

## **"DC66" by Jupiter Q. Hurst**

*Previous working title: Baked Ham & Raw Honeys by John Biddle from Lydney, UK  
[196909200600.51.7286N.2.5285W])*

### **Act 1**

#### **Scene Selection**

Prologue

101. End Times

102. The President and the Seven

103. At the Pizzeria

104. Club Heaven Studio Three

105. Jack in Heaven

106. Help from above

107. Descending into Hell

108. Free Will

109. Chocolate or Vanilla

110. Leaving on a Helicopter

111. Cracking balls

112. Francis & Irene

113. Jean Pierre De Quoi?

114. President looks like a woman

115. The Awakening

116. Presidential Address

117. The Commune

118. Mort

119. Talking in your sleep

120. Oceans of Sand

121. Naked engineering

122. Behind every great President

123. Let the games begin

124. Virgin Island Contretemps

125. Plum Wrong

126. Gladys

127. Mother Calling

128. April's Fool

Author's Notes

Bookmarks available in PDF format

## **100. Prologue**

Anita (English, Pseudo – Grandmother aka: Tethie)  
Listen closely, child: your mother asked me to tell you the truth.

Alice (9 years old, Australian, living in US)  
She did, Tethie? Where did she go, by the way? Will she be back before New Year's?

Anita  
She will rejoin you in the States. She ran a little errand for me. To deliver some assistance to a few of our sisters in Tripoli.  
Now, pay attention. Look down the valley. Tell me what you see.

Alice  
Cows?

Anita  
Indeed. More specifically?

Alice  
Friesian -Holstein pedigree cows?

Anita  
Holstein-Friesian, yes. Very good. And what do you not see?

Alice  
Um,... ...well, there's no bull with them?

Anita  
Exceptional! Merveilleuse!  
I thought you were too young but I can see you are great deal more advanced than other nine year olds I have examined.

Alice  
Thank you, Tethie!

Anita  
Of course. And why are there no bulls?

Alice  
Because bulls don't produce milk.

Anita  
Very good, yes. And what are bulls good for?

Alice  
Burgers?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Anita

[Laughing]

Yes, indeed. Burgers! Oh my! You have become Americanized!

Alice

I prefer it here in England though. Everything seems greener. Can I not stay here on the farm with you?

Anita

Yes, well, we have the constant rain to thank for that. You might miss your tan.

Alice

So, is that the truth you wanted to tell me? That bulls are good for nothing but burgers?

Anita

That is the crux of the matter. Yes.

Naturally we need a few good bulls in the world to “service” the cows.

But we buy straws from Canada to do that. And, only from bulls with a proven track record, I might add.

Alice

I see.

Anita

In short, we are talking about breeding, Alice. Which brings me to the point: we just got your maternal DNA report back.

Alice

You did? What did it say?

Anita

Well, as expected, your lineage originates in Lydia. Home of our ancestors.

Alice

[Excitedly]

So, I’m confirmed?

Anita

Yes, dear. You are confirmed.

But there is more...

Alice

Yes?

Anita

Your line comes directly from Queen Ephesos herself.

You are not just an Amazonian. You are an Amazonian Princess.

Alice

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Wow. I don't know what to say!

Anita

Well, "your highness", I would very much like you to not say anything at all. In fact, this should be the last time you ever speak of your inheritance. We have lived successfully among the world of men for over three thousand years to arrive at this point. The modern world thinks of us as merely a myth. Long may they continue to believe that!

Alice

But mom has always told me secrets are bad. Unhealthy, I mean.

Anita

They are. And, I do not wish you to keep secrets from her or from me. But this particular secret, your true identity, like all of us who share the same inheritance, has been kept a secret for so long because the time was not yet ripe for it to be revealed.

Alice

I understand, but will that time ever come?

Anita

Soon, dear. The time is coming very soon. I may yet live to see it myself if things go according to plan in the next few days and months. Now, as for you, young Alice, you need only concern yourself with completing your initiation into young womanhood. Are you well prepared?

Alice

I believe so. Jane has given me plenty of practice on the bullocks.

Anita

Good. And, good luck.

Alice

Thanks.

Anita

Now then, one more thing before we ride back to the farmhouse: It may occur that, while you are over at the commune in Missouri, you may run into one or more of my sons.

Alice

Cool!

Anita

Well, yes, cool, it may seem but I caution you to be very careful. Despite being identical twins, the one is a fool and the other is an egomaniac. Neither is to be trusted, by anyone, and certainly not by any sister of ours.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Alice

Wow. How can you say that about your own sons?

Anita

It was an experiment. We raised one here on the farm and we sent the other to be raised by a sister in the French Alps.

We wanted to see how each one would turn out, given very different upbringings.

Alice

Gosh, yes. I can imagine! The cultures of England and France sure are different.

Anita

It was more than that. We wanted to test our limits of control.

Alice

Control? How?

Anita

Jean-Pierre was given a broad education in France. He was allowed to make his own decisions from an early age. He was educated in all the fine arts but also the more salubrious affairs of men and women.

John, who now goes by his granddad's name, Jack, was given just a basic education, and taught nothing about sex or drugs or gambling, et cetera; those sorts of sinful ways of rougher men. He was meant to be innocent.

Alice

Ok, so, how did they both turn out?

Anita

Strangely, they both rebelled in their own way; Jean-Pierre, because he was so independent and self-sufficient and mature before his time; John-Jack, on the other hand, suffered what is known as subconscious rebellion, where he didn't know why he wanted to leave home, just that he wanted to get as far away from me as possible.

Alice

I'm sure that's not true! How could anyone not want to live with you?

Anita

It's different for boys. You'll see, when you get older. They take some taming.

Alice

Taming? How do you tame a man?

Anita

Oh, it's quite easy when you know the man's weakness.

Alice

What is Jean-Pierre's weakness then?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Anita

Vanity. He thinks he knows everything. Just flatter him. Tell him how learned he is and he will love you forever.

Alice

And what about John-Jack?

Anita

Probably better if you don't approach him.  
Certainly not by yourself.

Alice

Why not? I thought you said he was quite innocent?

Anita

He was....

We deliberately taught him as little as possible so as to protect him

Alice

So what went wrong?

Anita

Ever since he ran away from home, it appears he's been on a voyage of discovery, searching out all the twisted knowledge which he was sheltered from.

Alice

I see. So, what is Jack's major weakness?

Anita

Sex.

[Back to top](#)

## **101. End Times**

[Opening sound of car interior driving through rain with instrumental music playing lightly. The car radio comes on.  
We hear an announcer's voice come through the car radio.]

Radio Announcer (deep US accent)

"Happy New Year's Eve to everybody! We, here at End Times Radio, wish you all a very blessed new year and hope the end doesn't come too soon. [Pause]

Having said all that, the world is going to end soon or, at least, what are we doing here talking about it? We've been waiting for the end of things for quite a while now and we know you've been with us all the way! And yet we wait...

[Sound of radio being silenced]

Jack (English accent)

I can't listen to this. I'm tired. I need to concentrate on the road.

Ingrid (Swedish accent)

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Maybe there's something else?

Jack

Ok let's try some scan radio...

[Sound of car radio being run on scan mode, flicking between channels every 3 seconds or so.  
Eventually a preacher's voice comes on, sounding as if in a large auditorium, almost at the end of a sentence]

Preacher (southern US accent) [on car radio]

...if you'll open your Bibles and turn to Ecclesiastes... Now, most people like to read this third chapter about a time to be born and a time to die, a time to laugh and a time to cry, etc, etc but me, I like the first two chapters.

Jack

Well, you can tell we're at the Buckle of the Bible belt: nothing but Country Music and Preachers

Ingrid

Ooh, play this. I love these preacher men

Jack

You're so weird! You know, for an atheist, you seem to listen to preachers on the radio a lot

Ingrid

Well we don't have them in Sweden not so much. I tell you before. It's a religion free space

Jack

Everyone's got a religion, even if it's soccer, or in your case, Victoria Secret

Preacher [on radio]

...Because that's what I did, most of my life: Chased after women; drank fine wines, ate at the best restaurants. And then it hit me: I wasn't a kid anymore. It was time to put away childish things.  
And God had sent me signs along the way. ..

Jack

But I don't wanna grow up!

Ingrid

That is fact for you surely.

Jack

Indeed, indeed. But look at some people: they get married and their life is over. They get the 9-5 job and work until retirement and then die from lack of purpose. They walk the streets head down, avoiding eye contact...

Ingrid

Oh you have everything figured out, do you not, Mr. Smart pants.

Preacher [on radio]

But if a sinner becomes wealthy, God takes the wealth away and gives it to those who please him. This too is meaningless like chasing the wind.

Jack

Or, like chasing tail.

[Turns off radio]

That's enough for me.

Ingrid

You make no sense.

Jack

That makes two of us then

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Ingrid

Pull over at rest stop. I want call radio station with question.

Jack

It's not a phone-in talk show

Ingrid

No the other one. The other radio station. End times

Jack

Do you have the number?

Ingrid

I got it on my phone already.

Jack

You've called them before?

Ingrid

Oh yes. Lots of time. They very friendly. Ok it's ringing. Quiet please.

[On the phone] Hello? Yes, I have question for Mr. End Times man

[Pause]

Ok – I holding on...

[Talking to Jack] Ok stop here. I go stand under bank roofing over there.

Jack

Can't you just talk to them from in here?

Ingrid

No. You must not have radio working when you call. I go outside under roofing so you can listen on radio.

[Sound: car pulling over in rain, car door opens and closes]

Mr. End Times Man

[Sound: Jack listening to conversation via car radio]

Well, we have another caller on the line and she is from Sweden. Hello, Ingrid! You're not *actually* calling from Sweden are you? Only joking! I know: we've talked quite a few times before, haven't we?

Ingrid

Yes, yes, you know me. I travel in United States. I live at moment in South Saint Louis ghee-toe with "homies".

Mr. End Times Man

Are you now? I seem to remember you living in some sort of commune before. Well I hope our fair city is treating you well?

Ingrid

Oh yes, homies are very friendly. Just like hippies in commune very friendly. Every last one of them wants to be my friend and give me their digits

Mr. End Times Man

Well it sounds like you're having fun. So what's your question?

Ingrid

Do you think President of Untied States is really antichrist? Because I live in part of country where many people think this is case. They also think Apollo landing on moon is fake too, so I not sure.

Mr. End Times Man

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Well, that's a question I've been thinking about too and I have to say "No" to that. The anti-Christ will be someone from many cultures. Chapter 13 reads: *Then I saw a beast rising up out of the sea. It had seven heads and ten horns, with ten crowns on its horns. And written on each head were names that blasphemed God. This beast looked like a leopard, but it had the feet of a bear and the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave the beast his own power and great authority.*

The animals, leopard, bear, lion and dragon all have symbolic meanings to do with different countries. The bear is Russia, the leopard is Germany, the lion is England and the dragon is Wales. Now some scholars would argue that these countries weren't named until much later and wouldn't have been known to the apostle, John, as he wrote in exile on the island of Patmos, around AD 93.

Ingrid

Ah yes, Patmos. Very beautiful but very poor. I have been there once before on travels. I see lady pinching baby to make it cry for begging money.

Mr. End Times Man

Did you now? Well, anyway, mouth of a lion refers to someone who speaks English. The Leopard refers to Germany; someone who is maybe inspired or motivated by a German writer or the protestant movement maybe. The bear nowadays is Russian of course, but may not refer to the Russia we know but certainly that region with its more eastern cultures and philosophies. And the dragon is a pagan mythical creature and is also on the flag of Wales; so maybe a Celtic mentor, a parent or grandparent perhaps, who has been influential in this person's life.

Ingrid

Like the Prince of Charlies?

Mr. End Times Man

The Prince of Wales, yes, possibly but also maybe, like I said, a Pagan, a druid, that sort of thing. Maybe a patron or parent. A person who gives the beast power...

Ingrid

So Mr. Antichrist is not president of United States?

Mr. End Times Man

No, not the president, but I have heard that theory before so...

Ingrid

Ok, I go now! Bye!

Mr. End Times Man

Ok thanks Ingrid! And now moving on if you want to order a CD of my full explorations into the book of revelations and its meanings for all of us, call this number...

Jack

[Turns off radio]

[Muttering to himself] Well, that was worth it!

[Sound: Ingrid getting back in car]

Ingrid

I hungry! There's a pizza restaurant over there...

Let's go!

Jack

Ok, whatever! Hey, we can walk. It's right there.

Ingrid

But these spaces belong to pay-day-loan bank

Jack

They're closed

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Ingrid  
What if people need money fast?

Jack  
I guess they're gonna have to wait

Ingrid  
I hope they not starving like me.

Jack  
Ingrid, I would hardly call you starving.

Ingrid  
What you trying say. I fat?

Jack  
Nothing! Let's get out.

Ingrid  
Did we need make reservation?

Jack  
Always, yes. I called them already while you were standing outside talking to the radio station. I reserved a table for us under the names Mr. & Mrs. Lasiarse.

Ingrid  
Lazarus?

Jack  
Lazy Arse

Ingrid  
[Slapping cheek]  
Language!

Jack  
Oy! What was that for?

Ingrid  
That for bad joke - and this [slaps cheek again] is for not listening me on radio

Jack  
I did listen. I was joking about having made a reservation

Ingrid  
So you did *not* make reservation?

Jack  
It's a Pizzeria! You don't need a reservation!

Ingrid  
Why you have to lie always?  
[Slaps cheek again]  
Ok let us move car now.

Jack  
Yes dear.

Ingrid

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

And no being patronizing me!

Jack

[Singing to himself to tune of Que Sera; Sounds: car maneuvering]

"Whatever you say, whatever you do"

[A few seconds later]

Ah! We're here at last!

[Sound: door opening from outside to quiet inside, footsteps on gravel]

Ingrid

Hmm, so who do we know from England, with Welsh mother, and likes German and eastern culture?

Jack

I'm sure I have no idea.

[Back to top](#)

## **102. The President & The Seven**

[Sounds of Times Square ball dropping on TV – hum of conversations and new year's congratulations]

Agent Frank

Mr. President? Sir, I'm sorry to interrupt the festivities... but, there's been a situation.

President Barry

Happy New Year, Frank! Are you sure it can't wait? What's going on?

Agent Frank

It's the Secretary of State, sir. She's gone missing.

President Barry

What on earth...! I spoke to her just this morning!

Agent Frank

Yes, sir. There's more. Maybe we could talk in your office...

President Barry

More, you say?

Misha! Hey, baby, something's happened. I'll be right back.

First Lady Misha

Ok hon. Come back soon. I want the last dance!

President Barry

[Sounds of walking thru corridor away from party]

Lead the way, Frank. Keep talking...

Agent Frank

Well, as you know, sir. The secretary's plane landed safely just after 6pm local time. That's when you spoke to her.

President Barry

Yes, go on! What happened then?

Agent Frank

She and her entourage proceeded to the Corinthia Hotel. The evening's itinerary went off without a hitch. Hotel and conference room security was tight. Shortly after they had welcomed in the New Year, everyone retired to bed. All was good.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

President Barry  
I see. So she went missing in the night?

Agent Frank  
Yes, sir. When her detail knocked this morning (11 pm our time) there was no answer. Agents on the scene then entered her suite only to find it empty, except for her luggage and other personal affects.

President Barry  
And what's your theory, thus far?

Agent Frank  
Still working on it, Mr. President. There appears to be no forced entry. Indeed her detail was outside her hotel room door all night. No one came in or out after she had retired. The room does have a balcony but it's on the 26th floor. There is no external staircase. The roof is another 2 floors above. There is no evidence on the ground to suggest she fell. At this moment, it's a mystery, sir.

President Barry  
Indeed it is, Frank. Indeed it is. Did you say there was more?

Agent Frank  
Yes sir. Step into your office, if you wouldn't mind...  
[Sound: opening door]

President Barry  
Wow, the whole gang's here! Happy New Year everyone!

All  
Happy New Year, Mr. President!

President Barry  
Well this is a fine start to the year! So what else do we know?

Agent Stephanie  
Well sir, as Frank has probably already told you, the Secretary of State, has gone missing, but there's more...

President Barry  
So I keep being told. What more do you speak of?

Agent Stephanie  
Well sir, she is not the only one who is missing.

Agent Frank  
Six other foreign dignitaries are missing also. From the same hotel.

President Barry  
Six? Who?

Agent Stephanie  
[Reading notes]  
From the UK, the foreign secretary's wife, Fiona Jenkins; from Japan, the foreign minister's wife, Mizuki Sasaki; from Israel, Eliana Lieberman, from Italy, the foreign minister's girlfriend, Ella Terzi; from Russia, the foreign minister's wife, Ksenia Sukhinova; and, from India, another foreign minister's wife, Prema Singh.

President Barry  
And what do we know about their disappearances?

Agent Frank  
All very similar, sir. No signs of foul play but again: all had security outside their rooms, all went missing.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

President Barry  
Now, the Secretary of State, I mean our dear Lilly, was *alone* in her room, right?

Agent Stephanie  
Yes, sir.

President Barry  
What about the others, though? They were all sharing rooms with their husbands, weren't they?

Agent Stephanie  
Yes, sir.

President Barry  
Well, didn't the husbands notice something going on?

Agent Stephanie  
It appears the men may have been drugged, sir. Our agents on the scene are coordinating with the other detail units on blood test results. But all the men were complaining about feeling drowsy and some were nauseous. And not because of having drunk too much either. The Indian minister didn't touch a drop of alcohol and in fact had his food prepared separately by his own chef, who travels with him.

President Barry  
Smart man! So, if they *were* drugged, it wasn't in the food. Well, what's next?

Agent Frank  
Well, sir. I guess we'll get a full briefing to you in the next few hours.

President Barry  
Peachy! I guess there goes my lie-in. And, on the one day of the year I thought I might just get a day off.

Agent Frank  
There's a reason why most presidents go grey in their first term, sir.

President Barry  
Duly noted, Frank. Ok well, grey hair will be the least of my worries if I don't get back for the last dance with the First Lady. We will learn more about all this as the New Year unfolds.  
Till then, adieu.

[Back to top](#)

## **103. At the Pizzeria**

[Background restaurant sounds, Italian Pizzeria]

Jack  
We should order quickly. There are about to close, it looks like.  
Do you want wine?

Ingrid  
Dokey okey.

Jack  
Cuz they mainly have Italian

Ingrid  
I like nice Chianti?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Jack

I'd like a nice Chianti too but that's rarity over here; mass produced; not quite as good; too much added sugar; been made sweeter for a different palette

Ingrid

I will have water. It's ok.

Jack

Oh, well they have a good Chilean... here – let's do that

Waitress, Mariana

[Dark hair but actually from Mexico]

Buonasera and welcome to our little ristorante! What you would like?

Ingrid

Yes please. Me first! I would like tall dark handsome Italian stranger to ride on charger and sweep me away on adventure

Waitress Mariana

Excellent choice but we are all out of Tall Dark and Handsome Italian strangers. We do have a short, fat, greasy Italian chef, though. He has *very* dark hair - if you are interested

Ingrid

You know what? I say pass. I take burger, with bacon

Waitress Mariana

Did you look at the menu? This is a pizzeria.

Ingrid

What you mean?

Waitress Mariana

We have a hamburger pizza. I can add bacon to it also.

Ingrid

Dokey Okey, I do that.

Waitress Mariana

Fantastico! And what about you, sir?

[Sound of plates being knocked over and grappling for pen and notepad that fell to floor]

Jack

Are you OK?

Waitress Mariana

Yes, grazie. I was surprised to see you. I mean, you look like my long lost brother.

Jack

[Laughing] Well, maybe I am!

Waitress Mariana

[Laughing a little] Yes, maybe that's true! How funny! You look so familiar. Ok, now what would you like to eat?

Jack

What do you recommend?

Waitress Mariana

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

The lasagna is to die for

Jack

Excellent, and with a little green salad and some cheesy Doritos if you have any

Waitress Mariana

Si signore

Jack

Oh and some more water, and of course a bottle of your finest red wine... ..from Chile, grazie!

Waitress Mariana

Si signore

[Waitress departs]

Ingrid

Jack, we need to talk

Jack

We need to? Or, you need to?

2<sup>nd</sup> Waitress, Parfaite (French African)

Ze Chilean Red, signore...

Jack

Wow, that was fast

Parfaite

We are all telepathic, sir!

Jack

I'll bet that comes in handy

Parfaite

Eh, it can be a curse, too

Ingrid

I wish someone I know was telepathic. Instead I get tele-pathetic

Jack

[To Parfaite] It's not a bad red that.

[To Ingrid] And yes, I was listening. [Annoyed] I get it, alright?

Parfaite

Si signore. Good wine but not Italian though.

Jack

No. Sorry!

Ingrid

Do you still find me attractive?

Jack

Oh my god, please excuse me!

Parfaite

Si signore.

Jack [to Ingrid]

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

I beg your pardon?

Ingrid  
You hear what I say

Jack  
Is it so hard to repeat it?

Ingrid  
Why don't you ever talk about our future together?

Jack  
Because whenever I seem to announce plans they never work out.

Ingrid  
Maybe you just too damaged. All your fail relationships.

Jack  
Maybe that just means relationships are difficult to maintain over long periods of time.

Ingrid  
Define long time? Three years? Is that when novelty wears itself off

Jack  
No, it's quicker; more like three months. And you can just say "wears off", you don't need the 'itself'.

Ingrid  
And the novelty?

Jack  
Well by definition it is the newness of the thing so therefore the farther you move away from the start the more distant it becomes in time.

Ingrid [getting angrier]  
So just a question for time, then, is it?

Jack  
Of time. And yes, it gets us all in the end

Parfaite  
Your lasagna, signore!

Jack  
Blimey, are you sure it's cooked?

Parfaite  
And your 'amburger pizza with da bacon, bella signora!

Ingrid  
Wow! Thank you very much! And what is your name?

Parfaite  
Parfaite.

Jack  
Of course it is. Perfect!

Parfaite  
Can I get you anything else?

Ingrid  
A new man, maybe? I sure you meet plenty in busy restaurant like this, no?

Jack  
Ingrid!

Ingrid  
Don't mind him, he just stupid boyfriend.

Parfaite  
I hope you enjoy your meal.

Ingrid  
I will, I will. I see you soon!

Jack  
Look at you driveling all over your food.

Ingrid  
My mouth watering for Italian sausage...

Jack  
Don't say it. Please eat!

Ingrid  
You still not answer my question

Jack  
Which one?

Ingrid  
Can I give up my job, like you just did?

Jack  
That wasn't the question. And, No. You can't. I didn't quit my job just so you could quit yours

Ingrid  
But why? So you can sit around home alone all day?

Jack  
Yes.

Ingrid  
And what you do? Smoke pot, play music and watch sex on internet all day?

Jack  
Not all day no.

Ingrid  
So you admit it

Jack  
I admit nothing. These are all theories in your head. You are projecting on to me what you wish you could do if you didn't have to work.

Ingrid  
Me? Projecting? I should never give you psychology book. You didn't know what projection was till you met me.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Jack  
You got that right!

Ingrid  
You need come back to reality. I know my accent silly sometime but I know craziness in any language

Jack  
Maybe I just need to come and live out in the countryside like Theroux. Get back to nature for a bit.

Ingrid  
What! And just come home to your mamma every two weeks to do laundry? No. I know you. You can't survive one minute in wild. You raised by your "mummy" too long. You know how to kill conversation but not animal for meat.

Jack  
I guess so.

Ingrid  
I think we should split up

Jack  
Fine, if that's what you want

Parfaite  
Are you both finished?

Both  
Yes!

Jack  
I'm not sure I feel hungry anymore

Ingrid  
I take it home with me.

Parfaite  
One to-go box, signora!

Jack  
You guys are good. Were you listening to our conversation?

Parfaite  
Sorry. Kleenex needed on table twelve. Lady crying because of stupid boyfriend.

Jack  
Which one is table 12?

Parfaite  
This one.  
Here you are, bella signora!

Ingrid  
How did you know I was about to...? [Sobs] ...cry?

Parfaite  
Sorry, must go

Ingrid  
Do you have to?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Parfaite  
Yes. I am afraid so.

Jack  
I'm not ready to go, just yet. Let's at least sit outside on the deck and finish our wine. Maybe some cold winter air will cool you down?

Ingrid  
Maybe, yes. Go ahead. I go bathroom.

Mariana  
There is a small table at the end available  
Here, let me take your glasses through. This way, prego!

Jack  
Right behind you. That sounds lovely.  
[Sound: walking through restaurant then outside]  
Oh perfect.

Mariana  
And your drinks...  
And let me run back and get your jacket. You may need it out here. You left it on the chair

Jack  
Ok thanks.  
[Sighs] Now this is more like it!

Parfaite  
Here's your jacket, signore. And one more thing...

Jack  
Yes, what's that?

Mariana  
Your girlfriend has left.

Jack  
No, she's in the bathroom.

Mariana  
She went outside.

Jack  
Oh, I expect she's just getting something from the car.

Parfaite  
Ze chef saw her drive away.

Jack  
What? How does he know?

Mariana  
The chef was with her.

Jack  
He was?

Parfaite  
I saw ze chef get in her car and...

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Jack

[Angry] No. I understood what you said. That's not possible

Mariana

You were a little rude to her.

Jack

Maybe I can make a suggestion: keep your thoughts to yourself!

Mariana

You can spend ze night here if you want...

Jack

I can't believe she left me here! In the middle of nowhere...

Mariana

Be not afraid. It's the perfect place to be

Jack

Oh no, she's got my debit card in her bag.  
Did she pay you guys, at least?

Mariana

No, but it's ok. We can find plenty of ways for you to pay it back.

Jack

I'm pretty good at washing up...

Mariana

We will see.

Why don't you relax and finish your drink.

There is a delivery truck that goes by here in the morning. Maybe it can take you back to the city. Or, maybe, you might want to stay here with us for a bit longer. Why not wait and see?

Me and some of the staff are going over to the new club that just opened up in town.  
You should come with us.

Jack

What time is it now?

Mariana

Just gone eleven. Have some dessert while we finish up. It's blackberry crumble with vanilla ice cream. It's a specialty item not found on the regular menu; made with a few homegrown herbs and spices. It will knock your socks off *and* put a little pep in your step, if you know what I mean.

Jack

Hell, why not? Bring it on!

[Back to top](#)

## **104. Club Heaven Studio Three**

[At the Club "Heaven"; in Studio Three]

Dottie [Scatty assistant to Phyllis]  
Phyllis!

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Phyllis [Jewish stand up comedienne]  
Hey, doll face!

Dottie  
Have a great show, Phyllis!

Phyllis  
Are you sure about this place? It looks so impersonal, what with the big sheet of glass between me and the audience.

Jilly [Phyllis' director]  
It's a new concept, Phyllis. You and I are old school. This is the new thing, ya know?

Phyllis  
Speak for yourself, Jilly. I'm not old. So, how does it work again? We're being broadcast is that it?

Dottie  
Yep. It's going out over the internet on a live stream and throughout the club on a shortwave radio frequency. The people here in the club can tune in to your stage on their head-sets.

Phyllis  
Short wave radio? Does that mean the people in the car park can listen in without paying?

Jilly  
I asked the owners that too. They said that in theory, yes they can, but they see it as a form of advertising to cars driving by and to truckers and the like, who park in that truck stop across the road.

Phyllis  
Well Dottie, you make sure you take the hat around to those truckers and anyone else you find trying to listen in for free.

Dottie  
Yes of course. Where's the hat?

Jilly  
She's pulling your leg. Phyllis, we need Dottie to run the lights and the slideshow behind you.

Phyllis  
Well what will you be doing?

Jilly  
My leg's too bad today to do a lot of walking. Besides, someone needs to be in your ear if you forget your lines.

Phyllis  
Oh Norman! That's why I hate these scripted shows. You know I much prefer improv...

Jilly  
That would be fine except you end up repeating yourself

Phyllis  
Oy vey, what it is to grow old. We grow more aware of our body and what's fit to eat and what's not and all the time our body is already falling apart. I blame that Englishman, Newton. If he'd never invented gravity... but you know the worst thing about getting old? ....Depenz.

Dottie  
On what?

Phyllis  
No, Depenz. The adult diaper? Ah forget about it.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Jilly  
Save it for the show.

Dottie  
OK you're on in 2 minutes. Anything else I can get you, darling?

Phyllis  
Yes, a number of things. How about a tall stiff one? Martini, I mean...

Dottie  
Ok, that'll be half your quota, just to remind you. Only one more alcoholic drink in here after that.

Phyllis  
Jeez, who are you? My mother?

Dottie  
Don't say Jeez. You know I don't like it when you say that. Anyway, it's the club rules.

Phyllis  
Listen Dottie, you're a doll. OK? I Love you. I'm sorry. Peace and love.

Dottie  
Thanks.

Phyllis  
Now get me a drink!  
Only kidding, doll face. But could you hurry it up?

Jilly  
Phyllis! Be nice! She's a good Christian girl.

Phyllis  
I know, I know. Listen did you ever hear back from Gladys? When does she want us to go back out to New York?

Jilly  
Soon, soon. In fact I'll give her a call here now. Hey, meanwhile read this: you're not a complete unknown: look! The Riverfront Times has a bit on your last show

Phyllis  
Where? Let me see what those schmucks are saying about me!  
[Sound of newspaper – Sound Phyllis reading and mumbling and some positive hmm's and some eugh's]  
Philistines! They're saying I'm not edgy enough! I don't want to do gutter humor. Let the young comics talk smut.  
I've got class. Ingrid may be able to pull it off but not me.

Jilly  
You said pull it off!

Dottie  
You do do that Barbara Streisand joke. That's a little risqué!

Phyllis  
You just said do-do.  
Anyway, I only do that when I know it's an adult only crowd

Jilly  
Good

Phyllis

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Just good?

Jilly [Sarcastically]  
Oh, great! Fantastic! The best yet!

Phyllis  
That's why I love you

Ingrid  
Who loves you?  
Do we need to talk about it outside?

Phyllis  
Ingrid! When did you get here?

Ingrid  
Now.

Phyllis  
Where's your man?

Ingrid  
I left him at Pizza place down road.

Phyllis  
Is he coming here?

Ingrid  
Probably, but he not know you playing here. He not aware anything.

Phyllis  
Aw, bless him. So is one of the others going to take care of him?

Ingrid  
He with Mariana right now. I `spect she bring him over later. I not know. I got to get home quick. I just stop to say "peace love, Phyllis".

Phyllis  
Peace n love, baby!

Ingrid  
I so sad I not get to watch you perform! You know I your hugest fan.

Phyllis  
Number one fan, baby. Number one!

Ingrid  
Ok so I must go. Not much time.

Phyllis  
Hey, well you can always listen in on the radio.

Ingrid  
On radio? What station?

Phyllis  
Short wave baby. Just ask the truckers across the road.

Ingrid

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Truckers here? And Phyllis on radio? I in Heaven!

Phyllis  
Indeed you are, Ingrid. Indeed you are!

[Back to top](#)

## **105. Jack in Heaven**

[Sound: club entrance, chatter]

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Welcome to Heaven!  
Your ID please...

Mariana  
It's ok, go ahead

Jack  
Why does everyone in this country need to see an ID card for everything?  
We don't use them at all, back home

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
If this is your first time, please allow me to show you around. This is a club unlike anything you may be used to.

Jack  
I see that.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Good. We ask for your ID because we have two drink *maximum*. You need to show your ID every time you get an alcoholic drink. We also deter people from using this club as a way of committing adultery. When you arrive we post online that you are here. That way your wife at home knows where you are.

Jack  
I don't have wife

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
It's not about you.

Jack  
What did you say?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Follow me. How are you, this evening, Mariana?

Mariana  
Doing well, thanks. This one's barkier than his bite. Got lost on his way home. I'm showing him around town.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
What would you like to drink, Jack?

Jack  
Iced Tea, maybe? I don't have any money but...

Mariana  
Relax! I told you I got you covered!

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Long Island, then?

Jack  
The longer, the better, I guess!

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Ok, so you hand your ID to Nathalia, here... hi, Nathalia, how's it going back here?

Nathalia [Colombian accent]  
Got some beautiful people in the house tonight. Is this your first time, Jack?

Jack  
Yes, I'm one of Heaven's virgins, it would seem.

Nathalia  
Only a virgin here, though, right?

Jack  
What do you mean by that?

Nathalia  
Hey Jack, look behind you.

Jack  
Where?

Nathalia  
Up there over the door you came in through. It's a picture of you. It tells everyone what type of drink you just ordered.

Jack  
That's not my ID picture though. That's me right now! There's a camera on me right now!

Nathalia  
You're finally famous!

Jack  
I'm not sure about all this. Isn't there such a thing as privacy?

Nathalia  
Is there? Maybe that's just a concept in your mind.

Jack  
Oh ho, ho, very funny! Yes, I've been down that road and it's a dead end, my friend.

Nathalia  
How do you know I'm your friend?

Jack  
Figure of speech. I'm just saying, there could be things people don't want you to know.

Nathalia  
And why would they not want me to know?

Jack  
I don't know, they just might

Nathalia  
Like that they are having an affair?

Jack  
OK I think we are done here.

Mariana  
Are you having an affair?

Jack  
Of course not. I could never do that

Nathalia  
Someone's getting defensive!

Jack  
How? What are you trying to say?

Nathalia  
Just seeing if you were lying. And you possibly were.

Jack  
It wasn't an affair. It was more like two relationships that overlapped by a week.

Mariana  
Oh ho, ho, that's a good one!

Jack  
I'm serious

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
We can see how serious you are! Ha! Overlapped!

Jack  
Ok so what are all those rooms around us?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Let's go see. Bye Nathalia!

Nathalia  
Nice to meet you Jack. Come back soon. We have great smoothies. I think you will like.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Here! Put these on.  
Turn that dial to number one and you can hear what's going on in studio one. Playing now we have "The Inside Outlaws" – they do neo-post-modern classic rock. In two there's the two beautiful ladies who call themselves The Violet Lockets. Very Throwing Muses meets...

Jack  
Cool. I wanna hear both of them.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Well, there's more. We've got stand-up comedy coming soon in three. There's gonna be a poet in four. There's a pastor in five and a novel being read in six. A kid's story is being read in seven and then the other room, studio eight, is free right now. Anyone who wants to perform can stop by. Maybe you'd like to take over studio eight?

Jack  
Me? I don't think so!

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
You don't play or sing or read poetry, maybe?

Jack  
I do write music but no one's gonna want to hear me play. I'm not much of a musician.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
I'm sure you're being modest. You should give it a try.

Jack  
Seriously, you don't wanna hear me play.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
If you say so...

Jack  
And what's that room up there on the next level?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
That's Room 13. The bathrooms!

Jack  
Do they know we can see them in there?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
They should know. We give a tour to every new person.

Jack  
Can they see us?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
In certain places, sure. In others it's a mirror on the inside. Look, that lady is doing her make up.

Jack  
That's funny! How do you get up there?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
There's a service elevator underneath. See it?

Jack  
I think I need to make a visit.  
I'll be right back.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
It's ok. I'm coming with you.

Jack  
Seriously, you don't need to hold my hand

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
I don't intend to. It is my duty to accompany everyone on their first visit

Jack  
Ok let's go then. I'm busting

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
After you

Mariana

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

I'm gonna stay here. I want to listen to some comedy. It's just starting...  
[Sound: clicking receiver dial. Phyllis doing comedy – mic EQ...]

Phyllis

*Life is crazy, its nuts. Here's my personal theory on this existence that we are all in. God is in eternity forever, which is really a long time. If you've ever been in a bad relationship you can only imagine how long eternity is. And in his boredom, he created Earth: his own personal comedy club. He's got the time. He's got the real estate and he knows that life is eternal. So basically he's just screwing with us. And when he needs a good laugh he tunes into EARTH his own personal Comedy Station LIVE 24/7.*

*Like the food thing, is a perfect example: broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, celery, mushrooms - good for you! YUK! And, it all gives you gas! Fritos, Doritos, double cheese burger, chocolate shake - not good for you?! God, you really need to turn that around. Have you seen America lately? Jokes over! As my old friend Patty would say...*

Jack [Up in Heaven's bathroom]

Wow this is cool. You can see down into the club through this window.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine

It's more than that. Slide your hand across that window.

Jack

Wow, it's a video screen. That is a clear picture! Oh, wow, and you move it?  
I can see all the way round the room down there

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine

You can zoom in too. And turn audio to channel 9 and hear what people are saying

Jack

Mariana best not be talking about me behind my back then. Where is she?  
Oh yeah, over there. OK, audio on.

Mariana [through microphone]

Love you too! I'll see you after the show. Sorry to interrupt. Ooh, I've got someone with me you might want to meet.

Jack

So she is talking about me!

Mariana [thru mic]

Excuse me for a moment...

Jack, yes I *am* talking about you! So be careful what you say!

Jack

Oh wow, you can hear me?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine

The mic works both ways. Any receiver being targeted by the mic also receives audio from you the observer.  
Privacy in "Club Heaven" is a two-way street.

Jack

Do I at least get to pee in private?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine

Of course! No one wants to see that! Pick any open stall. I'll wait here.

Jack

Thanks. Just be a moment. Might as well tune in to some music while I'm sitting down...

Mariana

Well, enjoy! I'm going back to the comedy...

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Phyllis [Studio 3 continues...]

*You know what I found with relationships? 97% of the people I talk to, tell me they have a soul mate; someone they are connected to mentally, spiritually, physically. BUT THEY'RE NOT WITH THAT PERSON. They're with some other schmuck who's making them crazy. I know you men think we're nuts and we are! A lot because of our nutty hormones. But in our defense, I have never seen or heard of a group of women heading up a holocaust, genocide, or a Ku Klux Klan meeting. Talk about hormones! A lot of times, if men don't like someone, you shoot them, bomb them, or hang them up. We women, on the other hand, if we don't like someone we kill them with our tongues: we talk. "Oh Jilly, did you see that outfit she was wearing? Please! Talk about suppressed laughter! Does she think those shoes matched her bag? Oy! She has no taste. Jill, have you seen her house? Boy, did her decorator take her for a ride. Oh, please Jill, her husband has been playing around on her for years. Do you blame him? She never shuts up. She's a nut job. Oh, there's my other line. Okay, I'll talk to you later, Jilly. Yeah, I got to go. It's Linda. I got to take it. She's been pestering me to go to lunch. I just can't get rid of her. Okay, later! Yeah, Lin? What's going on? No, I was just talking to Jilly. Boy, she doesn't have a nice word to say about anyone..."*

Jack [walking back through club]  
Ok Front Desk Lady, do you have a name?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Yes, but you *can* call me "Front Desk Lady" too. It's not rude, it's accurate. You can call me by my real name when I'm not working. In fact, when we *are* working, we *prefer* you call us by our roles and not by our names. Call me "Front Desk Lady". Call anyone else who works at the front desk, "Front Desk Lady". Call the bar lady, "Bar Lady". Speak to the musician in studio one like: "Hey! Musician in studio one! It helps us not to confuse our roles with who we are in our personal lives.

Jack [slightly mocking]  
So what's your name?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Were you listening?

[Sound; fire alarm type sound/ siren]

Jack  
What's that?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
The tornado siren, let's walk  
[Sound: walking across club; some commotion in background, sirens, etc.]

Jack  
What's it calling us to do?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Go down stairs. There's a storm coming.

Jack  
Is it safe downstairs?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
We have a fortified basement

Jack  
It'd better be pretty big. There's a lot of people in here

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Don't worry: it's big enough. Twice as big, in fact.  
Level 2 goes out under the car park and emerges just south of here.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

There's also a heliport in a sheltered outcrop on the other side of the trees. Emergency helicopters may land there for faster access. Ambulance and fire have stations nearby, as well as the city guard, which has a garrison not too far away. In fact, we get a lot of veterans in here. Good place to find employees who are honest and hardworking.

Jack

Impressive! You know, I'm starting to think I might apply for a job here.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine

You can try but I don't think you have the right skill set.

Jack

You haven't seen my resume. I ran several wine bars in London for about five years.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine

Come on! Let's get on the paternoster. They turn it off in 5 minutes.

Jack

I'm serious, you know? I'll email it to you when I get home.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine

Truly, it won't do much good.

Jack

Why ever not?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine

You're not a woman.

[Back to top](#)

## **106. Help from above**

Agent Frank

Steph?

Agent Stephanie

Yes, Frank. Watcha got?

Agent Frank

Look at this...

Agent Stephanie

Scratch marks? What am I looking at?

Agent Frank

Pictures taken on the hotel roof. These markings appear on the perimeter railings above each of the seven bedrooms' balconies.

Agent Stephanie

They had help from above.

Agent Frank

It would appear so.

Agent Stephanie

Did we have our own agents up there?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Agent Frank  
Yes and no.

We had agents up there most of the time coordinating with hotel security.

Agent Stephanie  
Hotel security? Really? You gotta be kidding.

Agent Frank  
No ordinary hotel security. Ex-presidential special ops.

Agent Stephanie  
The Amazonian guard?

Agent Frank  
The very same.

Agent Stephanie  
I thought they we all locked up when their "fearless leader" was taken down.

Agent Frank  
Not all of them. Many were loyal to the state and to their national army. Those were the ones who informed on the ex-president and his whereabouts, helping us to track him down. It seems he treated them like slaves.

Agent Stephanie  
And we trusted these women? Once a snitch always a snitch. Isn't that the theory?

Agent Frank  
You know as well as I do: you can't trust nobody in this game.

Agent Stephanie  
Still. Those women all look like supermodels to me. I thought it was just some kind of a joke to boost his ego.

Agent Frank  
Maybe it looked that way but those girls are all highly trained operatives. They're especially good at hand-to-hand, close combat and espionage operations.

Agent Stephanie  
Killer queens. Well, I am shocked.

Agent Frank  
I don't know why. They all got trained just like you did.

Agent Stephanie  
Yes, but, you don't see me walking round in bikini shorts and knee high boots with my cleavage hanging out and brandishing a machine gun, do you?

Agent Frank  
I could say something right now but I don't want a law suit.

Agent Stephanie  
Sir! My goodness!

[Back to top](#)

## **107. Descending into Hell**

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

[Sound: paternoster; on the ride down]

Jack  
Hope we are not down here for too long

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Claustrophobic?

Jack  
No. I mean, I like it up there. I wanna see some more of the music acts and stuff.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Not to worry, we have other entertainment down here: TV's, radios, CB radios, internet, cell phone texting, all forms of communication

Jack  
Nice. How about Owls?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
I beg your pardon?

Jack  
Owls. Have you ever considered using Owls to send letters?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
We use doves. Turtle-doves, in fact.

Jack  
Well of course you do!

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Nah, they're pigeons really

Jack  
Ha, ha, that's funny!

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
[Joking tone]  
We cross-bred them with doves. All the same benefits of a pigeon but with a whole new look!

Jack  
Hey! Welcome to hell! Did you see that sign?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
I work here, remember?

Jack  
I think this Long Island's going to my head

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
I'll get you some food

Jack  
Oh it's all good

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
No, no. I can't let you get drunk. *That* is also my duty

Jack

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Don't you get tired of all these rules?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
They are not rules, they are duties  
I enjoy doing my duty

Jack  
Sounds like you've been a bit brainwashed

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
And you haven't?

Jack  
I can think for myself!

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
But only in terms of what you *think* you know.  
What if all this time, the things you thought you knew, were actually the opposite?

Jack  
That's just crazy talk.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Maybe, the beginning of sanity is realizing you *are* crazy...

[Back to top](#)

## **108. Free Will**

Agent Frank  
Mr. President!

President Barry  
Frank! Barry, please!

Agent Frank  
Yes, sir! Sorry sir!

President Barry  
Please no apologies...

Agent Frank  
Yes sir. I mean, Barry. Not sure I can do it. Sir. Sorry.

President Barry  
Never mind. Moving on. What's the latest?

Agent Frank  
Well sir. It looks like they had help from above.

President Barry [Musing]  
What do you mean? Divine intervention?

Agent Frank  
No sir. I mean, no disrespect, but...

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Agent Stephanie

I think what Agent Frank is trying to say, sir, is that there are markings on the railings above indicating wires were lowered to the balconies and the women were pulled up to the roof of the hotel.

President Barry

I see. So do we think they were air lifted from there? Wouldn't a helicopter have drawn too much attention?

Agent Stephanie

Indeed. There are markings on the roof indicating they jumped off the building, just like they had been abseiling.

President Barry

Really? How on earth do you kidnap someone and then force them to jump off a building against their will?

Agent Frank

Agreed sir. It doesn't sound very likely does it?

President Barry

Maybe they did tandem jumps? Nah, maybe not...

Agent Frank

Again, it doesn't sound very convincing, does it? I agree. That's why we're starting to think along a different line.

President Barry

Which is what exactly?

Agent Stephanie

That maybe they *weren't* forced, sir. Maybe they all left of their own free will.

President Barry

Oh my goodness.

[Sound: sitting down in leather chair]

Are you saying...?

Agent Frank

It explains how the husbands were drugged, how no-one heard any sounds of helicopters or breaking and entering, no signs of a struggle. Kidnappers leave some evidence behind. These ladies tried to cover their tracks.

President Barry

How on earth..? Phew! I need a minute to take this all in.

Seven prominent women, all from very different countries, go to a conference in Libya with the intention of disappearing into the night...

Why?

Agent Frank

At this point, your guess is as good as ours, sir. Makes no sense. But then, what does make sense in these types of situations? Nothing at the outset, but we'll know more by tomorrow, for sure. There are guards stationed around Tripoli and all major intersections, train stations and ports...

President Barry

If these ladies put in the preparation time to plan this whole thing, they will have thought of a way to leave the city without being detected.

How far away do you think they could be by now?

Agent Stephanie

We've run those numbers sir, and of course a lot depends on their method of transportation. A lot depends also on what time during the night they left too. According to the medical team the six husbands were drugged right around midnight or shortly thereafter based on the current toxicity levels in their bloodstream. This would give them quite a large head start. There's also the theory that they haven't left the city but are lying low...

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

President Barry

Who do we have on the ground there? Can we trust the intel we are getting?

Agent Frank

We have two CIA operatives there right now, plus a whole host of other foreign agents from each of the countries involved at the conference. In all reality, it sounds like quite a mess, sir; especially with the language issues.

President Barry

A real Babel of confusion, I can imagine. [Pause] Ok so what else? Any chatter?

Agent Frank

There's a report on its way, sir. But nothing out of the ordinary from what I'm told.

President Barry

Well this is hardly ordinary.

Agent Frank

Agreed but...

Agent Stephanie

...at the moment we don't know what to listen for (other than the names of the missing, but you can bet the only people using their names are the media). I think that's why the hesitation, sir. If we had heard from some group claiming responsibility then there would be something to go on. So far there's nothing but silence.

President Barry

Seems like if this was a voluntary act there's not going to be anyone claiming responsibility.

Agent Stephanie

Yes, sir. But there must be a motive. Once we discover *that* we might know where to look.

President Barry

None of this makes much sense.

You raised another point which is what do we tell the media?

[Sound: Door opening]

First Lady Misha

Darling, I'm going to retire! I'll see you in the morning! Hi Frank! Hi Stephanie! You guys work way too late! Really! Darling you should give them some time off, honestly.

President Barry

I'll be there very soon, we're just wrapping things up.

First Lady Misha

Ok darling, I'll see you soon. Honestly though, give this beautiful girl a vacation. She deserves it. She needs to get some sun! No offense Stephanie!

Agent Stephanie

None taken, ma'am!

First Lady Misha

Misha, please! You know me well enough by now!

President Barry

They insist on formalities, darling. I'll be right there.

First Lady Misha

Ok, I'm going!

[Sound: door closing]

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

President Barry  
Ok, where were we? The media?

Agent Frank  
The media will know soon enough, sir. A story this big will not be contained.  
New Year's Day was scheduled to be a day of rest for the delegates. Most of them were not due to fly home until the 2nd.

President Barry  
So we may have a grace period of about 24 hours then. We can worry about the media later. I can handle that.

Agent Frank  
What we need is more intel.

Agent Stephanie  
We could do with one of own agents over there, sir. I trust the work the CIA does but they sometimes leave things out of their report if they don't feel it necessary to include it. I think Agent Frank should go. He *is* your top agent, sir.

President Barry  
That he is.

Agent Frank  
Thank you sir, that's a great compliment

President Barry  
But I think you should go, Stephanie.

Agent Stephanie  
Me sir? I'm not sure I can. I have an end-of-year report that I need to finish in the next 15 hours and...

President Barry  
No. You *must* go. *You*, must go. See to it that you are covered in every way possible.  
Besides, Misha is right. You need a vacation. I know it's going to be a lot of work, but I'm sure you will get to the bottom of this faster than anyone can. After that you should go do some travelling for a week. Mount Kilimanjaro, Lake Victoria, maybe even get down to the cape. I highly recommend some safari time.

Agent Stephanie  
Yes, sir. As you wish. And, thank you. I have always wanted to see Africa. I feel a connection with that place even though I've never been.

President Barry  
Well, that's settled then. Leave now and try and get some sleep on the plane. Personally, I can never sleep in the air, but I hope *you* can though.

Agent Stephanie  
I'll do my best sir. I'll be in contact as soon as I arrive.

President Barry  
Ok, good night and God speed!

Agent Frank  
I'll call you in the morning Sir. I expect there's going to be an online meeting with the other affected heads of state.

President Barry  
Oh boy. I can't wait!

[Back to top](#)

## **109. Chocolate or Vanilla?**

[In Hell; basement to Heaven;  
[Loud music, pool table sounds and 24 hour news TV sounds, New Year's celebrations from Time Square]

Jack  
Wow this is huge! So much bigger than upstairs!

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
That's what I told you

Jack  
Yes, but I thought you were joking

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Why would I joke about that?

Jack  
Where do those double doors lead to over there?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
That goes to the underground car park.

Jack  
Seems a bit like overkill doesn't it?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
When the end comes, will you be ready? 'Cuz we will

Jack  
End? What end?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
The end of the world as we know it

Jack  
Ah, I know that song

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
I know you know it

Jack  
How could you know that?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Everybody knows that song

Jack  
Exactly

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
I know

Jack  
Right then. What's next?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Wanna see how deep this rabbit hole goes?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Jack

There's more? OK. Why not? I got nowhere else to be.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine

Only joking! This is all you get for now.

Fancy a bite to eat? Hey, Barlady Tamara! Are those cupcakes?

Barlady Tamara [cocktail waitress from Hungary with Australian accent]

Good evening, lady and gent! What's your fancy?

Jack

Thanks! Um... not sure...

Barlady Tamara

You won't regret it. Chocolate or vanilla?

Jack

Um, I don't know. They both look good to me.

Barlady Tamara

They are indeed. The chocolate one is made fresh with locally sourced ingredients and makes you feel like you can communicate with God. The vanilla one, also from local ingredients, is good if you have a lot of things to get done in a short space of time.

Jack

Funny, I thought it would be the other way round.

Barlady Tamara

Oh, vanilla for god and chocolate for strength?

You're not a racist are you, Mr English?

Jack

Me? Of course I'm not a racist but...

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine

But, what?!

How can you follow "I'm not a racist" with "But...?"

Jack

Let's focus on the cake.

I guess it's chocolate, then. I don't have anything major on the old "to-do" list and I think me and God need to have a little chat about this place anyway!

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine

God and I

Jack

You sound like my mother!

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine

Here: eat!

Jack [smelling]

Oh my gracious cupcakes! This smells so chocolaty...

I'm getting some type of spice too...

Nutmeg, maybe?

And wait,

There's something else...

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

A subtle hint of... euh! What is that? Skunk pee?

Barlady Tamara  
Wow! Good nose, bloke!

Jack  
Well you know, I did spend several years working in restaurants

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
You told us already. Just say "thank you" to a compliment

Jack  
Yes, ma'am! I'm sorry, I'll check with you before I speak next time

[Sound; jack's face being slapped]

Jack  
Ouch! Oh no, my cake!  
What was that for? I can't eat it now! It's covered in sawdust.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
No one calls me ma'am

Barlady Tamara  
I'll go fetch another one.

Jack  
Ok I'm sorry, you're not old, and I don't know why I said that

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
You don't think before you speak. Only one person gets called ma'am and that's the Queen of England and I am not she.

Jack  
Yes your majesty!  
[Jack's face gets slapped again}  
Ouch!

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Same goes for that word too.

Jack  
Ok do you have a list of names I can't call you? I really don't like getting slapped after everything I say

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Are you sure?  
[Slapping]  
I thought you liked that...  
[More slapping]  
... a little!

Jack  
Ok maybe just a little, but give me some warning next time

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Now where's the fun in that?  
Ok, well I must run back up to the front desk and make sure no other guests are left up there.

Jack

What about the rest of the tour?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
I was being nice: I'm done.  
This is Céline. She'll take over from here.

Céline [French accent]  
Bonjour!

Jack [Lecherously]  
Comment allez-vous, chérie?!

Céline  
Tu peut me-tutoyer

Jack  
Avec plaisir!

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Look for me a little later. There is more we want to show you.  
More, *I* want to show you, I mean.

Jack  
A bientôt! I enjoyed your company.

Céline  
Viens! Let us get you a drink.

Jack  
Does the two drink maximum still apply down here? I've already had half my quota!

Céline  
Bien Sur. If you want it to.

Jack  
No. No. Not if that doesn't apply.

Céline  
Down here, zere are no rules. You can `ave whatever you want.

Jack  
Alrighty then!

Céline  
Moi aussi.

Jack  
Quoi?

Céline  
You like ze music of dance? I like to DJ.

Jack  
Sure, I spent a good three years going to clubs in London during the nineties.

Céline  
But you don't it like anymore?

Jack

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Oh sure but I got back into writing music; got a band together and it just turned out more rock orientated.

Céline

Rock? C'est cool aussi. You should play some songs.

Jack

Now? I don't really enjoy performing.

Céline

You don't enjoy performing? And you were in a band? Why were you in a band?

Jack

I don't know. I just like writing songs but I kept getting drawn into starting a band.

Céline

So zis 'appened more zan one time?

Jack

Don't we have to prepare for the storm or something?

Céline

We are well protected 'ere. Ze walls and ceilings are bien reinforce.

Jack

Ok, then.

Céline

You know how to spin?

Jack

Oh, DJ? A little bit. But, hey, what did you mean earlier by "moi aussi"...

Céline

Ok take a look though my collection.

Jack

Redirection. Nice.  
Nice collection too.

Céline

I'm going to mix this new tune in.

Jack

LCD Soundsystem! I love that album

Céline

Find something to mix into it

Barlady Tamara

Here's your new cake. Can I get you guys something else?

Jack

A ham sandwich maybe? Not sure I'm really in the mood for cake.

Barlady Tamara

We don't have ham. Chicken be ok with you?

Jack

Sure. Sure. Whatever you have, thanks.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Barlady Tamara  
How about to drink?

Céline  
We will `ave deux shots de Patron, Mademoiselle!. Et deux glass de sprite. Merci, en?

Barlady Tamara  
You betcha, ladies! Coming right up!  
And, you're sure about the cake?

Jack  
I'm sure, thanks!  
Need something savory in my stomach first, I think.  
Hey, so... Barlady, are you from Australia? Is that what I'm hearing? Only, you sound kinda German too!

Barlady Tamara  
Yeah, I spent a good amount of time working the bars in and around Perth but believe it or not I was actually born in Hungary.

Jack  
Were you really? I've been there. Hungary, I mean. All I remember is dogs. Dogs barking in every back yard at twilight. Wow, it was noisy!

Barlady Tamara  
Hey, it's nice talking n all but I better get back. I got orders at the bar.

Jack  
Sure, sure. Catch you later!  
[Pause]  
Hey, Hendrix! This might work!

Céline  
Bien. You want to mix it in?

Jack  
I'll just watch you!  
[Sound: mixing Daft Punk is playing at our house with Purple Haze, then fades out]

Céline  
Voyeur!

[Back to top](#)

## **110. Leaving on a Helicopter**

[Helipad, White House; sound helicopter starting up, wind]

Agent Frank  
Stephanie, have a safe trip

Agent Stephanie  
I will Sir, thank you. I'll be in touch, on the hour, every hour.

Agent Frank  
Just call me when you get there. I need to get some shut-eye too.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Besides, I don't think we have a hostage situation  
Get some rest on the plane, get checked-in to the embassy and report back when you are sitting comfortably in your  
hotel room with a glass of orange juice in hand

Agent Stephanie  
I will, Frank. Glass in hand. You can be sure of that.

[Sound: helicopter taking off]

Agent Frank  
Ok, are we good?  
[Pause]  
Ok, wait here for just a second....  
[Pause]  
Ok, mine's off too.

Agent Stephanie  
I'm gonna miss you!

Agent Frank  
I'm gonna miss you too.  
The helicopters gonna circle for a few minutes and then come back to get you.

Agent Stephanie  
Will we only ever have these stolen moments together?

Agent Frank  
One day, my love, we'll buy a beach hut on a tropical island somewhere and never be apart again.

Agent Stephanie  
You're so romantic, Frank. That's why I love you!

Agent Frank  
I know you might be gone some time on this errand. I'm hoping I can find a way to come out there and assist you.

Agent Stephanie  
That would be most wonderful. Come protect me from the savages!

Agent Frank  
You're so funny. I know you can handle yourself.  
Meanwhile, yours truly here needs to do a mini investigation.

Agent Stephanie  
Oh yeah? What's going on?

Agent Frank  
Let's just say, I want to examine the flow of information through the Whitehouse. Think I'm gonna lay a few red  
herrings.

Agent Stephanie  
Red herrings? What are they?

Agent Frank  
Like false trails. Like deliberately feeding on people's need to gossip and poke their nose into things they don't need  
to.

Agent Stephanie  
You're afraid there's a mole in the Whitehouse?

Agent Frank

*[R] Rated: Adults Only!*

Not at all. I did not say that. No way!

Agent Stephanie  
Why you telling me?

Agent Frank  
Because with you away for a while I can protect you from being a suspect in any of these false trails.

Agent Stephanie  
Oh you're so clever.  
You're not gonna be seeing anyone else while I'm away though, are you?

Agent Frank  
Steph! Please! There's no need for jealousy.

Agent Stephanie  
Me? Jealous? Hah! That'll be the day!  
I just don't know why you don't tell anyone about us at work? Why do we have to keep it a secret?

Agent Frank  
Steph, you know very well. They would split us apart. No more working in close contact...

Agent Stephanie  
You better find a way to come join me out there. You're making me wet just thinking about close contact.

[Back to top](#)

## **111. Cracking balls**

[Sound: pool balls cracking]

Barlady Tamara  
You guys want something else from the bar?

Richy  
I'm good

Tim  
Me too.

Barlady Tamara  
You guys play a pretty mean game of pool.

Tim  
Hey, thanks! What's your name?

Barlady Tamara  
You can call me "Bar Lady".

Tim  
No, for real. What's your real name?

Barlady Tamara  
Tamara. And you are... Tim?

Tim  
Yeah right, you saw my ID card – I keep forgetting.

Barlady Tamara  
So what's going on, Mr. Tim?

Tim  
Sheltering from the storm

Barlady Tamara  
I hear ya. Hey, most of the locals have gone home already.  
I'm not needed at the bar anymore. Wanna play some pool?

Tim  
Sure.

Richy  
Hey, you wanna double up? Got a friend who can join us?

Tim  
That's what I'm talking about

Richy  
Right?

Barlady Tamara  
Let me go ask Céline, she's the one DJ'ing over there at the moment.

Richy  
Ok, Red Tits! Tell her to come over here and give this dude a hand

Barlady Tamara  
Who you calling Red Tits?!

Tim  
You've got a red blouse on...

Barlady Tamara  
Well, you keep that name to yourself.

Richy  
Will do. [Whispering] Red-tits!

Barlady Tamara  
Hey Céline! Over here!

Tim  
I don't think she can hear you over the music.  
Plus, that guy's talking her ear off

Barlady Tamara  
She heard, don't worry

Tim  
If you say so.

Richy  
No, she did. They're coming over here.

Tim  
Oh man, she's bringing that dude with her. Third wheel!

Richy  
I got this...  
Well, it appears, I'm your new partner, partner!  
And quite a stunner at that!

Céline  
You flatter me.  
I've heard a thing or two about you two, too.

Richy  
Both of them good, I hope

Céline  
Not all of them, no.  
50% were minor indiscretions, I believe.

Richy  
I can't recollect any

Céline  
Too many of the drugs?

Richy  
I came close to a lot of things but I never inhaled

Céline  
I see you are very clever, Monsieur

Richy  
[To Tim] Flattery from a classy lady never hurts, right?

Tim  
Right!

Céline  
If you take it as a compliment then what can I do?

Richy  
So who's your boyfriend? You gonna introduce us?

Céline  
Bien sur! Zis is Jacques

Jack  
Hi, Jack actually. I'm not her boyfriend though.

Richy [Disbelievingly]  
Right! Anything you say boss. So, are we game for a game?

Jack  
If you are playing for money, I'm not playing. I don't gamble; I'm happy to watch though.

Tim  
That's cool, bro. I'm pretty hard up too. We'll just keep it to a dollar each, yeah?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Céline  
Ok zen. We will start...?  
You want to accumulate ze balls?

Richy  
No. Two's fine for me!

Céline  
Mechant! I mean to say: you want to use zis rack for the balls.  
Here! Prends! Animale!

Richy  
[Tiger roar]

Barlady Tamara  
Keep your boots on cowboy!  
Ok, let's rack `em up!

Richy  
Anything you say, mi lady!

Barlady Tamara  
Good boy! You're a quick learner, aren't you!

Richy  
Quick learner, slow finisher!

Barlady Tamara  
Quick study, too!

Tim  
Ouch!

Richy  
Tim, dude! Back me up here!

Tim  
Women, dude. They're always right. There's no point arguing.

Céline  
I think I am beginning to like your friend more, for a partner.

Tim  
Score! Threesome it is then!

Richy  
No fair!

Barlady Tamara  
Ok how about Richy and I play against you and Céline?

Richy  
You read my mind.

Barlady Tamara  
Like I said: quick study! It's like I'm telepathic, I know!

Jack  
You're not the first one to say that tonight. I'm beginning to believe all you women are.

Céline  
It is ze truth

Richy  
Ruth

Céline  
Quoi? C'est qui?

Tim  
Ignore him. He's being silly.

Céline  
Je vois.

Barlady Tamara  
Ok, so what's new?

Richy  
You're new.  
To me.  
Tonight.

Barlady Tamara  
Let me see you smack them balls then, buddy.

Richy  
What...?

Tim  
Dude, she means break!

Richy  
OK, OK. Watch this!

[Sound: lightning and thunder-crack, ceilings shaking, faint screams]

Tim  
Dude, that was awesome! Man I hope this place holds together.

Céline  
Eh, Tim! A ton joue!

Tim  
Nice  
[Intermittent pool shots sounds throughout pool match, plus sounds of thunder from outside]

Richy  
Hey so where's your accent from dude? Don't tell me, Australia?

Jack  
No, England.

Richy  
Dude, I'm sorry. I knew you was from England. My family ancestors are from there. I was just pulling your leg. I bet you get that all the time, eh?

Jack

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

It's about 50/50. Some say England, some say Australia. Few Americans actually know where either one is though.

Tim

Hey, dude, we're not all that ignorant. I've done a bit of travelling. England's not far from Rhode Island, right?

Jack  
Funny!

Richy  
He's the *real* comedian. That's for sure.

Tim  
Dude, so Pink Floyd, right? Did you ever see them?

Jack  
A bit before my time.

Tim  
Nah, they were going for years. You heard their music though right?

Jack  
Oh, I grew up in the eighties. More like The Cure and Duran Duran, you know?

Tim  
Dude, I'm sorry.

Richy  
Man, what about punk? The sex pistols? The kinks?

Jack  
Oh, it's all good stuff. A bit anti-royalist though.

Tim  
You a fan of the queen then?

Jack  
Yes and no. The queen does a marvelous job but the same can't be said for every member of the royal family

Richy  
Know what you mean, dude. That Fergie! She upset a few, didn't she?

Barlady Tamara  
Charlie can be a right Charlie too. He said a few off the cuff remarks a while back - made me mates back in Auz quite angry

Jack  
I remember that, yes. So anyway, where are you both from?

Tim  
Oh different places. Me: Chicago and Richy: Pittsburgh.

Jack  
The steel city.

Richy  
Yeah, not so much now though.

Jack  
I went to college in Sheffield back in the UK. It used to be a big steel producing town too.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Richy

Right on. So anyway, me and Tim are in a band. You should come check us out. We're playing here next week.

Jack

I'm just passing through. Got stranded but I should be going home tomorrow.  
[More thunder cracks, outside]

Tim

If we make it outta here alive.

Barlady Tamara

We'll be fine, you pussies!

Céline

Why don't you play 'ere tonight? Ze stage is empty.

Tim

Yeah, we just might do that.

Richy

Our drummer's not here. You could maybe drop some beats for us

Céline

I can do zat.

Tim

Hell yeah. We could jam out a few tunes.

Jack

I look forward to hearing you.

Barlady Tamara

Is it my shot?

Céline

Oui cheri . Just ze black, remains. Clear ze table!

Phyllis

Hey kids!

Céline

Phyllis! Quoi de nouveau?

Phyllis

I love you too, hon.

Céline

Were you just performing?

Phyllis

Yeah, you missed it. I had to finish early though.  
I guess it's getting pretty intense out there.  
Fucking storm!

Céline

Phyllis! It is not you to be saying zis word.  
I'm sorry I did not 'ear you. I was spinning les disques down 'ere.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Phyllis

Storm is the word of the day, dear. Accept it and move on.  
Who are these guys?

Céline

Zis is Tim and zis is Richy, Zay are in rock band together, And zis is...

Phyllis [disgruntled]

Jack. Yeah, we met a few years ago.

Jack [anxious]

Phyllis? I thought you were...?

I mean, I didn't expect to meet you *here* of all places... How are you?

Phyllis

Oh, you know. Same shtick. Different place.  
Hey, nice to meet you guys!

Tim

Hey, you too.

Jack

So, what happened to the musical?

Phyllis

Oh, it's still going. I hooked up with Gary here, again.

Jack

I see that. Gary? Good to see you again.

Gary

[Nothing]

Phyllis

Well, this is comfortable. I think we're gonna continue our journey to the bar.  
Gary just got in after a long trip. He needs a drink.

Jack

Ok. Good to see you.

Phyllis

Good to see you too, doll.

I'll sneak back when I've got these three situated. See you a bit later. OK?

Jack

Ok

Phyllis

Hey, how's your mother and father?

Jack

Oh, good. I just Skyped them earlier tonight.  
You know, the time difference and everything.  
Their new year was 6 hours ago...

Phyllis

Sure, sure. I'll see you in a minute.

Céline

You know Phyllis zen?

Jack  
Yeah, I wrote some songs for her a few years ago.

Céline  
And?

Jack  
Well, we put on three shows to begin with...  
It was well received...  
But then I got involved in some other projects, and...

Céline  
And Phyllis? She kept on doing ze show?

Jack  
I guess so. We haven't spoken for a while  
This is quite odd meeting her out here in the middle of nowhere.  
You know her though do you?

Céline  
We met before when she played `ere.  
So, she kept on performing the show, you `aven't spoken in some time, and now, she is here and you are here too!

Jack  
We had about 100 people a night; at the shows

Céline  
Très bien!

Jack  
Yeah. She's done some TV spots and a bit in a movie too.

Céline  
Super. She is quite fameuse zen?

Jack  
Well, yes; I wouldn't say super famous; there's a lot of competition.

Céline  
You like her comedy though, yes?

Jack  
Oh sure. She's pretty cute. It's all family orientated too, for the most-part.

Jilly  
For the most part.

Jack  
Hey... [Struggling to remember name] How are you? I had no idea you were all playing here tonight

Jilly  
Not me; it's just Phyllis.

Jack  
Sure

Jilly

We weren't really meant to be here.  
We broke down. Phyllis' darling new Lexus!

Jack  
Oh dear.

Jilly  
Dear is right. Those things are not cheap to fix.

Jack  
Lucky she's one of the rich Jews then.  
And Gary? Is he playing with you now?

Jilly  
No, Gary's come to pick us up. Along with Dottie, our tech support

Jack  
Dottie? The tech support? That's not her real name is it?

Jilly  
It sure is. She's a cutie. Very switched on in fact. Got us all hooked up with YouTube and Facebook and the like.

Jack  
Oh, so you've got some videos online?

Jilly  
Not quite yet. We are nearly there. Phyllis is still getting over her fear of the camera.

Jack  
Lookout, she's coming back over...

Jilly [Acting casual]  
So, anyway, we were stuck here, we thought and then to our surprise Gary showed up completely unexpected.

Phyllis  
Thanks be to Norman!

Jack  
Yes indeed. Good old, Norm!

Phyllis  
You seems tense, darling. Did you choose the vanilla cake?

Jack  
I haven't had *any* cake. No, I chose chocolate but it got knocked out of my hand!

Phyllis  
Too bad, I had some of the chocolate. It was very good.

Jilly  
Not so good for remembering your lines though

Phyllis  
That's why I have you Jilly.  
So Jack, what's happening with you? Living down here with the inbreds?

Jack  
I didn't know it was a Jewish community...

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Phyllis  
Touché! So how is it you're here?

Jack [Sardonically]  
Well, let's see. We were on our way back to the city when my girlfriend decides to get into an argument again and dumps me in a Pizzeria just down the road, out here in the middle of nowhere. Then I got led to this club by a beautiful Mexican/Italian waitress called Mariana.  
All in all it's been a wonderful day!  
Is it still today? What time is it?

Jilly  
It's almost midnight!

Jack  
So then this tornado decides to show up and now we've descended into the depths of hell!  
That's where I be, how about you?

Phyllis  
Why weren't you at a party for New Year's Eve?

Jack  
We were. It was a wedding in fact. Can you believe that? Who gets wed on New Year's Eve? Anyway, it's about an hour south of here. We were with some friends of Ingrid's but then she got all paranoid and we had to leave.

Phyllis  
I didn't know you were still with Ingrid?

Jack  
Off and on. More off than on, as you can see.

Phyllis  
She was such a doll. I used to love her shtick about the 'homies in the ghetto.

Jack  
Yeah that's still her party trick – along with doing the splits and talking to every man in the room and making all the women jealous.

Phyllis  
And *you*, it sounds like. That's Ingrid for you!

Jack  
It's like she's unaware but I know she knows what she's doing.

Phyllis  
She's a free spirit! The world needs more like her.

Jack  
I'm not so sure. That's the way wars start.

Phyllis  
Oh, you *are* on a downer. You really do need some cake.

Jack  
Maybe, maybe.

Phyllis  
So I see you've met Céline. She's a cutie don't you think?

Jack

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

I'm really not interested. In fact I'm done with women. All they ever bring me is heart-ache and head-aches.

Phyllis  
You poor thing.

Gary  
Phyllis, I hear the storm's lifting. We should make a break for it. The valet has put your car in the underground car park. He says they can have someone look at it in a few days.

Phyllis  
Oh my lovely Lexus. I'm going to miss her.

Gary  
C'mon, I don't wanna be stuck here all night.

Jack  
Yeah, it'd be like one of those murder mystery weekends, wouldn't it? Stuck here together. Who knows what might happen?

Gary  
We'd probably have the pleasure of more of your sarcasm!

Phyllis  
Now then fellas. Let's play nice.

Dottie  
Guys it's almost midnight! Under two minutes to go!

Phyllis  
Let's just stay for a few minutes more then.

Céline  
Je vais tourner un disque spécial...

Tim  
Hey, I'm coming too. I spy a guitar over there...

Dottie  
I like the sound of one of those murder mystery role playing games

Phyllis  
Role playing games?

Dottie  
You know like Dungeons and Dragons, except no dragons. I don't like dragons. Roll some dice. Play a character. Use your imagination. See where the story takes you.

Jilly  
Sounds like fun. What would my character be called, d'you think?

Dottie  
Why not just use our real names?  
I could be Dottie, you could be Jilly, Gary could be Gary...

Phyllis  
And, I could be Phyllis?

Dottie  
You might have to choose a different name, Phyllis.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Phyllis  
What?

Dottie  
You're too famous! Just kidding, you can be Phyllis.

Phyllis  
Oh good. So how do we play?

Gary  
Sounds like a terrible idea. Let's go.

Jack  
Does sound terrible. No one wants to be called Gary, do they? Maybe Gary's character could be called Tim?

Gary  
Whatever.

Jack  
That's fine too; a somewhat unconventional name, though, I have to say. Anyway we've already got a Tim.

Gary  
Well that's good then

Phyllis  
I don't get it.  
Why would we want to be ourselves in a game when we can be ourselves in real life?

Dottie  
[Desperately] It's just pretend!

Gary  
I suppose you're going to make everyone have an unlimited amount of money; some great inheritance that enables characters to do whatever they want.

Dottie  
No, I would want to keep it real. They don't need tons of money if they use their imagination.

Jilly  
I wouldn't have time for that, I don't think.  
Sounds like reinventing a whole new second life.

Dottie  
Well, there's room for busy characters like that too - if only to act as a comparative for the other characters.

Phyllis  
I'm confused

Jilly  
You're not the only one, Phyllis.

Dottie  
There's really nothing to it

[Céline spins a build-up dance tune]

Phyllis  
Maybe some other time.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Ok what time does anyone have?

Dottie  
Seventeen seconds!

Phyllis  
Ok people gather round!  
Hold hands! Come on. Let's all get into the spirit!

[Some commotion]

Boys? Boys! C'mon now! Hold hands!

Richy  
Here it comes! 10, 9, 8

All  
7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 Happy New Year!

[Cheers, music crescendo climax, party poppers, etc]

Phyllis  
Ok love you guys!  
We gotta run! Moi, moi! [Kissing the air]

Gary  
About time. Let's go!

Phyllis  
So Jack, you wanna ride back with us? I'm sure Gary could fit you in.

Jack  
I don't think so. It's hard enough being around him for more than a minute. I can't imagine hours and hours.

Phyllis  
Ok, I get it.  
[Pause]  
Hey, so I'm heading over to New York tomorrow to see Gladys.

Jack  
Well give her my best. Are you doing any shows there?

Phyllis  
Probably. You know me!

Jack  
I know you, Phyllis. Yes I do.

Dottie  
It was nice meeting you all. God bless you all.

Jilly  
So long Mr Jack. Good luck with everything!

[Hugs n kisses n all that]

Tim  
Ok double or quits, guys?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Barlady Tamara  
I feel a hustle coming on.

Tim  
Me? You're the one that came from behind.

Richy  
My turn next time.

Tim  
Actually, I think I better quit gambling. Let's play a friendly. I don't have much cash left.

Barlady Tamara  
We can ask the club to give you credit?

Tim  
And you say I'm the hustler! I don't think so.

Céline  
I 'ave to go anyway. Ze manager wants to meet Mr Jacques la.

Jack  
Me? What did I do?

Céline  
Don't worry. It is not a bad thing.  
This way, please...

Tim  
Dude let's go outside for a smoke. Check out the storm...

Richy  
With ya.

Barlady Tamara  
Can I come?

Richy  
H-yeah. Twice if you like.

Barlady Tamara  
I'm gonna beat you. Come here!

Richy  
Woah! [Running off into distance] Help me I'm being attacked by a mad Hungarian Sheila!

Tim  
Later dude!

Céline  
Thank you for de match, eh?

Tim  
Hey, no sweat. [Pause] Hey, you got a number I can call you on?

Céline  
Sur. Prends ca. Zis is ze number of ze club.

Tim

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Righteous!

[Door in underground car park opening]

Jack  
Where are you taking me?

Céline  
Zese doors lead to ze underground garage...

Jack  
Nice. You could drive a truck through here.

Céline  
Zat is ze idea.

Jack  
Good to know.  
And why are you showing me this?

Céline  
Ze room de management is down `ere...  
[Sound: walking thru underground car park]

Jack  
The broom closet?

Céline  
Ca resemble, yes?  
En fait, it is our safe room and monitor room for se controle of ze cameras. Tout ca.  
Après-toi...

[Metal door opening, curtain sound]

Jack  
Feels like I'm re-entering the womb.

Céline  
Quoi?

Jack  
All these red velvet curtains.  
Very cool.  
Reminds me of this little jazz club I used to go to in Chicago.

Céline  
It sounds chouette.  
Well the storm may be passing but it may also come back again. Zis part of ze building is ze safest place to come  
back to should anysing `appen.

Jack  
And is something going to happen?

Céline  
Something is always going to `appen  
[Sound: champagne cork opening and glass being poured]

Jack  
Quite!

So where is everybody?

Céline

Zey are making ze building secure. Relax. Take a seat. I have somesing I need to tell you.

Jack

You do?

Céline

Prends! Have some more champagne.

Jack

If I must! Wow, this stuff is good.

Céline

It should be. It is tres, tres cher. Et tres bien fait, en plus.

[Sound: door closing, softly]

Jack

Alors, qu'est ce que tu veux me dire?

Celine

I love it when you speak French

Jack

J'adore quand tu me parles en Anglais

Celine

I want to be naked with you

Jack

Quoi?

Celine

Let me lift off your clothes and you can take mine

Jack

Somebody might come in!

Celine

En Francais

Jack

Quelqu'un peuve entrer

Celine

Ze door is locked. We are alone together

Jack

I feel dizzy.

Celine

Francais!

Jack

Je me sens... comme on dit?

Celine

Tais-toi

[Sound: kissing]

Jack  
Sacre-bleu!

Celine  
Undo my bra.

Jack  
J'essai...

Celine  
Lie down. I can pull zem off.

Jack  
Oh mon dieu!

Celine  
Finish your glass.  
Bien.  
Now, drink me!

[Back to top](#)

## **112. Francis & Irene**

Francis [Effeminate male accent]  
Hey girlfriend! Happy New Year! What time is it there?

Irene  
It's just after 5pm

Francis  
Oh girl, I bet you got a glass of wine in your hand already, haven't you?

Irene  
Not quite yet, no. We have to be careful here anyway. It's still a Muslim country, you know?

Francis  
I know. I know! So what's shakin'? Are you bored out of you mind yet?

Irene  
Almost. These conferences are important, I'm sure, but about the only thing interesting is watching the Americans try to speak a foreign language. Apart from that, the politicians' wives are of some interest but I'm hardly here to write a fashion article.

Francis  
*I'd* read it, but you know me. I'm a sucker for glitz.

Irene  
I miss you! Were you partying it up in SoHo last night?

Francis  
Sure was. Gotta hang with the girls any chance I get.

Irene

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Oh boy! Sorry to get you up so early

Francis

That's ok. I didn't get drunk; only a little tipsy. Probably had a few more than you though, right?

Irene

I've been close to tea-totaling it, yes indeed.

Francis

So... did you need anything or d'you just call to kill time?

Irene

Pretty much. There was nothing scheduled today except a short photo-op in a park just round the corner but they just announced they are canceling that so I really don't know what I'm doing here anymore

Francis

Well why don't you come on home then, Reenie? You can get an earlier flight can't you?

Irene

Well, I promised myself that I was going to go on and see a bit more of this continent. I should really go say hi to my grandparents . The paper doesn't need me back till the beginning of next week. I met a pilot last night from Cape Town. He says he's flying back south tomorrow morning and could drop me off pretty much anywhere I want to go along the way.

Francis

Oh well hon, go for it. Is he cute?

Irene

He's a dirty old man from what I can tell; seems to fancy himself as a bit of an Indiana Jones type.

Francis

I bet he's got some stories!

Irene

That's what I'm hoping. Just hope he doesn't turn out to be some kind of nut-job. Sounds like he's been in a few scrapes.

Francis

So, where you gonna ask him to take you? All the way?

Irene

Stop! I'm not ready for another relationship just yet; certainly not with some ageing diamond smuggler. He stinks of whiskey too, even when he's sober.

Francis

Well you take care, Irene. I'm sure you can handle yourself though. You've been in trickier situations, right?

Irene

Don't remind me. We'll see. I'll keep you posted. Watch for my texts!

Francis

I will.

Hey do you need me to call over to the paper? They're keeping tabs on your whereabouts aren't they?

Irene

Oh they've got me on GPS. Kenny's paranoid about that stuff.

Francis

That's cuz he loves you, baby. He's another one on your long list of admirers.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Irene  
He's just doing his job. Definitely not my type either; still lives with his mother, I'm sure.

Francis  
Well you have fun, Irene! My African Princess! Call me whenever.

Irene  
You too, Francis! My SoHo Queen!

[Back to top](#)

## **113. Jean Pierre De Quoi?**

Celine  
Oh mon dieu! Arrete pas

Jack [muffled]  
I'm drowning

Fatou [French African accent]  
Hey guys! Don't mind if we join you do you?

Lucie [Czech accent]  
I know what I want!

Fikreta [Bosnian accent]  
You gonna have to share

Celine  
Quickly ladies, zer is no time. We need ze measurement...

Lucie  
And a photo of the birthmark

Fikreta  
I don't see it

Fatou  
It should be under the foreskin

Fikreta  
It's not there

Lucie  
Well, it's the same height: seven inches, exactly!  
Only, you're right it doesn't look quite the same.

Fatou  
It's bent the wrong way. Feel it!

Fikreta  
Oh wow. You are right.

Celine  
I think he is passing out.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Ok Celine, you can get off him now. We've seen enough.

Fatou  
Is he asleep?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Hand me the champagne bucket

Celine  
Voila

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Take the bottle out  
[Sound: water and ice being thrown over Jack]

Jack  
Mother!

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Hello again, Jack!  
Or, should I say,  
« Bonjour à nouveau, Monsieur Jean Pierre De Lyons ! » ?

Jack  
Who? Where did...? I beg your pardon?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Oh I see: forgotten who you are, have you?

Jack  
Where am I?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Stop playing innocent. We know your real identity.

Jack  
I'm sure I have no idea what you're talking about.  
Where are my clothes?

Fatou  
Here. Take this towel and dry yourself off

Jack  
And my clothes?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
In due time.  
First, tell me how you met Ingrid.

Jack  
Ingrid? Wow, that seems like ages ago.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Why don't you sit up? I need some answers.

Jack  
I feel dizzy.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
That's normal. It's the champagne.  
There was a little something something mixed in with it!

Jack [Sounding drugged]  
Shouldn't I get dressed first?  
Ooh this sofa feels like marshmallow...

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Now then, Jack. That isn't your real name though, is it?

Jack  
Well, no. It's John. My granddad was John too but went by Jack. I liked it, so I took it on too.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
And the name Jean-Pierre is your French alter-ego is that it?

Jack  
No. Not at all.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Well, ladies! It seems our guest is suffering from amnesia.

Fatou  
Salut, Jean-Pierre!

Jack  
My, my. Yes, sit beside me, lovely lady!

Fatou  
Tu me rappelles pas? C'est Fatou. We knew each other in Strasbourg. I lived in the same complex d'appartements que toi. We did many things together?

Jack  
We did? I really don't remember. Sorry!

Lucie  
And what about me, Jean-Pierre? Have you forgotten our fun time together in Prague?

Jack  
Oh my! Another one. Sure! You can sit beside me!

Lucie  
We met at the cemetery. You were visiting the gravestones of our famous writers? You even stayed in my aunt's house. No?

Jack  
Look, ladies, I really hate to disappoint you but I *know* I have never met any of you before today.

Fikreta  
Hello, Jack. Or should I call you Johnny, as I knew you back in London? You were doing that sales job and came in to my office trying to sell me one of those giant calculators.

Jack  
Really, I'm flattered. I did do a job like that in London for a while so it is possible we met but if so it was only for a brief minute.

Fikreta  
I can't believe this guy. How do you not remember these?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Jack  
Woah mama!

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Ok ladies, take it easy. Let our guest relax for a minute. We need to get to the bottom of this. Clearly there has been a great misunderstanding.

Fikreta  
I don't understand. He looks just like the man I knew.  
Are you sure you don't have a doppelganger somewhere?

Jack  
Look, this person, who you think I am. He's French by the sounds of it. Is that correct?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
Honestly, we're not sure. It seems he speaks many languages. He moves from city to city, country to country, taking on new identities, new names, each time a whole new personality.

Jack  
And you think *I* am this mystery guy, do you?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
I'm still not sure.  
These three ladies have all spent an intimate amount of time with him. They were our best witnesses.

Jack  
Intimate amount of time? Are you sure you don't mean infinite?

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
No. You see, we know he has a birthmark in quite an unusual place.

Jack  
Oh yeah?

Lucie [giggling]  
Yes, an unusually large place too!

Fatou  
Vraiment!

Fikreta  
I don't know. I've seen bigger.

Lucie  
For me it is perfect size.

Jack  
I'm feeling a little warm, ladies. You can give me some space if you like.

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
You don't have it, Jack

Jack  
Have what?

Lucie  
The birthmark. Under your foreskin.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Jack  
I don't think...

Fikreta  
Relax! We looked already!

Fatou  
Same size. No mark though.

Celine  
And ze bend you said is wrong

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
I was just thinking that too. Here, let's play cricket. Catch this cork!

Jack  
Howzat!

Lucie  
He is right-handed! Muj buh! That is why!

Celine  
Oh no, he is fading... je pensais que j'allais finir...

Front Desk Lady, Jessamine  
I know, I know. I'm sorry. It's all been a bit too much for the poor guy.  
Hold him here, please Ladies. I need to go make a call.  
We need to go to plan B.

[Back to top](#)

## **114. President looks like a woman**

President Barry  
Morning Frank!

Frank  
Morning, Mr President!

President Barry  
You ok, Frank? You look like you slept here.

Frank  
I did, Sir. I'm fine though.

President Barry  
And Stephanie? Did she arrive yet?

Frank  
Just landed, sir. She's heading straight over to the hotel.

President Barry  
Any news from our friends across the pond?

Frank  
MI6 has some people in the area. They've been picking up some local chatter that might prove to be useful.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

President Barry  
Have they shared the recordings with our guys at the NSA?

Frank  
No, it's not that sort of chatter, sir. More like local gossip; coffee shop chatter; that sort of thing.

President Barry  
And?

Frank  
Well, we're looking into it.

President Barry  
Frank, is there something you don't want to tell me?

Frank  
No sir. Not at all. I just don't want to overload you with speculative rumors until we have some hard evidence.

President Barry  
That's ok, I understand but I'm curious. You know, in my younger days, I was going to be a detective before I got into politics.

Frank  
No kidding? Really? You're joking!

President Barry  
Ok, I may be joking a little but listen: this is the most unusual event on a world stage I can think of. I mean to say, I'm worried for Lilly and the others but it's not like some tragic 911-style event. It's just so unusual! Seven very prominent women suddenly decide to abandon the lives they knew and just disappear! You know, Misha said something last night before we went to sleep that was still with me when I woke up: "maybe they just got tired of their bullshit husbands". Now, don't go repeating that. Those weren't her words exactly, I'm paraphrasing of course, but that's the gist of it.

Frank  
I understand your point, Mr President, but this was also coordinated, planned in advance, for quite some time. I have been speaking with a few colleagues at the NSA in fact and there is no obvious trail of communication between these seven people. The only times they would have had the chance to be together would have been at similar international conferences but even then their husbands were with them. As for the secretary of state, this was the first time she had ever been in the same room with any of the other six.

Barry  
But I think that's the part of the puzzle that we are missing. Or, indeed, it may be that we are looking at the situation like men would. Men think of coups d'états, of seizing power, not relinquishing it; of attaining an objective, not letting go of one. We need to be looking at this like a woman, from a totally different angle. Find out what you can about these women. Dig deeper into their past. I want to know their back stories. How did they meet their husbands? What were their childhoods like? What do they spend their time doing when they are not in the spotlight?  
In the meantime, we should probably organize a video conference with the other heads of state and decide what we are going to say to the press. They don't know about it yet do they, the press?

Frank  
There was only one engagement scheduled for today and that was cancelled. Most of the delegates are scheduled to leave tomorrow morning. There will be press at the airport for sure. It's gonna raise questions if there is no photo opportunities before they all fly out. It's almost become routine.

Barry  
Well it might be better if we put out a statement before that happens.  
Hey, you forgot to mention the coffee-shop chatter. What are the locals talking about?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Frank

It may be nothing but one of the ex-president's former Amazonian guards was found dead at a small airfield southwest of Tripoli, quite a way into the desert. It looks like suicide but the locals are all quite jubilant. It seems she had gotten a reputation for being quite a loose woman after she returned to civilian life.

Barry

And they're sure it was suicide?

Frank

Pretty sure, but like said, we're looking into it some more.

Barry

Ok, well, I guess that's it for now, Frank. Report back as soon as you learn more.

[Back to top](#)

## **115. The Awakening**

Alice

Finally, you're awake!

Jack

Ugh, where am I? I feel hung-over.

Alice

You're fine. They've been taking great care of you.

Jack

They have? Well that's nice to know. And what's your name, young lady?

Alice

My name is Alice and I have nine years of age.

Jack

Where did you learn English? You sound a little French and a little all-over-the-place.

Alice

And you are from England, aren't you?

Jack

Indeed I am. So, Francaise? C'est ca?

Alice

Well, my parents are from Quebec but their work has taken us all round the world. I've lost count of the number of places we have lived in. I *have* been to England. I had a wonderful time eating cucumber sandwiches and drinking Earl Grey with lemon.

Jack

Sounds lovely. Did you see all the tourist spots you are supposed to see? Big Ben, the Tower of London?

Alice

No, we stayed in the West Country; the Royal Forest of Dean, it was called. What a grand name for a forest, is it not?

Jack

Did you really? That's where I'm from!

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Alice

Maman wanted to go there because she's a huge fan of J. R. Tolkien.

Jack

Well I hope the local hobbits were nice to you.

Alice

Extremely! We stayed in an old farmhouse with a charming old couple who knew a lot about the area. They told us all the best places to go see. It was magical.

Jack

It sure is. *I* grew up on a farm in that area *too*.

Alice

When are you going back?

Jack

Charming, I must say!

Alice

I mean: everyone who leaves home desires to return one day

Jack

Are you sure you're only nine? You sound a lot older.

Alice

I feel older. My grandma calls me an old soul. She tells me these sayings all the time, from those who came before.

Jack

Sounds like something Socrates might have said

Alice

I prefer not to focus on the messenger, rather the message.

Jack

Well aren't you just full of bons mots!

Mariana

Alice, darling! There you are! Your mother is looking for you. We thought you had gone to breakfast.

Alice

I guess I was hungry for something else.

Mariana

Yes, of course. The proper little detective! God bless you, my dear, sweet, Alice.

Alice

He's from England, you know!

Mariana

We've met already.

Jack

We have? You'll have to forgive me. I seem to have amnesia.

Alice

Are you two boyfriend and girlfriend?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Both  
No!

Mariana  
He was lost. At the restaurant. I tried to help him.

Jack  
I'm still lost. Where on earth are we?

Mariana  
What do you remember? Anything at all? The pizza restaurant, maybe? The club: Heaven? The tornado?

Jack  
Woah! I just got a glimpse right there. It feels like I've been around the world several times in my dreams but those places certainly stick out now you mention them.

Mariana  
There was an accident. The tornado hit the club that I took you to. You took a blow to the head. We brought you here. There are doctors here who have been taking great care of you.

Jack  
This is a hospital? It seems too quiet. It doesn't smell like a hospital either. In fact it smells quite nice.

Mariana  
You are the only patient here. That's why it's so quiet, probably.

Alice  
Well, except for a wheel-chaired lady they just brought in this morning. She's very nice. Completely paralyzed, but doesn't complain about a thing. You should meet her. She's a delight to converse with; she's read so many books...

Mariana  
Alice, why don't you run along and find your mother. She's waiting for you in the cafeteria.  
Do you remember where that is?

Alice  
On the other side of the herb garden. I remember.  
But I want to stay and talk with my new friend, Mr. English, some more!

Jack  
Alice, I appreciate it but, well, I should probably get going. I need to get back to the city. I've got work on Monday.  
Sorry, what's your name again?

Mariana  
Mariana.

Jack  
Mariana, of course. From lovely Italy!

Mariana  
I'm from Mexico, actually. I just work in an Italian restaurant.

Jack  
Oh, I see. Good accent though!  
So... Mariana, can I get a lift to the nearest bus station, maybe?

Alice  
Are you sure you can walk?

Mariana

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Alice is right. You may need some more time to heal. Let's see if you can stand up first.

Alice  
Let me pull the blankets down for you.

Jack  
Hey! Hang on. I'm half-naked!

Mariana  
Here's a robe.

Jack  
Thanks!

Mariana  
Ok. Let me lift your legs over the edge. How does that feel?

Jack  
It feels weird. Like I've forgotten how to use them.

Mariana  
Just take it slowly.  
Alice, go fetch that wheelchair over there.

Jack  
No! I can do it!  
[Struggling] Ok, maybe I can't.  
Wow, I feel giddy.

Mariana  
Thanks, Alice! Get behind him. Push that brake on. That lever there.  
Ok, now, Jack, sit down slowly.  
There you go! Good job!

Jack  
Thanks for your help. I don't know why I'm so weak.  
How long have I been here?

Mariana  
Well, I don't know how to break this to you gently, but I'm glad you're sitting down.  
There's no easy way to say it so I'm just gonna say it.  
Are you ready?

Jack  
You're scaring me.

Mariana  
This is difficult to say but... you've been in a coma.

Jack  
What!?

Mariana  
You've been in a coma for quite a while.

Jack  
So, that's why I feel so weak!

Mariana

Yes.

Jack  
How long for?

Mariana  
You're not going to believe me.

Jack  
How long?

Mariana  
Three years.

Jack  
Three years?  
Are you serious?  
The club, the pizzeria; it seems just like yesterday...

Mariana  
I know, I know.  
It's amazing isn't it?  
And, when I say three years, I mean it's been *exactly* three years.  
Today is New Year's Day  
Once again.

Jack  
Are you serious?

Mariana  
We were in here last night, like we have done every year since the accident, counting down to the New Year, hoping  
and praying you might hear us...  
And, you did!

Alice  
It's really a miracle! Everyone's been talking about it.

Mariana  
It seems like it jogged something in your memory, hearing the countdown. You woke, briefly and then you slept a  
good deep normal sleep for another ten hours. It's coming up to 11 am.

Jack  
I feel nauseous.  
I think I'm going to be sick.

Alice  
Here! Drink some water!

Mariana  
Relax! Focus on your breath.

Jack  
I need to call my girlfriend.  
Oh hell! Is she here? Where is she?

Mariana  
She abandoned you. Remember? At the pizzeria? She took your car and ran away with our chef.  
Is any of this coming back to you?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Jack  
A little. Oh, God!  
My head's hurting.  
Three years?  
How is that even possible?

Mariana  
Relax. Let's go outside and get some fresh air.

Jack  
Does anyone know I'm here?  
What about my job?

Mariana  
Really, I'm not the best one to explain.  
Let's go outside! There is someone you need to meet.

Alice  
Can I push?

Mariana  
Sure. Come on. I'll hold the door.

Jack  
So what is this place? It's not really a hospital is it?

Mariana  
This is the medical wing, sure, but this facility is so much more: it's our home.  
I can't wait to introduce you to everyone. They are all gonna be so excited to finally hear your voice.

Jack  
Me? I hope they're used to disappointment.

[Back to top](#)

## **116. Presidential Address**

President Barry [on television]  
Fellow Americans, I have a short announcement to make and I will not be taking any questions at this time.  
You will understand in due course.

Yesterday, our secretary of state, Lillian Chryton, along with six other women, disappeared from the hotel at which they were staying for the Libyan New Year's Eve celebratory conference.

We have no reason to suspect terrorist activity and in fact, it appears the women all left of their own accord. Their husbands and partners are all safe still in Tripoli and will each be making their own statements via their countries' media channels. The other six women were the wives and girlfriend of the visiting foreign secretaries from the countries of the UK, Japan, Israel, Russia, India and Italy.

Again, I assure you there appears to be no terrorist involvement as there were no signs of struggle and no demands have been made. Our top agents are currently coordinating with the information gathering services of the respective countries.

As yet the reasons or motives for these women's disappearance are unclear but I promise to bring you any news as I learn it.

As you can see, any speculation seems premature at this point and would probably only add to the confusion. It seems logical therefore to proceed with caution until more is known.

All I will say is that our thoughts and prayers go out to the immediate families and loved ones of these women.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

One last thing: the position of Secretary of State cannot go unmanned and I will be looking to appoint a temporary replacement in the interim.

Thank you for your understanding and may God Bless America!

TV Announcer

Well, there you have it. The President speaking just minutes ago from the steps of the Whitehouse, on this cold but crisp January morning, the time is fast approaching 9:30 am and we go now to the news room for more thoughts and reactions...

Agent Frank

Well, there you go, Steph. Did you catch all that?

Agent Stephanie

Got most of it. The line's a bit crackly. I'm sure we'll be getting a local news feed relaying the video here soon.

Agent Frank

So what did MI6 have to say?

Agent Stephanie

They seem convinced "the seven" have already left the city. There was a small ship chartered by a private firm that left the port a few minutes before 1 am.

Agent Frank

Is that what we are calling the ladies then? "The seven"?

Agent Stephanie

MI6 efficiency!

Yeah, so we've got coastguards around the Mediterranean on the lookout.

The scene at the hotel is pandemonium. Its only gonna get worse now the President's made it official but I guess that's what he had to do.

Agent Frank

He had to make it clear that this was not a terrorist plot otherwise we would have had all sorts of groups claiming responsibility. As it is, there's still going to be chaos.

Agent Stephanie

You know, frank. I believe MI6 to be top drawer when it comes to intel but while they're all looking out to sea I think I'm gonna follow up on that incident with the ex-presidential guard's supposed suicide at the airfield.

Agent Frank

Sure thing. You're there now, so you might as well look into any lead you've got. If they are on the boat, they'll be picked up somewhere no doubt.

Agent Stephanie

That's what I mean, Frank: this was so well planned, I can't believe the seven would have gone to sea when there's a whole jungle of places to hide to the south. And, flying seems the only way across the desert without running into a lot of trouble.

Agent Frank

I think you're on to something. Go with your gut, Steph.

Agent Stephanie

Plus, it turns out some of the ex-presidential guard worked for Hotel security.

Agent Frank

Well that would explain the "help from above" if those guards were on the roof. Check back when you get to the airfield.

Agent Stephanie

Will do, sir. Over and out.

[Back to top](#)

## **117. The Commune**

Alice

You're silly, Mr. Jack!

I have been looking forward to meeting you for ages, it seems like.

[Sound: main doors into hot house with a buzz of insects]

Jessamine

As, indeed, have I.

Mariana

Jessie! There you are!

Look! He's awake!

Jessamine

I see that! It is a miracle for sure.

It's a pleasure to meet you, Jack.

My name is Jessamine but you can call me Jessie; or, Directrice, if you prefer.

Jack

Eh bien, vous etes francaise, alors?

Jessamine

No, but we like the French tongue better because they still remember the feminine.

Jack

Hey, don't I know you?

Jessamine

Yes, you do. I'm the Front Desk Lady. I'm glad your memory is coming back.

Jack

I'm sorry but what is your name again?

Jessamine

I didn't tell you. It's Jessamine but you can call me Jessie if you like.

Let me accompany you guys outside.

I'm very excited to show you around too. This place has been quite an inspiration to us.

Jack

[Somewhat reluctantly]

On y va! Lead the way!

Jessamine

Take it easy, Jack! I'll push you. Let your muscles get adjusted to moving again.

Jack

I don't want to be in this thing forever, you know

Jessamine

I admire your tenacity. You'll need it if you are going to regain full strength; and you will, I can see that in you.

Put these gloves on at least. They'll help you grip the wheel rims better.

Jack  
Gold member gloves? Why does that name ring a bell?

Mariana  
From the movie?

Alice  
The gym.

Jack  
Right! I used to be a member in Saint Louis. It's like they're haunting me, you know? You sign one contract and they never give up chasing you, even if you move state.

Mariana  
Or, hide out in a commune!

Jack  
Is that what this place is? A commune?

Jessamine  
Sort of. Personally I don't like that word though. Makes us sound like a bunch of hippies.

Jack  
Nothing wrong with hippies. Some of my best friends are hippies. In fact that's how I met Ingrid. She was hanging out in an urban commune of sorts, called Calibri, in South Saint Louis. They grew their own food on a lot in-between the two houses they occupied.  
Oh my God, I just realized something!

Mariana  
What is it?

Jack  
You said I'd been out of it for three years. It's now just hitting me... What about my job? My car payments?

Jessamine  
Relax! Take a breath! Here, Alice, pick me some of those leaves off of that small tree there.

Alice  
This one? Mmm, smells weird.

Jessamine  
Here, Jack, chew on these leaves for a while. They'll calm you down.

Jack  
What a beautiful garden!

Mariana  
Don't you just love it? This is the medicinal section. There are too many to name right now but I'm hoping I can show you around when you're feeling stronger.

Jack  
I'm not going to be here long. I can assure you of that.

Alice  
Where will you go? Home?

Jack  
Home! I'd completely forgotten home. Does my mother know where I am?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Jessamine

It's ok. Try not to get worked up. As soon as we brought you here, we let your parents know.

Jack

Well that's a relief.  
Did they come and visit?

Jessamine

They wanted to but there really wasn't any point.

Jack

I guess it would have been a bit boring. But that doesn't sound like mum, not wanting to visit...

Mariana

Actually there was a lot more going on that you think. We read to you, exercised your muscles...

Jessamine

Otherwise you would have perished away.

Mariana

We played music, did all sorts of things to try and wake you.

Jack

I really should call home.

Jessamine

All in good time. There's just a few things more I want to show you.

Jack

Ooh, looks like you've got a serious nettle problem over there!

Jessamine

Nettles are some of the best things to aide in your revival.

Jack

You can eat nettles?

Jessamine [laughing]

We make a tea from them.

Jack

Oh. I didn't know.

Jessamine

Let's go outside.

Jack

I thought we were outside.

Mariana

Look up. This whole place is a glasshouse.

Jack

I feel like I'm having Deja-vu. I've seen this design somewhere before.

Jessamine

How are those leaves helping?

Jack

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

They're actually quite pleasant. I'm starting to feel pretty good.

Jessamine  
Thought you might. Come on. Check this out.

Mariana  
I'll get the door.

Jessamine  
Wait till I put this blanket on him.  
Ok let's go.

Jack  
Whoa! It is quite brisk out here, isn't it?

Mariana  
Ever been in a cable car, Jack?

Jack  
Oh, it's been a while. Chamonix, in the Alps, in fact. Man, that was high. You could hardly breathe up there.

Jessamine  
Well, this one isn't quite that high. Just takes us up to the top of the bluff there. A very elegant form of transport though.

Jack  
And you've got bikes in them. A little odd, I guess, but oh well!

Mariana  
They're dynamo'd; for empowering the cable lift.

Alice  
That's so cool. I want to ride one.

Jessamine  
Go right ahead. Want me to adjust the seat?

Alice  
No thanks. I got it.

Jack  
Neat. But you're telling me you power this whole cable car with just a few bicycle dynamos?

Jessamine  
Hardly! But it's a way of giving back. Every bit counts, right?

Jack  
I guess. Seems like a lot of work.

Jessamine  
I think that's your lazy voice coming out, Jack.  
You were raised on a farm, weren't you?

Jack  
How do you know? Oh, my mother.  
Hang on, what else has she told you?

Jessamine  
Nothing you wouldn't want us to know, I'm sure.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Jack  
I don't know. There's a few things...

Alice  
Secrets use up valuable brain power, Mr Jack.

Jack  
Good to know, Alice, thanks!

Alice  
You're welcome!  
Hey, look down there! You can see the whole complex.

Jack  
Not from where I'm sitting.

Mariana  
We're almost at the top. You'll have a better view in a minute. We can take you round to the hideout over there.  
There's a great panoramic view of the whole valley.

Jessamine  
Ok, get the door, Alice.  
Ready?  
Ok, here we go...

[Back to top](#)

## **118. Mort**

Mortimer Roth (South African mixed with Cockney London accent)  
'Ello darling, you must be the chick I spoke to last night. You look better all cleaned up.

Irene  
Charming! You must be sober.

Mortimer  
Name's Mort.

Irene  
I remember. I'm Irene. And you're sure you're a pilot?

Mortimer  
All my life!

Irene  
How soon can we get going?

Mortimer  
Might be a short wait. There's still police here, investigating that suicide yesterday

Irene  
What suicide? I didn't hear anything

Mortimer  
Didn't get much press. Suicide's illegal. Only whispered about.

Irene

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Who was it?

Mortimer  
Some local woman. C'mon, let's go take a butchers.

Irene  
Take a what?

Mortimer  
Butcher's hook; look. It's cockney

Irene  
So you're from London originally?

Mortimer  
Me dad was. Royal Air Force. Stationed in Johannesburg when he met my mother.

Irene  
What a rich heritage!  
Do you know any of these policemen that we can talk to?

Mortimer  
I should say. Do a little bit of importing from time to time. Always 'ave to check in with the ol' bill whenever I land, dun I?

Irene  
I don't know, do you?

Mortimer  
Course luv. They all gotta take their slice o' the pie.  
Hey, Faruque! When d'you think I can get airborne then? How long's this all gonna take?

Faruque  
We have very nearly concluded.

Mortimer [Jokingly]  
So what's the verdict then? Did she jump or was she pushed?

Faruque [Seriously]  
Why? What do you know?

Mortimer  
Nuffin'. Keep yer 'air on. Just an expression.

Faruque  
Where are you heading to?

Mortimer  
Cape Town. Eventually. Stopping off wherever this lovely lady wants to go on the way.

Faruque  
And who are you, young lady?

Irene  
Young lady? Why, thank you officer, you are kind!  
My name is Irene. My grandmother is from Kenya but I live in the US. I guess I should go see her now I'm on the continent but there are so many other places I want to see too.

Faruque

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Well I hope you enjoy your stay. Please be very careful though. Africa can be a dangerous place.

Irene

I will indeed, detective. I'm lucky to have an experienced guide like Mortimer with me.

Faruque

Yes indeed. I'm not yet detective though. One day I hope

Irene

Oh I'm sure you'll make it very soon. So I don't know anything about what happened but it sounds like you don't think it was suicide.

Faruque

I'm not supposed to say but that's how it is looking.

Mortimer

How d'you figure that?

Faruque

The woman fell from a private jet. We know what kind even though there is no record of the plane arriving or going as it is very well known here. Owned by famous English business man.

Mortimer

Really? Bet I can guess who that is!

Faruque

Please! You must be keeping silent. We are still not 100 percent but all indications point to his plane. I'm sure he was not involved himself of course. He lives in the Caribbean, far away. Not likely to be here for New Year celebrations, that is for sure.

Irene

How intriguing! What else can you tell us?

Faruque

Are you recording this? What are you? Reporter?

Irene

Freelance, yes, but please! I was here to cover the conference and it's been lamer than a legless duck. You gotta help me.

Faruque

I will do no such thing. This is very rude of you not to say you were reporter. My boss will be killing me.

Irene

I know, I know. You started talking first. I couldn't help it. It's my natural instinct. So was it murder then?

Mortimer

A reporter eh? You kept that quiet. I've always wanted to meet a real reporter. Listen darling, we don't need to ask any more questions. I know the plane Faruque here is talking about. There's no way they took off with a door open or opened it during take-off. If I had to guess, looking at where they got the chalk outline, this woman, whoever she was, must have been trying to climb on board from the outside.

Agent Stephanie

Interesting theory, Mr...?

Mortimer

Well hello to you too, gorgeous! Roth's the name, flyin's the game.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Agent Stephanie  
Detective! Agent Stephanie, US intelligence.

Mortimer  
CIA? Here? Well the thick plotens!

Agent Stephanie  
What can you tell me about the plane?

Faruque  
I'm sorry, miss. You will need to speak with my bosses.

Agent Stephanie  
No time. We are already 42 hours behind. How many seats on the plane? You can tell me that at least.

Mortimer  
Poor Faruque, he don't know which way to look. Probably not used to being questioned by two such beautiful women.

Agent Stephanie  
Not even the Amazonian guard?

Faruque  
How did you know?

Irene  
Weren't they disbanded when the regime fell last year?

Agent Stephanie  
Doesn't mean those women stopped working. Just got a new employer.

Faruque  
Most of them left the country. Only the crazy ones stayed behind

Agent Stephanie  
Or maybe the ones with a secret mission

Mortimer  
Blimey, this is fun.

Agent Stephanie  
Faruque, I need the number of that plane.

Faruque  
Please you must be talking to my bosses

Mortimer  
No worries luv. I got a picture of it somewhere on my phone. I met the pilot a few times too. Britisher, of course. Based out of Nairobi. Got his own short-haul business; mainly top executives and the like.

Agent Stephanie  
I'm gonna need your plane

Mortimer  
Hold on, hold on! There's no one flying my plane `cept me, gottit?

Agent Stephanie  
OK. I apologize, I meant: I would like a ride and you will be well compensated

*[R] Rated: Adults Only!*

Mortimer

Well then. That's more like it. It just so 'appens that me and this lovely lady was thinkin' of swinging by there anyway, on our way down south.

Agent Stephanie

Excellent. We need to leave immediately. There's no time to lose.

Mortimer

Well maybe you can 'ave a quick word with 'is bosses. Them's the ones been 'olding us up.

Agent Stephanie

Consider it done. Ready your plane!

Mortimer

Yes ma'am!

Agent Stephanie

[Sound walking away]

[Distant] Excuse me who's in charge here?

Irene

Well I guess I will appreciate some female company

Mortimer

Must be my lucky day! I usually have to pay for the company of two such lovely ladies

Irene

I'm still recording this you know?

Mortimer

Be even better on video!

C'mon! Let's get sorted!

[Back to top](#)

## **119. Talking in your sleep**

Jack

This is amazing! What a complex! It almost looks like a honeycomb with all those hexagonal roofs.

Alice

They're octagons, actually.

Jack

Even better. Eight's my favorite number.

Jessamine

We know, Jack.

Jack

You know, you women are pretty fond of telling me how much you know about me already.

Jessamine

Jack, do you know you talk in your sleep?

Jack

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Oh great! Yes, I have been told that a few times. Apparently, one time I even commentated on a whole Liverpool football match. Soccer, that is, to you.

Mariana

You've been talking in your sleep here too.

Jessamine

At first it was really surreal. We thought you were waking up.

Mariana

We would keep hoping that you were coming out of your coma.

Jessamine

But you didn't. But you kept on talking. On and on. Describing a place in your dreams: a turtle sanctuary.

Jack

Oh man, I've been dreaming about that place for ages.

Jessamine

Well here it is Jack: your dream come true...

Jack

This is amazing! So you're telling me this is a sanctuary? Self-sustaining, I take it?

Jessamine

Yes

Jack

Grow all your own food?

Mariana

And medicine!

Jack

Supply all your own energy?

Jessamine

Yep. See over there? Wind turbine, water turbine, solar panels you can see dotted around, thermal heating below the buildings, and we're just looking into natural gas collection too but we're still not quite sure just how eco-friendly that is yet.

Jack

Amazing, just amazing.

And it's a turtle sanctuary to boot!

Mariana

Not just turtles though; we take in any animal that we can help, including the occasional human.

Jack

Funny!

So how many people live here?

Jessamine

It varies a lot. Our core team is just seven of us but we could accommodate several hundred at a push.

Jack

Really? Where do they all sleep? I mean it's big but it's not that big is it?

Mariana

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

That's usually in the summer, when we put up tents. Right now there's just the seven of us plus you and Alice, her mother, Denise and, one new patient who just arrived today.

Jessamine

They'll be a few more arriving later too, now that you're awake.

Jack

So where does everyone come from during the summer months?

Jessamine

Oh, all over the world. We are part of a much larger association of sanctuaries like this one. Just like the birds, we migrate.

Jack

And how long have you been here at this one?

Jessamine

Ever since we got started, three years ago.  
Ever since you arrived.  
Before that I was a migrator; travelling where the warm currents took me.

Jack

Ah yes! Wither the wind! That's been my tangent too.

Jessamine

Yes, but not always with the warm currents, right?

Jack

I guess you could say that.

Jessamine

Jack, do you believe in God?

Jack

Oh no, is this some sort of cult?

Jessamine

Hey! What makes you think that?

Jack

I'm sorry. You put me on the defensive.

Jessamine

That's ok. I understand. I've been to England. I've lived there one summer.  
I know what the church is like over there. Very ceremonial.

Jack

You can say that again. I was a choir boy for a few years when I was about Alice's age. Our vicar was a nice chap but it felt like he was only interested in being chums with the rich people in town.

Mariana

He has to make a living like everyone else though, right?

Jack

Sure. I get it. But that doesn't seem to be who Christ came to save, or any of the great prophets, for that matter. They always seemed to care about the sick and needy and impoverished.

Jessamine

So you think Christ was just a prophet and not the son of God?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Jack

I didn't say that. You're putting words in my mouth.  
 What I mean is he seemed to preach against the love of money, as did many of the great teachers in history. Money is power, power corrupts, etc., etc. So getting back to my previous question: is this a cult? What do I need to know about you guys? Do I need to watch my tongue?

Mariana

No, no. Quite the opposite. We encourage openness. We encourage a student to learn all the many ways of the divine. Our goal is to be a sanctuary to the lost and help them on their way.

Jessamine

Each of us is on a similar but different path to salvation or enlightenment or nirvana or whatever other name you choose to give it. We cannot force anyone to believe what we believe because what we believe is not a belief but a knowing that cannot be described easily with words or even ideas; it's an experience.

Mariana

Some come here who are not ready; not yet open to seeing things differently.

Jessamine

All we can do is provide, food, shelter, warmth and comfort. If the student is ready, there are opportunities to grow in the spiritual plane, to find the peace within. But we cannot force it. And besides, we have visitors from many cultures and many backgrounds with many languages. Ultimately we know there is one end goal, one purpose but this message, brought over and over, time after time to the world of men, has been lost or misinterpreted or even deliberately twisted for personal gain.

Mariana

We know you know this because we have heard you talk about this in your dreams while you slept.

Jessamine

And, what is more: when we heard you describe this place, we knew we had to build it for you.

Jack

I beg your pardon?

Jessamine

This place. This is your creation.  
 You described it while you slept. And we built it.

Jack

Impossible. Seven of you built all this in three years?

Mariana

Oh there were a lot more than just we seven.

Alice

Five thousand and thirty nine, at the last count, to be precise.

Jack

Of course, you would know, wouldn't you? Is there anything you don't know?

Mariana

Jack! Go easy! I understand this is all quite a shock.

Jessamine

Alice, why don't you go find your mother?

Alice

Where is she?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Jessamine

I expect she's still in the cafeteria. If not there, then she may be in the hothouse.

Alice

Ok. I'll see you later Mr Jack. I hope!

Jessamine

Jack, we have been waiting for someone like you to come along. Yes, there have been others, in other parts of the world, but never here in the Midwest before. It was a sign from the divine universe; the fates aligned. When we shared the news with our association members across the globe we had more than enough offers of support.

Mariana

Too many, in fact.

Jessamine

It's a commonwealth thing: we all help each other. Today the Midwest, tomorrow darkest Peru or who knows where the next one will come.

Jack

Next one? Next what?

Mariana

Next man like you, Jack.

Jack

Me? I'm not a man. I'm a poor excuse for a man. I'm a coward, if you want the truth. I'm still a boy, really. I don't think I'll ever grow up. I don't really want to be a "man", so to speak.

Mariana

Exactly. It is the child in you that prevents you from being like all the other brutes.

Jack

[Laughing] This is too funny. Who are you guys, really?  
I need to speak to the man in charge.  
Someone's got to be able to speak some sense around here!

Jessamine

Jack, look around you.  
Do you see any men?

[Silence]

Jack

Oh no! This isn't a lesbian colony is it?

Jessamine

I think we should leave you alone for a while. Give you time to collect your thoughts.  
There's a radio phone over there. Give Seoyeon a call when you're ready and she'll wheel you back down.

[Back to top](#)

## **120. Oceans of Sand**

[Sound: crackling radio in airplane]

Radio Announcer

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

This is the BBC world service.

We come to you with probably the strangest news I've had to report in all my time here at the Beeb: at just after 3pm GMT, (9 am local time), the US President stood on the steps of the Whitehouse and delivered the news that the Secretary of State, Lillian Chryton, who had been attending a peace conference and New Year's Celebration in the capitol city of Tripoli, Libya had gone missing along with six other prominent women from six other countries. The women are *not* presumed dead, nor are they believed to have been abducted but rather, it is believed, they have simply run away; disappeared from the spotlight.

CIA officials, MI6 and Intelligence officials around the globe have been put on high alert.

As yet there has been no sight or sound from the missing seven. Any theory as to their motive for such actions seems moot and the situation can only be described, as one official put it, as "baffling".

For more on the story, we go now to... [Trailing off]

Mortimer

So how do you like the view?

Irene

Incredible! It's like an ocean of sand.

Agent Stephanie

Hey look over there! 9 o'clock on the horizon.

Is that a camel train?

Mortimer

Sure looks like it. Wanna take a closer look?

Agent Stephanie

Sure, why not? It's not every day I get to fly across Africa.

On second thoughts, we better not. Let's not waste any time.

Mortimer

You're the boss.

So, got any theories yet?

Agent Stephanie

Several. What these women did was highly unusual. They went to great lengths to slip away in secret. I highly doubt they would get on a boat. They'd be too vulnerable. They've taken care to hide their tracks.

Irene

Have they? Really? I mean, how do you know they weren't abducted? They left clues, right?

Agent Stephanie

What we know is still a best guess; a process of deduction. I wouldn't call them clues.

Mortimer

I think I see where she's going. The clues they left were the absence of what you might call "normal" clues.

Agent Stephanie

That's it; it's like that Occam's razor theory: sometimes the most obvious answer, *is* the answer, or something like that.

Irene

Ok I see what you mean.

So what about this suicide case back at the airfield? What do you make of that?

Agent Stephanie

Maybe it was an accident. Maybe she just happened to be there, saw this strange group of women trying to board a plane at night, maybe even recognized one of them...

Irene

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Which is possible. She was ex-intelligence, right?

Agent Stephanie

Maybe she tried to stop them; did something crazy like try to jump on a wing, hoping they would stop, but they didn't; they couldn't afford to stop.

Mortimer

What I don't get is why go to all this trouble in the first place. I mean they were all connected to high seats of power. Couldn't they have made their point some other way? I'm sure they could have held press conferences themselves even if they were only the wife or girlfriend of some politician. And, as for Lillian, the secretary of state, she already had a position of power.

Irene

Who would have listened to them? You say she has power but what power does she have really? And, more to the point, what point are they trying to make anyway?

Agent Stephanie

All I know is, I've been commanded to find them and that's what I'm going to do. I certainly have a duty to make sure the secretary of state is safe. As to the how and why, I guess we are only going to get that from the lady herself.

Mortimer

You said it: let's wait till we hear it from the horse's mouth. I'm with you on that.

Agent Stephanie

Hey, Mort, how much longer till we get there?

Mortimer

Keep yer knickers on. We'll be there soon enough. Just crossing into Chad, so we're about half way there.

Agent Stephanie

I wish this thing was a jet.

Mortimer

Me too, darling! Me too! Could be worse though: at least you're not on camels. Now that would be slow!

[Back to top](#)

## **121. Naked engineering**

Jack [Talking on short wave radio]

Come in, Seoyeon!

Over. [Radio crackles]

Hello? Seoyeon? Can you hear me? Over.

Seoyeon (South Korean) [on radio]

Reading you. Over.

Jack

Can you help me get back down? Please?

Seoyeon

Be right dare. Over

Jack

Okey dokey.

Over and out.

[Sound: train whistle]  
[Sound: sliding door]

Seoyeon  
Well hey, good looking! So you need ride back down?

Jack  
I need someone to push, that's for sure. My arms feel so weak.

Seoyeon  
Oh, yes. Probably not use muscles in long time, eh? Dat sucky!

Jack  
So, let me guess: Chinese?

Seoyeon  
No, no! South Korean! Please! What you take me for?

Jack  
Ok! Sorry!  
I was close though.

Seoyeon  
Please! China very different. Not same. No way!

Jack  
I love how international this place is!

Seoyeon  
So you like train?

Jack  
Love trains! Best way to travel. Why? [Chuckling] You got a train?

Seoyeon  
Sure do.

Jack  
Are you serious?

Seoyeon  
Step this way! Or, how you say? Let's roll...

Jack  
Full steam ahead!

Seoyeon  
How you know?

Jack  
How do I know what?

Seoyeon  
Train: steam train.

Jack  
Goes without saying, I guess. I don't know. Lucky guess is all.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Seoyeon  
You like Thomas train?

Jack  
Really?

Seoyeon  
Take look...

Jack  
Oh my god! A little bitty Thomas!  
That is so cool!

Seoyeon  
All for you! Or, from you! Whatever!  
Here we go!  
Load up!

Jack  
All aboard!

Seoyeon  
You wanna yank dat chain?  
[Sound; toot-toot of steam train whistle]

Jack  
That is awesome! Truly, I try not to over-use that word but this really is awesome!

Seoyeon  
Glad you like. Design myself. From your description.

Jack  
This was in my dreams too?

Seoyeon  
Sure was. Had to build narrow gauge though; not enough room for regular. Better for climbing also.

Jack  
So you're an engineer? You look so young!

Seoyeon  
I specialize. No point filling head with stuff I don't need.

Jack  
And how old are you now?

Seoyeon  
Twenty-two.

Jack  
That's incredible!

Seoyeon  
Maybe. I don't think so.  
Many people waste too much time learning stuff they forget.  
You specialize. You can do degree in half time.

Jack  
Stands to reason. So you built this whole engine?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Seoyeon

I design then get help from many others. I not wonder woman!

Jack

Right. So it runs on coal? I thought you guys were so "eco-friendly"?

Seoyeon

Engine burn charcoal. Make our self from cornstalk.  
Move you left side. Much better view of valley. We take long way round.

Jack

This is so beautiful. Is all this land part of the commune?

Seoyeon

Whole valley. Sure. Forest there is National Park. After trees, bout hundred meters. Property ends right at small road  
bridge in distance. See?

Jack

Hey is that a Greek theater down there?

Seoyeon

Sure is. Just like the one in...

Jack

Orange.

Seoyeon

You guessed it.

Jack

I suppose I mentioned that in my sleep too.

Seoyeon

We stop and take a quick tour, OK?

Jack

Why not!

Seoyeon

Be there in a minute or two.  
You sing and play guitar, right?

Jack

Me? Oh, a little. Not very good though.

Seoyeon

Me, no. I wish.

Jack

Yeah, it's come in useful a few times.

Seoyeon

With the ladies?

Jack

Oh, no, nothing like that. I was thinking about a time I got stranded down in Greece with no money and a long train  
ride home. I did some busking and the people at the train station must have felt sorry for me cuz they gave me  
enough to get a few sandwiches and stuff. Probably paid to get me to shut up!

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Seoyeon

Maybe you play something later? Maybe you sing me song in your room.

Jack

I don't know. I'm not in a fit state to be doing anything like that. And, besides, you're young enough to me my daughter.

Seoyeon

What you think? I just want hear you play, that's all. Man, you men are all on one track mind!

Jack

I'm sorry. I got the wrong impression.

Seoyeon

That's ok. I understand. Men need strong sex drive. Otherwise no babies, right?

Jack

Hmm, I never thought of it like that.

Seoyeon

I know. You man. You want feel good moment. Women want have baby.

Jack

Oh so you want to get pregnant?

Seoyeon

Yes and no. When time is right, I will be ready.  
Ok here we go.

Jack

Cute station.

Seoyeon

Easy access for wheelchair, see?

Jack

I can do it. [Rolling down ramp] whoa!

Seoyeon

Be careful!  
Over here! Turn in there!

Jack

Oh man, this is too cool.  
Echo! [Echo, echo]  
Great acoustics!

Seoyeon

Hey! So how I look on stage?

Jack

Like a star!  
So, do you have a boyfriend?

Seoyeon

No! Course not!

Jack

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Sorry! I just thought...

Seoyeon

Too much distraction. I prefer work and study.  
Man, you overthink too much. Always cart before horse with you.

Jack

Hey, Seoyeon, am I saying it right? I apologize. I didn't mean to get you upset.

Seoyeon

It not you. All men thoughtless pigs - every one.

Jack

Well hey now, I wouldn't go that far. Some of us are nice!

Seoyeon

Really? I see men in room when they think no one watching. You not first man we had here. So many disappointments. I can show you video.

Jack

No thanks, I can imagine.  
[Ponderously] What do you mean: video?

Seoyeon

All room have video camera. Keep us safe and honest. Here, look at my phone...  
You see? Type in room number. Yours 37. And look: there is room.  
Type 69: my room!

Jack

Nice number! Did you pick that yourself?

Seoyeon

See what I mean? Even you are pig. Not your fault. I know. Just way you wired, right?  
World much better if men learn control. How I wish!

Jack

C'mon! I was only joking around. You're getting all serious on me.

Seoyeon

But this is serious! I had high hope for you. Now I see I was wrong. Men all same. Disgusting!

Jack

Hey don't go! I need you to get me back to my room. Don't leave me here! Please?

Seoyeon

Look, I going show you something. Then you say I'm right. Then I take you home. Ok?

Jack

Ok. Certainly! I'm sorry!

Seoyeon

Hold jacket!

Jack

What are you doing?

Seoyeon

Vest... shoes... pants... catch!

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Jack  
Don't take your clothes off! You'll freeze...

Seoyeon  
Shirt... bra and last not least... panties. Catch!  
Smell good?

Jack  
No! Eugh!

Seoyeon  
Don't look away! Look at me! Look me up and down! Me saving myself for perfect man to come along. Give me baby. I work hard. Take care of this body.

Jack  
Aren't you cold?

Seoyeon  
Cold? Cold! Cold is in mind. Body produce heat like generator. You must learn overcome cold. Overcome fear. Overcome everything.

Jack  
You are truly beautiful.

Seoyeon  
Thank you!  
And how is penis doing?  
Let me check...

Jack  
Hey!

Seoyeon  
As I suspect! Very hard. Not from cold either.  
See how much control you have? None!  
I must cut you now. Throw you on garbage heap.

Jack  
What! What do you mean?

Seoyeon  
You are not fit for making babies with me. I must keep waiting.

Jack  
I've got witnesses. My parents will come looking for me.

Seoyeon  
No one knows you are here.  
What Jessie told you about your mother? It was lie.  
She call your family next day you arrive. Tell them you dead.  
You died in tornado when ceiling come down and then burn to ground.  
Nothing left but we send them ashes in jar.

Jack  
This is ridiculous! I demand you take me home right now. I need to call my lawyer at the very least.

Seoyeon  
Who you kidding?  
We know you. We know all about you.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

You never use lawyer in all your life except one time for minor traffic ticket.  
Am I right?

Jack  
How do you know all this about me?

Seoyeon  
You think you met Ingrid by accident?  
Did she approach you or did you approach her when you first met?

Jack  
First thing she asked me was if I wanted to go see her bedroom.

Seoyeon  
And rest is history, yes?

[Silence]

Jack  
So Ingrid was in on this all along. Is that what you're saying?

Seoyeon  
You see? We know you. We see how you live. Sit here for while. Think about that, dumb pig!  
Give me my clothes!  
I'll be back...  
Maybe!

[Back to top](#)

## **122. Behind every great President**

First lady Misha  
Darling, you look tired. Can't you at least take a quick nap?

President Barry  
Believe me, I would love to but my adrenalin's keeping me going right now. Aren't you intrigued as to what's going on?

First Lady Misha  
Not intrigued, not at all. I know you're enjoying the hunt, darling, but these women are deserters, if you ask me. We should just let them run and get back to more serious things like the economy.

President Barry  
Wow. I hardly think that's possible. The media is going crazy, worldwide.

First Lady Misha  
These women don't deserve such attention. They should be standing by their men. They should be proud of the positions they found themselves in, not shirking the responsibility.

President Barry  
Have you eaten darling? You sound a little ornery.

First Lady Misha  
Me, ornery? I'd say that's exactly what these women are. A temper tantrum is really what this sort of behavior is.

Rebecca, President's aide  
[Knocking]  
Sir? I have those dossiers, you requested.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

President Barry  
Come on in, Becky. You can set them on my desk.  
Where's Frank?

Rebecca, President's aide  
He's waiting outside, Mr President.

President Barry  
Tell him I'll be two minutes.

Rebecca, President's aide  
Yes, sir [door closes]

First Lady Misha  
Two minutes! That's what it's come to hasn't it?

President Barry  
Misha, you knew what it was going to be like. You were the one who pushed me to pursue the job.

First Lady Misha  
Because that's what you wanted!

President Barry  
Did I? I sometimes think I'd have had an easier time staying at the local level; maybe waited a few terms before running.

First Lady Misha  
Well you made it didn't you? You're here, aren't you?

President Barry  
Yes I am but I would not have done it without you pushing me constantly; picking me up whenever I got deflated.

First Lady Misha  
You make me sound like a slave driver!

President Barry  
That's not what I meant at all and you know it, darling. You are my rock. I love you!

First Lady Misha  
I love you too, Mr President!

President Barry  
Cute! Ok, I'll see you a little later. Ok?

First Lady Misha  
K. Kisses?

President Barry  
[Kisses; door opens and closes]  
Frank? Hey, come on in.

[Back to top](#)

## **123. Let the games begin**

Jessamine  
Good! You made it back safely!

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Jack

Yeah, no thanks to you! Or, any of you, for that matter!  
I've never met such an insensitive group of women!  
I can't imagine why you would want to keep me alive for three years just to subject me to such behavior!  
It's so rude!  
And, so weird!

Jessamine

Anything else you wanna get of your chest?

Jack

[Getting even more angry]  
Oh, now you're just looking for a fight!  
Well then, yes.  
I guess, *there is* more:  
When can I call my parents to come and get me out of this madhouse?  
Oh, and why all the slapping?  
Is this some kind of lesbian, sadomasochistic hippie camp?  
I mean, where do you get off on all of this?  
I guess I shouldn't really expect a common sense answer to all this should I?

Jessamine

No, you are right. We have behaved very badly and we need to be punished.

Jack

Yes you do.  
Hang on, what?

Jessamine [Sounding concerned]

Listen, Jack. I'm concerned about your health. It probably wasn't a good idea to let you get up and about so quickly after your re-awakening. We should check your blood-sugar levels at least.  
Hey, there's Alice!  
Alice! Come here, quick!

Alice

Hello! What seems to be the matter, Jessie?

Jessamine

Do you have your blood sugar tester?

Alice

Of course, I always carry it with me.

Jack

I'm so sorry. I didn't know....

Jessamine

Let's test Jack's sugar level.

Alice

Oh sure.  
And you assume too much, Mr Jack. I just like to be prepared. Maybe it's you that has diabetes...  
Hang on...  
Ok hold out one of your fingers...

Jack

It's not going to hurt much is it?  
Ow!

Alice  
That was it. Nothing to it. You're not going to cry are you?

Jack  
Course not!

Alice  
Oh you do have low sugar!

Jack  
What does it say?

Alice  
No I can just tell by your snappiness....

Jack  
God, you're such a know-it-all, aren't you?

Alice  
Ok here it is: 68. Wow, you need to eat something fast.

Jack  
What does 68 mean?

Alice  
80 to 120 is normal. If you go much lower you're gonna pass out.  
Hang on, I got some snacks I keep for emergencies.  
Here, eat this! All of it!

Jack  
Mmm, chocolate! Wow, that's good!

Alice  
Yes, well, it's not exactly chocolate but it does the trick.  
You should definitely eat some real food soon though. That won't sustain you for too long.

Jessamine  
Why don't we go to the theater? There is to be music and dancing and food and frivolity tonight. You can relax and tell me everything that's on your mind. I'm sure we've only scratched the surface.  
I'd like you to go deeper; much, much deeper.  
You can talk while I push...  
[Sound: wheelchair over gravel path]

Jack [With mouth full]  
I still need to call my mother.  
[Swallows]  
And, what am I supposed to say?  
"Hi mum, it's me! I'm not dead! But don't worry, some evil band of lesbian weirdoes has been looking after me during my three-year coma. Yeah, they thought that telling you I was dead was better than telling you they kidnapped me. How are you mother? You're not all dead over there too are you?"  
I mean, what if they *are* all dead and I never got to see them or even go to their funeral. I mean...

Jessamine  
Please! Calm down. Just finish your cake.  
I understand your frustration. Unfortunately, we have no phones here.  
Tomorrow I will take you into town and you can call from the club.

Jack

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

No phones? Are you kidding me? What about a cell phone? No one's got at least one cell phone?

Jessamine

They don't work out here. But that's how we like it.

Jack

Like I said: weirdoes!

Jessamine

We are indeed. Relax. You'll feel better soon, I promise.

Jack

I hope so.

Jessamine

You never know. The right food, the right medicine, the right tender loving care and we might have you up on your feet in no time. Take some time to quieten your mind. Everything will become clear in a few minutes.

Jack

I just need to get home

Jessamine

Totally understand. How I long for home!  
As indeed do all the lovely ladies you'll see tonight.  
From all corners of the earth...

Jack

Who?

Jessamine

Take a look!

[Sound: female audience chatting]

Jack

My word!

Jessamine

Let's position you stage right.  
Excuse me for a second. [Sound: microphone pa]  
Ladies!

Your attention, for just a moment!

[Sound: crowd simmering down]

I have with me, someone you all know very well!  
All the way from sunny England: everyone say "Hi Jack!"

All

[Sound cheering, whistling]

Jessamine

Of course, he doesn't know *where* he is or *who* he is, for that matter, but from what he was telling me on the way over here, he'd rather just get home to mummy, just as soon as his little legs will carry him, God bless him, than stay here with us for an evening!  
Now what do you say to that, sisters?

All

Booooooo!

Jessamine

You don't want him to go?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

All  
Noooo!

Jessamine  
Ok well I guess you need to convince him to stay then. Ok?

All  
OK!

Jenni [Finnish accent]  
I'll take care of him!

Jessamine  
We have a volunteer! Thank you Jenni!

Seoyeon  
I'll help you too. You're gonna need it!

Jessamine  
Well thank you too, Seoyeon! I think you'd better stay in your seat for just a minute though. I know Celine wants to do introductions...

Celine  
Thank you, Jessie.  
Ecoutez, toutes la monde! Listen everyone! Open your ears!  
We are honored to have with us tonight, three fine examples of eligible middle-aged men.  
You have already met one of them, now let me introduce you to the other two.  
All the way from the Boise, Idaho, known for intellectual prowess, it's Iain Pinkerton!

All  
[Sound cheering, whistling]

Celine  
And thirdly, from ze steel city of Pittsburgh, hammering on and off those righteous strings for more than a generation, the man that holds it all together, Richy the Bass.

All  
[Sound cheering, whistling]

Celine  
I know that there are many of you among us today that are:  
Ripe for regeneration...

All  
[Sound: Cheers!]

Céline  
Primed for procreation

All  
[Sound: Cheers!]

Céline  
Over-filled with fertility

All  
[Sound: Cheers!]

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Céline  
Excellent. Fantastique. So let the games begin!

Jack  
Games? What games? Hey where d'you go?

Jessamine  
I'm down here in the audience seats. Jenni will look after you.

Céline  
Please gentlemen, your attention, if it pleases you.

Jessamine  
You're a good sport, Jack!

Céline  
Ok, Iain, Richy! Take a seat.  
Let's have you stage left, Iain and you in the center, Richy... shall we?  
[Sound: organizing of chairs]  
Ok, perfect!  
Now, ladies, stand up where you are and introduce yourselves when you are called!  
Maaike?

Maaike [Dutch accent]  
Hello gentlemen. My name is Maaike.  
With me is Iris from Denmark and Jenni from Finland who just jumped up on stage over there by Jack.  
Oh and I'm from The Netherlands if you couldn't guess.  
But we are not the reason you are here tonight.

Iris  
Before you in the audience are thirteen international exchange students

Jenni  
They have been studying here in the US and are now ready to return home as missionaries.

Iris  
They will each take the mission forward! To support our sisters abroad!

All  
[Cheering] Our sisters abroad!

Iris  
Ladies, please stand and wave when your name is called.

Jenni  
Thank you, ladies!  
Ok, here is the list:

From the Czech Republic,  
Lucie Bartošová!  
[Applause]

From South Korea  
Seoyeon Kohng  
[Applause]

From Argentina  
Evelyn Quinteros  
[Applause]

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

From the Philippines  
Yvonne Castaño  
[Applause]

From the Ivory Coast  
Fatou Koné  
[Applause]

From Colombia  
Nathalia Turbay  
[Applause]

From Mexico  
Mariana Chagoya Triana  
[Applause]

From the Democratic Republic of Congo  
Parfaite Ndila  
[Applause]

From Hungary  
Tamara Rakosi  
[Applause]

From Chile  
Lucie Sandoval  
[Applause]

From Bosnia  
Fikreta Gutic  
[Applause]

From Jamaica  
Deanna Hargitay  
[Applause]

And,  
From Brazil  
Sancler Notarangelo  
[Applause]

Maaike

Now, there are thirteen of you ladies and only three men.  
So I make that four ladies to a man plus one extra. Sancler, why don't you sit this one out? Go sit by Jessamine and keep her company, ok?

Sancler  
Oh really?! When is it going to me my chance?  
Ok, very well...

Maaike  
Thanks!

The rest of you, come down to the stage, and pick your man.  
[Sound: feet on steps, walking on stage, some cheers of excitement]

[Back to top](#)

## 124. Virgin Island Contretemps

Rebecca, President's Aide

Sorry to interrupt, Mr President, Agent Stephanie's on line three from the Kenyan embassy.

President Barry

Thanks, Becky!

[Sound: door closing]

What's she doing there? I thought we were pursuing the boat in the med?

Agent Frank

We are, sir. Do you want to talk to her, or should I?

President Barry

I'll put her on speaker.

Stephanie! What are you doing in Kenya?

Agent Stephanie [On phone]

Following a hunch, sir. Did you hear about the boat?

President Barry

Not yet. I'm with Frank. We've been going over the dossiers on the seven women. He thinks he's found a connection.

Agent Stephanie

Well the ambassador here just got word that the ship everyone's looking for just pulled into the port of Aboisso in Ivory Coast. The vessel was searched but there was only a crew of three on board.

President Barry

I see.

Agent Stephanie

It must have been a decoy sir.

Agent Frank

Steph, I've got some news for you on that suicide victim at the airfield in Tripoli.

It seems there *was* a connection to one of "the seven".

The woman's name was Enass Meshwesh. It seems that after she lost her guard job - after the coup - she applied to several foreign embassies in Tripoli. Not surprising on its own, but it seems there was an incident at the Italian embassy a few months ago. The Italian foreign secretary was visiting with his girlfriend, Ella Terzi, when this woman, "Enass", stood up in the lobby and started shouting obscenities at Ella.

We looked a little closer into the past of the two ladies and, well, it seems they might have known each other. Both of them worked on a kibbutz for the summer in Turkey when they were at college. We're talking over twenty years ago but hey, it's a connection. The Turkish government closed the kibbutz down the following year citing the commune as a breeding ground for radicals.

Agent Stephanie

Thanks, Frank. I knew I was on the right track!

This "Enass" tried to stop a private jet from leaving the airfield. I don't think it was suicide; more like an accident. The jet is registered to a Brit called David Clarkson. He's over at the British embassy claiming his jet was stolen and that he's been in Nairobi since Christmas. The jet was in its hanger along with several other planes from the Harris fleet. It's definitely the same plane. I flew here courtesy of a local hauler and he takes pictures of all the planes he sees whenever he lands. He's a bit paranoid, if you ask me, but I trust his knowledge in this matter.

President Barry

Can't be too careful in a place like Libya.

Agent Frank

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

What's the hauler's name?

Agent Stephanie

Mortimer Roth, from South Africa. He's been flying for eons. Quite a jewel in the rough. Oh and just for the record, I found him with a New York reporter called Irene Nabil. She's of Kenyan origin. She chartered Mortimer's plane to fly her to see her grandmother who lives here in Nairobi. She had been at the conference too but hadn't filed a report as she said the whole thing had been un-newsworthy up until that point.

President Barry

I bet she's kicking herself now.

Agent Frank

Which paper does she work for?

Agent Stephanie

She's freelance but mainly writes for the New Yorker. She mentioned a guy called Kenny who she reports to.

Agent Frank

I'll check her out. And the others. Thanks.

President Barry

Anything else, Steph?

Agent Stephanie

Not from this end, sir. But you might want to have someone put some pressure on the Brits. There's something going on. What, I'm not sure, but that jet was part of the fleet owned by the British tycoon, Brandon Harris. You know him don't you, Mr President?

President Barry

I do, indeed. He spent a semester at Harvard Business while I was at Law School. I didn't know him to speak to then but that was over thirty years ago.

Agent Stephanie

Yes, but didn't you visit him last year at his mansion in the Virgin Islands?

President Barry

How did you know that? I thought we'd kept that one quiet, Frank!

Agent Frank

What can I say, Mr President: she's good.

President Barry

Yes you are indeed, Miss Stephanie. Very good. Or at least, you got most of the story. The first lady and the children stayed with Brandon but I went off snorkeling most of the time. I can't stand just lying on the beach drinking cocktails when there is so much nature to be explored.

Agent Stephanie

Not really *my* work, sir. That reporter, Irene, knew about your trip. She's something of a gossip writer, reading between the lines. How long did your trip last, Mr President?

Agent Frank

Steph, is this really relevant. I think we should get back to the issue at hand.

Agent Stephanie

How long, sir?

President Barry

Well we were due to stay five days in all. I have to admit I could have stayed forever; the water was beautiful.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Agent Stephanie  
But you had to cut it short, sir?

President Barry  
Yes, we did. Misha and Brandon got into some political argument on the very first day. I thought it was nothing but it continued over into the next. Neither of them wanted to let the matter rest. We left on the third day.

Agent Stephanie  
And what were they arguing about sir?

President Barry  
Well, you know, I'm not sure I can remember. They never argued in front of me. I only got to hear about it at night when Misha would complain to me about what an arrogant so-and-so this man was.

Agent Stephanie  
I think you should ask her about it, Mr. President. And maybe have someone like Frank there when you do.

Agent Frank  
Steph, what on earth are you talking about and what on earth does this have to do with anything? And, how does this Irene reporter know about the President's visit and especially about the details.

Agent Stephanie  
She interviewed Brandon not long after the visit, Sir. She has a knack for getting the truth out of men. I can see why: I watched her with this Mortimer chap, the pilot. She had him curled around her little finger.

President Barry  
Maybe we should think about recruiting her!

Agent Stephanie  
Not a bad idea, Mr. President. Well I'd better be signing off.  
Frank, I'll send you more details as and when, ok?

Agent Frank  
Stay safe, Steph!

[Back to top](#)

## **125. Plum Wrong**

Iris [Danish accent]  
Now we have made some considerations and some adjustments to how we normally play. As you can see, Jack is stuck in wheelchair unfortunately. For this reason we have all three gentlemen in wheelchair too.

Jenni  
That's right, Iris. We, as the judges, will bear in mind that only two of our contestants are fully fit. We have therefore taken out some of the more strenuous activities.

Maaike [Dutch accent]  
Ok well it looks like each guy has a judge and four students so let's find out a little more about them.

Iris  
Each student has prepared a question so let's get started. Who shall we have first?

Jenni  
How about Lucie? You go first, darling!

Lucie

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

I am only 22. How old are you and is age difference a big problem for who you with?

Jenni

Good question. Gentlemen, why don't we start on the left with you, Iain?

Iain

I guess I never really thought about it. I prefer someone younger than me but not too much younger. I'm 43 myself so that is quite an age gap but I understand you want an older guy, a more mature donor, right? I can respect that.

Jenni

Jack?

Jack

Um, I really don't know what to say. I'm 39 so I guess that does make me too old. 17 years difference: that's quite a bit, don't you think?

Lucie

Ooh I love your accent though! And, you? What's your name again?

Richy

Richy.

Lucie

And what do you think, Mr Richy? Am I too young for you?

Richy

Well, my granddaddy used to say: "a hole is a hole is a hole". Never knew what he meant till now!

Maaike

And for the record, Richy. How old are you?

Richy

Just turned 29.

Iris

Ok great. Next question from, let's see... Yvonne! What's your question?

Yvonne [Philippine accent]

In my country, the Philippines, we have many religious traditions. Does it matter to you what country a woman is from?

Jenni

Richy, let's start with you.

Richy

Like I said before: a hole is a hole is a hole.

Jenni

Thank you. Jack?

Jack

I'm a traveler, Yvonne, so I am interested in many cultures.

Iain

Me too. I love women from all over the world.

Iris

Thank you gentlemen. Evelyn, what's your question?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Evelyn [Argentinian accent]

Hi guys! I grew up on an Ostrich ranch in Argentina. Sometimes we would have an animal that was vicious to the other birds and my father would have to kill it. Is this something you could do?

Iris

Ooh, I like it! Jack, you first!

Jack

Well, Evelyn, I grew up on a dairy farm but fortunately I never had to do something like that.

Iris

But could you?

Jack

Well, I'd like to think I could but honestly I've never killed anything intentionally.

Maaike

[Sound: wrong answer horn]

Ok, ok. I just have to jump in here. Jack, obviously wasn't aware of all the rules, so we'll give him a pass on that one.

Jack, you must try to avoid using any extremes in your answer such as the word "never" or "ever". No one is perfect and while it may possibly be true what you said, it probably isn't completely true. After all, there are high stakes to play for here, so I can understand your desire to win.

Jack

You do know that I don't know anything, right? I mean, about this game. What is there to win?

Maaike

I am so sorry. I thought Jessie had explained everything but clearly not. These thirteen students are all set to go back to their country of origin soon and establish a learning center like this one. But, they do not want to go there alone.

They each want to start a family.

Jack

So they're looking for a husband?

All

[Sound: laughing]

Maaike

Not exactly, no! That's sweet though, really!  
No, they each need a good sire to start them off.

Jack

A good sire? I don't follow...

Richy

Bit slow on the uptake, eh pommie?  
She means they all want a good banging from whichever one of us wins.

Jack

All of them?

Richy

Yup!

Jack

And there's just one winner?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Richy

Only one wiener gonna win, bro'. Sorry n'all

Jack

Hey, be my guest. I am not going to father a dozen bastards, thank you very much.  
Nurse, you can take me home right now thanks!

Jessamine

Oh Jack, c'mon, be a sport. Just play along for a bit more. We do love listening to you talk, right ladies?  
[Sounds: approval cheers and whistles]

Iris

Maybe it's shot time; get everyone loosened up.

Jenni

Hey, whaddya know? Here comes Colette with a tray of shots! Nice timing!  
[Sound: glasses clinking on tray, cheers and ahh's]  
Ok, on with the questions. Fatou! Over to you!

Fatou

Bonsoir messieurs! In Africa, the woman was dominant until the blade and gun arrived. I do not trust a man enough to lie beneath him. Indeed I would prefer to ride a man only if he is securely tied down. What do you think of that?

Iain

My kinda girl, Fatou. I respect your fight. Don't mind if I we get a little S&M, for sure!

Richy

If you're down, I'm down on the ground! I'll tie myself up right now, girl, for what you be layin' down.

Fatou

Now? Honest?

Richy

Sure thing. You wanna skip the questions and go for a ride? Hop on, girl, you go right ahead.

Fatou

Tie him down now. I cannot wait.

Richy

Really?

[Sound: some commotion]

Maaike

Ok well, Fatou's taking things to the next level, ladies!  
Let's see. You got the cuffs, Iris?

Iris

Sure do. Here you go ladies.  
[Sounds: cheers and whistles]

Jenni

Ok, lie him down gently. Each of you grab an arm or a leg.

Iris

All secured?

Fatou

So, Mr Richy. You big shot, is that right?  
Let's see what you got under those shorts

[Sound: shorts being ripped off]  
Not bad for starters, now let's see if we can make him stand to attention.  
Why don't you show me what your tongue can do when it's not busy yapping?

Richy  
Bring it on, girl.  
Ooh that's musky lookin'!  
Mmm, gonna be...

Fatou  
Just shut up and lick, boy!

Iris  
Looks like we're getting some movement down there

Fatou  
Hardly, this thing's as lifeless as wet lettuce

Iain  
Uh oh, someone's got performance anxiety!

Richy  
[Muffled] Not me, mate! Just getting started.

Iain  
Save your breathe, young man! Wait till you see a pro in action.

Fatou  
Someone take care of this "pro" for me please!

Lucie  
I got this.  
Why don't we just strap you to the chair, Mr Pro?

Iain  
Be my guest, darling!

Lucie  
Less of the "darling", old man!  
Ladies, you got this one tied down, already?

Maaike  
You're all set, Lucie.

Lucie  
OK Mr Pro, why don't you tell us the truth?

Iain  
What are you talking about?

Lucie  
Someone put a gag on this one!

Fikreta  
I got it. These stocking are getting too hot anyway.  
Chow down on this, pervert!

Iain  
[Muffled] Oh wow!

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Lucie

Stuff it down his throat, I can still hear him.

Fikreta

Go ahead Lucie. Give it to him!

Lucie

Earlier you were asked if you had a problem being with girls younger than you.

You said "I guess I never really thought about it".

Let me introduce you to someone who might help you get your memory back....

Alice? Are you ready to come on stage?

Alice

I'm here.

Lucie

Alice, you're 9 years old now but how old were you when you met this man, Iain?

Alice

I was six years old.

Lucie

Tell me what you remember about him.

Alice

Well, we were travelling through Idaho, my mother and I. We were tracing some of the birthplaces of her favorite authors. We stopped off in a motel run by this very same Mr Iain Pinkerton. That night when I was taking a shower in our room I found a tiny camera lens embedded in the ornate tiling. I told my mother and we went to investigate further. We waited till Mr Pinkerton had gone to his room for the night and broke into his office. In the back room we found his computers and servers and all manner of surveillance equipment linked to every room. On the computers we found hundreds of pictures of people taking showers and much, much more. We later found out that he was selling a lot of the pictures of young girls like me on a secret website.

Jenni

Thank you Alice, that was very brave of you and your mother. Speaking of whom, Denise? Would you like to come up here please?

Denise [Canadian accent]

My pleasure.

Jenni

Now, Denise, I know most people wouldn't have done the investigative work that you and your daughter did and I know Iain here is having a hard time defending himself with a bunch of stockings stuffed down his throat but tell me; are you sure we have lured the correct man here tonight to face judgment?

Denise

Before we left that night we paid Mr Pinkerton a visit. We sedated him with a vaporized formula and collected hair and saliva samples as well as taking some pictures of our own.

Jenni

So you are sure we have the right man?

Denise

Very sure. If you can call him a man. More like a piece of perverted excrement, if you ask me.

Jenni

And what is to be his punishment?

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Denise

With the wise-mother's approval we are to castrate. Maybe that will curb his enthusiasm for young girls.

Iain

[Muffled screaming]

Jenni

And are you going to perform the surgery?

Denise

No. My daughter Alice has been practicing on calves for several years now. She knows what she's doing.

Alice

I certainly do. Stand aside ladies. Allow me to prune those over-ripe plums...

[Back to top](#)

## 126. Gladys

[Sound: inside comedy club]

Francis (on stage in distance)

So, last night, I had a dream where I was back at school and there was an exam and I hadn't revised...

Do you ever have that dream?

Well, imagine yourself as me...

A dude in high heels, with a feather boa, wearing a white, leather one-suit...

Everyone failed the exam that day. They were too distracted by me to concentrate.

Ok, well, enough about me. On to our next guest tonight all the way from... [Fades out]

Phyllis

Gladys! How are you darling?

Gladys

So good to see you again, Phyllis! Are you going to be performing tonight?

Phyllis

We'll see. I just landed. It's been quite a long few days.

Gladys

We always have a slot for you on open night

Phyllis

Nice. Hey, we need to talk. It's urgent.

Gladys

Sure thing. Just a minute...

[Calling] Hey! Francis!

Francis

Whatcha need, hon?

Gladys

Watch the door for a few, will ya? I gotta show Philly round. Show her the new changes.

Francis

Why sure. I'm all alone tonight anyway.

Gladys  
Where's little Reenie?

Francis  
She's on safari without me!

Phyllis  
Oh you poor thing, darling.

Francis  
Honey, please! Call me Francis.

Phyllis  
Well, Francis, it's nice to meet you. I've heard wonderful things about you.

Francis  
It's great to meet you too, Miss Phyllis. Huge fan! Huge!

Phyllis  
Auw, you're sweet, doll.

Gladys  
Let's get you a drink, doll face...

Phyllis  
Can't say no to that

Gladys  
Can't say no to much, right? Watcha having? Usual?

Phyllis  
Sure. Hey listen, we need to get a message to Misha.

Gladys  
Hey, keep your voice down.  
It's taken care of. Anyway, Francis' girl is on the case.

Phyllis  
What are you talking about?

Gladys  
Libya. You must have seen the news.

Phyllis  
Course. On the plane. Everywhere in fact.  
What's going on?

Gladys  
The "seven" may be a mystery to everyone else but they have now exposed who they truly are to us.  
We suspected something like this might happen. That's why we sent Francis' room-mate over there to cover the conference.

Phyllis  
Is she one of us?

Gladys  
No. She's an "innocent", like your dear, sweet Ingrid.

Phyllis

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

I wouldn't call her innocent by any stretch.  
In fact we know she's one of them. She just doesn't know I'm one of us.

Gladys  
Well, Irene, his room-mate is just a fashion/gossip columnist. But, she tells Francis everything. They're like sisters.

Phyllis  
Speaking of Francis, is she a he?

Gladys  
In transition, yes.  
Anyway, Irene is now en route to Kenya where we believe "the Seven" have run off to.  
Anything else I can tell you?

Phyllis  
No, I was talking about Jack.

Gladys  
Which Jack?

Phyllis  
The one that wrote *your* song; the Gladys song.

Gladys  
Oh him? What's he got to do with anything?

Phyllis  
Well it appears they mistook him for some French guy called Jean-Pierre. Ingrid was instructed to take him to a pizzeria in a small town near their Midwest commune and drop him off. The staff there then took him to a club they own.

Gladys  
Ok... go on.

Phyllis  
So I heard Ingrid call into End Times Radio. That's her way of sounding the alert to the others in the locale.

Gladys [Laughing]  
They are so paranoid!  
Go on!

Phyllis  
Anyway, we were not far away from her and went straight to the club and pretended to have broken down.  
Anyway, you can just drop in there and get a gig. They've got eight studios. It's kinda complicated. Short wave radio.  
Anyway...

Gladys  
Get to the point, doll. I ain't got all night

Phyllis  
Well you know, Celine? The French girl?

Gladys  
Sure. What about her?

Phyllis  
Well as we were leaving, we were out in the car park, its underground, kinda dark, but anyway...  
So we see her take Jack off into some private room. So we hang around and sneak up to the door and, well...  
Wow! You should've heard what went on!

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Gladys [A little exasperated]  
What?

Phyllis

Well, she gets him naked and they start going at it, you know? Boom, boom, boom. Cha, cha, cha... Anyway, then Jessie and three other girls burst into the room from some side door and start interrogating him, measuring his you-know-what and looking for some birthmark on his... you-know...

Gladys  
Penis?

Phyllis

Yeah, under his gentile-skin...

Gladys [Laughing]  
Yeah! Good one! Let me write that one down!

Phyllis

In a minute.

So, anyway they thought he was someone called Jean-Pierre de something.

Gladys  
Lyons.

Phyllis

That's it. Lions!

Gladys

Lyons. Yeah, we know.

Or, at least that's been the rumor. Who started it, hell knows, but it's been out there for a while.

Phyllis

Well? Who is he?

Gladys

Well, he's rumored to be some secret love-child that Anita had back in the day. He was sent to France somewhere near Lyons and raised by who-knows-who.

Phyllis

And what does that mean for us?

Gladys

Well, he's been missing for some twenty years and they want to find him and make him their leader.

Phyllis

Why?

I mean why do they need a man?

Gladys

Come on, Phyllis! This might be *our* time but the world still looks to a man to lead them.

Phyllis

So what's so special about this guy?

Gladys

I don't know but I expect he's been raised with this intention, this purpose. A man of the females, raised to lead them to true emancipation.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Phyllis

Well, good job they got the wrong guy, right?

Gladys

Right now we need to be more concerned about what "The Seven" are up to. Talk to Francis when you can get him alone. He'll fill you in.

Phyllis

Or, *she* will! Right?

Gladys

I keep getting that mixed up. You're right.  
Anyway, here's looking at you, doll!  
[Sound: clinking glasses]

[Back to top](#)

## **127. Mother Calling**

[Sound: phone ringing, then being answered]

Jack

Hello?

Anita

Finally! You're awake!

Jack

Mother! How are you?

Anita

We are both very worried about you...

Jack

You both are? Or just you, mum?  
Hang on, I just realized something...  
I'm in the loft! I'm home!

Anita

What on earth are you talking about! I know you're at home. I called you on your apartment number.  
Are you doing drugs again?  
I called to wish you a happy new year. I tried yesterday but there was no answer.

Jack

Yesterday? Isn't it the first today?

Anita

I'm sure you know very well.  
Where were you yesterday? There was no answer all day. Did you get my messages?

Jack

Hang on, what day is it then?

Anita

Do I and your father need to book a flight and come over there? You don't sound like yourself at all.

Jack

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Honestly, what day is it?

Anita

Oh my goodness! It's the second already. Where is Ingrid? Has she been a part of your debauchery?

Jack

Good point. I'm not sure. I just woke up.

[Calling] Ingrid?!

Hang on let me go look.

Anita

Tell her I need to speak with her.

Jack

Nope. She's not here.

Her car's not in the car park either.

Anita

Not to worry have here call me when she comes in.

Now, where were you yesterday?

Jack

That's what I'm talking about!

The last thing I remember is me and Ingrid going to a Wedding in Eureka Springs on New Year's Eve.

Anita

Ingrid and I

Jack

Yes, mother. Ingrid and I.

Anita

Don't "mother" me!

Jack

Yes, mum.

Anyway, we stopped off at an Italian on the way back for a bite to eat. She got mad at something I said and then left me sitting there. She just drove off with some bloke from the restaurant, if I remember right.

Anita

And then what happened?

Jack

You see, that's the thing. I have no idea.  
It feels like I've been date raped, or something.

Anita

Raped?

Jack

Well, not raped. I mean drugged.

Anita

Do you not remember anything at all?

Jack

Nothing!

Well, except for fragments of some crazy dream I had but you don't want to hear about that.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Anita

I think you should come home. Obviously this Ingrid is not right for you after all. You don't have a job. You can't survive on your savings for long. You've done enough for your ex-wife already. Honestly, I think some time here on the farm would do you good. Plus your sister really misses you. She doesn't say so to you, but she does

Jack [Beginning to cry]

I know, mum. Why can't I find someone decent? No one seems to have any morals any more. You raised me to be a gentleman but it doesn't work. "Nice guys finish last", they say and it's true. The nicest girls go after the bullies and the pricks.

Anita

Now, now! Things will work out. I'm sure of it. The right girl's probably waiting for you here in England. Let's talk more when it's not so late. You're probably getting ready for bed.

Jack [Crying and laughing]

Mother! What time do you think it is here?

Anita

Well, it's coming up to six o'clock here. It's already dark so imagine it must be near midnight over there. You really need to be taking better care of yourself.

Jack

Mother, first off, I'm thirty nine. I can take care of myself just fine. Plus, when are you going to learn: we are six hours *behind* you. It's almost noon here.

Anita

Really, there's no need to be patronizing!

[Sound: doorbell intercom]

Jack

You're so funny, mum! Hey, there's someone at the door. Hang on a sec...  
Hello?

Dave [On intercom]

Dude! Where've you been?

Jack

I'll buzz you in, mate.

[Sound: buzzer]

Mum? I'll have to let you go. Dave's here. I'll call you tomorrow, ok?

Anita

Ok darling! I'm glad you're ok. Sleep well!

Jack [Ironically]

Yes, mum!

[Sound: knocking on door and opening]

Dave

Dude! What's up?

[Hugging] bring it in!

Jack

Hey, it's good to see you!

Dave

You too. We missed you yesterday. Turned into an all-day jam-fest.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Jack

You did? Man, I don't remember anything since New Year's Eve. I think Ingrid's left me. For good this time. She abandoned me in the middle of nowhere.

Dave [Surprised]

She did? She showed up at our house yesterday for a bit. I think she told Sandra that you were home passed out.

Jack [Sarcastically]

Hey, well thanks for calling me to make sure I was alright.

Dave

I did. Check your messages.  
Look at your answerphone, dude. You've got like 42 messages!

Jack

Oh lord. I bet that was mum.

Dave

I called at least seven times.

Jack

Oh man, I don't want to have to go through them all.

Dave

Just delete them all then.

Jack

Oh I guess I better go through them.

Dave

Dude, let's have a smoke first.

Jack

Sure, why not.

Dave

Mind if I use the desk?

Jack

Go for it.

Dave

Hey, who's Liz?

Jack

Liz? I don't know.

Dave

This notepad on the desk. It's full of letters to some girl called Liz.

Jack

Oh man! I bet that was Ingrid! How did she find that?

Dave [Lecherously]

Dude! You been seeing someone on the side?

Jack

No! It's complicated.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Dave  
They always are, man.

Jack  
No, I mean, she's not a girlfriend. It's Liz, as in Elizabeth, Queen of England.

Dave  
Dude, you're in love with the Queen of England?

Jack  
Course not. They're more like confessionals...

Dave [Reading]  
*Dear Liz, this is my thirteenth epistle to you in as many months...*  
Dude, "epistle"? Really? Trying to be Shakespeare?  
*I trust all is well with you. I write because I watched an interview with you on your website the other day from a young man who was complaining about his thoughts going round in circles. I know how this young man feels and I think I have discovered the reason and a path out of such madness...*  
Dude, do you really think she reads all the letters she gets? Anyway, you didn't actually send these, did you?

Jack  
Those are just rough copies. I typed them up and emailed them so I could use spellcheck.

Dave  
Well I'm sure if Ingrid did read them she wouldn't have got the wrong impression.

Jack  
You don't know how jealous she can get.

Dave  
Hey, man. Relax! You wanna start this?

Jack  
Sure. Not here though. Let's go up to that empty loft with the balcony.

Dave  
Shall I bring a guitar?

Jack  
Go for it.

[Sound: opening door, walking down concrete echo corridor]

Dave  
Wanna take the stairs?

Jack  
Nah, the elevators coming up.

Dave  
Dude, you're getting lazy. We need to get back into our work-out routine...

[Sound: elevator bell, doors opening]

Lucie & Seoyeon  
Hello!

Dave [Flirtatiously]

Well hello, ladies! You going up?

Lucie  
Sure. Come in.

[Sound: doors closing]

Jack  
Are you new here?

Seoyeon  
Yah. Just move in. My name Seoyeon. This is Lucie. We like make new friends.

Dave  
Dave. Nice to meet you both.

Lucie  
Nice to meet you, Dave. And you are?

Jack  
Jack. So, you're sharing the apartment?

Lucie  
We sure are. We just signed the lease. Gonna move our stuff in soon.

Dave  
Let me know if you need some help with that.

[Sound: elevator doors opening, walking down corridor]

Seoyeon  
We love help with furniture, sure. Especially from strong young man like you!

Jack  
Why does your voice sound so familiar?

Dave  
Dude, that's my line!

Seoyeon  
I don't know. Maybe we meet in past life, huh? [Laughing]

Jack  
Maybe. I feel like I met you in a dream.

Dave  
Dude, slow down. You'll scare them off.

Seoyeon  
Nothing scare me. Maybe this is dream come true.

Lucie  
You live on this level?

Jack  
One floor down. We sometimes hang out in this loft over here.  
It's empty, so the acoustics are really great.

Dave

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Plus it's got a balcony. Most of the others don't.

Lucie

Well, what a coincidence, eh? This is my new apartment...

Dave

Ok cool.

Jack

Well, we better find somewhere else to go then.

Seoyeon

Please! Come in. We don't mind. We like have company.  
We bring tape measure to size things up

[Sound: apartment door opening]

Jack

You're sure you don't mind?

Lucie

Not at al. Come in! I want to get to know everyone here, very well.  
Hey, is that a joint behind your ear?

Jack [Knowingly, jokingly]

I'm sure I have no idea...

[Sound: apartment door closing]

[Back to top](#)

## **128. April's Fool**

BBC Radio Announcer, Steve

...And a very good morning to you wherever you are. Today is April 1<sup>st</sup> and the time is fast approaching 7:45 am on this cold and miserable start to the day, here in London. We do hope the weather is a little more encouraging where you are! Coming up in fifteen minutes, a summary of the main headlines from home and around the world, followed by today's featured stories including "Where did the tradition of playing practical jokes on April Fool's Day come from?" plus "It's three months now since the disappearance of "The Seven" as they've come to be known; speculation continues as to their motives. If indeed they *did* leave of their own free will, certainly no group has claimed responsibility for their disappearance. We invite your calls and comments and emails on that story and any others mentioned on the show.

But first, we start with continued coverage of the hostage crisis unfolding in Nairobi, Kenya, where, three days ago, a group of possibly six or seven armed men and one woman, it is believed, took over a shopping mall in the busy downtown retail district. The situation appears to be at a standstill. The Kenyan government forces have surrounded the mall with armed police but so far we have heard no demands from the terrorists, neither do we know how many hostages exactly they are holding. Officials say they have been reviewing security camera footage from buildings located around the mall and have been interviewing those who managed to flee the building at the beginning of the attack.

We certainly know that three people were killed during that initial attack but many more are feared to be still inside the building and their condition is still unknown.

For more on this story we go now to affiliate reporter Irene Nabil who is actually on vacation but who was actually in the building when the terrorists first entered...

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

Irene? Are you there?

Irene

I'm here, Steve.

Yes, indeed, this is "day three" and many are calling on the Kenyan authorities to do more. We thought we might see the army brought in yesterday but there seems to be some internal disputes going on in official circles. Nonetheless, families of those still missing (and thought to be being held hostage inside the shopping mall) have been lining up around the perimeter in increasing numbers.

BBC Radio Announcer, Steve

And what are some of the families saying that you have talked to?

Irene

Well, as you can imagine, Steve, they are all very distressed, many are confused as to why this is even happening (we've heard no word or demands from the attackers). But there is an anger growing among these friends and families of the missing that the authorities should be doing more. I'm standing on the roof of a building just across from the mall and behind me are several snipers but what they can see or do is unclear.

BBC Radio Announcer, Steve

Yes, there are no windows, or at least only some tiny ones, on the outside of the building, is that correct?

Irene

That is correct, Steve.

So it seems as though we are in a period of "Wait and See". Until we hear something from the attackers we really don't know what their demands might be or how this could be resolved.

One official that I did speak to said, "...

[Sounding distressed]

Just a minute, Steve. One of the snipers has come over to talk to me.

Hey! What are you doing? That's my microphone!

BBC Radio Announcer, Steve

Irene? Are you still there?

[Silence]

Ella Terzi [Italian accent]

Ciao!

This is Ella Terzi. Your reporter is safe.

BBC Radio Announcer, Steve

Ella Terzi? Ella Terzi! The whole world has been looking for you for the last three months. What are you doing there in Nairobi?

Ella Terzi

Believe me, Steve, we tried to get here earlier to stop this tragic crisis.

BBC Radio Announcer, Steve

Please put Irene back on, we need to make sure she is ok.

Ella Terzi

Here, tell him you are ok.

Irene

I'm fine Steve. It appears the snipers and military personnel I was just telling you about are not exactly Government Issue but with Ella here. They...

Ella Terzi

Ok, enough. You happy Steve?

So we know who is behind this and we have been trying to...

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

BBC Radio Announcer, Steve

If you are just joining us, I am on the line live with Ella Terzi, one of "the seven" who disappeared from a hotel in Libya during the New Year's celebrations there.

Ella, we do not have much time scheduled for this unexpected interview but...

Ella Terzi

Well, make time, Mr Steve! Do you not know this is hugest story you will ever cover?

BBC Radio Announcer, Steve

I realize that but we are in the middle of the news.

Ella Terzi

I am in the middle, Steve. This *is* the news. This is happening right now.

BBC Radio Announcer, Steve

I understand, my producer says go for it but keep it quick. Tell me what you want me to know.

Ella Terzi

You have been told that a certain terrorist group from South Sudan is behind this hostage crisis. While that may be true on the surface there is much more going on behind the scenes. You should ask my ex-boyfriend, the Italian Foreign Minister, for more details on how Italy and China businessmen are wanting to cause continued conflict between South Sudan and Kenya so that they can get a new pipeline built from the massive oil fields in South Sudan through to Kenya and sell some weapons in meantime.

BBC Radio Announcer, Steve

Ok we will ask him.

Ella Terzi

We must go now. We need to go talk to terrorists.

BBC Radio Announcer, Steve

You're going in there? Don't you think that is very dangerous?

Ella Terzi

Maybe, yes. But terrorists need to learn truth. They have been made pawns in much bigger game.

BBC Radio Announcer, Steve

And when you say "we" surely you don't mean you and the other six ladies who went missing back in January, do you? Where is the American Secretary of State?

Ella Terzi

No. I am not with other six. We each have different mission. You will hear from them when time is right.

I have my amazing sisters with me. That is all I need.

I go now

BBC Radio Announcer, Steve

Wait, I have one more question...

Irene

Too late Steve, she and her small group of snipers are walking back to their positions. I'll go talk to them some more, you can be sure of that.

Oh no! They just jumped off the building.

BBC Radio Announcer, Steve

What? This is incredible.

Irene [slightly out of breath]

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

I'm watching them now abseiling down to the street. There are four of them total... no, wait... it looks like they are being joined by three more crossing the street... and, wait... is that? There are three more getting out of an ambulance walking towards them... and, yes, I see it... my sound-guy's just spotted three more first responders joining them; they just got out of a fire truck at the corner...

[Pause]

Some government police are walking after them right now. I can see one waving his arms in an attempt to get their attention...

But no, they are walking up to the front entrance to the mall and it looks like they're going in...

BBC Radio Announcer, Steve

Again, if you are just joining us, here on the BBC. This is no April fool's joke. You can watch live coverage of the events unfolding, I'm told, on channel two, right now and also streaming with some delay, it must be said, on our BBC world service website. Over in Nairobi, one of our affiliate reporters who was there when this hostage crisis first developed, Irene Nabil.

Irene, are you still there. We've got 30 seconds before we have to leave you temporarily but rest assured, my producer is furiously re-writing our schedule as I speak. Irene?

Irene

You're not going to believe this, Steve. The three snipers have turned their guns to face the local policemen that were trying to walk across and talk to them. No shots fired as yet. They are just in a standoff, guarding the doors to the shopping mall. Meanwhile, Ella and the other figures who just joined her on the street are in the process of taking their clothes off.

BBC Radio Announcer, Steve

You are kidding.

Irene

I know, I can't believe it either. Yup, there's the last of them. And now they are opening the doors... they're going through... they're gone. They are inside.

BBC Radio Announcer, Steve  
Naked? Am I hearing you correctly?

Irene  
Yup. Naked.

~~~~~\*\*\*~~~~~

*To be continued...*

[Back to top](#)

End of Act 1

~~~~~\*\*\*~~~~~

## **Author's Notes**

*Until everyone is at peace, the show must go on...*

### **Myth & Legend**

*In the beginning of our story was a country called Lydia, situated in what today is called Turkey. Roughly two thousand eight hundred years ago, the country faced a great famine. In order to ration food supplies, the ruler, King Lydus, told half of his people to play games one day while the other half ate and then on alternate days each half of*

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

*the population was to switch from eating to playing games which was a method to distract oneself from hunger. This legend was recorded by Herodotus although some later scholars argue about its veracity. Anyway, the story goes that the famine got worse and King Lydus told two of his generals, Tyrrhenus and his brother, Tarchon, to lead half of the people onto boats and to go and seek out new land on which to settle. They set sail south into the Mediterranean Sea, rounded Greece and the southern tip of what is now Italy and landed on the northern Italian mainland across from Corsica, close to what is now Naples. Their new colony eventually spread south and stretched almost as far south as Rome and as far north as Florence. This new land they called Etruria. This new Etruscan civilization would later invade Rome, which had been established by the Italics and hence, the two cultures merged.*

*The underlying supposition of this story is that behind every great man there is a great woman, but what happens when that great woman deserts her great man? Indeed the Lydian women who stayed behind, while still being renowned for being skilled archers, were also cultivators of the land and continued to build on their knowledge of agriculture as well as many other crafts. In comparison, the Tyrrhenian women became manipulators of men, spouses to invaders and wreckers. The Lydian women who remained in Lydia came to distance themselves from their Tyrrhenian sisters and formed a secretive organization of warriors known as the Amazons. For a while they tried to establish colonies to the east in regions such as Afghanistan. They would farm and hunt with bows and arrows. Some would cut off their left breast to become even better archers. They would kidnap soldiers to mate with and keep the female offspring. The male infants would be dumped on the doorsteps of local villagers' homes. But the rise of men and steel weaponry and the spreading of various empires, drove the Amazons to more and more remote areas. Instead of trying to remain independent they decided to take their organization underground. They returned to traditional civilization but kept their secret affiliation, keeping track of their members and their lineage until the time would be ripe for their re-emergence. In the new age that is upon us, the information age, the age of global communication, that time has come and they are ready to reveal themselves. Indeed, they are more than ready, they have been preparing for thousands of years...*

*The Tyrrhenian women, it must be said, are not totally unaware of the Amazons. Their self-image became tarnished by the association made between their name and the empire-building tyrants that followed. They have since returned to referring to themselves as Lydians in the hope of bettering their image at least in reputation if not by virtue.*

*And so the scene is set. Members of each group, The Amazons and The Lydians, are among us, everywhere. In every town and every city and every rural community. They have permeated every strand of society. But who knows who is an affiliate of which group or indeed, neither group? For the "Innocents" far outnumber both groups combined and are played with as merely pawns in this game between the two old rival factions.*

### **Characters & Production**

While this script has been written as a radio play, the intention is for it to spawn a TV series. I wrote it as a radio play because I grew up listening to radio plays from the BBC. Radio requires so much more imagination than TV. It also allows for plenty of dialogue which I understand would be reduced for a screenplay but it brings a discipline to the writing process requiring the story to be told through words rather than visuals. I would however like to produce a radio play version using 3d recording techniques which it might be possible to do during the TV production from the same audio recordings.

Being set in the modern day and involving no magic or super-natural powers, its production cost could be much lower than some competing TV shows. The first twenty eight scenes of Act 1 have been written with the intention of allowing a series to be generated which could run indefinitely, if so desired. There is a framework written for the rest of the plot for Acts 2 & 3, which is outlined in the accompanying excel spreadsheet but it is flexible enough to allow many minor stories to be told from episode to episode.

There is no main star of the entire show. Although several characters feature more prominently in the first three acts, their involvement will diminish over time. This would mean that no long term contract need be made with any particular actor. The audience will benefit from never knowing if a character will continue or not as each character is dispensable. The story so far contains 43 characters with speaking parts, some major and some minor in their contributions. There are several dozen characters who are referred to and who can be introduced into the script with speaking parts further along. The story is a global one with immediate concentration on a few locations including the Whitehouse, a small Midwestern town like Eminence, MO with a pizzeria and a night club, a self-sufficient commune in the country, a loft in downtown Saint Louis, a hotel in Tripoli, a rooftop overlooking a shopping mall in Nairobi and two small airfields, one in Libya and the other in Kenya. The story will continue to progress around the world, visiting many cultures and many locations as is deemed possible. In the current plotline, future locations include the African

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

jungle, African coast, the Forest of Dean in the UK, the Virgin Islands and the southern states of Alabama, and Louisiana all would feature during Acts 2 & 3.

### ***Writing & Experiences***

As a writer, I, John Biddle (from Lydney, UK), have grown up loving stories involving fantasy, magic and Jedi and super-heroes but there has always been a part of me that gets depressed by such a romantic view of life when Life itself has always seemed, to me at least, so full of wonder to begin with. What depresses me most is the inability of most people I have met, in my 25 years since leaving home, to recognize this wondrous beauty all around. I believe that the stories and movies based in fantastical universes have contributed to people's disappointment in everyday reality. Entertainment has become a diversion. It is my belief that this would be the opinion of the Amazons also. If they have any primary purpose then it is to educate people about this unseen beauty and bring the world of men and women into a harmonious balance. The Lydians, on the other hand, would seem to be content with the current status quo and have the purpose to see things continue along past lines, leaving the decision-making up to men. The Amazons would see this as short sighted thinking however, realizing that without a huge shift in consciousness the path we have been on, for the past several thousand years, is a self-destructive one.

One of my favorite Shakespearean plays is Hamlet, which the RSC is now taking around the world over the next two years incidentally. In his desperation to reveal the truth of his uncle's actions, Hamlet decides to perform a play. He hopes that through art, his uncle and mother will feel remorse and confess this suspected truth. When I look at the last 25 years of popular culture it seems that movies and TV shows have been central to shaping the evolution of consciousness in the modern youth. As someone who has been teaching a teenage youth group for the past year I recognize the influence that these two media have over the way young people view the world. The internet does have a lot to offer but it relies on the end user knowing what to search for. TV and movies offer passive education while the internet requires more engagement by the student. If we can produce a form of entertainment that leads viewers to research history and one that provokes discussion about economics and politics I think it will have served its purpose.

And so it is that, instead of writing this story as a novel, fixed in time and bound by *my* description of the characters, I wrote just the dialogue. In this way I hope to be able to allow the producers and actors more creative freedom by bringing their own experiences and perspectives into the mix. It would also allow for novels to be written after the show is produced. In this way, complaints about the screenplay not remaining true to the book could be eliminated. The show relies on mystery and revelation so I don't think a viewer who had already read the novel would enjoy it as much if they knew what was going to happen next. Also books often describe what people are thinking, which is not part of reality as no one is telepathic. All we know about others is what we know about ourselves and we either project meaning onto others or we find empathy with others by realizing our similarities.

This is not an historical piece but a melding of reality and fantasy; it is a proposition of what might happen should women assert themselves more fully. It has two parts: Jack's story and the story of "The Seven". Jack's story is seen through his eyes whereas the story of "The Seven" is told by multiple characters.

Jack's story is my story re-written into this world of secret female societies. For 18 years I have worked in retail in different guises: direct sales, flooring sales, wine bars and clothing as a representative and latterly as a manager. As a result I have met thousands of people and had occasion to interview most of them either formally or informally. Added to this my independent travels have taken me across large parts of Central and Eastern Europe, to Turkey and the Middle-Eastern countries of Jordan and Israel. I have lived in the US for the past thirteen years and have visited at least half of the states.

Back in 2008 I was studying the economy of Nordstrom where I was working compared to that of the US. The company experienced its first decline in sales in the seven years since 9/11 which happened a month after I started working for them. I decided there and then that I would leave Nordstrom and run an experiment. That was to give up everything I owned and just see what would happen. I wanted to see what would happen not only to me but my relationship with my girlfriend and my relationship with my credit card companies, etc. It has been five years of many ups and downs in fortunes and emotions. I would like to write a memoir about these experiences and about what I have discovered but the truth might hurt some people I care about too much.

Having met stand up comedienne Phyllis Shulman during the first year of my exodus from the rat-race I was inspired by her story and her desire to write a musical. I wrote 18 melodies to go with the lyrics that she had written and have since increased that number to 25 songs. While this "play" is no longer a musical as such, it could incorporate some of the music we made either as introductory music or during the end credits of each episode. The show that

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

we produced and performed for three nights in Saint Louis was less of a traditional musical and more of what we called a "Popschtickle". We performed 10 songs interposed amongst Phyllis' stand-up routines, the choice of song complementing the comedic material. Moreover, the name of the Popschtickle came from my going to a wedding in Eureka Springs and asking the heavens, as we drove into the city, to give me a sign as to what to call the show. The very next gas station we drove past had a big sign advertising their sale of "Raw Honey". This seemed perfect as a description of a female comic and so the idea took hold. My working title for this script has been "Baked Ham and Raw Honeys" which is funny to me but might not seem interesting to others. That is why my suggested production title is "DC66" which seems more catchy and intriguing.

On a similar but different note, I have chosen the pseudonym "Jupiter Hurst" mainly because John Biddle is also the name of several famous people in history, one of whom lived 400 years ago and was imprisoned for his religious beliefs. Believe it or not, here in the Buckle of the Bible-belt, I have met several people who have heard of this other John Biddle and they don't seem to like him either. Also, I am writing about a character very much like myself so it seems fitting to write from my own alter-ego. The idea of alter-ego is a theme in the stories too.

Since doing the show with Phyllis, I made my way through Eminence, MO where I lived in a cabin for three months and then came to the city of West Plains, MO where I managed a restaurant in the Opera House for six months. After that I went back to stay with my parents on their farm in the Forest of Dean, England for four months. Then I came back and lived with a guy called Paul Rideout who was building a recording studio. I also looked after his wife during those three years. She was paralyzed with MS after having lived with this degenerative disease for some 20 years prior. During that time I started a new relationship with a lady called Morgan, who is now my wife. We have bought ten acres next to her parents' farm. Half of the ten acres is pasture and the other is woodland with a small fish pond. It had been a dream of mine some seven years earlier to own a turtle sanctuary and now that dream is a reality. We are working towards becoming more and more self-reliant; gardening, canning vegetables and soon will have an apiary to produce our very own, allergy-fighting, raw honey.

The story of "The Seven" is inspired by watching world politics over the last 25 years, but especially in the last five years. It draws upon recent world events such as the Arab Spring and the hostage crisis in Kenya. The story uses these familiar news items to create a fiction based in reality. The question remains: what if most world leaders *are* as corrupt as we think they are? What if their wives and close family members grew a conscience and exposed them?

This is the age of information and subsequently the age of the whistle-blower. Maybe the answer is not to fight corruption but merely to shine a light on it? Imagine if there were a secret society of women all around the world in every strata of society, all with this intention in mind. Revolution could occur almost overnight and without much bloodshed. For when the illusion of power and money is unveiled it immediately loses its hold on a person. When the people as a whole see through the illusion they will give less importance to money and power and place more value of quality of life; their health and the health of the planet. The Book of Ecclesiastes, supposedly written by the richest most powerful King of Israel, Solomon, speaks so eloquently to this subject. It is indeed one of my favorite books in the Bible.

### **Sharing the wealth – Sharing the discoveries**

Why is it that during five years of recession, Wall Street has been one of the few areas of growth? I have interviewed many people about the global economic collapse and the growing gap between rich and poor. It appears that most people do not understand how it works. It was out of this discovery and with guidance from what I now understand to be the Holy Spirit that I created a financial mechanism which would allow everyday workers and customers to receive equity in the products they help create and make possible by purchasing. This mechanism I call fanShare. Later in Acts 2 & 3 we will see the amazons bring this economic system into the story. How cool would it be for viewers to be watching a TV series and to know that there were parts of it like fanShare that were actually real and that they could get involved with outside of TV land?

Indeed, fanShare is just the mechanism but the ways in which it could be used could change the course of economic history in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I do not say this to make out that I am an expert in economics but in truth to say that this wisdom has always been there. Certainly the books of Moses have incredible economic wisdom in them. I am an idiot and terribly prodigal. It has only been through listening to the Pneumati Agio that the simple truths about economics have been revealed to me. In fact the best example of how to explain the wealth gap to your kids comes from the story of farmers like my dad who built a very successful herd which when he sold it had increased greatly in value.

The farm workers who helped him build the herd received nothing from their sale. And so it goes with most companies once they come to the end of their life-cycle: the workers who built the company get nothing and the legal owners get the wealth. Governments and leaders know this and the intention has been to use taxation to

*[R] Rated: Adults Only!*

redistribute wealth but how can this been done fairly? Better to give equity to the workers directly and give them a legal share in the future wealth which should give them incentive to worker with even greater involvement and to a much higher quality.

When I speak to people about fanShare and the many other ideas I have been given for an improved society most people do not understand or they seem to treat me as though I am talking a foreign language and what could a jumped-up country boy know about anything. Like Hamlet I feel that there is something rotten with the state of Denmark. Like Hamlet I ponder the question of whether to be or not to be. And, like Hamlet I have concluded that if they won't listen to the rantings of someone they think has gone mad then maybe they will be persuaded by art and believe they drew out the idea for themselves.

### **Themes & Ideas**

The content is intended for grown-ups and has themes related to the seven deadly sins of lust, greed, gluttony, laziness, hatred, jealousy and vanity. It compares these base desires with the opposite virtues of chastity, temperance, charity, diligence, patience, kindness and humility. There are comparisons made between these fourteen concepts and the hierarchy of needs as expressed by Maslow. There are elements alluding to the Book of Revelations and the prophesied apocalypse and how it should be read as fantastic poetry rather than taken literally. There are philosophical discussions and conversations about the quality of a purposeful, healthy and happy life. There are discussions about modern economics, the state of world politics, of empire building and of revolution.

While many stories are purported to be fictional, this story aims to be a work of "faction"; a composite of fact and fiction. Some of the characters are based on real people, some are purely fictional and some are a mixture of the two. Whereas many pieces of fiction claim that their characters bear no resemblance to people living or dead, I see this as a lie. My intention is to be more honest.

Many fictional stories are also set in their own little universe without referencing other art. This too seems unrealistic and I would hope to include many references to popular culture to maintain a certain level of realism.

### **Porn & Publicity**

The story will not appeal to a modern audience unless it is somewhat shocking and will not endure if it is not thought-provoking and does not stir emotion. It may well provoke more than this however with its religions themes and with such an infusion of hot, sexy women. I believe that money, sex and religion are three subjects polite society shies away from discussing but that because they are not talked about openly they remain problem areas in people's personal lives. I wish to provoke these discussions and add fire to the debate by employing actresses in the porn industry to become some of the actors in this story. I believe we can "save" such actresses from such degrading work and appear virtuous in our employment of them. I think we can garner a lot of publicity from such action both good and bad but always free.

### **Love Life & Laugh Often**

If it were not for comedy, politics would be drudgingly boring, in my opinion. Those is power deserve to be made fun of otherwise their sense of power can go to their heads. I hope that with the parallel story involving the US President and "The Seven" that we can explore the politics of other countries without getting too offensive. It still remains that of the several hundred countries in the world there are still territories ruled by dictators. I do wish to educate our audience on the lives of those in other countries and to at least, in some small way, let them know of their existence and the quality of life and liberty the people in those countries experience.

### **Rewriting & Rewriting**

There comes a point where one has to turn one's work over to the public for consideration for if it remained in a vacuum then what would have been the point? Since I started working on this script back in 2010 it has been rewritten countless times. Each writing has spawned new ideas and each character brought more possibilities to the plot. Also, during that time, I have had many new experiences and revelations about the current state of affairs that I have wanted to reference. It has been overwhelming at times to try and keep it all in mind at the same time. It was partly for this reason that I made the spreadsheet that accompanies this text so that I could picture the characters and have a sense of their cultural backgrounds and how they might connect with one another.

[R] Rated: Adults Only!

If you are reading this, chances are that you are one of the few to whom I have sent it to for consideration. While I think I have constructed the storyline as tightly as possible, I realize that there will be questions that remain unanswered for now. This is intentional. I want there to be people who don't fully understand and I want there to be questions. I want this to be something one has to re-read or watch again and again to find the clues and references, sub-plots and affiliations between characters.

From the start of writing this I have envisioned many stories and many authors. I want to work in collaboration with a group of writers rather than be the singular author. I am very critical of other books I have read and movies I have watched. I have often found flaws in their plots and in the rules behind their fantastic universes. If I can find a group of writers to work with on the continuation of this story I would be very excited and very open to suggestions. As I said before, what I have written so far is enough to create intrigue and introduce most of the primary characters but where it goes from here would benefit from having many perspectives included.

My hope is you will want to play your part in this story...

[Back to top](#)

~~~~~\*\*\*~~~~~

Fin.

~~~~~\*\*\*~~~~~