

7-10 Split

A Comedy in Two Acts

By:

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**"7-10 Split" was first produced by the Port Stanley
Festival Theatre in July 2011**

CAST

Earl: Terry Barna
Brenda: Martha Zimmerman
Larry: Rod Keith
Gustaf: Bruce Tubbe

Director: Richard Bauer

CHARACTERS:

Earl (40's)

Brenda (Earls' wife): (40's)

Larry (Brenda's brother): (late 30's)

Crown Prince Gustaf (mid -late 20's)

"Larry" can also be played as "Laura", Brenda's sister. Contact playwright for required script changes

Setting: A mobile home in the Green Gables Trailer Park

The set is a typical mobile home interior with furniture that's out of date and has seen better days. The television is one of the old console types. There's a full laundry hamper somewhere on stage. Time: Late morning.

Act 1

EARL is working at the computer, BRENDA is at the window.

BRENDA: *(looking out the front window)* I don't like the look of this. I don't like this one little bit. They're still there Earl.

EARL: *(not paying attention)* That's nice....

BRENDA: It's been over twenty minutes now....

EARL: I'll alert the authorities.

BRENDA: Over twenty minutes and I can't see nothing happening.

EARL: Well, then maybe nothing *is* happening.

BRENDA: I still don't like it.

EARL: Brenda, you're the only person I know who can *not* like something that *isn't* happening.

BRENDA: This is important, I think we're being sur-veiled!

EARL: We're being what?

BRENDA: You know, watched!

EARL: Looks to me like you're the one doing all the watching.

BRENDA: How do I know if they're watchin us unless I'm watchin them?

EARL: Ok fine... who's watchin you watchin them?

BRENDA: *They are.*

EARL: Brenda, get away from the window. Ever since I hooked up that TV cable you been watching too many cop shows and it's affected your brain. You're paranoid.

BRENDA: But it's a cable TV truck. It's just sittin' across the road.

EARL: So there's a cable TV truck on our street. Big deal.

BRENDA: They can tell, I know they can. *(picks up the phone)* Hello.... Hello?? *(checks the cord connections)* Cheap piece of crap! Earl, the phone's dead! *(Earl pays no attention)* Earl!! Are you listening to me? I said the phone's dead

EARL: For cryin out loud, can't you see I'm busy!!

BRENDA: Did you pay the phone bill?

EARL: Is it plugged in? Try jiggling the cord.

BRENDA: I've tried that and I'm telling you... it's dead.

EARL: So we're being sur-veiled and now they've cut our phone off.

BRENDA: *(panicked)* You think they cut our phone lines!?

EARL: I don't suppose they're hiding behind a grassy knoll are they? No they haven't cut the phone lines!

BRENDA: Then why won't the phone work all of a sudden?

EARL: Will you please just give me a little peace and quiet? I'm working on something important here.

BRENDA: But this is serious, I need to use the phone.

EARL: Then go next door and use the Barnesdales' phone.

BRENDA: That's who I'm trying to call!

EARL: Then I guess you've got a problem.

BRENDA: I wanna see if those cable guys are checkin' up on their cable too.

EARL: They don't have illegal cable. They have illegal satellite.

BRENDA: *(tries the phone again)* Hello, Hello!! When's the last time you paid the phone bill?

EARL: I didn't actually pay it, I experimented with it.

BRENDA: How do you mean?

EARL: I sent it back marked "deceased". I didn't think they'd have the heart to cut off a dead persons phone.

BRENDA: You didn't really think that through, did you Earl. Anyway, I think we should disconnect our cable for a while, just to be safe.

EARL: Forget it... no way. I'm busy.

BRENDA: Busy? All you've been doing is sitting at that computer all morning!

EARL: Listen, I'm not climbin' that pole again, I'll get electrocuted or radiated or somethin'.

BRENDA: *(peeking out of the curtains)* But they're parked right in front of Larry's place.

EARL: *(suddenly attentive)* Larry's place? *(goes to the window)* What's that big dummy up to now.

BRENDA: I wish you wouldn't call him that.

EARL: He is what he is. Not your fault your brother got all the dummy genes. *(peeks out curtain)* Ha! I knew it! He's gettin' TV cable installed. Installed!! That means he's payin' for it! If that doesn't prove he's a big dummy, I don't know what does. *(pause)* I wonder if he's gettin' the

BRENDA: I think they're checkin' up Earl! I heard they have these electronic gizmos that can tell if you've got illegal cable, just by drivin' past your house. They're probably scanning us right now!

EARL: Maybe we should wrap our heads in tin foil so they can't read our thoughts.

BRENDA: Do you think they can?

EARL: Sure, then they climb back into their starship and blast off for Planet High Def.

BRENDA: Fine, make fun, but if they find out you hot-wired the cable and take away our TV, it's all your fault.

EARL: No, it'll be your brothers fault for bringing the cable company here and making them suspicious! I'll bet he's done it on purpose, he's still out to get me!

BRENDA: Don't start on that. He is *not* out to get you.

EARL: Oh he's out to get me alright. And ... you don't hot wire TV cable, you hot-wire cars.

BRENDA: Well it's all illegal, isn't it.

EARL: *(still peeking out the window)* Yeah well if they show up sniffin' around here, I'm tellin' them about that remote control box he never returned then sold at a garage sale!

BRENDA: You mean the one you bought and used for two years?

EARL: I haven't paid him for it yet so it's technically still his. *(peeks out the curtains)* Ok... They've come out of Larry's place... act natural.

BRENDA: What are they doing?

EARL: They're just sitting in their truck.

BRENDA: See I told you, I bet they're scanning us, I bet they can see right under my clothes! *(she starts rummaging through the hamper).*

EARL: What are you doing?

BRENDA: Looking for my good undies!

EARL: Wait... somethings happening.

BRENDA: What.. What??

EARL: (*in mock panic*) Oh no, they've got a huge antenna with sparks coming out of it!

BRENDA: I knew it! (*rushes to the kitchen drawer and takes out a roll of tin foil*)

EARL: They're pointing it right at our trailer!

BRENDA: Oh my god... I told you! (*trying to wrap her head in tin foil*) Don't just stand there, help me!

EARL: Relax, relax, they're driving away.

BRENDA: Oh thank goodness. I feel funny. Do you think they x-rayed us?

EARL: What do you think? If they'd x-rayed us we'd both look like skeletons, wouldn't we? Jeez Brenda, you gotta think these things through. Anyway, I got more important things to think about. I'm workin on something here that'll solve all our problems.

BRENDA: Oh great, how many times have I heard that?

EARL: This time it's different, this time everything is..

BRENDA: (*interrupts*) You're right Earl, I have to hand it to you. At least you never come up with the same dumb plan twice in a row. We need money, we can't eat those pies in the sky you keep chasing.

EARL: No sky pies here Brenda, I'm daring to dream!

BRENDA: You've got the dreaming part right anyway. Maybe it's time you actually looked for a job.

EARL: Well if you brother hadn't screwed me around, I wouldn't have to look for a job would I?

BRENDA: Like that was the only job in the world.

EARL: You know I'd go back to work in a second if I could find something that matched my unique qualifications.

BRENDA: Fair enough, but I think the job market for "ex almost pro bowler" who "dares to dream" is pretty thin right now.

EARL: You call it "dreaming", I call it "creative strategizing".

BRENDA: Actually, *you* called it dreaming.

EARL: Potato, potato. (*he pronounces "potato" the same way both times*)

BRENDA: Whatever you call it, it sure ain't paying the phone bill is it?

EARL: Leave it to me Brenda, I have this all under control.

BRENDA: Oh sure, like the last time!

EARL: Don't start!

BRENDA: Two thousand dollars worth of surplus Fudgsicles you bought and said we could make a fortune on! My feet are still sticking to the floor

EARL: And that's my fault? They coulda told me they weren't supplying the freezer!

BRENDA: Then there was...

EARL: (*interrupting*) Don't dwell on the negatives! If you can't talk about my successes, don't say anything at all.

Brenda stands silently staring at Earl.

EARL: (*repeatedly presses keyboard keys*) Damn the internet is slow. The kid next door must be playing on-line games again. Doesn't he have anything better to do than sit at the computer all morning? I wish I had somebody else's password.

There's a couple of seconds of silence, then Earl looks at Brenda, they stare silently at each other for a few seconds.

EARL: ...What? ...What? (*the penny finally drops*) Oh very

funny!!

BRENDA: Earl, if this is another one of your hair-brained get rich quick schemes I swear I'm walkin right out that door and you'll never see me again!

EARL: You wouldn't dare!

BRENDA: Oh yes I would!

EARL: Where would you go?

BRENDA: I dunno, maybe I'd stay with Larry.

EARL: You mean you'd walk out the door and clear across the road?

BRENDA: That's right

EARL: Then how would I never see you again if you're only across the road?

BRENDA: Never mind that, at least he has a phone that works!

EARL: Good! Then you can call me when I'm lounging on the Riviera after my ship comes in!

BRENDA: The only way you'll get on a ship to the Riviera is if you put on a giant rat costume and crawl up a mooring rope!

EARL: Just you wait, this is all going to work out. It's a legitimate business deal!

BRENDA: It's not more Fudgicles?

EARL: No

BRENDA: It's not three hundred pounds of black market lobster left in our driveway?

EARL: How was I supposed to know they'd go bad so fast?

BRENDA: You mean this is all above board?

EARL: Totally.

BRENDA: Totally?

EARL: *(pause)* Mostly

BRENDA: What is it this time? Tell me. I'm tired of your crazy schemes. I can't live like this anymore... this place is falling apart! The roof leaks, it needs paint and that front door lock has been busted for months.

EARL: Come on baby, I'm doin' my best.

BRENDA: And now the cable company is after us!

EARL: No they're not baby, they were just installing cable for your brother.

BRENDA: But I just feel like givin' up sometimes.

EARL: I know that kitten, that's why I'm doin' all this. It's for you, it's always been for you. You gotta have faith.

BRENDA: Tell me it's gonna work this time. Guarantee me it's gonna work!

EARL: I can guarantee it won't make your feet stick to the floor or make the driveway smell bad.

BRENDA: I'm serious Earl.

EARL: I know baby. I just want to make you proud of me. I know I'm not the smartest guy in the drawer. I can't buy you diamonds or take you on fancy trips or even buy you brand new stuff but that doesn't mean I'm gonna stop trying. All I ever wanted was for us to be happy and for you to be proud of me.

BRENDA: *(softening)* Ohh I love my Curly Early.

EARL: You're the only one who still calls me that.

BRENDA: My Curly Early.

EARL: It used to be good didn't it, back when I was Curly Early... I'd walk into the bowling alley and everyone would know me. "Hey Curly. .got another perfect game in ya today?" "Hey Curly, when ya joinin' the tour?"

BRENDA: "Hey Curly, where's that twenty bucks ya owe me?"

EARL: But you were proud of me then, weren't you?

BRENDA: I sure was baby and I still am, it's just that we need money. We really do.

EARL: That's what I'm workin on baby! In the meantime we just have to make do. How about your souvenir spoon collection, we could sell that.

BRENDA: No way! But I'll tell you something else we could sell.

EARL: No!!

BRENDA: You don't even know what I'm going to say!

EARL: Yes I do and the answer is no!

BRENDA: Alright, what was I going to say?

EARL: I can't say it.

BRENDA: Then I will. We have a fancy expensive bowling ball that's just been sitting in the closet for the last twenty years. Why don't we sell *that*?

EARL: Why don't we just sell my soul!!

BRENDA: Because we need more than a buck and a quarter!

EARL: That ball stays where it is.

BRENDA: But it's useless.

EARL: I'll pretend you didn't say that.

BRENDA: You never use it anymore!

EARL: And we both know why!

BRENDA: Don't start!

EARL: I'm not selling my ball and that's that!

BRENDA: But it's just a stupid bowling ball!

EARL: Whoa! Did you hear what you just said?? Just a stupid bowling ball!? I think you, of all people would know the significance of that ball and the legend it represents!

BRENDA: It's just a stupid bowling ball!

EARL: It's a Lane Master Black Diamond Limited Edition ball, that's what it is! That's the Cadillac of balls! It's computer balanced, diamond polished and specially drilled to fit my hand, nobody else could possibly appreciate it. Besides ...it has "Curly Early" engraved on it.

BRENDA: Baby, you're still *my* Curly Early but nobody else's. Those days are gone.

EARL: I've still got it, it's in my blood. Sometimes at night I even dream about it. I can hear the crash of the pins and see the lanes glistening with oil. In my right hand... the Black Diamond nestles like it was born there ...my left hand caresses "Curly Early" embroidered on my shirt. The backswing, the delivery, the ball rolls, I pose...pins fall. I am one with the lanes.

BRENDA: *(pause)* Maybe you should be one with a shrink.

EARL: Sure, make fun but I'll bet they still talk about me down at Fred's Bowl-a-Rama. I can still curl that ball down the lane and take out a 7-10 split with my eyes closed

BRENDA: *(to herself)* Just like back in the day...

EARL: Just like back in the day. Back when I coulda turned pro!

BRENDA: Well you didn't.

EARL: But I coulda!

BRENDA: If ifs and buts were candies and nuts..

EARL: And we both know why I didn't turn pro don't we?

BRENDA: Oh so it's my fault because I got pregnant!

EARL: Well it wasn't me that got pregnant was it?

BRENDA: *(pause)* I'll give you a second to realize how dumb that sounds.

EARL: *(pause)* I'm sorry baby, I didn't mean anything by that. You and little Earl are the best things that ever happened to me. If I had to choose all over again I'd do

the exact same thing. Besides, we've had twenty good years since I hung up the two-tone shoes haven't we? We've done

ok, Little Earl turned out good and now he's all grown up and moved out.

BRENDA: I miss him....

EARL: Me too, but he's a career man. He's gotta go where his career takes him.

BRENDA: He's living the dream.

EARL: Yeah, I was so proud the first time I saw him work. Standing up there, so professional, so confident, his hands on the controls. I got tingles all up and down my spine the first time I heard him say it

Brenda and Earl look at each other and say the next line in unison like a carny ride operator.

BRENDA & EARL: Ya wanna go fasterrrrrrrrr!!!!

(They both laugh)

BRENDA: Nobody runs the Tilt-A-Whirl like our little Earl!

EARL: I m gonna get him a t-shirt for Christmas that says Tilt-A-Whirl Earl It's good to see him make it. It's all been worth it baby.

BRENDA: I know hon, but sometimes I wonder if things coulda been different. Maybe you'd have really hit the big time... been on one of those Saturday morning TV bowling shows.

EARL: I was good wasn't I? Did you know I got a call from the Dr. Scholls people once? They were talkin' about me endorsin' their line of special rental shoe anti-bacterial foot powder. I even came up with my own catch phrase. "Take it from Curly Early, my feet are so clean you can eat off them!"

BRENDA: That's good. That's real good.

EARL: I woulda been on TV and everything. We coulda been set up with free foot powder for life.

BRENDA: I coulda used it last summer.

EARL: But I chose you over the glamour of big time bowling.

BRENDA: Oh Early! *(she hugs him)* .

EARL: You're still my little pin bunny, aren't you?

BRENDA: I love you Early...

EARL: I love you too.

BRENDA: *(pause)* So, do you wanna?

EARL: In the middle of the day?

BRENDA: Not that! I mean the tour!

EARL: What?

BRENDA: Little Earl has moved out, it's just us again. You could go back, turn pro. I could go on tour with you.

EARL: You really mean that?

BRENDA: Why not?

EARL: Yeah!! Why not? The tour's even bigger than it was back then. There's tons of dough to be made.

BRENDA: And you're just the man to make it!

EARL: "The Return of Curly Early"!

BRENDA: Like you said baby, you've still got it!

EARL: Polish up that brass ring cause I'm about to grab it!

BRENDA: Oh baby, grab me too!!

EARL: I will baby, I will! But first.... go get my ball!
(inhales deeply) I smell a freshly oiled lane!

Brenda takes a bowling bag out of a closet, Earl reverently removes the ball, and holds it in front of him, striking a bowling pose

EARL: It's been a long time. A long time since I held this ball and it still fits perfectly. Like a glove...a big round really heavy glove.

BRENDA: You look good baby, real good!

EARL: I can feel it. I can feel the energy running up my arm. Kinda like that time I shorted out my power drill.

BRENDA: I can feel it too... all through my body! Kinda like the time I shorted out my...

EARL: (*interrupts*) Don't bring that up again! The tour! Why didn't I think of this before? But I'd need you there with me baby, it'd be too dangerous for me to go out there alone, pro bowlers are chick magnets.

BRENDA: I'll be right beside you!

EARL: Right! I gotta get the feel back again. Gotta start practicing and... I want you to take all my bowling shirts to the laundromat and use extra Bounce, I don't need them chafing. And make sure those little holes in the armpits are clear, ventilation is very important.

BRENDA: So you're going back!

EARL: Back to Fred's Bowl-a-Rama. I haven't been back since the day little Earl was born and we moved away The day I cleaned my ball for the last time. Lots of memories in those lanes. Things I ain't thought about in years. Pass me my bag.

Brenda passes him his bowling ball bag and he takes out a small towel. It's filthy and black with lane oil and grime.

EARL: Look at this... my personalized lucky bowling towel. I'll bet it still smells like lane oil. (*he sniffs it*)

BRENDA: Hasn't that been in your bag for twenty years?

EARL: Yeah... that wasn't a good idea.

Brenda looks in the bag and takes out a small silver bell, the type used on retail counters

BRENDA: What's this?

EARL: Just a little souvenir I took from Fred's.

BRENDA: Why on earth would you take a bell?

EARL: Because a kid was growing up too fast.

BRENDA: I don't understand.

EARL: It was Fred's boy. He was only six and he got caught in the middle of something he didn't understand and I thought I should do something about it.

BRENDA: You're being mysterious and that usually means you're up to something.

EARL: No I'm not baby, really. It's just that the kid needed my help.

BRENDA: So you helped him by stealing the counter bell.

EARL: That's about it.

BRENDA: That's my Earl, man of action. So, what was going on?

EARL: It's complicated. Besides, it was a long time ago now.

(computer sfx indicating mail has arrived)

EARL: An email... this could be it! *(puts the ball, bell and towel back in the bag, hands it to Brenda)* Put this back in the closet. If this is what I think it is we won't have to sell the ball or anything else ever again. *(he goes to computer)* Alright, look at this, what I was tellin' you about! The Crown Prince guy just got back to me!

BRENDA: Crown Prince guy?

EARL: Crown Prince Gustaf.

BRENDA: Sounds like he's out of a Disney movie.

EARL: He's foreigner, they all have names like that. *(reading from the screen)* "Please stand by for further communication"

BRENDA: Further communication?

EARL: He's got people.

BRENDA: Who is this guy?

EARL: He's a genuine Crown Prince who needs to get a hundred and fifty million out of his country because the Visigoths had taken control of the government and he was going have to exile himself to an island somewhere but they've frozen his assets.

BRENDA: Why would they want to freeze his....

EARL: *(interrupting)* It means he can't get at his fortune and he needed someone with financial smarts to help him.

BRENDA: Oh. So who's the person with financial smarts?

EARL: Me.

BRENDA: You?

EARL: Yeah!

BRENDA: Oh.

EARL: You see, he's stuck over there in one of those foreign countries with a weird name... "something-stan", "rama lama ding dong-stan", I dunno. So he needs me to grease the wheels for him and as soon as he can get his fortune safely out of the country he says "thank you" with a huge wad of cash.

BRENDA: So how exactly do you "grease the wheels"?

EARL: His money is all tied up by the Visigoths that have taken over his country, but he needs cash so he can bribe them into releasing his fortune.

BRENDA: So you grease the wheels with cash.

EARL: Yep.

BRENDA: But, if they already have his fortune, why don't they just keep all of it?

EARL: *(pause)* It's not that simple. Besides, there are some things it's best I don't know about. Too much knowledge can be dangerous.

BRENDA: Then you must be just about the safest man in the world.

EARL: You can't be too safe.

BRENDA: And where is the "wheel greasing" cash coming from?

EARL: It's all taken care of.

BRENDA: (*threateningly*) If my spoons are...

EARL: I didn't touch your spoons, it's all taken care of, don't worry about it.

BRENDA: But honey, if you're going back on tour, you don't need this.

EARL: I can't ignore this, it's big, real big. Bigger than anything I've ever done before!

BRENDA: Why didn't you tell me about it?

EARL: Because until it panned out I wanted to keep it hush hush.

BRENDA: Why? In case it blew up in your face face?

EARL: Go ahead... mock. This is the real deal. As soon as I hear from the Crown Prince that everything is a "go", we've got it made.

BRENDA: (*hopefully*) Really? Then maybe we can get nice things like everyone else!

EARL: Our things are just as nice as anybody else's around here.

BRENDA: What about Larry, he has real cable TV..

EARL: Aw will you shut up about Larry!

BRENDA: And the Bannerman's just got a whole set of seven dwarfs garden gnomes!

EARL: They got 'em half price 'cause there was no "Grumpy" and two "Bashfuls"

BRENDA: But still.

EARL: Look, you gotta have patience, these things take time. But trust me, the money's gonna come. It'll be like bananas from heaven.

BRENDA: Maybe we can get them collection agencies off our back. I'm tired of climbing out the bathroom window every time they show up.

EARL: Leave it propped open in case they come back, it'll kill two birds with one stone.

BRENDA: So this Crown Prince is really gonna come through?

EARL: You bet.

BRENDA: I just wanna be sure baby, Larry says those internet guys are scam artists.

EARL: If Larry had a brain like mine, he wouldn't say that. In fact, if he hadn't messed me around I might even let him in on it but... I don't want to talk about him right now, I don't want anything to spoil this moment.

BRENDA: What moment?

EARL: The moment when you realize your man has finally come through.

BRENDA: But it hasn't happened yet.

EARL: But it will, just wait and see. It's all for you Brenda, everything I've ever done has been for you!

BRENDA: Like when you burned down our first trailer?

EARL: That wasn't for you, that was for the insurance but once this comes through, we'll have tons of dough. What do you want?... anything!

BRENDA: Maybe we can get a new flat screen TV, you know, one you don't have to put a doily on top of... and cable, hooked up properly so it's not all fuzzy... like Larry has....

EARL: Aw, will you stop goin' on about Larry!

BRENDA: Come on Earl, he's my brother.

EARL: By the way, now he has cable, remind me to go over there tomorrow night to watch the hockey game.

BRENDA: I thought you didn't want anything to do with him.

EARL: I'll be watchin' the game! Doesn't mean I have to talk to him.

BRENDA: Why can't you just *try* to be nice to him?

EARL: 'Cause he stole my job *and* he thinks he's better than me!

BRENDA: He doesn't think he's better than you, he likes you.

EARL: Then why's he showin' off, tryin' to make me look bad? (*looks through the curtains*) That's what he's doing, getting TV cable installed just to make me look cheap.

BRENDA: So much for "the moment". Forget about Larry, come and have some lunch.

EARL: I'm not hungry.

BRENDA: Well I am (*Brenda exits to kitchen*)

EARL: I can't think of food at a time like this. I'm tryin' to concentrate on the Crown Prince and getting back on the tour and he's across the road eyeballin' me like that. When I'm rich I'm gonna hire someone to eyeball *him*, see how he likes it.

BRENDA: (*returns with a tin of Chef Boy-ar-dee ravioli, eating it with a spoon*) This stuffs really goodwant some?

EARL: I told ya I'm not hungry.

(during the next segment, they each carry on their own side of different conversations, oblivious to the fact that the other isn't listening)

BRENDA: Boy-ar-dee. Do you think he's any relation to Boy George?

EARL: (*peeking out the window*) ... Mr. Big Deal thinks he's king of the trailer park.

BRENDA: I love Italian food.

EARL: Sitting there like he owns the place...

BRENDA: It's good right out of the tin. They make it that way so you've got options.

EARL: Ever since he stole that job, he's been lordin' it

BRENDA: For instance, what if your microwave's busted? You can eat it cold and it's just as good. See? Options.

EARL: He's really beginning to get on my nerves Brenda!

BRENDA: ...and if you don't finish it, you can put the tin upside down on a plate and it's like you never opened it.

EARL: And, he's drinkin' *Corona!* I can tell by the clear bottle! What's wrong with "50" all of a sudden? I tell ya, he's really puttin' on airs.

BRENDA: Some even have those little pull tab openers so you can eat it right there in the grocery store.

EARL: Thinks he's Mr. Fancy Career Man. He's just a night watchman in an apple warehouse.

BRENDA: It's even good in a sandwich.

EARL: An apple warehouse. Big deal!

BRENDA: It even comes in it's own ketchup.

EARL: He's a friggin' Apple Cop!

BRENDA: Who's an apple cop?

EARL: Your brother!

BRENDA: He's not an Apple Cop, he's a Night Security Supervisor.

EARL: (*peeking out the curtains*) Look at him there... Mr. Hot Stuff thinks he's so cool.

BRENDA: Make up your mind.

EARL: Apple cop. Big deal.

BRENDA: But isn't that the job you wanted?

EARL: (*pause*) Yeah... but he turned it stupid.

BRENDA: Larry really likes you, Earl...he does. He's never said a word against you, you know that. He's family and you're gonna treat him like family.

EARL: I do treat him like family. Didn't I borrow a hundred bucks from him just last month?

BRENDA: That's not what I mean. As far as I'm concerned he's welcome over here anytime and I told him that.

EARL: Oh no you don't! He's not setting foot inside this trailer again!

BRENDA: Oh yes he is!

EARL: *(pause)* Okay... but he can't stay long.

BRENDA: Earl, he's lonely. He doesn't have anyone to talk to.

EARL: Maybe he would if he coulda held on to his wife!

BRENDA: It wasn't his fault!

EARL: Then whose fault was it?

BRENDA: Nobody's!! How was he supposed to know the car door was going to fly open?

EARL: He shouldn't have taken the turn so fast!

BRENDA: All she had to do was hang on to something.

EARL: She did... but that plastic Jesus snapped off the dashboard like a dry twig. Bad mojo follows that guy around like pickled egg stink.

BRENDA: That was no reason to leave him.

EARL: Maybe he shoulda gone back to pick her up.

(SFX computer mail, EARL goes to computer)

Hey it's the Crown Prince! *(reading)* "Am happily joyous to be again making your fine acquaintance".

BRENDA: Why does he talk so funny?

EARL: Cause he's a foreigner. I told ya, he lives in one of those foreign countries, you know one of those that are even worse than France. *(reading from computer)* "Am happy to report agreed upon sum from your kind self is sufficient to release funds"

BRENDA: You sent him money?

EARL: It's the wheel greasing cash.

BRENDA: But...

EARL: No buts! This thing is happening! Look at this...
(*reading from the screen*) "I am in receipt of your ten thousand dollar check to "expedite paperwork" and will soon release funds to you in amount of fifteen million dollars. Yours truly, Crown Prince Gustaf" I don't believe it! Did ya hear that Brenda!! Will soon release funds! Fifteen million! Yahooooo!

BRENDA: But Earl....

EARL: (*dancing around the room singing, celebrating etc*) It worked! It worked!! Fifteen million! I told you we'd be in the money!

BRENDA: Earl, wait a minute...

EARL: Proud of me now baby?!

BRENDA: I dunno Earl

EARL: (*yells out window*) Eat your heart out Larry Loser!
(*starts dancing around again*) We're in the money, we're in the money!!

BRENDA: But EARL....

EARL: (*dancing*) I'm rich, I'm rich, I'm stinkin' stinkin' rich. I'm rich, I'm rich, I'm stinkin' stinkin' rich!

BRENDA: (*louder*) EARL!!

EARL: What... what!!??

BRENDA: You wrote him a check for ten thousand dollars?

EARL: Of course I did!

BRENDA: But we don't have ten thousand dollars.

EARL: Of course we don't!

BRENDA: Then what's going to happen when....

EARL: Nothing's gonna happen!

BRENDA: Earl, this is gonna blow up in your face , just like the Fudgsicles!

EARL: They didn't blow up, they melted!

BRENDA: I just know something bads gonna happen!

EARL: Believe me baby, nothings gonna happen. Nothing! I've got it all worked out. He said they'll release his money as soon as they get the check. Now this is where the plan gets truly beautiful... I used a check from an account I closed last year! So by the time they discover there's no such account, they'll have already released his fortune and he'll send me the fifteen million!

BRENDA: How can he release the funds to your account if your bank account doesn't exist?

EARL: Because he's not releasing the funds to my account, I told him to mail me a check...do ya think I'm an idiot?

BRENDA: You're sure that's going to work?

EARL: What could possibly go wrong?

BRENDA: Well, what if his check bounces, or they want to wait until the check clears before they release his fortune or...

EARL: Stop thinking so much Brenda! Sometimes you just gotta let it unfold. I've ruined too many perfect plans by thinking too much, this time, it's just unfolding.

BRENDA: How is that different from unravelling?

EARL: I'm letting the process happen naturally. It's orgasmic. (*Brenda looks puzzled*) Orgasmic... you know, like orgasmic farming. (*pause*) Oh never mind, it would take too long to explain.

BRENDA: I'd like to see you explain it to the farmers.

EARL: Farmers? Why would I have to explain anything to farmers? Jeez Brenda, try to focus will ya?

BRENDA: I'm just worried baby, it all seems too good to be true.

EARL: You mean, so good it *has* to be true! Check this out.

(he hands her a file folder from beside the computer)

BRENDA: *(she opens the folder)* What are these?

EARL: Testimonials. Testimonials from people just like me who have helped other rich guys in the same country in exactly the same situation.

BRENDA: *(reading)* "My five thousand dollars turned into eight million overnight, now my financial freedom is assured" Where did you get these?

EARL: The Crown Prince sent them to me.

BRENDA: *(still reading)* "I'm writing this testimonial from the Bahamas on board my own personal luxury yacht". *(pause)* Oh my God I don't believe it!

EARL: Believe it baby! Proud of me now?

BRENDA: Bursting! *(sits down)* Fifteen million dollars. I can't even count that high, we can have everything we've ever wanted

EARL: We can have things we don't even know we want, like... like... well, I don't know.

BRENDA: A pool?? Can we have a swimmin' pool?

EARL: You bet.

BRENDA: With that fancy water that turns red if somebody pees in it!

EARL: Oui oui!

BRENDA: *(puzzled)* Was that a joke?

EARL: Yeah, it's French.

BRENDA: Oh baby... you're already gettin' classy!

EARL: You're gonna see a whole new me! When you're rich, everything changes. People look at you different. For one thing, you don't get hassled at the variety store when you ask for change for the laundromat, Big changes are comin' Brenda. Didn't I tell you I'd come through?

BRENDA: You came through baby, did you ever come through....

EARL: And it's all for my kitten....my sexy kitty!

BRENDA: (sexily) ooohh, you're kittys guy aren't you?

EARL: You know it baby!

BRENDA: oooh, you're my filthy rich kittys guy....my filthy dirty filthy rich.....

(they draw closer)

EARL: I'm so filthy rich I'm gonna take a shower in hundred dollar bills... wanna join me?

BRENDA: Oh, baby, your sexy kitty's heart's beating like crazy, can you feel it?

(puts his hand on her chest)

EARL: Oh baby, can I ever...

BRENDA: Say it baby... it would be so hot if you said it.

EARL: Say what baby?

BRENDA: Your catch phrase, just like you woulda on TV.

EARL: My feet are so clean you can eat off them.

BRENDA: Oh baby!!

Just as they kiss, there's a knock on the door, actually sounds more like someone kicking the door

(Brenda and Earl shoot each other a look then run and hide on either side of the door)

EARL: We expecting anybody?

BRENDA: No

EARL: Crap!

BRENDA: Did you pay the gas bill?

EARL: No. Did you pay the hydro bill?

BRENDA: No. Did you pay the water bill?

EARL: No. Did you pay the tax bill?

BRENDA: No. Have we paid anything?

EARL: Not exactly, no.

BRENDA: So we owe everybody.

EARL: Pretty much.

BRENDA: So it could be anybody.

EARL: Right. *(pause)* Did you prop open the bathroom window?

BRENDA: I thought we were millionaires?

EARL: Well we don't have it yet, do we? So we have to stall them until we do.

BRENDA: *(calling out)* Who is it?

EARL: Shhhhhhh!!!! Don't let them know we're home!

LARRY: It's me, Larry.

EARL: Oh great... the Apple Cop.

BRENDA: Earl!!

LARRY: Come on, open the door, I've got my hands full!

EARL: We're closed! *(approaches Brenda)* Now where were we....

BRENDA: Later Earl... now open the door.

EARL: Ah come on baby...

BRENDA: I said later...

EARL: Just give me five minutes...

BRENDA: The door!

EARL: *(tries to be sexy)* My feet are so clean...

BRENDA: *(interrupting)* Will you open the door!

EARL: Why don't you show me your 7-10...

BRENDA: *(threateningly)* Earl!!

LARRY: Hurry up, this is getting heavy.

EARL: *(moves away from the door)* Fine, open the door before he starts to cry. First he steals my job, now he interferes with my... my... husbandlyness!

Brenda starts to open the door

EARL: Don't say a word to Larry about the fifteen million!

BRENDA; Why not?

EARL: 'Cause he'll blab it all over the park, then everyone will want in on it!

BRENDA: Okay, Fine.

*Brenda opens the door, Larry enters carrying a bushel
basket of
apples.*

LARRY: *(handing basket to Brenda)* Here ya go Sis.

EARL: Apples huh?

LARRY: That's what I like about you Earl, sharp as a tack.

EARL: So what happened Apple Cop? Did they escape?

LARRY: What?

EARL: Are they your prisoners?

LARRY: What are you talking about?

BRENDA: Oh never mind him, just make yourself at home.

EARL: Yeah, it's right across the road.

BRENDA: *(gives the basket to Earl)* Here, make yourself useful.

EARL: Did you give us all the bruised ones?

LARRY: They're overstocks, if they have too many we can take some home... I thought you guys might like some.

EARL: They look kinda puny.

BRENDA: Earl, why don't you take the apples to the kitchen and get Larry a beer.

EARL: Can't he get his own, he just lives across the road.

BRENDA: Earl!!!!

EARL: Okay, Okay *(heading to the kitchen)* Apparently I have to get you a beer. Oh, and what if these apples escape again? Should I call you?

BRENDA: EARL!!

EARL: Okay, okay. *(takes apples into the kitchen)*

BRENDA: And don't forget the beer! *(sits beside Larry)* I'm sorry, he's just being an asshole.

LARRY: What's with calling me "Apple Cop"?

BRENDA: That's just what he's decided you are at the warehouse because you're the Night Security Supervisor.

LARRY: Oh I get it. Look, maybe I should leave, this isn't working out, I thought the apples would soften him up.

BRENDA: He loves anything free, he just won't admit it. Don't worry, he'll come around, it's just going to take some time.

LARRY: Time? It's been almost a year! How many more "anonymous" bags of flaming dog crap am I going to find on my front step?

BRENDA: *(pause)* He's still doing that huh?

LARRY: Yep

BRENDA: We don't even have a dog, I've no idea where he's getting it from. *Brenda and Larry look at each other.*

Larry changes the subject

LARRY: I don't know what to do Brenda, I've tried being nice to him, I've tried ignoring him but nothing seems to work. He's acting like a ten year old. An *immature* ten year old.

BRENDA: Earl marches to his own kazoo player.

EARL: *(from the kitchen)* Help Larry... help!!

BRENDA: What the...

An apple comes sailing through the air out of the kitchen

EARL: *(from the kitchen)* Oh no....an apple just escaped!

BRENDA: Oh for crying out loud!

LARRY: What's he talking about?

Another apple comes sailing into the living room

EARL: Look out Larry, they're making a run for it!! Arrest them, arrest them!!

A third apple comes sailing out of the kitchen

LARRY: Earl, cut it out!

EARL: Fine. Some apple cop you turned out to be.

BRENDA: *(to Larry)* Just ignore him.

LARRY: It's kinda hard...

BRENDA: Earls a proud man. He was really upset when they gave you that job.

LARRY: That's just it, they gave it to me, I didn't steal it. It would have been his if he bothered to show up for the interview. Besides, he could've still had his old job there if he hadn't walked out in a snit.

BRENDA: I know.

LARRY: All I know is, he's still mad and he's still taking it out on me.

BRENDA: You think you've got it bad? I have to watch him try every get rich quick scheme out there.

LARRY: This place still smells like Fudgsicles

BRENDA: Tell me about it.

LARRY: Then he bought what he said was Egyptian real estate.

BRENDA: That would be the pyramid scheme.

LARRY: What about that truckload of designer sunglasses?

BRENDA: You mean the "Ray-Bobs"?

LARRY: That was a classic.

BRENDA: He's a decent man Larry, a little misguided but he means well. *(calling to the kitchen)* Earl, where's Larry's beer?

EARL: Coming... just as soon as I warm it up!

BRENDA: Oh Larry, maybe you're right, maybe I shouldn't have asked you over here, he's just not ready yet to be civil to you.

LARRY: Actually I'm kinda glad you did, there's somethin' come up at the warehouse that he's gonna be interested in. I didn't want to mention it until...

BRENDA: *(interrupting)* I don't think he'd be too interested in a job right now....

LARRY: Why, does he have a new job?

BRENDA: No, not exactly. But let's just say we won't be needing

money anymore.

LARRY: What, Earl's decided to become a homeless nudist who doesn't eat?

BRENDA: No, it's just that. Well... I'm not supposed to say anything so you have to promise you won't tell anybody.

LARRY: I have a feeling I won't want to tell anybody.

BRENDA: We're getting fifteen million dollars!

LARRY: What? Where... how?

BRENDA: It's still a secret, but Earl is going to help a Crown Prince get his money out of his country and he's getting paid fifteen million!

LARRY: Let me guess. He heard about this on the internet, right?

BRENDA: Well, yes.

LARRY: Oh Brenda, I told you those guys were scam artists!

BRENDA: But he has testimonials.

LARRY: It's another get rich quick scheme. Only someone with a turnip for a brain would fall for that.

EARL: *(entering from the kitchen)* Who has a turnip for a brain?

BRENDA: Nobody's has a turnip for a brain!

EARL: *(points at Larry)* It's you isn't it! You're saying I have a turnip for a brain!

BRENDA: No he isn't.

EARL: You're rubbin' it in again about the lobsters aren't you? You know very well it was the hottest day of the year and besides, they were supposed to be alive.

LARRY: Oh, it would have been so much better to have a pile of live lobsters dumped in your driveway!

EARL: That's no reason to say I have a turnip for a brain!

LARRY: You were listening to us!

EARL: I was not! You can't eavestrough in your own house!

LARRY: Don't you mean eavesdrop?

EARL: Of course I do.

LARRY: No, wouldn't want to sound stupid would you?

EARL: Oh, so now I not only have a turnip for a brain but I'm stupid!!

LARRY: So you mean up until this point, your head contained a reasonably intelligent turnip?

EARL: Don't you try and put a turnip in my head.

LARRY: I wouldn't think of it.

EARL: Then who's the turnip brain?

LARRY: Certainly not you.

EARL: Good.

LARRY: That would be insulting to turnips.

EARL: Aha!! I knew it! You see Brenda? You see what he thinks about me!!? Well, let's see what he thinks about this!

Earl runs into the kitchen and returns with the basket of apples, picks one out which he holds up and shows Larry

EARL: What do you think about this huh??? *(He proceeds to frantically smash the apple with his fist until it's pulverized then triumphantly holds it up to Larry's face)* There!! How about that huh? What do you think about that?

LARRY: *(pause) (calmy)* You smashed an apple.

EARL: Yeah, but it's *your* apple!

LARRY: No it isn't, I gave it to you. It's your apple.

Earl looks at the apple, then at Larry, then methodically smears the smashed apple all over the front of Larry's shirt.

EARL: There! How about that!

LARRY: *(pause while Larry stares incredulously at his apple smeared shirt)* Why did you do that?

EARL: To show you I don't need you tryin' to impress me with your stupid apples.

LARRY: I'm not trying to impress anyone! I just got some apples from work and thought...

EARL: *(interrupting)* Oh yeah... from work!! Here we go again. Rub it in why don'tcha Mr. Apple Cop.

LARRY: I just thought you might like some free apples, what's wrong with that?

EARL: Look, I don't care about your apples and I don't even care about that stupid job anymore 'cause starting today, I'm fryin' a fish that's a whole lot bigger than you!

LARRY: *(Larry and Brenda exchange looks)* Another one of your get rich quick schemes?

EARL: Wouldn't you like to know!

LARRY: Not really.

EARL: Yeah? Well just wait til I'm eatin' fish and you're eatin'... somethin' else.

LARRY: Bon appétit, go eat your fish, I'm happy for you.

EARL: I'm not gonna be eating fish, it's a simile, smart guy.

LARRY: Don't you mean "metaphor"?

EARL: Don't try to trip me up! All you need to know is that I don't care about that stupid job anymore, I'm in business with someone who's gonna make me some real money.

LARRY: His name wouldn't be "Ponzi" would it?

EARL: No, and it's none of your business what his name is. And by the way just to prove that money is no object to me anymore, here's ten bucks towards that hundred I owe you.

(hands Larry a twenty dollar bill)

LARRY: This is a twenty.

EARL: I need change.

LARRY: Oh for cryin out loud! *(searches his pockets)* I don't have my wallet.

EARL: Okay, then you owe me ten.

LARRY: What? I don't owe you ten, you owe me eighty!

EARL: You see that Brenda, there he goes, turning everything around so it suits him. Isn't that just typical. Tell you what, have it your way, you keep that ten you owe me, so now you owe me twenty.

LARRY: Look, Earl the only reason I came over here was to tell you about an opportunity down at the warehouse. Things have changed and...

EARL: *(interrupting)* Hello! Ground control to Major Larry!! How many times do I have to tell you, the last thing I need right now is a stupid job at that stupid warehouse! So you can take your stupid job, your stupid apples and your stupid stupidity and stick it somewhere stupid!

BRENDA: Somebody oughta write that down.

LARRY: So if you don't care about the job, why are you so upset?

EARL: What?

BRENDA: Good question Earl, why are you so upset?

EARL: Upset?

LARRY: You smashed an apple.

EARL: I didn't smash an apple I made a point.

LARRY: Who makes a point by smashing an apple? You make a point with reasoned argument and relevant facts, not by pulverizing fruit and smearing it all over someone!

EARL: Don't get fancy with me! Ya know, you got some nerve, sitting here in my house, braggin' about that job that shoulda been mine, all the time wearing my apple!

LARRY: You know damn well you coulda had that job.

EARL: And now you try to buy me off with a bunch of scabby stolen apples.

LARRY: Don't insult my apples!

EARL: Scabby Applethief.

LARRY: What!?

EARL: That's your new name... Scabby Applethief.

LARRY: What's wrong with you?!

EARL: Scabby.

LARRY: Brenda will you do something about...

EARL: Scabby. Scabby Applethief.

LARRY: Will you grow up!!

EARL: No!

LARRY: You've lost it Earl, you really have.

EARL: Talk to the hand!

LARRY *(to Brenda)* Is he serious?

BRENDA: Yep.

LARRY: Who says that anymore?

EARL: Whatever you say is gonna go in one ear and straight out the other.

LARRY: Because there's nothing there to stop it, not even a turnip!

EARL: You hear that Brenda? Well I'm takin' the high road. I'm not gonna be bothered by lame insults from someone who can't even hang on to his wife!

LARRY: Don't you dare bring that up!

EARL: *(Singing "Plastic Jesus". Google "Tia Blake Plastic Jesus" for a good tempo)* I don't care if it rains or freezes, long as I got my plastic Jesus sitting on the dashboard of my car....

LARRY: How low can one man sink?

EARL: Snapped off like a dry twig, how convenient!

LARRY: Okay, that's it! You're nuts Earl! You're insane! You are a turnip brain! A turnip brain who doesn't have the sense to know when somebody is trying to help him out!

EARL: Did you hear that Brenda! He admitted it!

BRENDA: Admitted what?

EARL: That I'm a turnip brain!

BRENDA: Bingo!

EARL: *(to Larry)* Scabby Applethief.

LARRY: Turnip brain.

BRENDA: Earl, grow up! And Larry, you should know better!

LARRY: I should know better? I'm not the one dumb enough to believe some internet scam artist is going to give me fifteen million dollars!

EARL: What?!

BRENDA: Larry!

LARRY: Sorry!

EARL: You told him??

BRENDA: It just kinda slipped out! He said he had a job for you then I said we didn't need the money and then he said you were gonna be a naked guy who doesn't eat and then...

EARL: So that's what this is all about, you're nosing around to get a piece of the action!

LARRY: There isn't going to be any action Earl, you're being scammed!

EARL: Says the man not smart enough to uncover these opportunities for himself and just wants to ride on my coat-tails.

LARRY: By the time this is finished, the only thing you'll have left is a turnip... one that is roughly the size of your hat!!

EARL: All right, that's it!! It's go time!

LARRY: Bring it on Turnip head!

Earl and Larry starting dancing around each other like a couple of bad boxers, while Brenda tries to intervene. After 5 or 10 seconds a very loud knock is heard on the door. Everybody freezes. Knock happens again.

LARRY: Aren't you going to answer it?

EARL: Not necessarily

Knocking is louder and more insistent

LARRY: Are we just gonna stand here like this??

EARL & BRENDA: Shhhhh!

Knocking is even louder

VOICE FROM OUTSIDE: *(very loud and threatening)* You have exactly ten seconds to open this door!

EARL: *(loudly, to the man at the door)* I don't have a watch.

VOICE: Five seconds.

EARL: I can't, I'm naked!

VOICE: *(louder and more threatening)* Two seconds!

EARL: Brenda, open the door!

BRENDA: Me?! Why me?

EARL: Because he thinks I'm naked!

The door bangs open revealing a large intimidating man wearing a black leather jacket and carrying a briefcase

BRENDA: *(Angrily)* How many times did I tell you to fix that lock!

EARL: I was gettin' around to it!

BRENDA: Well that does us a hell of a lotta good now doesn't it!

EARL: Why didn't you fix it?

BRENDA: Me??!! Why should I have to....

GUSTAF: *(bellows very loudly)* Shut up!!!

Everyone falls silent as the intruder takes a few steps into the room

EARL: Who are you?

GUSTAF: Who do you think I am?

EARL: The cable guy?

GUSTAF: Have you been waiting all day for me?

EARL: No

GUSTAF: Then I'm not the cable guy am I?

EARL: Then who are you?

GUSTAF: Just call me... Crown Prince Gustaf.

Lights Down. End of Act 1