

Murder... Forget About It!
A Murder Mystery Dinner Theater Play
by
Ethan Scott

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Cast of Characters

<u>Dawn Donleone:</u>	A female in the 40s. The wife of Godfather Coronie Donleone, the head of the Donleone Crime Family.
<u>Michael Donleone:</u>	A male in the 20s. The delicate looking son of Dawn Donleone.
<u>Trixie Donleone:</u>	A female in the 20s. Step-sister to Michael Donleone. She has been mistreated by her step-mother her entire life.
<u>Joseph McAfee:</u>	A male in the 30s to 40s. Consigliore to Godfather Donleone. Joseph has been with the family so long he is almost a part of it.
<u>Vinnie "Fat Ears" Petrone:</u>	A male in the 30s. The Godfather's #1 enforcer. He feels he is overdue for some freakin recognition.
<u>Edward L. Ness:</u>	A male in the 30s. FBI undercover agent. He was sent in undercover to be the hotel manager for The Golden Flamingo hotel.
<u>Director Johnson:</u>	A male in the 30s to 40s. Director of the FBI. Small role at end of play.

Scene

The play takes place in the ball room in The Golden Flamingo Hotel. The audience members are guests/members of the Donleone Crime Family.

Time

The present.

ACT I

The lights fade to black. The Godfather waltz is played. The lights come up as Joseph MacAfee; consigliere of the DonLeone family enters with Edward L. Ness, undercover agent of the FBI posing as a hotel manager.

NESS

Mr. MacAfee, let me just say what a pleasure it is to have the DonLeone Import/Export here at The Golden Flamingo Hotel tonight. If there is anything I can do to make your evening more pleasurable please do not hesitate to let me know.

JOSEPH

Thank you, Mr. Ness. Mr. DonLeone has always enjoyed your fine establishment. Now, let us dispense with the small talk and get down to business. Coronie DonLeone is here tonight to announce that he is retiring as chairman of the DonLeone Import/Export.

NESS

If you don't mind me asking, why is Mr. DonLeone retiring?

JOSEPH

The past wars have taken their toll ...

NESS

Wars, Mr. MacAfee?

JOSEPH

Yes. Mr. DonLeone has always thought of business as a war, like the cola wars back in the 80's. As if Pepsi could ever beat Coke. Mr. DonLeone wishes to enjoy his golden years lying on the beaches in the Caribbean, while he still has golden years to enjoy. He has invited all his employees here to witness the change of power and to announce who will become the new chairman.

NESS

Have all the guests arrived for tonight's dinner?

JOSEPH

Mr. DonLeone is in his room with his daughter, Trixie. Vinnie Petrone, the head of security, is taking care of a security issue. I believe we are waiting for Mrs. DonLeone.

NESS

Very well then, I will make sure everything is in order and that your party is not disturbed tonight.

JOSEPH

Mr. Ness, may I impose on you for a favor? I have some very important documents Mr. DonLeone would like to keep locked away until the announcement. Would you mind if we put these in the hotel safe?

NESS

Of course not, Mr. MacAfee. If you will come with me, I'll make sure they are locked away.

JOSEPH

Thank you.

NESS

This town won't be same without Mr. DonLeone. He has always kept Goode's Hardware in business. I've never seen anyone buy so much concrete.

Joseph and Ness exit. Vinnie "Fat Ears" Petrone enters the stage. He is a big guy and works as the Godfather's enforcer.

VINNIE

Alright, everyone shut your traps. I don't want to have no problems here tonight. I'm Vinnie "Fat Ears" Petrone. I'm in charge of Don DonLeone's security here this evening and I needs to make sure none of yous peoples are packing any heat.

(Notices a guest.)

Well, lookie here, I don't believe it, Louie "Prima" Cacciatore from Chicago. How ya doin?

(Reacts to answer.)

I haven't seen you since that little job we did on Michigan Avenue. The way you made that guy beg for his life, forget about it.

(Goes to woman in audience.)

How you doin? You are one hot looking broad. Have you got any Sicilian in you? Would you like some?

Joseph and Ness enter.

JOSEPH

Vinnie, what are you doing? You're scaring the employees.

VINNIE

Employees? What you talking about, Joey? These are the extended ...

JOSEPH

I do not believe you have met the hotel manager yet, Mr. Ness.

VINNIE

Oh, right, the hotel manager. I was, uh, just meeting some of the extended, uh, fellow members of the business. Sorry, Joey.

JOSEPH

Vinnie, I have told you before, call me Joseph.

VINNIE

Sure thing, Joey.

(Shaking Mr. Ness's hand hard.)

Hey, nice to meet you Mr. Ness. Hey, are you the one who put the self cleaning toilets and fresh towels in the bathrooms? Very classy stuff.

NESS

Thank you, glad you enjoyed them.

VINNIE

I didn't use the towels, I just noticed them. Hey, wait a second, you ain't related to that law guy who did in Capone are you?

NESS

No, no relation.

VINNIE

Good, cause if you were, Badda Bing, Badda Bang!

NESS

Yes, well. If you gentlemen will excuse me, I do have a hotel to run. Mr. MacAfee, if you need anything else, do not hesitate to let me know.

Ness exits.

JOSEPH

Did you take care of the "security" problem?

VINNIE

Yeah, that snitch is sleeping with the fishes. And by that, I mean he's dead.

JOSEPH

I still wish we knew if he told the feds about our meeting tonight.

VINNIE

Well, he ain't telling no body nothing, except for maybe Luca Brazia.

JOSEPH

I tried to convince the Don to postpone the announcement...

VINNIE

Relax. Don DonLeone knows what's he's doing.

JOSEPH

Well, if he would just listen to me, things would run much more smoothly.

VINNIE

You know, if you're the one who becomes the new boss, you will get your wish.

JOSEPH

I'm just the Consigliore; there is no way that Don DonLeone will name me the new Don. Besides, I enjoy being the power behind the throne. I have all the benefits of being in organized crime with none of the risk. I just hope whomever Don DonLeone chooses to be his successor will keep me as Consigliore so I don't have to get a day job. How about you, Vinnie, you want to be the new Don?

VINNIE

Me? Don of the DonLeone Crime Family? Well, I can't say that if Don DonLeone was to make me the new boss, I wouldn't consider it. But I think it's easier if I stay the Enforcer, stick with what I know best. Right Joey?

JOSEPH

Joseph, oh, forget about it. Vinnie, I have a little job for you. I need you to watch our new friend the hotel manager for me. Although the Don seems to trust him, I don't.

VINNIE

I think you're being paranoid again, Joey.

JOSEPH

I'm paid to be paranoid. Just make sure he doesn't do anything out of the ordinary.

VINNIE

Sure thing, Joey.

JOSEPH

I need to visit the self cleaning toilets.

Vinnie and Joseph exit. Trixie DonLeone, Coronie DonLeone's daughter, enters. She is a woman in her late 20's.

TRIXIE

Excuse me; has anyone here seen Joey? Daddy sent me here to find him.

(She goes to guest.)

Oh, my god, Donnie Voltaire!

(Scream of joy.)

You're my favorite singer of all time! I cannot believe you're here! Could you sign this for me?

(She pulls a pen and suggests Donnie sign a body part.)

Is it too much to ask you to sing a little from your upcoming album "Ring-A-Ding-Ding Sing"?

(If guest says no, she sits in lap and says:)

I understand, you don't want to work on your time off. Just so you'll know I would go to mattresses with you anytime.

Joseph enters.

JOSEPH

Trixie, what are doing? This is a respectable establishment.

TRIXIE

Sorry, Joey, I just got a little star struck. I never met a big star like Donnie Voltaire.

JOSEPH

I thought I told you to stay with your father until time for the announcement.

TRIXIE

Sorry, Joey, but Daddy wanted me to find you.

JOSEPH

Is everything alright?

TRIXIE

Yeah, daddy just wanted to go over some things with you about tonight's announcement. Besides, now I can mingle with the guests without Daddy watching my every move. Maybe I can find a nice respectable man.

JOSEPH

A respectable man in this bunch? Good luck. If your mother ...

TRIXIE

Step-Mother!

JOSEPH

If Mrs. DonLeone arrives, please, let her know where I am.

TRIXIE

Okay.

Joseph exits. Vinnie enters

VINNIE

Well Trixie, how you doin'?

TRIXIE

Vinnie "Fat Ears" Petrone! I didn't know they let pigs into this place.

VINNIE

Is that any way to say hello? Be nice Trixie.

TRIXIE

NICE! After what you did to me?

VINNIE

Trixie, how many times I gotta say I'm sorry? I had no choice.

TRIXIE

No choice! You took me on a hit for our first date!

VINNIE

You know how hard it is being the Don's enforcer. I had to take those guys out when I had the chance.

TRIXIE

You could of at least of picked up the check. You shot those guys, and then left me with a \$1000 tab.

VINNIE

Sorry, doll face. Why don't you give me another chance? I'll make it up to you?

TRIXIE

Forget about it!

VINNIE

Not even when the Don passes his power down to me?

TRIXIE

Yeah, right. Like Daddy would ever pass his power to you.

VINNIE

Who else is he going to pass it down to?

TRIXIE

How about Michael?

VINNIE

You mean Mr. Broadway Dancer, forget about it. That whelp couldn't keep control of the family. I'm the only one who has the strength and will to get anything done.

TRIXIE

How about me? I could run this family as well as Michael or you.

VINNIE

You? Don't make me laugh. This is the Sopranos, not Sex in the City. I'm the only freakin choice. I've spilled more blood for this family than anyone. I've even been voted the Don's Most Valuable Enforcer five years in a row.

TRIXIE

I don't care if it was 10 years in a row! I still say I could run this family as well as anyone else.

VINNIE

Trixie, you are so cute when you're angry.

Vinnie advances to Trixie.

Come on baby, I have a bold new outlook for this family, and now is your chance to be in the shotgun seat, if you know what I mean.

Vinnie grabs and kisses Trixie. Ness enters.

NESS

Oh, excuse me. I didn't mean to interrupt anything.

VINNIE

Get over here.

NESS

I didn't see anything.

VINNIE

What didn't you see?

NESS

I didn't see you kissing her.

VINNIE

I thought you said you didn't see anything?

NESS

I didn't.

VINNIE

Then how do you know I wasn't kissing Trixie?

NESS

I didn't see you kissing Trixie

TRIXIE

How did you know my name is Trixie if you didn't see him kissing me?

NESS

He just said your name was Trixie.

TRIXIE

But he didn't call the girl he wasn't kissing Trixie so how can that be my name?

NESS

I didn't hear him call you Trixie.

VINNIE

You calling me a liar?

NESS

I'm not calling you anything.

VINNIE

Oh, so now I'm nothing to you, is that what you're saying?

NESS

I'm not saying that.

TRIXIE

Well, you must be saying something because I hear your lips moving.

VINNIE

What are you saying tough guy? You saying I am freakin nothing? That you saw me kissing Trixie? That you are some kind of all-knowing-type person?

NESS

I have no idea what I'm saying.

VINNIE

Who am I?

NESS

You're not nothing, you're Vinnie.

TRIXIE

And who am I?

NESS

I have no idea.

VINNIE

And what were we doing when you came in?

NESS

I don't know, but you were definitely NOT kissing.

VINNIE

Alright, now that we got that straight, what did you want when you interrupted me kissing Trixie?

NESS

I wanted to know if you could tell Mr. MacAfee that Mrs. Dawn DonLeone called. She will be arriving here very soon with her son Michael.

Ness exits.

VINNIE

Great, the jazz hands son returns.

TRIXIE

Well, looks like you won't be the new Don after all.

VINNIE

(Shouting.)

Shut up Trixie! I'll be the new Don, one way or another!

TRIXIE

There is no need to shout.

VINNIE

I'll shout at you if I want to and you can't stop me! Now if you will get the hell out of my way, I need to go take care of a few things.

TRIXIE

I ain't stopping you.

Vinnie exits.

... punk! Geez, hit men are so touchy. No wonder all the girls say he's quick on the trigger.

Dawn DonLeone enters with Michael DonLeone. Dawn is a woman in her 40's. She is the actual business side of the "family" business. Michael is in his 20's, good looking and is a Broadway dancer.

DAWN

(Speaking into a Dictaphone.)
... and I need to know when the imports arrive so all the boxes can be checked out before the exports are shipped. Thank you and that's the end of this memo.

TRIXIE

Hello, Michael. How are you?

MICHAEL

Hello, Trixie. Like the new hairstyle, much better than that Shinad O'Conner look you had.

DAWN

Trixie, would you go upstairs and let your father know that Michael and I are here.

TRIXIE

But I just got down here.

DAWN

Trixie, just do what I ask.

TRIXIE

Sure thing, mommy dearest.

Trixie exits

DAWN

(Speaking into Dictaphone.)
This is a letter to the New York Times. Dear Mr. Times
...

MICHAEL

Mother, could you stop working for one minute and tell me why I was brought home?

DAWN

Michael, have I ever told you the story of how your father became the Godfather of one of the last crime families left in America?

Music starts playing under Dawn's story.

MICHAEL

No, but I think you're about to.

DAWN

Your father did not start out as a crime boss. He started out as a small time olive oil importer/exporter with his best friend Vito Linguini. They were the best importers and exporters in this town, which isn't easy, considering this town has no docks. Coronie was the brains and Vito took care of any kind of problems that would arise. Together, they were unstoppable.

MICHAEL

If they were unstoppable, then why did they turn to crime?

DAWN

Self-defense. The Fettuccine crime family, the most ruthless and unforgiving family of them all wanted the business and decided to send your father and Vito a message. They lured them to a warehouse for a great deal on olive oil, but, once they were in the room, they were met up with about 500 rabid Chipmunk fans. They kept singing the Chipmunks Christmas song over and over and over. It was horrifying. Your father was only able to escape because Vito sacrificed himself.

MICHAEL

Why did Vito sacrifice himself?

DAWN

Your father had a wife and a young daughter. Vito told your father get out while he could and live a life for both of them. Your father vowed on the day of Vito's funeral that Vito would not have died in vain.

MICHAEL

What does this have to do with me?

DAWN

Vito let your father live so one day your father would have a son to pass his legacy to. You will become the Don of the DonLeone crime family and you will control the family interests, including gambling, prostitution, the Oscars ...

MICHAEL

The Oscars?

Music stops.

DAWN

Of course, how else do you explain George Clooney getting his Oscar? Michael, your father has decided to step down as the chairman of DonLeone

(MORE)

DAWN (cont'd)
Import/Export. He wanted you home for the announcement. I have a very strong feeling he is going to pass his power down to you.

MICHAEL
What? I don't want any part of the family business.

DAWN
Michael Vito DonLeone! That's no way to thank your father for doing what's in your best interest.

MICHAEL
How does he know what my best interests are? He has never cared about me! I wish he were dead so I wouldn't have to live by his rules anymore.

DAWN
Michael, don't say that. Your father loves you very much.

MICHAEL
If he loves me, he has to accept me for who I am, not who he wants me to be. As far as I'm concerned, he can take his announcement and shove it up his canolie.

Michael storms out.

DAWN
I swear that boy will be the death of me someday.

Joseph enters.

JOSEPH
Mrs. DonLeone, you look as beautiful and radiant as ever.

DAWN
Thank you Joseph.

JOSEPH
Was that Michael I saw leaving? I thought he was in Europe with the touring company of "The Facts of Life: The Musical"? You know, the reviews said he was the best Joe Polacheck they had ever seen. Even better than Nancy McKeon.

DAWN
Coronie felt he should be here for his announcement. Speaking of the announcement, heard anything about who will become the next Don of the family.

JOSEPH

No. Coronie wouldn't tell me anything. Why are you concerned about it? You are not even involved in the "family" side of the business.

DAWN

I'm worried because I don't want someone coming into power that would have an influence on the import/export business.

JOSEPH

What do you mean? The import/export company has always been a cover to launder money for the family.

DAWN

But who says it has to stay that way? I've been working as the Vice President of a phony cover company for the family for the past 10 years. However, I think I've found a way to make the import/export company completely legitimate.

JOSEPH

How would you do that?

DAWN

I have some people lined up who are interested in investing in DonLeone Import/Export. Their only concern is they don't want to be a part of any criminal activities. With Coronie retiring tonight, there is a chance that he could make me the new Don of the family.

JOSEPH

And if he chooses someone else?

DAWN

Then all I have to do is convince his successor that the import/export company would be better off not involved in the family business.

JOSEPH

Either way, I don't think Coronie would let that happen. When Coronie retires, I'm sure he will still have some say over what happens in the business. The only way the new Don would have complete control would be if Coronie were to pass away.

DAWN

Of course. If you'll excuse me, I'd like to go see my husband.

Dawn exits. Mr. Ness enters.

NESS

Mr. MacAfee, there is a phone call for you in my office.

JOSEPH

Who is it?

NESS

It's George Clooney. Something about a slur made about him by Mrs. DonLeone?

JOSEPH

Actors! Thank you.

Joseph exits. Ness's phone rings.

NESS

Hello? Popcorn.

(Pause.)

Yes, everything is going as planned.

(Pause.)

I don't know.

(Pause.)

Trust me; I'll let you know when the time is right. Just be ready to move in. I'll call you back when I know more. Bye.

Vinnie enters

VINNIE

Hey, Ness, can I speak to you for a moment?

NESS

Sure, Mr. Petrone, what can I do for you?

VINNIE

Please call me Vinnie, and it's not what you can do for me, it's what I can do for you. I've come to find out that Joey had you put some documents in the hotel safe right?

NESS

Who did you hear this from?

VINNIE

From my little friend right here.

(Goes to audience member.)

Say hello to my little friend.

NESS

Hello little friend.

VINNIE

I was just thinking that it was unfair of Joey to involve you in the family business. You're just a hotel manager; you don't need to worry about keeping some documents. So, you know what I'm going to do?

NESS

Make me an offer I can't refuse?

VINNIE

(Laughs.)

Funny guy. No, I'm going to do you a favor. I'm going to put your mind at ease and take those documents off your hands.

NESS

I don't think that's necessary, Vinnie. Part of my job is to take care of the guests and their business. I don't mind holding onto those documents.

VINNIE

You know, Ness, to not let me do you this favor would be very insulting to me.

NESS

Well, I don't mean to be insulting, Vinnie ...

VINNIE

And it would show me great disrespect ...

NESS

I mean no disrespect ...

VINNIE

And it could be very harmful to your health. If you know what I mean?

NESS

Vinnie, are you threatening me?

VINNIE

Threaten? All I'm trying to do is to persuade you to let me do you this favor.

NESS

I'm sorry Vinnie, as gracious as your offer is, I must decline. Mr. MacAfee wanted me to hold those documents in the safe until Mr. DonLeone made his announcement. I cannot give them to you.

VINNIE

You know something, Ness? You got guts. I just got one question for you. What size shoes do you wear?

NESS

Ten. Why?

VINNIE

I just wanted to know how much concrete I needed to buy. See you around Ness.

Vinnie exits. Trixie enters.

TRIXIE

Oh, it's you again.

NESS

Hello. We were not properly introduced last time. I'm Mr. Ness, the manager of the Golden Flamingo Hotel.

TRIXIE

A hotel manager huh? You must make a pretty good living then?

NESS

I do alright, Ms. DonLeone.

TRIXIE

(Starting to flirt with Ness.)

Please call me Trixie. So, Ness Mess, you single?

NESS

Yes.

TRIXIE

I like single guys. Ness, what's your first name?

NESS

Edward.

TRIXIE

Eddie, can I ask you a question?

NESS

Ummm, well, ummm.

TRIXIE

(Grabbing Ness.)

Do you think I'm sexy?

NESS

Trixie, please let go of me.

TRIXIE

I knew it, I ain't no longer sexy.

NESS

Trixie, it's not that. I didn't mean anything ...

TRIXIE

It doesn't matter what you meant. I'm going to be 30 next year and I'll never find the right guy. Do you have any idea how hard it is to find a single, stable guy in his 30's? Either they have loser jobs, are divorced, have kids, are gay, or they have been screwed over so many times, they are overprotective, jealous assholes. What I wouldn't give to meet a guy who is just normal.

NESS

Trixie, you're a beautiful woman. Any man in his right mind,

(Looks at audience.)

well, no one here, but any other guy would love to have you as his girl.

TRIXIE

Then what's wrong with me?

NESS

Nothing. It's just that you're Coronie DonLeone's daughter. He's a very intimidating man to have as a father. I hear he's very protective of you.

TRIXIE

Yeah, he's always chasing off the guys I want to see. You know what he would do when I brought a guy home. Daddy would take him down in the basement and show him his gun collection. Then he would give him a bullet and tell him that if he tried anything with me to remember where that bullet came from. And there were a bunch more bullets and they could all move faster than him.

NESS

That must have made dating guys difficult.

TRIXIE

And it never stopped. That kind of thing happens with every guy I like. He has ruined my life with his over-protectiveness. I'll never meet anyone and be happy with Daddy around.

NESS

I don't know what to say.

TRIXIE

You don't have to say anything. My father is my problem and I'm the only one who can do anything about it.

(Kissing Ness on the cheek.)
Thanks for listening, Eddie.

NESS

You're welcome. Now if you will excuse me, I need to check, check, with the chicken, kitchen, and see how dinner is coming along.

Ness exits. Trixie pulls out a vile of white powder, looks at it, and then exits. Michael enters from one entrance and Vinnie enters from another.

MICHAEL

Hello, Vinnie.

VINNIE

Hello, Michael.

MICHAEL

So?

VINNIE

So? How's your little play tour going?

MICHAEL

It's a touring off-off-Broadway musical and it's fabulous. I see you survived the last war.

VINNIE

No thanks to you.

MICHAEL

What's that suppose to mean?

VINNIE

It was very convenient that you left just as the war started with the Scalini's. You know, I wish my daddy was the boss so I wouldn't have to fight.

MICHAEL

My dad didn't get me out of the war; I got offered a part in an off-off Broadway musical.

VINNIE

It just seems a little suspicious to me that just as the war was starting, you got a part in a musical inspired by an 80's sitcom playing the role of a woman.

MICHAEL

I can't help it if I have delicate features.

VINNIE

Maybe you should start wearing a dress all the time so no one will recognize you.

MICHAEL

That's it, Vinnie! I've had it with you picking on me. I'll never forgive you for that pool party, you know the one. Every time I tried to get out; you pulled me back in.

Music from West Side Story starts.

VINNIE

Are you going to just bark all day, little doggie, or are you going to bite?

MICHAEL

What did you say?

VINNIE

You going to bark all day, little doggie, or are you going to bite?

MICHAEL

That's it. It's go time, Vinnie.

VINNIE

Bring it on! I've been waiting to kick your ass for years!

Michael and Vinnie do a dance fight in the style of West Side Story. Joseph enters with Ness and breaks up the fight.

JOSEPH

Break it up! What the hell are you two doing?

Vinnie and Michael start accusing each other of starting the fight.

JOSEPH (cont'd)

That's enough. Vinnie, go tell Trixie and Mrs. DonLeone to come here. I have some things to tell them before Coronie make his announcement.

VINNIE

Sure thing, counselor. Catch you later, Michael.

JOSEPH

Mr. Ness, will you go upstairs and let Mr. DonLeone know that we are ready for him to make his announcement.

Ness exits.

JOSEPH (cont'd)

Michael, what is the matter with you?

MICHAEL

Vinnie started it.

JOSEPH

Yeah, Vinnie starts everything. Is this how you are going to behave when you run the family?

MICHAEL

Run the family? I don't want to run the family business.

JOSEPH

Your father knows that, but he has no choice.

MICHAEL

Well, we'll just see about that.

Michael exits.

JOSEPH

I swear this family is going to be the death of me. Ladies and gentlemen, may I have your attention. Everyone has been summoned here tonight because each and every one of you has proven your loyalty time and time again. Coronie DonLeone has made it known that he has decided to retire as the head of DonLeone Import/Export. Tonight, he will announce his successor and the beginning of a new era for the DonLeone family.

Ness enters, out of breath.

NESS

Mr. MacAfee! Mr. MacAfee!

JOSEPH

Mr. Ness, what is it?

NESS

Come quick, there's something wrong with Mr. DonLeone.

JOSEPH

Where is he?

NESS

In his room, he was complaining of chest pains and he sent me down here to get you.

JOSEPH

Ness, you stay here. I'll go and check on Coronie.

Joseph exits. Dawn enters.

DAWN

Well, I am here. Where is everyone?

NESS

You're the first to arrive.

DAWN

This is just great. I got off an international conference call to come down here. Where is Joseph?

NESS

He had to go and check on something.

Trixie enters.

DAWN

Trixie, is your father on his way down?

TRIXIE

I don't know.

Vinnie enters.

VINNIE

Alright, I'm here.

TRIXIE

Daddy isn't here yet.

VINNIE

What the hell? Ness, where's Joey?

NESS

He'll be back in a few minutes, I'm sure.

Michael enters.

DAWN

Michael, have you seen your father?

MICHAEL

No, I haven't seen him all night.

Joseph enters

JOSEPH

May I have everyone's attention, please? I just came from Coronie DonLeone's room. I have some very sad

(MORE)

JOSEPH (cont'd)
news. It appears that Coronie DonLeone has passed
away?

MICHAEL, DAWN, VINNIE, TRIXIE
What? Oh my God! You freakin kidding me! That's
terrible!

JOSEPH
Quiet, everyone! Everyone calm down.

DAWN
I'm going to see for myself.

JOSEPH
Not right now, Dawn. Dr. Puzo is trying to determine
the cause of death.

DAWN
Joseph, what happened?

JOSEPH
I don't know for sure. Mr. Ness came here and told me
Coronie was complaining of chest pains. When I walked
in the room, Dr. Puzo told me Don DonLeone had passed
away.

VINNIE
Ness killed him!

NESS
What?!

VINNIE
Then why were you up in his room?

NESS
Mr. MacAfee asked me to let Mr. DonLeone know that it
was time to make his announcement.

JOSEPH
That is true, I did. Ness, what happened when you got
upstairs?

NESS
Mr. DonLeone asked me to come in, so I did. Then he
told me he was having chest pains, so I ran down here
to tell Mr. MacAfee. That's all I know.

VINNIE
I don't believe him. He's an outsider. Give me five
minutes alone. I'll figure out if he's telling the
truth or not.

JOSEPH

Vinnie, shut up! Violence isn't always the answer. We don't know anything yet, so there's no reason to start putting blame on someone. Mr. Ness, if you could go and get everyone a drink, I would like to talk to the surviving family members alone.

NESS

Certainly, Mr. Macafee.

Ness exits.

JOSEPH

Ladies and gentlemen of the family, may I have your attention? This is truly a tragedy, but let me assure you that dinner will not be disturbed.

MICHAEL

What do you mean? My father is dead!

VINNIE

The whole reason for this gathering was for the Don to announce whom he was passing his power too.

TRIXIE

With Daddy dead, who's going to run the family?

JOSEPH

There's no reason to start panicking. Coronie had a Will made out with specific instructions of what is to be done in case of his death. The Will is in the hotel safe along with other important documents.

MICHAEL

Well, go and get it. We have a right to know who is going to be the next Don of the family.

JOSEPH

I thought you didn't care who was going to be the next Don of the family, Michael?

MICHAEL

I never said I didn't care; I just said I didn't want to be the Don, that's all.

VINNIE

Well, I want to be the new Don. I've earned the stripes to be the Don.

DAWN

You? The new head of the family? Forget about it. My husband wouldn't have made a violent idiot like you the new Don.

TRIXIE

Yeah, you're not even real family. Daddy knew Michael didn't want to be the new Don, so he could've named me.

JOSEPH

I'm not going to get the Will until Dr. Puzo has given me the results of his examination. We don't know yet how Don DonLeone died. I'm going to speak with Dr. Puzo.

Joseph exits.

DAWN

I can't believe my dear Coronie is dead. I told him to stop eating those value meals.

VINNIE

I wonder why Joey wants to know how the Don died.

MICHAEL

You don't think that Joseph suspects one of us had something to do with his death?

DAWN

That's absurd. Everyone here loved Coronie.

TRIXIE

Daddy was the best.

VINNIE

I would've killed for that man. Wait a minute; I have killed for that man.

Joseph enters.

JOSEPH

I have spoken with Dr. Puzo. It appears that Coronie DonLeone has been murdered.

ALL

Murder... forget about it!

JOSEPH

Dr. Puzo concluded that Don DonLeone died of poisoning when he discovered a small amount of white powder on the floor by the mini bar. It turns out, the powder was Lithocaine powder, an extremely lethal poison. According to Dr. Pulzo, when Lithocaine is administered to the body, it causes the heart to beat so fast the heart will literally explode. One of you finally did break his heart.

DAWN

Joseph, you cannot seriously think one of us is responsible for my beloved husband's death?

JOSEPH

The only members of the family that have been in and out of this room are Dawn, Trixie, Michael and Vinnie. Everyone else has been in this room since the evening began; therefore you four are the only ones who had the opportunity to poison Don DonLeone.

VINNIE

Just because we had the opportunity don't mean we took it. Besides, you can't commit murder without a motive. I learned that by watching that "Law & Order" marathon. Man, I miss Jerry Orbach, how bout you guys?

JOSEPH

You want a motive? Here's your motive, Vinnie. You have been serving as the Don's enforcer for years now. Out there in the trenches, fighting, killing for the Don. And now Coronie says he is going to retire and appoint a new Don to take his place. Perhaps you went to plead your case to Coronie and found out that you were not going to be the new Don. That all your years of service would go without any of the recognition you felt you are due. Perhaps you felt that by killing the Don before he appointed his successor would throw the family in such disarray you could use your strength and muscle to take over.

VINNIE

That's a good theory, Joey, but I told you earlier that I didn't want to be the new Don.

TRIXIE

That's not what you told me. You told me that you were going to be the new Don and this was my opportunity to be in the shotgun seat. You said that you were going to be the new Don one way or another.

VINNIE

Trixie, how could you sell me out like that, after all we have been through?

DAWN

Well, Joseph, that sounds like a motive to me.

JOSEPH

Not so fast Dawn. You also had a motive.

DAWN

What are you talking about Joseph?
 (To the theme of the Knack's "My
 Sharona".)
 I loved my, my, m, m, m, m, my Coronie.

JOSEPH

There is an old saying that love and business don't mix. You told me earlier that you wanted to make the import/export business legit. You said you have some investors lined up, but they will not invest if they suspect the company is involved in criminal activities. I remember mentioning to you that although Cornoie was retiring as the Don, he would still have control over the business. The only way that the new Don would have complete control is if Coronie were to die.

DAWN

You got all that out of our 5 minute conversation. Talk about reading between the lines, dam, you're good.

JOSEPH

Which brings us to Michael.

MICHAEL

Me? I didn't even want to be the new Don. What motive could I have possibly had?

JOSEPH

Not wanting to be the new Don is your motive. It's well known that you want to live your life on your terms, not by your father's rules. When I told you earlier that I thought you were going to be named the new Don, your reply was "We'll just see about that". Perhaps you killed your father so he could not appoint you as his successor.

MICHAEL

That's absurd!

JOSEPH

The only one I cannot figure out a motive for is ...

Ness enters with drinks.

NESS

Excuse me; I have drinks here for everyone.

JOSEPH

Thank you, Mr. Ness. You can put them over there. As I was saying, the only one I can not figure out a motive for is Trixie, so it appears you're in the clear.

NESS

Excuse me, may I say something about that.

TRIXIE

No, you may not.

JOSEPH

Be quiet Trixie. Go ahead, Mr. Ness.

NESS

Trixie told me earlier that she was tired of her over-protective father ruining her love life by running off every guy she dated. She even went so far as to say that she would never be happy with him around.

JOSEPH

I guess I was wrong; Trixie does have a motive. Thank you, Mr. Ness. That will be all for now.

Ness Exits.

JOSEPH (cont'd)

Every one of you had a motive and the opportunity to murder Don DonLeone.

MICHAEL

If you are sure one of us did it, why not call the cops and have us arrested?

JOSEPH

If we bring in the cops, the press will soon follow. We don't need the Fettuccines, the Alfredos, the Primavera's and the Angel Hair's knowing that Coronie DonLeone is dead. If they find out, they will try to take us over. We must have a new Don appointed before we bring in the police.

DAWN

Joseph is right. We have to know who the new Don is before the other families find out what happened here tonight.

JOSEPH

Therefore, I will assume the role of Don for the time being until the murderer is revealed.

VINNIE

Why you?

JOSEPH

Because I know I didn't kill Don DonLeone and I didn't have a motive. I'm going to find Mr. Ness to get the Will and the rest of documents to make sure they remain

(MORE)

JOSEPH (cont'd)
 safe. Once the murderer is revealed, I'll unseal
 Coronie's Will and determine who the next Don will be
 in accordance with Conronie DonLeone's wishes.

Joseph exits.

DAWN
 I cannot believe that Joseph is doing this! I'm going
 to see Coronie. I'm his wife and I want to say my
 final goodbye.

Dawn exits. Vinnie starts to exit.

VINNIE
 Well, I can't just stand here while I'm waiting for
 Junior Detective Joey to solve the case.

MICHAEL
 Vinnie, where you going?

VINNIE
 I'm going outside to have a smoke. If Joey ask where
 I am, tell him where I am.

Vinnie exits.

TRIXIE
 I need something to calm my nerves. I'm going to see
 Dr. Puzo for a tranquilizer. You want anything,
 Michael.

MICHAEL
 No thanks. I'm going to go use the bathroom; I hear
 they have self cleaning toilets here.

Michael and Trixie exit. Ness enters.

NESS
 Mr. MacAfee, the kitchen wants to know if you ...
 (Looks around and sees no one is in the
 room.)
 Where did everyone go?
 (Ness's phone starts ringing.)
 Hello? Shortcake. Yes.
 (Pause.)
 No.
 (Pause.)
 It is decidedly so.
 (Pause.)
 You may not rely on it.
 (Pause.)
 Reply hazy, ask again later.

(Ness hangs up the phone. A gun shot rings out.)

What was that?

Joseph comes staggering in carrying documents. He has been shot.

NESS (cont'd)

Mr. MacAfee! Joseph, what happened?

JOSEPH

Ness, take these. Keep the Will safe until Coronie's murder is solved. And if you're not too busy- if you could find the guy who shot me, that would be great.

Joseph dies. Vinnie enters.

VINNIE

What the hell happened to Joey?

NESS

Joseph has been shot!

Michael enters.

MICHAEL

I heard a gun shot.

VINNIE

Yeah, Joey got shot.

Dawn enters.

DAWN

What was that loud noise?

MICHAEL

Someone shot Joseph.

Trixie enters.

TRIXIE

What the hell is going on in here?

DAWN

Someone popped a cap in Joseph's ass.

All look at Dawn.

What? I heard it in a movie once.

MICHAEL

Who would've shot Uncle Joey?

NESS

That's a very good question, Michael. One I intend on finding the answer to.

MICHAEL

Why do you care who shot him, you're just a hotel manager.

NESS

Actually, I'm not the hotel manager. I'm Edward Ness, undercover agent for the FBI.

ALL

The FBI!

NESS

That's right. The FBI has been following the activities of DonLeone crime family for sometime.

VINNIE

(Pulling out a knife.)

What's to stop us from killing you right now?

NESS

Because I know something you don't.

VINNIE

You don't know nothing.

NESS

Oh, I know something alright. And that something isn't nothing either.

VINNIE

Alright, let's hear this thing.

NESS

I'm on Coronie DonLeone's payroll. Don DonLeone knew the FBI would find out about what was happening tonight and would want to have an agent on the inside. When the assignment was offered, I volunteered. No one but Don DonLeone and I knew. I believe it's in your family's best interest to let me investigate the death of Coronie DonLeone and the murder of Mr. Joseph MacAfee.

VINNIE

Why should we listen to you? A not-so-untouchable FBI agent?

NESS

Because, FBI agents surround this entire hotel.

Vinnie and Trixie look around for the FBI.
You can't see them from in here. There are also several news vehicles parked outside as well. I have to check in with my superiors at the FBI at various intervals via phone. If I fail to answer the phone with the correct code word, the hotel will be stormed and everyone here will be arrested.

DAWN

Vinnie, we don't need the news about Coronie getting out to the other families. Remember?

VINNIE

Yeah, you got a point, Dawn. Alright, I'll play along for now.

NESS

Alright. As dinner will be coming out soon, I think it is best to move Mr. MacAfee out of the room so no one here will lose their appetite. Vinnie, if you and Michael would move Joseph out of here.

Vinnie, Dawn, Trixie, and Michael move the body out of the room.

Ladies and gentlemen, I'm sorry to inconvenience you, but I'm afraid everyone will have to stay in the hotel until I have solved this crime. I have no choice but to put the hotel under total lock down. I thank you for your cooperation in advance.

END ACT 1

ACT II

Michael and Dawn enter.

MICHAEL

I can't believe we are going to let this FBI idiot do this investigation. This is a family matter. We should be handling this, not him.

DAWN

What choice do we have? I'm not going to lose the import/export business because of the FBI. The IRS, maybe.

MICHAEL

Well, you'll lose it anyway if Vinnie or Trixie become the new Don.

DAWN

Michael, it's starting to sound like you actually care about who the next Don will be.

MICHAEL

Well, anyone is better than Vinnie running the family.

DAWN

What about your half-sister Trixie?

MICHAEL

Trixie as the Don? I'm not sure if she could handle those types of decisions.

DAWN

Michael, are you saying that you want to be the next Don?

MICHAEL

I don't know. I mean, I didn't at first. When dad died earlier tonight, I wasn't too concerned because I knew that Uncle Joey would still be around to take care of things. But, with Joey dead, I'm not sure anymore. Maybe I should give up my career as an off-off Broadway triple threat and take over the family.

DAWN

Look at you, taking responsibility like a man. My little boy is all grown up, but I don't want you to give up your dreams. You've worked so hard. I have an idea. If your father's Will names you as the next Don, why don't you pass your powers onto me.

MICHAEL

Why would you want to run the family?

DAWN

This is our chance to go legit and live a life without having to worry about cops or rival crime families. I have some investors lined up who cannot wait to invest in DonLeone Import/Export. If you are named as the next Don, pass your powers to me. This way the business can go legit and you can still live the life you have always wanted. What do you say?

MICHAEL

Sounds pretty good. Alright, Mom, if I'm named the new Don, I will pass the position to you.

DAWN

Thank you, Michael. You have made your mother very happy.

MICHAEL

There is just one problem. What if the Will gives the power to Vinnie or Trixie?

DAWN

You don't worry about that; let your mother take care of them. In the meantime, we have to find out whose name is on the Will. I have to find some way to get Ness alone.

MICHAEL

What good would that do?

DAWN

Michael, I wasn't always your mother you know. I was once a vivacious, alluring, sexy ...

MICHAEL

(Sticks fingers in his ears.)

La, la, la, la, la, stop, stop. I don't want to hear that! My god Mother!

DAWN

Well, what do you want to hear? That I'm going to read him a bedtime story?

MICHAEL

Do whatever you need to do, just don't tell me about it.

DAWN

Alright. Let's go and plan how we're going to take care of things.

Dawn and Michael exit. Vinnie and Trixie enter from the other side of the room. Trixie is eating an orange.

VINNIE

I still say we should just kill the schmuck and take the Will from him.

TRIXIE

You heard Eddie, we kill him and the FBI will be in here faster than (*insert topical joke here*). I don't know about you, but I'm too pretty to go to prison.

VINNIE

Yes, yes, you are. All this killing has really gotten me, you know, a little excited. What do you say you and I take a moment to enjoy the atmosphere?

TRIXIE

Vinnie, how can you think about sex now? Joey and my father have both been murdered and I have no idea what is going to happen to me after the Will is read.

VINNIE

What do you mean?

TRIXIE

If my dad passed control to Dawn, she'll cut me off.

VINNIE

Wait, I thought Dawn was your mother.

TRIXIE

No, she's my step-mom. My real mom died when I was just a baby.

VINNIE

Really? All these years I had no idea. I really have to stop working so much and pay attention. I'm sorry about that.

TRIXIE

It's alright, I never knew her. Daddy did his best to provide for me, but he was so busy with the business, he never knew what I really had to go through.

VINNIE

What was that, if you know what I mean?

TRIXIE

Dawn didn't treat me near as well as she treated her precious son Michael. My life would be so much easier if she had died instead of my father.

VINNIE

What about Michael? You two have always gotten along.

TRIXIE

Michael is such a mama's boy, he will do anything his mommy tells him to do. That witch will convince Michael to cut me off since I'm not his "real-blood-sister" and then I'll have to go back to my job as an Amway saleswoman.

VINNIE

Well, it sucks to be you. At least I know whoever becomes the new Don I will still have a job.

TRIXIE

(Becoming flirtatious and coy.)

Vinnie, I see what you mean about the atmosphere here tonight. I didn't feel it a first but now I do. It is somewhat electrifying.

VINNIE

It is?

(Getting it.)

Oh, right it is. What do you say you and I go enjoy this atmosphere together alone?

TRIXIE

Well, I just can't knowing that I might have to live on the streets. Unless ...

VINNIE

Unless what?

TRIXIE

Well, if you were to help me make sure I had some security, I'd feel so much better. Then I could return the favor, if you know what I mean. What do you say? For me?

VINNIE

I don't know.

TRIXIE

Why don't we go somewhere and talk it over.

Trixie exits sucking on a piece of orange. Vinnie thinks for a moment, and then exits after her. Ness enters on the phone carrying a drink.

NESS

That's right.

(Pause.)

Everything is going fine, there's no need to worry.

(Pause.)

I can handle whatever happens trust me.

(Pause.)

Alright, bye.

(Hangs up phone and puts down drink.)

Ladies and gentlemen, at this time I would like to ask for everyone's cooperation with my investigation. If everyone here cooperates, I should solve this case before the night is over. Once the killer is in my custody, we can all go on with our lives.

Dawn enters. She tries to look very sexy and plays it to the hilt. She attempts to seduce Ness throughout the following dialogue.

DAWN

Mr. Ness, may I have a word with you?

NESS

Sure, Mrs. DonLeone.

DAWN

Please call me Dawn. I was wondering if you have made any headway with your investigation.

NESS

No, not yet. But not to worry. I will find out who killed your husband and Mr. MacAfee.

DAWN

My goodness, you are so determined, aren't you? I love that quality in a man. Tell me, Eddie, is there a Mrs. Ness?

NESS

Ummm, no. Working for your late husband and the FBI keep me pretty busy.

DAWN

That's a shame. You're such a handsome, strong man. I'd have thought some woman would have snatched you up. You must be spread pretty thin.

NESS

Mrs. DonLeone, did you want something in particular?

DAWN

I was wondering ... since Coronie died, you're not going to be on the take anymore.

NESS

No, I guess not.

DAWN

Well, I might be able to help you with that. If you were to let me have a look at the Will, I can put you on my hay roll payroll, if you know what I mean.

NESS

Mrs. DonLeone, please. I don't even have the Will with me. I put it back in the safe until I can solve the crimes.

DAWN

Well, why don't we go back to your office, just the two of us, and go have a look at it together.

She kisses Ness. Ness tries to pull away. Trixie enters with the orange slices.

TRIXIE

What the hell is going on here?

Ness breaks away, goes for his drink, and gargles.

DAWN

Nothing, now.

TRIXIE

You were trying to seduce Eddie to get the Will.

DAWN

Upset because I beat you to the punch, Trixie darling?

TRIXIE

I'll punch you, you evil witch!

NESS

Ladies, ladies, please. Calm down. No one is getting the Will until after I have solved tonight's murders. Is that clear? Now where is Vinnie?

Vinnie enters.

VINNIE

Yo, did I miss anything?

NESS

(Aside.)

You have no idea. Perfect timing, Mr. Petrone.

VINNIE

I always have perfect timing. I'm like a Timex, I take a licking but I keep on ticking.

NESS

Maybe you should leave the stand-up comedy to the comics.

VINNIE

You saying I'm not a comic?

NESS

Yes.

VINNIE

You mean to tell me I'm not funny?

NESS

That's what I am telling you.

VINNIE

Oh, so I'm not a comic or a clown here for your amusement?

NESS

You're not a clown or a comic.

VINNIE

I'll have you know I went to clown college and I took second place in an open mic night at Shifty's Funny Shack, so don't tell me I ain't funny.

TRIXIE

Vinnie, enough with the "Goodfellas" rip off!

NESS

Thank you. Now where's Michael?

Michael enters.

MICHAEL

(Singing.)

Here I am.

NESS

Right on cue, Michael.

MICHAEL

Well, I'm an off-off Broadway triple threat. I never miss a cue.

NESS

Now that everyone is here, I can begin the investigation. After Mr. MacAfee's body was moved out of the room, I made a few notes about some of the events I witnessed this evening. I have some questions I'd like to have answered. Vinnie, why did you

(MORE)

NESS (cont'd)
threaten me to give you the documents Mr. MacAfee had
me put in the safe?

VINNIE
Threaten? Who said anything about threaten? I just
wanted to do you a favor. It's not my fault you take
your job so seriously you couldn't realize when someone
is trying to do you a favor.

NESS
But you said by not letting you do me the favor could
be harmful to my health.

VINNIE
Yeah, I didn't want you to get a paper cut. You get
lemon juice on those things and they can really sting.

NESS
I can see I'm going to get nowhere with this line of
questioning. Very well then, let's move on. I have
looked over the notes Mr. MacAfee made before his
death, and have taken a statement from Dr. Puzo. Mr.
MacAfee wrote down his theories about all of you,
including the possible motives each of you might have
had for murdering Don DonLeone and the fact that each
of you had the opportunity. I will not go over the
motives again, as I'm sure all of you were paying very
close attention. I say this because Mr. MacAfee is now
dead. Therefore, he must have been on the right
track. I have also concluded that Mr. MacAfee
suspected who killed Don DonLeone and confronted the
killer.

DAWN
How do you know that?

NESS
I found traces of white powder on Mr. MacAfee's right
hand underneath the fingernails. He must have fought
with the person who shot him.

MICHAEL
Well, then it is easy to know who shot Joey. Everyone
search each others clothes, if we find white powder on
them, they're the killer.

VINNIE
Good idea.
(Approaching lady in audience.)
I'll check out this lady's shirt right here. How you
doing, Cupcake?

NESS

No one is checking other people's clothes. The murderer would have brushed himself off after the scuffle, so trying to find powder residue on the killer's clothes would be like trying to find Amy Winehouse in Rehab.

VINNIE

Yeah, but it could be a lot of fun.

NESS

That notwithstanding, I think there are more obvious things to look for first.

TRIXIE

What would that be?

NESS

Well, to start with, where was everyone when Mr. MacAfee was shot?

DAWN

I went to see Coronie. I wanted to say my final goodbye.

NESS

Did anyone see you?

DAWN

Dr. Puzo saw me in the elevator. But, when I got to Coronie's room, Coronie was already gone. I guess Dr. Puzo had him moved to the funeral home already.

VINNIE

I went outside for a smoke. And before you ask, no one else was out there. But, if you want proof you can smell my breath.

NESS

You can smoke and shoot someone at the same time.

VINNIE

Not in this state. They banned smoking inside hotels and restaurants. If I were smoking when I shot Joey, I'd have to be inside, which would be breaking the law, and I would never do that.

NESS

And murder is not against the law?

VINNIE

In my line of work, it's more of an occupational disease. Besides, I take my work very seriously. I'd wait to have a smoke until after I shot someone.

MICHAEL

I went to the bathroom. I had heard all about those self-cleaning toilets, I just had to see them for myself. There was someone in the next stall. I have no idea who it was, but he eats way too much fiber.

TRIXIE

I went to look for Dr. Puzo to get something to calm my nerves, but I couldn't find him, so I went to the hotel bar and had a couple of shots with the bartender. He's a really cute interior designer from San Francisco trying to make it in the world of fashion. I was hoping to get his number so I could ask him out later.

NESS

Good luck with that.

TRIXIE

You could have asked him to confirm my alibi if you hadn't sent him home when you locked down the hotel.

NESS

Everyone seems to have an alibi, which means that one or all of you are not telling the truth. However, there is another course of action. I should have thought of this first. The gun that was used to shoot Mr. MacAfee is missing. I know from the size of the bullet wound that Mr. MacAfee was shot with a .38 caliber gun, so we can conclude we are looking for a handgun. I would like everyone to turn out their pockets and purses. Whoever has the gun, is our killer.

Everyone does as they are asked. Each suspect pulls items from their pockets, except for Trixie who stands in frisking position. No gun is found, but a bullet casing is found in Dawn's purse.

NESS (cont'd)

What do we have here? A bullet casing for a .38 caliber hand gun.

DAWN

I don't know where that came from? Someone must have slipped it into my purse. I don't even know how to use a gun.

NESS

Well, Mrs. DonLeone, the evidence says otherwise.

TRIXIE

There is your killer, Eddie. Arrest her! Do you think she'll get the chair?

MICHAEL

What possible motive could my mother have to murder Joseph?

NESS

Yes, what motive would Mrs. DonLeone have to kill Mr. MacAfee? What does DonLeone Import/Export import?

DAWN

Exports.

NESS

And what do you export?

DAWN

Imports.

NESS

According to Mr. MacAfee's notes, you have several investors lined up to help DonLeone Import/Export become a legitimate business. Who are these alleged investors?

DAWN

Just a few people I've met at dinner parties and social meetings.

NESS

What would be the names of these people?

DAWN

My investors would prefer to stay anonymous. They're the sort of people who don't like their names in the papers.

TRIXIE

You're wasting your time, Eddie. She'll never tell you anything. I think you should try to find the gun and have it fingerprinted. When you find her fingerprints on the gun, you can have her arrested.

NESS

That's actually a very good idea, considering the source. Mr. MacAfee came back in here with the documents from the safe, so he must have been shot on his way back from my office. I'm going to search the area for the gun. Ladies and gentlemen, while I'm gone, I want you to keep an eye on the four suspects. If you help them to escape, then I'll have all of you arrested for accessory after the fact.

Ness exits.

MICHAEL

What do we do till he gets back?

TRIXIE

I'm going to go to the personnel office and see if I can find that bartender's number. Vinnie, would you like to come and help me? Some of those files can be very heavy.

VINNIE

Yeah, sure, I'll come. Maybe I can find that gun as well and end this my way.

Vinnie exits.

DAWN

Trixie, darling. Would you bring me something to eat? I'm feeling a bit peckish.

TRIXIE

There's an orange that I brought on the bar. Why don't you just have that, mommy dearest!

Trixie exits.

DAWN

I wish she would quit calling me that. I swear, you hit someone with a wire hanger one time and they never let you forget it.

Dawn crosses to eat a slice of orange and drink a drink during the following dialogue.

MICHAEL

Mom, you were a little hard on Trixie.

DAWN

Nonsense, I was no harder on her than I was on you. She just never applied herself enough to make it as far as you did.

MICHAEL

But, Mom, you did treat me better. I had a Big Green Machine, she had a Big Wheel. I had private tutors and you sent her to public school. I went to Julliard and you made her get her degree online from Phoenix University.

DAWN

Michael, don't tell me you are going soft again?

MICHAEL

No, not at all. Were you able to get Ness to let you look at the Will?

DAWN

No, that damn Trixie came in here before I had a chance. If only she had died with her mother, then she would not be a problem.

MICHAEL

How did her mom die?

DAWN

She died from a bombing that was meant for your father. They were going to go for a bike ride one summer afternoon. Elvira, Trixie's mom, got her bike out of the garage and started riding it in the driveway. It turns out they put the bomb on the wrong bike; when she hit 5 miles an hour, the bomb went off and killed her. Your father was devastated. I stayed with your father night and day after Elvira was killed. I became pregnant with you, and then Coronie and I were married a few days later. He gave me this ring.

Michael looks at the ring on his mom's hand. He notices a burn on her hand.

MICHAEL

Mom, where did you get that burn?

DAWN

(Snatching her hand away.)

Oh, that's nothing. I just turned the hot water on instead of the cold in the bathroom.

MICHAEL

It doesn't look like a water burn. It looks like the powder burns I would get when dad tried to teach me how to shoot.

(Realizing that his mom killed Joseph.)

You killed Joseph!

DAWN

What? Michael, don't be stupid. I did no such thing.

MICHAEL

You're lying.

DAWN

(Confessing.)

Michael, you don't understand. I had to kill Joseph.

MICHAEL

What do you mean you had to?

DAWN

He found out who my investors are. He also found out you are not Coronie's son, you are ...

(Dawn lets out a scream and falls to her knees.)

Michael, my chest. Get help. Find Dr. Puzo, please.

Michael runs out of the room calling for the Doctor. Ness enters as Michael is exiting.

NESS

Michael, what's wrong?

(Seeing Dawn.)

Mrs. DonLeone. Are you alright?

DAWN

Pee ... Pee...

NESS

Yes, I've seen the self-cleaning toilets.

DAWN

No. P ... P ...

NESS

Oh, starts with a P? Mrs. DonLeone I'm not very good at charades.

DAWN

Poi... , Poi ...

NESS

Poi? Poi? Poison. It's poison.

(Dawn shakes her head yes.)

I got it! You were poisoned. I got it! I win!

Dawns falls dead. Vinnie enters.

VINNIE

I couldn't find that damn gun anywhere ...

(Notices Ness with Dawn.)

What the hell are you doing? Get away from her!

(Vinnie checks for a pulse.)

She's dead.

(Advancing on Ness.)

You did this. You did it all. You killed Coronie and now you killed his wife. Joey said he didn't trust you and now I know why.

A womanly scream (Michael) is heard off stage.

VINNIE (cont'd)
Trixie's in trouble.

Vinnie starts to run out, but Trixie enters the room.

VINNIE (cont'd)
Trixie, you all right? I heard you scream.

TRIXIE
I didn't scream.

A womanly scream (Michael) again. Michael enters.

MICHAEL
Dr. Puzo is dead.

ALL
What?

MICHAEL
He's in the lounge with a tongue depressor sticking out of his throat.

NESS
I got to see this, I mean, I better check this out.

Ness exits.

TRIXIE
What happened to Dawn?

VINNIE
Mrs. DonLeone, I'm sorry to tell you, is dead.

MICHAEL
Oh, Mother! Oh Mother! No! No!

TRIXIE
Oh, darn.

VINNIE
Michael, what happened?

Michael is crying like a baby.
Michael, be a man for once and tell me what happened? Did Ness kill Dawn?

MICHAEL
I don't think so. We were just talking when she felt pain in her chest. I ran out to find the doctor. Ness must have come in and found her.

Ness enters.

NESS

Michael is right. Dr. Puzo has been murdered.

ALL

Murder ... Forget about it!

NESS

I will not forget about it. Someone has poisoned Mrs. DonLeone and now Dr. Puzo is found dead as well. This is getting serious.

MICHAEL

What are we going to do?

NESS

We can't leave Mrs. DonLeone out here on the floor. Michael, Vinnie, please move Mrs. DonLeone into the lounge and put her with Dr. Puzo.

Michael and Vinnie move Dawn out.

MICHAEL

Mother, oh, Mother. I swear I will find whoever did this to you and make them pay.

VINNIE

Maybe you should put her in her favorite rocking chair.

Michael and Vinnie exit. Ness's phone rings.

NESS

Hello? Pumpkin.

(Pause.)

You don't say.

(Pause.)

You don't say.

(Pause.)

You don't say.

(Pause.)

You don't say.

(He hangs up.)

TRIXIE

Who was it?

NESS

He didn't say.

Michael and Vinnie enter.

NESS (cont'd)

Michael, what happened to your mother when you two were alone?

MICHAEL

She told me that she was the one who shot Joey. She was about to tell me why, then she felt pain in her chest and then ...

NESS

Back up a minute. Mrs. DonLeone admitted to killing Mr. MacAfee?

MICHAEL

If you don't believe me, look at her hand. She has a gunpowder burn.

NESS

Did she tell you why?

MICHAEL

Joey found out something about her investors.

NESS

Investors? I saw a list of investors on one of the documents I put in the safe. If I remember correctly, one of the names was Guido Alfredo.

VINNIE

Guido Alfredo? That is the head of the Alfredo family. Mrs. DonLeone was selling out the family!

NESS

Well, if that is true and Mr. MacAfee found out, that would certainly give her the motive to kill him. Now, let's connect the dots. Coronie dies of a heart attack from poison. Lithocaine poison was found under Joseph's fingernails. Dawn admitted to shooting Joseph, therefore Dawn would have poisoned Coronie.

MICHAEL

What else was in those documents?

NESS

I have a list right here. There's a sealed copy of Coronie DonLeone's Last Will and Testament, a list of names marked "Investors", and a note to Coronie from Mr. MacAfee that reads "Coronie, your suspicions were correct. You must decide how you want to proceed. Joseph".

VINNIE

I wonder what that note means?

NESS

There is also a copy of Michael DonLeone's birth certificate.

TRIXIE

Why would Uncle Joey have a copy of Michael's birth certificate?

NESS

I think it is time I look over those items in the safe more carefully. Ladies and gentlemen, it's obvious that I have hit a dead end with my investigation, no pun intended. As all of you are innocent, well, maybe not innocent, let's say not guilty of tonight's crimes, I would like you to keep an eye on these three suspects. * While I'm gone, you can put your deduction skills to the test. You may want to ask Vinnie, Trixie, and Michael some questions. I would like you to try to discover who killed Mrs. Dawn DonLeone and Dr. Puzo. You may also want to think about the remaining items in the safe. Good Luck.

*Ness exits. The host describes how the resolution sheets work. A question and answer session takes place with the audience. How the Q & A is handled is left up to the discretion of the director. This will continue as long as it takes for each table to fill out its resolution sheets. Once all the sheets are turned in, the following dialogue takes place. * (If the director decides not to let the audience interview the suspects, then this part should be omitted and Michael will start his line after Ness exits.)*

MICHAEL

When Ness gets back here with the Will and I'm shown to be the new Don of the family, I want you two to know that you'll get nothing.

VINNIE

What makes you so sure you are going to be the next Don?

MICHAEL

I'm his only son.

VINNIE

What about me? I did more for the Don than any of his worthless spoiled children. I feel confident that my years of service will not go unnoticed.

MICHAEL

You, forget about it. My dad wouldn't have made you the next Don. You don't have the sensitivity and wisdom to guide this family.

TRIXIE

Well, I'm his only daughter. He could've just as easily made me the new Don. I have earned it. I've had to endure that horrible stepmother for years.

MICHAEL

Don't you talk about my mother like that! She was a saint.

TRIXIE

A saint? Try Satan.

MICHAEL

Shut up, Trixie.

TRIXIE

Oh, what's the matter? The little mama's boy gonna cry now over his dead maaa-meee.

VINNIE

Hey, Trixie, lay off the kid.

TRIXIE

Shut up, Vinnie, this don't concern you. My mother died when I was a baby, killed by a bike bomb. I've been living under that horrible woman's tyranny for years. How did it feel, Michael, huh? To see your mommy dearest die right in front of you, knowing you couldn't do anything about it?

MICHAEL

Well, at least I knew my mother. Your mother was probably some stripper dad picked up from a bar. You were probably an accident.

TRIXIE

The only accident is that I didn't kill your mother sooner.

Vinnie and Michael act with indignation.
That's right, I did it. I killed your horrible mother. I poisoned the orange with Lithocain powder.

MICHAEL

That's not true because you ate a piece of the orange. You would've poisoned yourself.

TRIXIE

You'd like to think that wouldn't you smarty pants? I've spent the last several years building up immunity to Lithocain powder. I killed your detestable witch of a mother and I'm not sorry! She got what she deserved for the way she treated me. How does it feel, Michael? Knowing your mother is burning in Hell!

Michael lunges at Trixie, grabbing her by the throat. Vinnie tries to stop him, but he pushes Vinnie back and he falls hard to the floor. Michael keeps choking Trixie, until he lowers her to the floor and she dies.

VINNIE

What the hell did you do?

Vinnie checks Trixie's body.
You killed her. You killed the woman I love.

Vinnie starts looking for his knife and can't find it.

MICHAEL

(Holding the knife.)
Missing something?

Vinnie charges at Michael, but Michael cuts him.
How dare she talk about my mother like that? My father would have never stood for that. I'm going to take my father's place and no one is going to stop me.

VINNIE

You killed Dr. Puzo!

MICHAEL

My mommy made me do it. My father has always suspected that I wasn't his son. I was born premature, or that is what my mother wanted him to believe. Joseph found out tonight, so he placed the note with my birth certificate, but he didn't have the chance to tell my father before he died. My mother knew that after my father died, Joseph would get the Will and show his findings to Trixie, my father's true blood heir. Together, we were going to run this family as mother and son.

VINNIE

Dawn poisoned Coronie and shot Joey. Trixie killed Dawn, and you killed Dr. Puzo & Trixie. What about Ness? He's sure to find out what happened.

MICHAEL

(Laughs.)

"Ness, Vinnie admitted to killing my mother to take over the family. He attacked Trixie, but I was too weak to stop him from strangling her. We fought and I was able to get his knife from him and stab him with it." I'm sure he'll believe you were the murderer given your criminal record. Now, all I have to do is remove you.

VINNIE

Michael, you couldn't take me when we were kids, what makes you think you can take me now?

MICHAEL

I've learned how to fight with stage combat. I know how to handle a knife.

Michael and Vinnie fight. How the fight is done is left to the discretion of the director. In the end, Vinnie stabs Michael with the knife and Michael falls dead. Vinnie is now standing over the bodies of Michael and Trixie. Ness enters.

NESS

Ladies and gentlemen, I think I've put all the pieces together ...

Ness notices Vinnie standing over Michael's and Trixie's dead bodies. Ness's phone starts to ring.

VINNIE

Ness, I can explain what happened.

NESS

(Pulling out a gun.)

Freeze, Vinnie! You're under arrest!

VINNIE

Ness, this ain't what it looks like! I didn't do this!

NESS

Drop the knife Vinnie!

VINNIE

(Moving away from Ness.)

Ness, hear me out! Michael killed Trixie, not me!

The phone stops ringing.

NESS

You stabbed Michael! Vinnie don't move. I'm warning you!

VINNIE

(Moving away from Ness.)

Ness, you have got to believe me!

The gun goes off and Vinnie falls dead. The lights go black. Sound of police/swat entering the building is heard. Vinnie, Michael and Trixie leave during the blackout. The actor that played Joseph enters as Director Johnson of the FBI. Lights come back on with Ness and Johnson on stage.

JOHNSON

What happened here tonight?

NESS

Well, FBI Director Johnson, it appears that Mrs. DonLeone and Michael were in cahoots. I looked at the investors list and every investor is a member of a rival family. Dawn was selling out so she could go legit, but I don't think Coronie would have let her. So, she poisoned him. Would have gotten away with it too, but Joseph MacAfee found out what she was up too, so she shot him.

JOHNSON

What about Michael?

NESS

Michael's birth certificate is a fake. If you look at the Notary Seal, you can see that the seal is a stamp, not an emboss. The seal stamp has only been around for the past 10 years, so the certificate was made recently. Dr. Puzo would have known that and that's why I think he was killed. I believe that Coronie DonLeone suspected Michael was not his son, but the son of Vito Linguini, Don DonLeone's dead business partner. Mr. MacAfee must have confirmed that with Dr. Puzo.

JOHNSON

Since Trixie DonLeone was his only real child is that who the Will named?

NESS

Although Trixie was well taken care of in the Will, Coronie didn't leave his power to Trixie. He left it to Vinnie "Fat Ears" Petrone. It's a shame he went crazy and killed Trixie and Michael. He would've

(MORE)

NESS (cont'd)
killed me, too, if I hadn't found the gun Mrs. DonLeone used to shoot Mr. MacAfee.

JOHNSON
That wraps it up then. Oh, one more thing. We've moved all the bodies out except for one. We can't find Coronie DonLeone's body.

NESS
Dr. Puzo must have had it moved out before I could put the hotel under lockdown. You may want to investigate the funeral homes in the area.

JOHNSON
I still think you should have called backup in sooner, but at least you survived the night. Why don't you take a little vacation, you've earned it.

NESS
Thank you, Director Johnson. Maybe I'll try the Caribbean.

JOHNSON
Well, good bye, Edward Locke Ness. I never thought you were the monster the press made you out to be.

Johnson exits.

NESS
(Laughs.)
That joke never gets funny.

Ness's phone rings.
Hello? Money.

(Pause.)
Everything went fine; they believed every word of it. They're even going to give me a medal.

(Pause.)
You needn't worry about the guests at the dinner. I took care of them along with the hotel staff. I poisoned the desserts with a time release poison our lovely government developed. The poison lies dormant until the victim eats green vegetables. Then the chlorophyll reacts with the poison and the person dies of stroke.

(Pause.)
There's nothing to worry about. I told you it would work. You are free to retire from a life a crime knowing that no one will ever come after you. Which brings us to my payment? I believe the agreement was for 10 million dollars.

(Pause.)

(MORE)

NESS (cont'd)

Thank you very much Don, excuse me, Mister Coronie
DonLeone.

*Ness hangs up and exits off the stage as the
Godfather waltz plays.*

THE END