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Norman Maine Publishing

MURDER AT CLUB FISHNET
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MURDER AT CLUB FISHNET

FARCE/MURDER MYSTERY. When several severed body parts are discovered at Club Fishnet, a small-town brothel, the madam hires gumshoe detective Connie Vesper to investigate. But when Connie must go undercover as the new “naughty schoolgirl” at the brothel, she elicits the help of her gay uncle. Uncle Louie poses as a detective to throw off the killer while Connie collects evidence undercover. The plan seems like a good one until Connie’s “virginal” fiancé and an entire hockey team show up. **(Contains mature themes and language.)**

Performance Time: Approximately 75-90 minutes.

CHARACTERS

(3 m, 8 w, male extras)

CONNIE VESPER: 19-35, female private detective. She has glasses and is very attractive, but has chosen to wear clothing that resembles a gumshoe detective. She wears an old-style grey suit coat with matching pants and blouse, and her hair is tied tightly up in a bun so she can wear a classic men's fedora hat.

LOUIE: 30-50, Connie's uncle, who is gay, but not effeminate; works in the mail room at the Millborough Police Station.

MADAME ANGELINA BOVINE: Mature woman, attractive, runs Millborough's local whorehouse "Club Fishnet."

GARY POLYDORES: Connie's fiancé, attractive male, 19-35 years old, in the US Army

HONEY: 19-35, dressed as a "cowgirl"; rowdy, speaks with a southern drawl.

CHERRY: 19-25, dressed as a cheerleader; perky, bouncy, stupid, skips a lot.

JASMINE: 19-35, dressed as a sexy nurse; tender, caring, always wanting to help others.

BABETTE: 19-35, dressed as a French maid; really is French.

VAMPIRALA: 19-35, the Gothic-style vampira; speaks with a mild Eastern European accent.

MONA MOOSEHEAD: 19-35, dressed as an "Amazon" or Indian and carries a bullwhip; muscular, hefty woman; actually a Swedish girl named "Inga" in disguise.

CHIEF WILBERFORCE: Older man, believed to be dead.

THE JOHNS: In Act I they appear in business attire. In Act II they appear as rowdy hockey players. Note: You may also pull out male members of your audience and guide them through the appropriate scenes.

SETTING

Small town of Millborough, MA. Club Fishnet and Connie Vesper's detective agency.

SET

Connie Vesper's Office: A disheveled and disorganized detective agency. The door has the words "Connie Vesper, Private Eye" written on it in big black letters. Her office is adorned with all sorts of memorabilia from dime store pulp novels with lots of papers strewn everywhere and an old fashioned typewriter on a desk.

Club Fishnet: Entry door is far left. Exposed scaffolding provides a two-level effect. Door frames represent the various girls "bedrooms." Affixed to the door frames are scrims representing the doors to each girl's room. The rooms are located in this order: Honey's room and Cherry's room downstairs upright; Babette's room downstairs downright; Madame Angelina's room downstairs right center (Note: it also heads to kitchen, basement and back door.); Mona's room upstairs right; Jasmine's room upstairs left; Vampirala's room upstairs center.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Act I

Scene 1: Club Fishnet.

Scene 2: Connie Vesper's detective agency office.

Scene 3: Connie office, an hour later.

Scene 4: Club Fishnet.

Scene 5: Connie's office.

Scene 6: Club Fishnet.

Act II

Scene 1: Club Fishnet, seconds later.

Scene 2: Club Fishnet, two hours later.

PROPS

Severed hand	Bullwhip
Severed foot	Spittoon
Severed penis	Handcuffs
Old-fashioned typewriter	Vampire teeth
Raincoat, for Madame Angelina	Women's wallet
Knapsack	Passport
Fake blood	Rubber hatchet or tomahawk
Police badge	Scalpel
Purse, for Madame Angelina	Syringe
Money	Candles
Telephone	Hockey stick
Cigarette	Hockey mask
Partition or screen	2 Photos
Book	Pen
Handgun	Paper
Handbag, for Connie	

SOUND EFFECTS

Knock at the door	Splashing sound
Zipper being unzipped	Heavy metal music
Doorbell ringing	

ACT I

SCENE 1

(AT RISE: Dimly lit stage reveals a seamy whorehouse. We see the bare backs of Honey, Babette, Vampirala, Cherry, and Jasmine. They are all wearing lacy underwear with clearly visible fishnet stockings. They are all in their "rooms," which have silhouetted scrims for doors surrounding the stage area. Only their bare backs are seen as they make low-key moaning sounds and thrust their bodies forward and back as if engaging in sex acts. The audience does not see the johns. [Note: Before the show, the director may ask several men from the audience to participate.] Johns wait backstage and when they hear their cue, "We better call the police," they rush out the back of the venue and hysterically try to put on varied articles of clothing. The girls continue to moan louder as if building to a "climax," then all of a sudden each girl begins to find something in their bed. As they hold up different, poorly visible body parts, each girl starts to scream. They all gather up the various body parts. As lights come up full, girls congregate center. Madame Angelina enters from her room to CS to meet with her girls. Madame Angelina is a more mature woman. She enters more clothed than the others, but is still dressed quite sexy, and also is wearing fishnet stockings.)

MADAME: What is it? What's the matter, girls? What's going on?
What's with all the commotion?

CHERRY: (Dressed as a cheerleader, perky.) Sis-boom-bah! It was awful!

JASMINE: (Dressed as a sexy nurse.) Body parts! They were in our beds!

BABETTE: (Dressed as a French maid, speaks in a French accent.) Ooh la-lah! Zey are everywhere! Look! A hand!

(Babette holds up a severed hand, and several girls scream.)

HONEY: (Dressed as sexy cowgirl, speaks with a Texas drawl.) Look at this here. I got me a hoof! (Holds up a severed foot; several girls scream.)

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VAMPIRALA: *(Dressed as a gothic-style vampira, speaks with an Eastern European accent.)* Well, I shall tell you, in my bed I found a... *(Holds up a severed penis. All the girls shriek.)* Holy shit! *(Throws the penis to a member of the audience.)*

MADAME: *(To Vampirala or to whomever catches the penis.)* What's the matter with you, honey? At least you got the *best* part!

CHERRY: What should we do, Angelina?

JASMINE: We better call the police!

(Cue for all the johns to quickly exit. They all have business suits on but rush out as if they're getting dressed in a hurry. As they go, the girls stare at them as lights fade to black.)

SCENE 2

(AT RISE: Office of Connie Vesper, private detective. She sits typing at her desk and does not notice that there is a soft knock at the door SL. Connie stops typing. She pulls the paper out of the typewriter and starts speaking to the audience as if she were the narrator in some film noir.)

CONNIE: *(To the audience.)* It was a rainy evening. I was trying to catch up on some old paperwork I'd left undone in between cases. *(Continuing as the knocking gets louder.)* You know, it's not easy being a female detective. People tend not to take you seriously. When my father handed the agency over to me, he warned me that there'd be some tough times ahead, and boy, was he "rught." *(Pronounced "ruggit." Connie looks at the paper.)* "Rught"? *(Corrects the typo and continues.)* And boy, was he right! *(She is oblivious as the knocking gets louder.)* People treat you like you're not a "real detective," just because I'm a female and tend to mix my narrative tense. I never get any help from the police. If my Uncle Louie wasn't on the force, I'd never get any cases at all. *(Knocking has turned to pounding now.)* You know, I remember this one case... *(Fed up with the knocking she throws the paper on her desk and shouts.)* What!? *(Regains her composure.)* So much for noir. Come in.

(Madame Angelina enters, wearing a raincoat and drags in a large white knapsack with blood stains on it.)

MADAME: Excuse me, but could you help me?

(Connie looks at the bag.)

CONNIE: Certainly. The Chinese laundry is one flight below.

MADAME: No, no. Are you Miss Connie Vesper, Private Eye?

CONNIE: What's the door say?

MADAME: It doesn't say anything. It's a door.

CONNIE: I mean the letters on the door!

MADAME: They don't say anything, either.

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CONNIE: The sign! How does the sign read?

MADAME: It can't read. It's an inanimate object. It's physically incapable of...

CONNIE: *(Fed up.)* Yes! Yes! I'm Connie Vesper, Private Eye! Now, what is it that you want?

MADAME: *(Forgetting why she's there.)* Want?

CONNIE: The bag.

MADAME: *(Remembers.)* Oh, yes! Well, you see, in this bag is, well, um...it's rather difficult to explain.

CONNIE: Come now, Miss...Miss...?

MADAME: Actually, call me Madame.

CONNIE: Okay. Madame... *(Walks over to the bag.)* ...what could be so troubling that you... *(Peeks in the bag, emits a high-pitched scream, then closes the bag back up quickly.)* What the hell was that?

MADAME: A body.

(Connie pauses, opens the bag up again, screams again, then re-closes the bag.)

CONNIE: We better call the police!

(The johns rush through the door SL, once again putting on their clothes. They rush offstage as Connie looks at Madame Angelina.)

MADAME: I'm sorry. It was a long wait in the hall.

CONNIE: Just who are you, anyway?

MADAME: My name is Angelina Bovine, but most folks just call me... *(Opens her raincoat to reveal her sexy outfit.)* ...Madame Angelina.

CONNIE: Madame Angelina? Are you a psychic?

MADAME: Not quite. I run Club Fishnet on the outskirts of town.

CONNIE: Club Fishnet? Is that some sort of dance establishment?

MADAME: Hmmm. You're not too bright for a detective, are you? It's the local whorehouse in Millborough.

CONNIE: The local...? Oh, my goodness! Why did you come here with that...that...bag?

MADAME: Because I need your help.

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CONNIE: Why didn't you go to the police?

MADAME: Do you know the police department in this town?

CONNIE: Yes. Why? *(Takes the bag.)*

MADAME: They're some of our regulars. If we went to the police, some would be afraid of us spilling the beans on their extended, uh, "coffee runs."

CONNIE: *(Understands.)* I knew there had to be a reason why cops like donuts so much...

MADAME: There's another reason I came to see you, Miss Vesper.

CONNIE: What?

MADAME: *(Shouts.)* I said there's another reason I came to see you, Miss Vesper!

CONNIE: I know that! I meant what was the other reason?

MADAME: Do you know who Police Chief Wilberforce is?

CONNIE: Who?

MADAME: Boy, I'd sure feel better about your sleuthing capabilities if you got one of these by yourself. He was the Millborough Chief of Police.

CONNIE: That's right! Now I remember. He disappeared over two weeks ago. It was in all the papers.

MADAME: Well... *(Points to the bag.)* ...I...think...that's... him.

(Connie looks at the bag, screams again, then let's goof it.)

CONNIE: How do you know that's him?

(Madame pulls out a bloodied police badge.)

MADAME: This was found with one of the body parts. *(Sniff-sniff)*
He was our *best* customer.

(Connie takes the badge.)

CONNIE: It's a badge!

MADAME: Good for you! I knew you'd get one sooner or later.

CONNIE: This whole thing is unbelievable.

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MADAME: Hey, I didn't write it. Wilberforce always said that Club Fishnet would make him fall to pieces sooner or later. I think he was banking on later, though.

CONNIE: Do you have any suspects?

MADAME: Just one. Mona Moosemount.

CONNIE: Mona Moose...mount?

MADAME: Of course that isn't her real name. That's her Indian name.

CONNIE: Moosemount?

MADAME: Mona. She's my newest girl. Chief Wilberforce was last seen in her "company" the night he disappeared.

CONNIE: Could just be coincidence. Any other reason you might suspect her?

MADAME: Well, let's just say Mona caters to a very "specific" clientele. She likes to play, shall we say, "rough"? (*Pretends to crack a whip.*) And so did the chief, if you get my drift. (*Pretends to crack a whip again.*)

CONNIE: Stop that! (*A little repulsed.*) I see. (*Thinks.*) But what to do with the body? You can't leave it here. It does need to go to the police. (*Sniffs the air, noticing a pungent smell.*) And quickly.

MADAME: Isn't there someone you can call?

CONNIE: (*Thinks.*) I'll see if my Uncle Louie can help. He's on the force.

MADAME: No! No police!

CONNIE: It's okay. It's not like he's a real policeman. He works in the mailroom. Don't worry. We can trust him.

MADAME: (*Breathes a sigh of relief.*) Good. So, you'll take my case?

CONNIE: (*Hesitant.*) I'll take it. But I don't know why you came to me or what you want me to do.

MADAME: I want you to come work undercover at my place.

CONNIE: What?

MADAME: Yes. That way, nobody will know what you're up to. (*Looking over Connie's form.*) You are an attractive female... (*Connie blushes.*) ...even if you don't have any tits.

CONNIE: I can't pretend to be a whore... (*Looks at Madame Angelina who has taken offense to the term.*) ...I mean, "a lady of the evening."

MADAME: I'm not asking you to entertain, my dear. I'm asking you to investigate. I just want you to wear the clothes so the girls think you're new. I'll have a room prepared for you. Do you have anyone that you work with?

CONNIE: On occasion my uncle helps me on cases. I'm not sure he'll want to get in on this one, though.

MADAME: Well, I'll just prepare the one room. (*Looks Connie over again.*) Hmm. We'll have to think of a gimmick for you.

CONNIE: A gimmick? What do you mean?

MADAME: An angle. All my girls "specialize." There's Mona, who I told you about; Cherry, the cheerleader; Jasmine, the sexy nurse; Babette, the French maid; Honey, the cowgirl; and Vampirala, the vampire.

CONNIE: Why all the fake names?

MADAME: What fake names? We need to come up with something to tell the girls what you specialize in. Do you have any hobbies?

CONNIE: I play chess.

MADAME: (*Shakes her head.*) No. That's no good. No guy wants a smart girl. (*Pauses, then thinks of something.*) Unless, of course... (*Slowly turns around and examines Connie.*)

CONNIE: What?

MADAME: A schoolgirl. Yes. The little-naughty-Catholic-schoolgirl look would suit you. (*Pulls money out of her pocketbook.*) Don't worry about a thing. I'll get you the clothes. You just show up tonight and get to work. (*Hands Connie money.*) This should more than cover your fee.

CONNIE: (*Startled at the amount.*) Yikes!

MADAME: And I'll double that when you've solved the case.

CONNIE: You've got to be kidding! (*Madame Angelina closes her coat and heads for the door.*) Wait a minute. (*Connie approaches to give her back the money.*) Maybe this is a bad idea. I mean, I can't hang around a whore, I mean, your place. I've got a fiancé...Gary. (*Whispers to her.*) What if he should find out?

MADAME: (*Whispers back.*) You can explain it to him.

CONNIE: (*Loud.*) I'm not sure I can explain it to myself! What will Gary think?

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MADAME: My dear, if you play your cards right while you're solving this case, my girls will show you some techniques that will make your boyfriend, Gary, the happiest man on the planet. So, I doubt he'll mind. *(Again heads for the door.)* I'll be back with your costume in an hour.

CONNIE: I don't know about this.

(Madame turns back to Connie once more.)

MADAME: Remember, be as secretive as possible. If certain people on the force find out, they'll shut me down. I'd have to let all my girls go.

(Connie picks up her telephone and starts dialing.)

CONNIE: I'll be careful.

MADAME: *(Cautioning.)* Yes. You'd better. *(Exits.)*

CONNIE: *(Into the phone.)* Hello. Uncle Louie? Can you come over here right away? It's an emergency. *(Pause.)* No. Don't bring the whole force. Just you. Don't tell anyone. *(Pause.)* Good. Thanks. *(Hangs up the phone, pauses thinking about what Madame Angelina said.)* I wonder what she meant by that?

(Lights fade to blackout.)

SCENE 3

(AT RISE: Connie Vesper's office, an hour later. Uncle Louie arrives. He is dressed in a policeman's outfit. As lights come up, we see Uncle Louie examining the contents of the bag.)

LOUIE: Is that a penis or a dildo?

CONNIE: I wouldn't know. I didn't look that closely.

LOUIE: And you call yourself a detective. *(Reaches into the bag then quickly pulls his hand back out.)* It's real. *(Looks in the bag.)* What happened to the head?

CONNIE: I don't know. Maybe they couldn't find it.

LOUIE: Hmmm. Could be the chief. Hard to say. *(Thinks.)* He was Jewish. I wonder? *(Looks in the bag.)* Yeah. Could be him. I'll take the bag to the morgue. I'll tell 'em something.

CONNIE: Uncle Louie, I'm really going to need your help on this one.

LOUIE: Sure thing, kiddo. What do you want me to do?

CONNIE: You used to help my father with cases before he left me the agency. Come with me to Club Fishnet.

LOUIE: You want me to go with you to a brothel? Me?

CONNIE: I'm going undercover as one of Madame Angelina's girls. If this Mona person is the killer, then she could be dangerous. If she's not, I still may need you to help me find out who the killer is. I'm going to need you to watch my back.

LOUIE: Watch your back? Connie, I don't even carry a gun.

CONNIE: What kind of policeman are you, anyway?

LOUIE: A gay one! I only work in the mailroom at the station. Need a record pulled? Then I'm your guy, as you know. But as far as actual field work, forget about it. That's why I stay where I am. Nobody asks questions in the mailroom. And in five more years, I can retire with quite a nice little pension to tide me over. If anyone were to find out I was gay, they'd boot me off the force and screw me out of my retirement plans.

CONNIE: That's right. I'm sorry. I forgot.

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LOUIE: That's okay. It was important for the exposition, anyway.

What are you going to do about Gary?

CONNIE: (*Meekly.*) Not tell him?

LOUIE: (*Firm.*) Constance, you could be gone for days working this case. You're supposed to be getting married in two weeks. I think he'll be a little miffed if you're not there.

CONNIE: I know. He's coming over later. I'll think of something.

LOUIE: Good girl. Listen, if it means that much to you, I'll go. (*Drags the bag to the door.*)

CONNIE: Are you sure? It could be dangerous.

LOUIE: Please, Connie. I'll be a gay man at a whorehouse. What could *possibly* happen to me there? (*Connie nods as Uncle Louie exits. Blackout.*)

SCENE 4

(AT RISE: Club Fishnet. Lights come up on the girls, who are now clothed in sexy robes and are seated around on various tacky furniture adorning the stage. Vampirala is smoking a cigarette as she paces the floor in spiked heels. The others appear to be more at ease.)

CHERRY: How long is the indoor plumbing going to be broken?

BABETTE: Madame Angelina said the plumber should be here tomorrow.

(Cherry puts her knees together.)

CHERRY: I have to go pee.

HONEY: Use the thing-a-ma-jig outside in the yard like everybody else, Cherry.

CHERRY: Ew! Gross! (Short pause.) I'll wait.

(Everybody looks at her in shock.)

JASMINE: Till tomorrow?

CHERRY: I've got a lot of willpower. (Long pause.) Gotta go.

(Cherry exits out the door far SL. Honey looks annoyed at the pacing Vampirala.)

HONEY: Quit yer clip-cloppin' around like that, darlin'. You'll wear out the floor, not ta mention them spiked heels a'yers. Man, you could gig frogs with them things.

JASMINE: Yes. Vampirala, you'll make yourself sick worrying and pacing so much. And you shouldn't smoke. Try deep breaths to relax. (Breathes in.) In. (Breathes out.) Out.

VAMPIRALA: Relax? You must be joking! We find body parts all over the place and you're calm? By the "Eternal Master," it is lucky I do not smoke an entire carton of "Luckys." (Cherry re-enters.)

BABETTE: But, mon ami, Madame Angelina haz always taken good care of us in ze past. I'm sure she weel not let any harm come to us now.

CHERRY: Yeah! That's right, Babette! *(Cheering.)* Angelina, she's our madame. If she can't do it, no one... *(Thinks.)* ...uh, ca-dame!

HONEY: Ugh! Where's muh six-gun when I need it? Cherry, girl, we're off duty. Cain't yuh give the perky act a rest?

CHERRY: *Act?*

(Cherry shrugs her shoulders then skips off SR. The girls watch her leave then continue.)

JASMINE: I wonder who those body parts belonged to and where they came from?

(All the girls look at Vampirala.)

VAMPIRALA: Don't look at me.

BABETTE: You cannot blame us for suspecting you, Vampirala.

HONEY: Y'all gotta admit blood n' gore do seem to be right up yer alley.

(Cherry enters SL, skipping.)

VAMPIRALA: *(Angry.)* Right now... *(Pauses to do a quick double take on Cherry. To Honey.)* ...right now, Honey, I could shove something up your "alley." I do not seek out violence. I only seek a young male virgin. One that I can consume. To make my own.

JASMINE: Why a young male virgin?

VAMIRALA: I've never met one before. Besides... *(Pointing to Cherry.)* ...Cherry was the first one out here. She claimed... *(Mocking Cherry.)* ..."it was awful, sis-boom-bah," but I noticed she didn't have body parts when she came out. *(Points to Cherry's breasts.)* Except for those fake things. How do we know she had one at all? Maybe she planted the other body parts in the house. Yes, it could easily have been her!

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CHERRY: That's a terrible thing to say! My tits are real!

HONEY: Cherry would never do such a thing!

CHERRY: Thank you, Honey.

HONEY: Cherry doesn't have the brains to pull off something like that!

CHERRY: That's right! *(Pauses to consider. To Honey.)* Hey!

(Cherry, Honey and Vampirala all get into a catfight as Babette and Jasmine step in to break them apart.)

BABETTE: S'il vous plait! Filles! Cassez-le vers le haut! [*"Please! Girls! Break it up!"*]

JASMINE: Girls! Girls! There's no need for hostility. We need to remain calm. Besides... *(Brings the girls in closer.)* ...didn't anyone notice who we haven't seen since last night?

CHERRY: You mean...?

VAMPIRALA: You're right.

BABETTE: Where is...?

ALL: Mona?

HONEY: The new girl. *(There is a loud sound of a woman growling offstage.)* Oh. There she is. *(The growl gets louder.)*

CHERRY: She seems to be in a better mood today.

VAMPIRALA: You think... *(Pause.)* ...Mona?

JASMINE: I'm not sure what to think. All I know is she keeps to herself. She's very quiet. *(Growling continues.)* Well, usually. When we checked all the rooms last night to find the rest of the...parts...

ALL: Eeew!

JASMINE: Mona wouldn't let any of us into her room. Remember?

HONEY: That's right. She only dropped a hand into that bag Madame Angelina was carrying.

BABETTE: And we haven't seen her since then. It's like she's cut herself off from the rest of us.

VAMPIRALA: Bad phraseology, Babette.

JASMINE: Mona could do the same thing to us that she did to, well, whoever those parts belonged to.

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CHERRY: I still think we better call the police! *(The johns rush in through the SL door, once again putting on their clothes. They rush out the door SL as Madame Angelina enters.)* Whoops. Sorry!

MADAME: I thought they left already. *(Closes the door and approaches the girls.)*

HONEY: What did the detective say?

MADAME: The detective? Um, well, she, I mean *he*, will be coming by later to have a look around. He might stay with us for awhile, so if you see him, be extra nice.

BABETTE: A private detective! Is he young and rugged?

MADAME: Oh, the ruggedest, to be sure.

BABETTE: *(Excited.)* Ooh-la-la. I better go and clean his room. *(She exits.)*

CHERRY: Sounds dreamy. Bet he played football in high school. Maybe even... *(Sigh.)* ...quarterback! Oooh! *(Looks at the others.)* I'll go help Babette. Tee-hee! *(Exits.)*

HONEY: Finally, a real man 'round here. A genuine John Wayne type. *(Looks at the others.)* I gotta find muh spurs. *(Exits.)*

JASMINE: Someone with intelligence enough to know his way around a book as well as a woman's heart. Men like that are in such short supply. *(Looks at the others.)* Excuse me. I need to go re-stock my sponges. *(Exits.)*

MADAME: *(Looking at Vampirala.)* Well? Aren't you going to make some sort of Dracula-like reference?

VAMPIRALA: No. *(Turns to leave, then turns back excited.)* I just can't wait to fuck him. *(Exits.)*

MADAME: Boy! Are you girls in for a big disappointment when Connie gets here. *(Remembering.)* The clothes! That's right. *(Exits as lights dim. Blackout.)*

SCENE 5

(AT RISE: Connie's office. Uncle Louie is pacing back and forth waiting for Connie, who is trying on her naughty schoolgirl outfit behind a partition.)

LOUIE: Come on, Connie. What's taking you so long? Your Madame Angelina said to be there by seven, didn't she?

CONNIE: *(From behind the partition.)* Yes, but I can't figure out how to hook the fishnets to these garters.

LOUIE: Simply pull the strap through the front hook and attach it to the other metal piece.

CONNIE: *(From behind the partition.)* I don't even want to know how you knew, but that worked. *(She comes around wearing the naughty-schoolgirl costume. It's a white blouse with a very short plaid skirt. She's still wearing her glasses, but has her hair done up in a bun. She also carries a book.)* Well? What do you think?

(Louie looks for a moment.)

LOUIE: Nothing. Does absolutely nothing for me. Sorry.

CONNIE: You mean to tell me, if you were straight, this outfit would do nothing for you?

LOUIE: Don't forget. I was married for seven years. My wife tried everything. Any kind of costume you could think of, Marcy tried wearing it to get "Mr. Happy" to stand up. Nothing.

CONNIE: What did you do?

LOUIE: Well, I came up with a little mental game to help me... *(Embarrassed.)* ...y'know.

(Long pause.)

CONNIE: No. What?

LOUIE: *(More embarrassed.)* You know!

(Long pause.)

CONNIE: No. What?

LOUIE: A Boner! Boner! Boner! Boner! To help me get a boner!

CONNIE: Sorry I asked. You know, you are my uncle. I really shouldn't pry. *(Short pause.)* What game?

LOUIE: John Wayne.

CONNIE: John Wayne?

LOUIE: I'd think of John Wayne. Not "Green Berets" John Wayne. More like the way he was. The early "Red River Valley" John Wayne. *(Getting excited.)* He was much tastier back then.

CONNIE: *(Staring.)* I think... *(Pause.)* ...I'm good. Thanks, Uncle Louie. *(Gary enters as Connie goes back behind the partition.)* I better change back before Gary gets here. I don't want him to see me in this outfit.

(Uncle Louie notices Gary enter.)

LOUIE: Gary!

(Connie shrieks from behind the partition.)

GARY: Nice reception. What's with the partition? Where are you, Connie? You back there?

LOUIE: Hold it, soldier! *(Blocking and trying to stall Gary.)* Private Polydores, don't you know its bad luck to see the bride before the wedding?

GARY: It's two weeks away.

LOUIE: Is it that soon? My, my, my how time flies.

CONNIE: Gary, I'm trying on my wedding dress. Go away.

LOUIE: *(Trying to lead Gary to the door.)* See? Can't have you seeing the bride in her gown before the big day, now can we? Let me escort you out.

(Gary makes his way back to the partition from the right side.)

GARY: Wait a minute. Connie, you told me your mom was having your gown altered and was going to bring it when she arrived from Kalamazoo next week. What gives? *(Connie steps out again from*

behind the left side of the partition, back in her original costume. She holds the other outfit in her hand and throws it to Uncle Louie, who shoves it down the front of his pants.) There you are. (Kisses Connie on the cheek. She smiles. Gary looks around.) Where is it?

CONNIE: Where's what?

GARY: The gown you were just trying on? It's not back there and you don't have it.

CONNIE: Gary, you know for someone who is supposed to be in the Army, you ask far too many questions.

GARY: But—

(Connie leads him away from the partition.)

CONNIE: I'm supposed to be the detective, remember?

GARY: Yeah, but not for long.

CONNIE: Gary, I... *(Pause.)* ...what do you mean "not for long"?

GARY: Well, we're getting married, right?

CONNIE: Yes. So?

GARY: So, you *were* planning on giving up this detective agency thing, weren't you?

CONNIE: *(Confused.)* Why would I give it up? I never said I was going to give anything up.

GARY: Now you *don't* want to be working dangerous cases when the kids come, sweetheart.

CONNIE: *(Surprised.)* What kids?

LOUIE: *(Grim.)* Aw, holy Christ.

GARY: I thought we'd start with a boy, of course, then maybe a girl, then another boy, and... *(Notices Uncle Louie's sudden "belly.")* Have you been putting on weight, Louie?

CONNIE: What do you mean "we"? You're being awfully decisive with *my* reproductive organs, "sweetheart." *(To Uncle Louie.)* Do all military men have to be such two-dimensional thinkers?

LOUIE: It helps.

GARY: But we discussed this.

LOUIE: Maybe I better go.

CONNIE: "Discussed it" doesn't mean the same as "decided it."

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GARY: You're being unreasonable.

CONNIE: Unreasonable? Me? Gary, we're both virgins!

GARY: All the more reason to start the family right away!

LOUIE: Yep. Definitely time to go. Connie, I'll see you at seven.

Don't be late. *(Exits.)*

GARY: What's at seven?

CONNIE: I've got a case.

GARY: Another case? We're getting married in two weeks and you're taking on more cases?

CONNIE: Just one. It's a special case, Gary. *(Goes over to the desk. Pulls out a gun and a handbag. Puts the gun into the handbag and starts for the door.)* It's paying a lot of money. Look, I'm just as anxious for the wedding night, Gary. Trust me. I'm so frustrated I could explode at any moment. I'm sure you are, too. *(Gary hesitates briefly, then smiles and nods.)* But this business means a lot to me. I don't have time to discuss this with you right now. But when I get back, we really need to talk about some things.

GARY: When you get back? How long are you planning on being gone?

CONNIE: Two, maybe three days. A week at the outside. When I get back, I'll be totally ready for the wedding. *(Runs back to Gary and kisses him quickly on the cheek.)* I promise. *(Runs back to the door.)* Love you.

GARY: Wait a second! Where will you be? How do I get in touch with you?

(Pause. Thinks.)

CONNIE: Umm...you don't. You can't. Top secret stuff. Sorry. Bye. *(Closes the door.)*

(Gary looks at the door for a moment.)

GARY: *(Aside.)* No way, honey. Till death do us part. Wherever you go, I go. *(Exits. Blackout.)*

SCENE 6

(AT RISE: Club Fishnet. Madame Angelina enters from the entrance to her room far SL.)

MADAME: Girls! Oh, girls! Could I see everybody please! *(All the girls enter, bantering as they gather around Madame Angelina.)* Okay! Quiet! I wanted to tell everybody that we have a large group coming in tonight at midnight. *(Looks around.)* Where is Mona?

HONEY: Carving notches on her bedpost probably.

(Girls giggle.)

MADAME: That'll due, Honey. *(Shouts.)* Mona!

(A growl is heard offstage.)

MADAME: Oh, she seems like she's in a good mood today.

MONA: *(Offstage.)* What is it?

MADAME: Come on down, honey. This is important. *(Mona Moosehead appears at the top step, thundering her way in. She carries a bullwhip and smacks it as she approaches the group. She does not aim for anyone in particular.)* Good. Now come on over and join the group, Mona. I want you all to meet someone. Her name is Connie. *(Calls.)* Oh, Connie!

(Connie enters far SR from Madame Angelina's room, wearing her naughty-schoolgirl outfit. She stares at the costume of each girl, but is oblivious to Mona at first.)

MADAME: Connie will be taking the last room in the back. I've already made it up for you, dear, so you can go make yourself comfortable. You can... *(Points to Honey.)* ...stand next to that girl. I've got a few more announcements.

(Connie stands next to Honey and Vampirala.)

HONEY: *(To Connie.)* Hiya, Darlin'. I'm Honey.
CONNIE: Nice to meet you, Honey. *(Looks and is a bit startled at the sight of Vampirala.)* And you are?
VAMPIRALA: Vampirala...mistress of Blood.
CONNIE: *(Uneasy.)* Nice...to meet you. Um, Honey?
HONEY: Yes?
CONNIE: Could we s-switch places? *(They switch places, and now Connie stands in front of Mona. She bumps into her.)* Excuse me.

(Connie slowly turns and looks at Mona, who looks back at Connie and growls. Connie slowly switches back with Honey as Madame Angelina continues.)

MADAME: So, again. We've got that large group coming in tonight.
BABETTE: Who are zey, Madame Angelina?
MADAME: Well, that's the bad news, I'm afraid.
VAMPIRALA: *(Suspicious.)* Why?
MADAME: It's the Millborough Mohawks.
GIRLS: *(Terrified.)* The Millborough Mohawks?!
HONEY: That rowdy ol' hockey team?
MADAME: That's right. *(Cherry raises her hand.)* Yes, Cherry?
HONEY: Ain't they the guys who kept on their uniforms and face masks when they trashed the house last year?
MADAME: Yes. They play their last game of the season tonight, and if they win, they'll be looking to celebrate...big.
CHERRY: In that case, I just got my period.
BABETTE: Oui. Je, aussi ! Red tide. Terrible thing.
HONEY: You know how it goes. One girl gets it, we all get it.

(Babette and Cherry verbally concur.)

JASMINE: *(Offering.)* I've got Midol.
(Vampirala pinches her arm.)

VAMPIRALA: Shut up. You've got everything.

MADAME: Girls, I hate to remind you. But, if you recall last time, *that* excuse didn't stop these guys from finding "alternatives."

(Cherry and Honey both wipe their mouths as Babette rubs her butt.)

GIRLS: Oh, yeah.

MADAME: They assured me they'll behave much better this time.

(The following five lines overlap as the girls all frown.)

CHERRY: No way. They were jerks!

HONEY: Animals! They broke my spurs!

BABETTE: Forget it! My room shall be closed!

(Vampirala points to the spittoon over by the stairs.)

VAMPIRALA: That spittoon over by the stairs will overflow!

JASMINE: My ass still hasn't healed from the last time!

MADAME: They're paying us double.

(The following five lines overlap as the girls all smile.)

CHERRY: But some of them *were* cute.

HONEY: I can always get new spurs. I like animals.

BABETTE: My room just opened. I shall need extra pillows.

VAMPIRALA: Better get the spittoon ready.

JASMINE: I've got a new Sitz bath in my room.

MADAME: They'll want that three-girl special like last time. So whoever is available at that time is in the group. Got it? *(All girls nod.)*

JASMINE: What about that detective? *(Connie looks up at Mona again and then at Madame Angelina.)* Is he still coming?

MADAME: I'm, uh, not sure. He could be arriving tonight, tomorrow, whenever. But don't worry. He'll come. Just check your rooms before you entertain for, well, for anything else unusual. If you find

anything, bring it. No wait! Change that! Change that! Don't *bring* it. Just report it to me. Okay?

(All girls start to exit. Mona looks once more at Connie, growls softly, then exits, cracking her bullwhip one more time. Connie approaches Madame Angelina.)

CONNIE: I see what you mean about Mona. She's frightening. Vampirala's kind of creepy, too.

MADAME: I'm hoping both girls are innocent, Miss Vesper.

CONNIE: I doubt that.

MADAME: I meant that I hope they're not involved in the crime. But if anyone were to be involved, my guess is that it would have to be Mona. She's new. I don't know much about her.

CONNIE: It's going to be kind of hard to investigate if I have to avoid your clients running around here.

MADAME: When the hockey team arrives, I suggest you make yourself scarce, dear.

CONNIE: I'll try. But what happens if one of them tries something?

MADAME: Well, when in Rome, darling...

(Madame starts to leave when Connie pulls her back.)

CONNIE: Wait a minute! When in Rome? I can't do that. I've never even been with...I mean...

MADAME: My dear Miss Vesper. Are you trying to tell me you're a...a...virgin?

CONNIE: What? Me? A v-v-virgin? Don't be ridiculous. Of course not. Well, maybe a little. Okay, yes. Yes, I am a virgin. I was saving myself for marriage.

MADAME: *(Incredulous.)* Why?!

CONNIE: My fiancé and I have been dating since high school. We both agreed to save ourselves till our wedding night.

MADAME: That's this Gary fellow?

CONNIE: That's right. Gary Polydores.

MADAME: Good looking boy?

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CONNIE: Oh, yes. He's very cute.

MADAME: I admire you for your conviction, dear, but I'm afraid you still might run into some trouble when these players arrive tonight. When they lose, they have insatiable appetites. When they win, they become like Vikings storming a peasant village.

CONNIE: Really?

MADAME: Let's put it this way. Last time they were here, we had to shut down for two weeks.

CONNIE: Why? Did they destroy the place?

MADAME: Boy, you still aren't getting it, are you? It was my girls! They needed the time to...heal.

CONNIE: Oh. *(Realizing.)* Oh! But I can't! Oh my. What do I do? *(Madame Angelina whispers in her ear.)* You've got to be kidding.

MADAME: Oh, and the plumbing's broken, so you may have to use the thing-a-ma-jig outside. *(Turns to go, then turns back.)* But there is a spittoon near that bottom step...just in case you need it. Tee-hee. *(Exits.)*

CONNIE: *(Disgusted.)* Eeew!

(Uncle Louie enters from Madame Angelina's room.)

LOUIE: What is it, Connie?

CONNIE: Uncle Louie. We need to find the killer here and get out of here by midnight!

LOUIE: *(Looks at his watch.)* That's only a little while from now. Why? What's up?

CONNIE: The Millborough hockey team is coming here after their game tonight, and they could cause some problems.

LOUIE: Might blow your cover, eh?

CONNIE: *(Thinks.)* Well, something might get blown, anyway.

LOUIE: Where do we start?

CONNIE: Madame Angelina suspects this girl named Mona. Mona just went out with the rest of the girls. I'll go up to her room and see if I can find any incriminating evidence.

LOUIE: What do I do?

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CONNIE: The girls are expecting a male detective to be looking around. You pretend to be him while I search their rooms.

LOUIE: Okay. I'll scour around while I'm down here, see if I can find anything.

CONNIE: Good. I'll meet you back down here in about an hour.
(Connie heads up the steps.)

LOUIE: *(Calls after her.)* Be careful, sweetheart.

CONNIE: You, too. *(Exits. Uncle Louie starts looking around the stage area when Mona shows up.)* Hello there.

(Connie slowly makes her way around Mona, who sneers at her all the way out. Mona comes down the stairs. At the bottom step, she cracks her whip, startling Uncle Louie.)

MONA: You! *(Uncle Louie stares at Mona, frightened.)* You not regular.

LOUIE: I'm not? *(Nervous, makes a joke.)* Gee, I feel pretty regular.

(Mona cracks her whip again.)

MONA: Mona not know you. Who are you?

LOUIE: I'm a d-d-detective. Madame Angelina hired me.

(Mona circles Uncle Louie. Pulls a pair of police handcuffs off his belt.)

MONA: You like these?

LOUIE: Like? Handcuffs? Yeah, I suppose. They do the job.

MONA: They certainly do. You sexy man.

LOUIE: Why, thank you.

MONA: For old fat guy. *(Mona drags Uncle Louie toward the stairs behind a tufted chair.)* Come! We go upstairs!

LOUIE: Upstairs? What for?

MONA: For sex. Mona like you. Do you good.

LOUIE: That's okay. Really. You see, I'm... *(Realizing Connie's up in Mona's room.)* ...I'm tired. Maybe some other time...?

MONA: Got no other time. Hockey players come at midnight. *(Grinds her hips.)* Need to loosen up. Need you. *(Uncle Louie is shocked.)* Come. We go upstairs now.

(Mona starts to grope Uncle Louie all over.)

LOUIE: Easy! Easy! Couldn't we talk about this first?

MONA: No talk. *(Thinks he's talking about charging.)* Don't worry.
Mona like you. No charge. Freebie.

(Mona starts kissing Uncle Louie all over.)

LOUIE: B-b-but you don't understand. I... *(Thinks of a way to keep her downstairs.)* ...I want to do it here.

MONA: Here? Behind chair?

LOUIE: Yes! I much like.

MONA: But girls come any moment.

LOUIE: *(Thinking fast.)* Adds to the excitement, don't you think?

MONA: *(Smiling.)* Mona like the way you think!

(She picks Uncle Louie up and places him behind the chair as she slowly makes her way down his front.)

LOUIE: Oh, holy Christ.

(Uncle Louie is extremely uncomfortable as Mona unzips his pants. Sound of zipper being unzipped.)

MONA: *(From behind the chair.)* Hey? What gives? Why you no up?

LOUIE: *(Desperate. To himself.)* Think-think-think-John Wayne...John Wayne...John Wayne...Red River Valley...Red River Valley...Red River *(Stops. Smiles.)*

MONA: *(From behind the chair.)* That better!

(Uncle Louie grimaces and lowers himself behind the chair. Honey enters from far SR, slowly followed by Babette. Honey is looking around the room.)

BABETTE: What is it, mon cherie?

HONEY: Nothin', I guess. Thought I heard someone talkin' about John Wayne. *(Sigh.)* Wishful thinkin', I guess.

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(The two exit again. Gary enters from the door far SL. He sneaks into the house. He is skulking around when Vampirala enters.)

VAMPIRALA: Ah-ha! *(Looks Gary over.)* You must be the detective!

GARY: Detective? Me? No. I'm just looking for a girl.

VAMPIRALA: *(Disappointed.)* Oh. Very well, then. *(Comes over and grabs Gary by the arm and leads him upstairs.)* The cost is \$200 for the first hour.

GARY: Wait! You don't understand! I can't. I'm engaged! I'm a virgin! *(Thinks.)* Two hundred dollars?

(Vampirala stops, slowly turns, and looks back at him.)

VAMPIRALA: Did you say, "a virgin"?

GARY: Yes.

VAMPIRALA: *(Hugging Gary.)* At last! You are the one I've sought my entire life. A true virgin! Thank you, Eternal Master!

GARY: What are you talking about? *(Vampirala shows him her vampire's teeth.)* Nice teeth.

VAMPIRALA: Don't worry. They only hurt a little.

GARY: Hurt?

VAMPIRALA: This one's on the house!

GARY: Wait! Wait!

(As Vampirala drags Gary off, we hear Uncle Louie emit a grunt as he appears from behind the chair. Mona emerges, runs over to the spittoon by the bottom step, spits fluid into it, then wipes her chin. She makes her way back to Uncle Louie and looks at him, amused.)

MONA: You cum quick. Been awhile since you been with a woman, eh? *(Laughing, she slaps his back.)*

LOUIE: You have no idea.

(Connie re-appears at the top of the stairs and comes down. Uncle Louie pulls his pants back up quickly.)

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MONA: Mona still not loose. Go up to room to get ready. You meet
Mona there in five minutes. *(Letting her Swedish accent slip.)* No
dilly-dally.

LOUIE: *(Exhausted.)* No. No... *(Surprised by Mona's change in dialect.)*
..."dilly-dally"?

*(Mona passes Connie, cracks her whip, and laughs when she reaches the top of
the stairs. She exits.)*

CONNIE: Uncle Louie. What happened? Did she attack you?

LOUIE: In a way...nothing I couldn't handle. What did you find?

CONNIE: This. *(Pulls out a woman's wallet.)* Mona's not her real name.
In fact, she's not even from this country.

LOUIE: *(Shows him Mona's passport.)* A passport? Where's she from?

CONNIE: Look. *(He examines the passport closely.)*

LOUIE: She's Swedish? You gotta be kidding me!

CONNIE: Her real name is Inga Yohanssen. She only recently entered
this country.

LOUIE: Interesting. Did you find anything linking her to the murder?

CONNIE: Not really. I did find this. *(Pulls out a tomahawk.)* She had
this tomahawk in her room.

LOUIE: Ah-ha! So, she might have hacked up the chief then wiped off
the blood.

CONNIE: I don't think so.

LOUIE: Why?

CONNIE: Here. *(Whacks Uncle Louie on the head with the hatchet.)* It's
rubber.

LOUIE: Ow. *(Takes the hatchet and the wallet.)* So maybe she isn't the
killer. Then who?

*(Gary is heard moaning offstage as we see the silhouette of Vampirala's legs
up in the air.)*

CONNIE: I don't know. I'm going to check some of the other rooms.
Try to keep them busy down here.

LOUIE: What? Keep them busy? Not the way I kept Mona busy, I hope.

CONNIE: What do you mean?

LOUIE: Nothing. Nothing. You just go do what you have to do. But hurry back. Those hockey players should be here soon.

CONNIE: Right. *(Hears Gary moan again.)* That sound...

(Listens again as Gary moans one more time. Shrugs her shoulders and returns upstairs. Uncle Louie throws the hatchet, wallet, and passport onto the chair as Honey enters. Honey sees Uncle Louie and does a slow walk around him, checking him out and sizing him up.)

LOUIE: Oh, no. Not again!

HONEY: You! You the detective feller?

LOUIE: Yes, ma'am.

HONEY: Tell me sumthin'. You...you like...John Wayne?

LOUIE: *(Happy.)* Why, I just love John Wayne!

HONEY: *(Excited.)* Yee-haw! I knew it! Let's go, varmint! Giddyap!

(Honey jumps onto Uncle Louie's waist and "rides" him out into her bedroom downstairs up SR.)

LOUIE: Oh, no!

(Louie exits. Gary is chased by Vampirala down the stairs. Gary is only in his underwear. Vampirala is back in her sexy gothic-style lingerie. She is angry.)

GARY: Wait! I can explain!

(Vampirala runs to the bottom step and spits into the spittoon. She then confronts Gary CS.)

VAMPIRALA: Phooey! You said you were a virgin! Lies! Lies! All lies!

GARY: How could you tell?

VAMPIRALA: You didn't say the right sentence. The one phrase that always gives away a true virgin! *(She storms her way to the kitchen.)*

GARY: What phrase is that? *(He goes over to the tufted chair. He sees, then picks up the hatchet first, then the wallet, then finally the passport. He looks at it and is startled.)* Oh no! Oh my God!

(Mona re-enters at the top of the stairs. She sees Gary's back and thinks its Uncle Louie.)

MONA: You! Stop! Thief! *(Comes to the bottom of the stairs. Gary turns around. Mona recognizes him, then speaks in a Swedish accent.)* Ya! Gary?

GARY: Inga?

MONA: *(Still in the Swedish accent.)* What are you doing here?

(Offstage shouting as we see Honey's silhouette sitting on top of Uncle Louie.)

HONEY: Yee-haw! Ride 'em cowgirl!

LOUIE: *(Offstage, shouting.)* Ow! Ow! Ow! John Wayne...John Wayne...Red River Valley...Red River Valley!

(Connie peers out at the top of the steps, whispering.)

CONNIE: Uncle Louie? Uncle Louie? Are you all right?

(Gary pulls Mona down to the floor in front of the high-back chair. He whispers to her.)

GARY: Inga, quick! Hide!

MONA: From who?

GARY: My fiancé...Connie.

MONA: The new girl? She's your fiancé? But how can you have a fiancé when I am your wife?

HONEY: *(Offstage, shouting gets louder.)* Yee-haw!

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LOUIE: (*Offstage shouting.*) Ow! Ow! Watch the spurs! John Wayne...Red River Valley...Red River Valley...Oh help me, John Wayne! Help me!

(*Connie comes down to the bottom of the steps and stands CS near Gary and Mona.*)

CONNIE: (*Whispers.*) Uncle Louie? Uncle Louie?

(*Gary holds Mona's mouth as lights fade to blackout. Intermission.*)

[End of Freeview]