

# The Lakeside Players Present



# "Dealt a Deadly Hand"

## Murder at the Pocono Royale Casino




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*An Audience-Participation Murder Mystery-Comedy*  
*By Tony Schwartz & Marylou Ambrose*  
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**[www.lakesideplayers.net](http://www.lakesideplayers.net)**

Dear Murder Mystery Fan:

Thanks for buying a Lakeside Players original murder mystery package. In this package you'll find:

1. FAQ's about our audience-participation murder mysteries
2. One complete murder mystery script that may be photocopied for cast members
3. Suggested script for master of ceremonies
4. Production Notes (properties, costumes, music, helpful hints)
5. Sample news release

Whether you're a seasoned actor/director or a rookie, this envelope contains everything you need to stage the perfect crime! Happy sleuthing!

***Tony & Marylou***

## FAQ' S (Frequently Asked Questions)

### ***Does performing in an audience-participation murder mystery require lots of acting experience?***

No! Our actors range from friends with no experience to people who direct their own theater companies. We usually give inexperienced people smaller roles and then try them in larger roles as they gain confidence. More than experience, we look for the ability to ham it up, to work in close proximity to the audience, to memorize lines, and to perform without stage fright. Once a person meets these qualifications, we work with them on developing their characters.

### ***How many weeks of rehearsals are needed?***

Days of rehearsals are all that are needed. All our shows are scripted, one-act plays (not just flow charts), around 30 pages long, and with an average of 8 actors/show. No one has an overwhelming amount of lines. The key is to give actors their scripts a couple weeks before the first rehearsal so they can familiarize themselves with the play and start developing their characters and memorizing their lines early. Four, 2-3 hour rehearsals usually work for us, but you might want to add more, especially if this is your first murder mystery.

### ***Suppose the audience doesn't want to participate?***

No problem. Our shows don't depend on heavy audience participation like some murder mysteries do. Early on, we discovered that most people are *afraid* you'll ask them to get up on stage and do something. This fear might even keep them from enjoying a murder mystery. That's

why we've designed our shows as scripted, one-act plays. Audience members aren't asked to play parts or do anything but sit and watch, if that's what they want. The audience-participation part of our shows consists of getting people involved in conga lines, mambo lessons, or sing-alongs; and in the end, having them vote on "whodunit" and why. It's all strictly voluntary, and we tell them that up front, before the show begins.

### ***How much ad-libbing is required?***

Not as much as you might think. Actors should stick as closely as possible to their scripts, just like in a conventional stage play. Of course, with the audience often only an arm's length away, it's tempting to toss off an ad lib or two. That's fine. Some of our best lines crop up this way--and we keep using them!

**A few words about "mingling":** When we started performing our mystery shows, the entire cast mingled with the audience during the pre-dinner cocktail hour. We've stopped

doing this for several reasons. First, if a venue doesn't feed the actors dinner (and not all of them do), we can't expect our cast to come early to mingle and then sit around for hours waiting to perform. Second, when actors mingle, they risk giving away too many details about the show, especially since the audience's questions aren't always the most astute. "So, who committed the murder?" is a common one. We prefer to have a couple key cast members mingle for 10 minutes before each show, but only to look over the audience and choose good candidates for the mambo lessons and other interactive parts. We usually ask them a few simple questions relating to the show so we can tell people they've won something if they get the answer right. Just say "You're a winner! We'll tell you what you won later." What they've actually won is a chance to get up in front of their friends and look silly. What questions should you ask? Something easy. A typical question for our *I Love Lucy* spoof is, "What country did Ricky come from?"

***What's the best place to perform these shows?***

Anywhere! The beauty of our murder mysteries is that they're so adaptable and portable, they can be performed in almost any venue. Admittedly, we do most of our shows in restaurants and country clubs, where dinner is part of the package, but we've also performed in church halls and on theater stages. It's wonderful when we have lots of space, but even our most extravagant shows can be performed in a small area. In fact, our very first murder mystery was performed in an old inn, with most of the action occurring in a doorway between two dining rooms!

***Does dinner have to be part of the package?***

No! Our shows can be performed just like traditional one-act plays, with the audience sitting in chairs, rather than at tables. No matter what your arrangement or venue, be sure to thoroughly discuss the evening's agenda with the people in charge. They'll be happy to accommodate you, as long as they understand how things are supposed to go and why. Handing them a written schedule of events is also helpful. You'll find a sample handout in this package.

***Do you need a Master of Ceremonies?***

Yes. Someone needs to welcome the guests, explain how the show works, explain the voting process, announce the prizewinners, introduce the actors, and then say thank you and goodnight. The director is the logical choice. If the director acts in the show as well, he or she SHOULD NOT be in character when performing MC duties.

***How do you choose the murderer?***

Our shows are written so that almost everyone in the cast has a good motive for murder. Changing murderers is especially important if you're performing several shows in the same venue or the same area. Then it won't matter if audience members tell their friends "whodunit."

## Agenda for Interactive Murder Mysteries

Dear Restaurant or Theater Owner:

This tried-and-true format keeps the evening running smoothly and everyone happy—the audience, the restaurant or theater owners, and the actors. It's just a suggestion—feel free to revise it to fit your establishment.

**Cocktails/Mingling:** The cast mingles (in costume and in character) with the audience, setting up the plot for the main show later on. *Suggested time: 15-30 minutes.* **(NOTE: You may choose to omit this. See “A few words about mingling,” above.)**

**Dinner:** The actors leave the guests alone to enjoy their dinner. This way, the audience can eat in peace and then give their full attention to the show. When the show is performed during dinner, the audience misses half of it because they're busy eating, waitresses are trying to serve, and there's a lot of plate and glass noise. *Suggested time: 1 ½ hours*

**The Show:** As soon as the tables are cleared and you give us the go-ahead, we take over the rest of the evening. We act as MC's, perform the murder mystery, award the prizes,\* and then say thank you and good night. Our shows are essentially one-act plays. The audience sits and watches, absorbing clues, until the murder occurs. Participation is in the form of conga lines, mambo lessons, and sing a-longs. *Approximate time: 1¼ hours, including ballot casting and closing remarks.*

**Ballot Casting/Dessert:** We instruct guests to fill in their ballot sheets (saying “whodunit” and why) and turn them in as quickly as possible. The judges go through them and determine the winner. **This usually occurs when the restaurant serves dessert.** This keeps people from sitting around idly while the judges determine the winners. It also helps restaurants sell more desserts if they're served a la cart, because guests have worked up an appetite since dinner.

**Closing Remarks:** We announce winners, award prizes, introduce the cast, thank everyone, and say goodnight. Then it's back in your hands.

**Ambiance:** Some restaurants like to join in the fun by decorating tables or serving drinks to go with the murder mystery's theme. For example, if the show takes place on a cruise ship, you might hand out leis to the audience, use tropical flower arrangements on tables, or serve tropical drinks with umbrellas.

\* **Prizes:** Prizes are usually the restaurant's responsibility. Suggestions are a bottle of wine, lunch or dinner for two, or a small gift. We usually have three prizes.

**If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call us!**

## **Dealt a Deadly Hand: *Murder at the Pocono Royale Casino***

*By Marylou Ambrose & Tony Schwartz*

### **Cast of Characters:**

**Rick:** Casino owner

**Candy:** Rick's pre-teen daughter

**Croc Chaser:** TV personality and owner of "What a Croc Farm"

**Dudley Wadsworth III:** Rick's lawyer

**Stella & Carmella Portabella:** Senior citizens visiting casino

**Chief Wooden Nickel:** Native American with claims on casino

**Princess Wanna Wampum:** Chief's girlfriend

**Lola:** Rick's ex wife; a former showgirl

### **Time & Place:**

The present; Rick's club, the Pocono Royale Casino

**NOTE:** This play was written to be performed in a variety of venues, and not all of them will have a real backstage area. Consequently, the script usually designates only *when* the actors enter and exit, not whether they enter and exit stage right, left, or center. That's up to the director and depends on the venue. In our show, we hang a curtain upstage center as a backdrop, so the actors often enter and exit from either side of the curtain. However, they also enter and exit stage right and stage left.

## **Dealt a Deadly Hand: Murder at the Pocono Royale Casino**

**Master of Ceremonies:** Welcome to the *(Insert your company's name)* production of *Dealt a Deadly Hand: Murder at the Pocono Royale Casino!* Tonight, you're part of the action. So keep your eyes and ears open for clues, because before the night's over, someone will be ruthlessly murdered. And it's up to you to guess "whodunit" and why.

How many of you have been to a murder mystery before? Well, this show is a little different. We won't ask you to take a part, or get up on stage, or do anything but watch if you don't want to. So you shy people can come out from under your tables now and just relax and enjoy the show. Your main job is to pay attention and play detective—and then to vote at the end. The first *(Insert how many prizes you have)* people to correctly guess the murderer and the motive will win a prize. I'll explain the voting process to you in more detail after the show.

And now—on with the show!

### **Act 1**

*Show begins with about 30 seconds of the song "Harlem Nocturne." As music fades, RICK and CANDY enter.*

**Candy:** Wow Dad, another full house! The Pocono Royale Casino is a hit!

**Rick:** Yeah, Sweetheart, the first legal gambling casino in the Poconos. My dream has come true . . . again.

**Candy:** What do you mean, "again"?

**Rick:** Never you mind. Now run along and get your homework done.

**Candy:** But Dad . . . .

**Rick:** No buts. You don't want to tick off the nuns, do you?

**Candy:** I hate Catholic school! I want to go to dance school. I want to grow up to be a Vegas showgirl just like Mommy was!

**Rick:** You're going to go to school and grow up to be a doctor or lawyer just like your, just like your . . . just like no one in your family was!

**Candy:** I'll go live with Mommy. She'll let me be a showgirl.

**Rick:** Enough! That's the last place I'm letting you go. You're staying right here with me. Now, it's about time for me to sing a number for the guests. You run along and do your homework. Scat! (*He nudges her offstage; then returns to sing.*)

**Rick:** Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the Pocono Royale Casino, the first gambling casino in the Poconos. And here's a song about another famous casino.

*Sound cue: RICK sings "At the Copa." While he's singing, CANDY comes back onstage wearing the Catholic school uniform and a huge Vegas-style headdress. She's trying to dance like a Vegas showgirl, but she has two left feet. She's slightly behind RICK, so he doesn't notice her.*

**Rick:** (*Song is over and RICK takes several bows.*) Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you, thank you . . .

*CANDY comes up next to him and starts bowing.*

**Candy:** Yes, thank you so much.

**Rick:** What are you doing?

**Candy:** I was your backup dancer. See, they love me.

**Rick:** Take that headdress off and go to your room! And do your homework!

*The CROC CHASER enters.*

**Croc Chaser:** Hello, Mate. Hello, little girl. Wow! That's some Catholic school uniform! When I went to Catholic School, the girls wore the same hats! (*Points to her Vegas headdress*)

*RICK and CANDY both look at him like he's nuts.*

**Croc Chaser:** Hey, would you like to see my pet? Now, don't be afraid! ("*Don't be afraid*" is his catch phrase. He uses it all the time, usually when something is about to go wrong.)

*He pulls out his snake.*

**Croc Chaser:** Isn't she a beauty? She's an Australian Queen Cobra, the deadliest snake in the world. Dooooon't be afraid! This is my little friend Cleopatra. Isn't she something? Dooooon't be afraid! I'm an expert at snake handling. Besides, this snake is trained. She won't bite.

*The snake bites him.*



**Croc Chaser:** Ouch! But no worries! I have anti-venom! (*He pulls anti--venom out of shirt pocket and drinks it right out of the bottle.*) Mmmmmmm . . . smooth. That's never happened before. I'm sure it won't happen again.

**Rick:** (*Threatening*) Look, get that snake out of here before I call the cops!

**Croc Chaser:** Hey, I know, maybe Cleo and I could put together a little show for you. Sort of a reptilian Sigfried and Roy!

**Rick:** Out! Now!!

**Croc Chaser:** Right, Mate. Will do! (*exits*)

**Rick:** (*to CANDY*) And *you* go do your homework!

**Candy:** I'm calling Mommy! (*exits*)

**DUDLEY WADSWORTH III enters**

**Dudley:** She won't have any luck calling her mother. She's not home.

**Rick:** Now how would you know that?

**Dudley:** Because she's in town.

**Rick:** (*Starts talking like Humphrey Bogart*) What are you talking about?

**Dudley:** I'm your lawyer. Your ex-wife knows how to get in touch with me. Lola called me just a few hours ago and told me she was in town. She wanted to know if you were here. She wants to see you.

**Rick:** (*Still talking like Bogart*) Why would she want to see me? Maybe it has something to do with Candy.

**Dudley:** She didn't say. All I know is, she's on her way over here.

**Rick:** (*Still talking like Bogart*) Well I don't want to see her. (*Music cue: "Harlem Nocturne" plays in background while RICK delivers the following speech.*) I must have been crazy to get involved with a Vegas showgirl. The divorce nearly killed me . . . and so did she. I'll never forget that last night. We had it out. I turned to put another log on the fire and she hit with the vase. The next thing I knew, I woke up with a bandage on my head and divorce papers in my hand. She got everything, including the Vegas casino.

**Dudley:** You haven't been right since. Ever since you got hit in the head, you keep clicking in and out of this Humphrey Bogart character from Casablanca.

**Rick:** (*normal voice*) What are you talking about?

**Dudley:** Never mind. What are you going to do when Lola shows up?

**Rick:** That's what I pay you for. You think of something. You're in charge.

**Dudley:** Don't worry, no one is going to get *this* casino away from you. I have a lot at stake, too. Don't forget, my brother and I just bought the "Silver Fox Bus Line," specializing in busing senior citizens to casinos! We're going to make a fortune! So don't worry, no one is getting this casino away from you. Not while I'm on the job. (*To self*) Like you said, I'm in charge.

**STELLA and CARMELLA PORTABELLA enter.**

**Stella:** Excuse me. Can someone tell us what time the Chippendale Dancers are going to start?

**Carmella:** Yeah, we don't want to miss that!

**Rick:** There are no Chippendale dancers here.

**Stella:** There aren't?

**Dudley:** Afraid not.

**Stella:** No dancers. What a dump!

**Carmella:** Come on, Stella. I think there's go-go boys next door! (*They start to exit*)

**Rick:** (*Stops them*) Now, now ladies, there's no need to go next door. You're here to gamble, aren't you?

**Stella:** No, we're here to audition for the chorus line. (*Does a little chorus girl kick*)

**Carmella:** We are?

**Stella:** (*to RICK*) Of course we're here to gamble.

**Carmella:** We are?

**Rick:** The slots are that way, ladies. (*Points offstage*)

**CARMELLA starts wandering in that direction.**

**Stella:** (*Stops her*) Uh, Carmella, the go-go boys, remember?

*CARMELLA takes a dollar bill out of her purse and puts it in her teeth.*

**Carmella:** Let's go, Sis!

*They exit.*

**Rick:** Dudley, you better think of something to get rid of Lola. Now -- I have to make sure Candy is doing her homework.

**Dudley:** You don't have to worry. Not while I'm on the job! I'm on it. I'm in charge . . .

*RICK exits.*

*DUDLEY has his back turned and is talking to himself as CHIEF WOODEN NICKLE and PRINCESS WANNA WAMPUM enter. He doesn't see them.*

*Music cue: Indian tom-toms*

**Dudley:** *(To self)* I have to keep Lola away from Rick.

**Chief:** *(Holds up hand as a sign of greeting)* How!

**Dudley:** I don't know how just yet.

**Princess:** What him mean?

**Chief:** Me not know. Him speak with forked tongue. Me try again.

*This time the CHIEF taps Dudley on the shoulder, which startles DUDLEY out of his daydream. He turns and sees the CHIEF and PRINCESS and looks shocked.*

**Chief:** *(Raises hand again)* How!

**Dudley:** *(Cautiously raises his hand and answers as if confused)* Now . . . brown . . . cow?

**Princess:** What him mean?

**Chief:** Me thinkum him smoke too much loco weed!

**Princess:** *(To DUDLEY)* Are you boss?

**Chief:** Yeah, we want um speak to Big Boss of Casino. You boss?

**Dudley:** Me? No . . . I mean . . . (*Looks around to see if anyone's listening*) I mean, yeah! I'm the boss. I'm in charge. What can I do for you?

**Chief:** Me Big Chief Wooden Nickel. This my girlfriend, Princess Wanna Wampum.

**Princess:** (*Raises hand*) How!

**Dudley:** (*Raises hand*) Yes, brown cow. We've been through all that. Now, how can I help you?

**Chief:** Me Chief of great Lenape Tribe. Many years ago, this all Lenape land, given to us by great President Lincoln. Many years later, land taken away from us by another president, a crooked President.

**Dudley:** Nixon!

**Princess:** We here to claim what's rightfully ours: our land. And since casino built on Indian land, casino ours, too!

**Dudley:** That's preposterous!

**Chief:** Not so. Native Americans successfully reclaiming land all over country. And opening casinos! We hit jackpot! We get land back *with* casino! Ha, ha, ha!

**Dudley:** (*Scheming; light bulb goes off*) Did you say you were looking for the boss? I'm sorry, I thought you said you were . . . lost! That's it. I thought you were lost and I wanted to help. But perhaps I can help you after all.

**Princess:** What you mean?

**Dudley:** Allow me to introduce myself. Dudley Wadsworth III, Esquire is my name, and reclaiming Indian land is my game.

**Chief:** We not understand.

**Dudley:** You're going to need a lawyer to represent you through all this. I'm your man! Not only that, but I also own a bus company that's going to bring senior citizens into the casino! You need me. So don't worry, no one is going to keep you from claiming this casino. Not while I'm on the job! Deal? (*Extends hand*)

*CHIEF and PRINCESS exchange a look and then nod to each other.*

**Chief & Princess:** Deal! (*all three shake hands*)

*DUDLEY exits. STELLA & CARMELLA PORTABELLA start to enter and stop when they spot CHIEF and PRINCESS.*

**Carmella:** Psssst, Stella! Look, there's a couple of Hare Krishnas!

**Stella:** Those aren't Hare Krishnas. Don't you know an Indian when you see one?

**Chief:** That's Native American.

**Carmella:** Naked Americans? Oh no, we just saw them.

**Chief:** (*Shakes his head in disbelief; says to PRINCESS*) How we ever lose everything to paleface?

**Princess:** (*Shrugs*) Go figure . . .

**Stella:** Carmella, let me handle this. Obviously, they're the owners. Indians own most of the casinos these days.

**Carmella:** Are you the owner, Chief?

**Chief:** Not yet.

**Carmella:** (*Pushing STELLA aside*) Stella, let me talk to them. I think I can speak their language. (*To CHIEF, talking in exaggerated "Indian language"*) Me Carmella. She Stella. We Portabellas. We come in peace, Kimosabe.

**Chief:** (*To PRINCESS*) What the hell she talking about?

**Princess:** I don't know. I don't speak Italian. (*To ladies, talking in exaggerated "Italian"*) We soon take-a over casino. Then, we bus-a in many-a senior citizens like-a you to-a gamble. They win big-a money, capiche?

**Carmella:** What the hell is she talking about?

**Stella:** I don't know. I don't speak Apache.

**Chief:** That's Lenape.

**Carmella:** (*Whispers to STELLA*) He has to pee.

**Stella:** Second door on the right, Chief.

**Princess:** He can hold it.

**Stella:** Wait a minute, I get it. So what you're saying then, is you're taking over the casino and busing in senior citizens to get them to gamble away their social security checks.

**Chief:** Yeah, it's going to be like taking candy from a baby . . . uh, me mean, we give seniors chance to supplement income.

**Stella:** I've got reservations about that. Come on, Carmella, we've got work to do.

**Carmella:** At the reservation?

*The SISTERS exit. Now that they're alone, the CHIEF and PRINCESS drop the Indian act and take on a whole different persona.*

**Princess:** I think we better keep an eye on them. They might not be as senile as they look. We can't let anything interfere with our plans.

**Chief:** No, we've worked too hard to let anything stand in our way now. You even got a degree from Harvard Business School. We can't let that go to waste.

**Princess:** Every other tribe in the country has a casino. Why not us?

**Chief:** Yeah, but until we get what we want, let's keep up the Hollywood Indian image. It plays to our advantage.

**Princess:** (*Flirtatiously*) Come on Chiefie, we go back to teepee and order room service.

*CHIEF and PRINCESS exit. RICK enters.*

**Rick:** I'm back, ladies and gentlemen, and here's a little number I hope you enjoy.

*Music cue: RICK sings "Mack the Knife." While he sings, CANDY once again appears behind him wearing the showgirl hat and doing bizarre dance steps. Neither of them notices LOLA enter and sit at table, watching them. She has a drink in her hand. When the song is over, RICK bows and thanks the audience. CANDY comes up next to him and does the same.)*

**Rick:** Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

**Candy:** Yes, thank you very much.

**Rick:** Again? I thought you were doing your homework.

**Lola:** Oh, leave the kid alone. She needs work, (*To self*) lotsa' work, (*To them*) but with a little help, I think she could go places.

**Rick:** (*Talking like Bogart*) Lola! What are you doing here?

**Lola:** (*Get up and walk toward RICK*) I was in the neighborhood. I thought I'd stop by and chat about the good old days.

**Candy:** Mommy, I want to come live with you so you can teach me to be a showgirl!

**Lola:** We'll see, sweetie, we'll see.

**Rick:** (*Still talking like Bogart for next section, until noted otherwise*) She's not going anywhere, except back to her room and finish her homework. Now scat!

**Candy:** I don't want to!

**Lola:** Run along and do as he says. We'll talk later.

**Candy:** But, but . . .

**Lola:** Go on.

**Candy:** Ohhh . . . (*She storms off, sticking her tongue out at her father as she passes him*)

**Rick:** She gets that from you.

**Lola:** It's a start.

**Rick:** What are you doing here?

**Lola:** I thought I'd stop by and say hello. You know you're still crazy about me. Don't you miss me?

**Rick:** Of all the gin joints in the world, you had to walk into mine.

**Lola:** You're still doing the Bogie/Casablanca thing?

**Rick:** (*In normal voice*) What are you talking about?

**Lola:** (*Looks at him like he's nuts*) Never mind. So, nice place you got here.

**Rick:** I had a nice place in Vegas, too, until I got hooked up with you. All you were ever after was my casino. And you got it, too. That divorce lawyer got you everything.

**Lola:** So where did you come up with the dough to open this joint?

**Rick:** I was working as a blackjack dealer at the Frump Casino in Atlantic City. Ronald Frump recognized me and knew about what happened in the divorce. He believed in me and offered to back me in this casino.

**Lola:** I see. So you owe him a fortune.

**Rick:** Yeah, a huge fortune. But I'll get it paid off. This place is jumpin'. It's a goldmine -- and one you can't get your hands on.

**Lola:** Oh Rick, (*Getting flirty*) I just stopped by to talk about old times. I have everything I want. Well, almost . . . (*Walking her fingers up his arm*)

**Rick:** (*Starts getting weak in the knees; then panics, stands up, and clicks back into Bogie*) Yeah, well, the reminiscing is over. Have another drink on me, and then get out.

**RICK exits.**

**Lola:** (*To self*) Oh, I'm not done with you yet, Rick old boy. (*Looking in direction he exited*) Here's looking at you, kid. (*Raises her glass in a toast; then exits*)

**The PORTABELLA SISTERS enter.**

**Carmella:** Wasn't that one dancer something, Stella? He was undressing me with his eyes.

**Stella:** Yeah, right. I've never been so embarrassed.

**Carmella:** Oh, you're making a big deal out of nothing.

**Stella:** Nothing? You had to try and give him a dollar bill holding it in your teeth?

**Carmella:** He shouldn't have yanked so hard! My teeth came out with it and landed in the middle of the stage! I'm writing Polident a letter.

**Stella:** Maybe you should forget go-go boys and Polident and just stick to bingo.

**DUDLEY enters.**

**Dudley:** Ladies, I was next door and saw the whole thing. Imagine that dancer yanking your false teeth out like that. No one is going to take your teeth away from you, not while I'm on the job!

**Carmella:** What were you doing next door at the go-go boy show?

**Dudley:** (*Stammering*) Me? I . . . uh . . . was working on case! That's it. Uh . . . a client had an eye poked out by a flying g-string. I was doing a little undercover work.

**Stella:** More like doing some "under the covers" work. I'm sure you do.



**Dudley:** Ladies, I think we have a case. Here's my card. Call me.

**CROC CHASER enters.**

**Croc Chaser:** Hey, Mate! Ohhhhhh, a business card exchange. Here's mine! (*He hands DUDLEY his card*)

**Dudley:** (*Reading card*) The "What a Croc Farm"?

**Croc Chaser:** Yeah, catchy, right?

**Carmella:** (*To CROC CHASER*) Say, weren't you just dancing across the street?

**Stella:** Right costume, wrong guy.

**Carmella:**(*Spins CROC CHASER around and looks at his butt*) Hmmmmmm . . . You're right. (*Slaps him on the butt*) But not bad for a rookie!

**Croc Chaser:** Whoa! Feisty old girl, aren't you! You remind me of my snake. Let me take it out! (*Starts to take out snake*)

**Stella:** You pig! (*Hits him with her purse*)

**Carmella:** No no! I want to see!

**Stella:** Come on. (*Dragging CARMELLA off*) How are we going to get any work done if I have to keep babysitting you! Now be quiet, I have to check in with headquarters. (*At one side of stage, takes out cell phone and dials*) Hello boss. We've infiltrated the enemy!

*The SISTERS exit. DUDLEY looks at them suspiciously.*

**Croc Chaser:** Wow! She packs quite a punch!

**Dudley:** Yes, I better follow them and make sure they don't assault any of the other guests.

**DUDLEY exits.**

**Rick:** I see you've gotten rid of the snake.

**Croc Chaser:** Oh no, mate, she's right here inside my shirt. But doooon't worry, she's safe in there. (*Talking to the snake inside his shirt and petting it*) You're a good girl, aren't you? You're a -- Ow! Ow! Ow! She's biting the hell out of me! But doooon't worry! I have the anti-venom right here in my pocket! (*Takes bottle out and slugs it down again*) There we are, mate. All better.

**Rick:** I thought I told you to get rid of that snake. You've been gambling pretty heavy these past few days. We've extended your credit through the roof. How are you going to cover this? And if that snake kills you, who's going to pay?

**Croc Chaser:** Dooooon't worry, Mate. I've got plenty of anti-venom. Ow! (*Slugs more*) As for covering my debts, it's just a run of bad luck. It's got to turn around. Just a little more credit is all I need. Ow! (*Slugs more antivenin*)

**Rick:** I can't give you any more credit without some substantial collateral.

**Croc Chaser:** What kind of collateral?

**Rick:** Well, do you have any property?

**Croc Chaser:** All I have is the world famous What a Croc Farm!

**Rick:** That'll do.

**Croc Chaser:** But I couldn't. I . . . .

**Rick:** You want a second chance, don't you?

**Croc Chaser:** Well, yeah, but . . . .

**Rick:** Step into my office. There are just a few papers to sign . . . .

**RICK and CROC CHASER exit. LOLA enters and sits at table.**

**Lola:** What's a girl gotta' do to get a drink around here? (*Music cue: "Harlem Nocturne." Music plays in background throughout LOLA'S speech.*) I can't believe I had the guts to come back here. Not after what happened. But I had to see Rick again. I never wanted a divorce, but things got nasty that night. We had a fight. There was a lot of yelling and screaming going on. He turned to pick up a log, and I thought he was going to hit me. So I grabbed a vase and hit him over the head . . . just as he was putting a log on the fire. He never meant to hit me. But it was too late. I didn't know what to do. I knew he wouldn't believe me, and I didn't think we could live together after that, so I filed for divorce. I went for it all -- and I got it. The Vegas casino. But I've got no head for money. I screwed things up and the IRS came and took it all. Now all I have left are the clothes on my back. But you know what? That doesn't hurt half as much as losing Rick. I'm probably crazy, but I still love the big lug. Maybe we can start over again. Maybe I can have Rick *and* the lifestyle I'm accustomed to. I've missed him so much, I've watched "Casablanca" every night for the past five years.

**CANDY enters. (She has removed the chorus girl hat)**

**Candy:** Mom, when can you teach me to dance?

**Lola:** Go do your homework.

**Candy:** It's done. That's all I do is homework! I want to dance!!

*CANDY demonstrates some really bad dance moves.*

**Lola:** Apparently, the dancing gene skipped a generation.

**Candy:** Mom, I want to come live with you.

**Lola:** How about if I come and live with you?

**Candy:** And we can get rid of Daddy?

**Lola:** No, the three of us, together.

*Music cue: Indian tom-toms. CHIEF and PRINCESS enter.*

**Chief:** How!

**Princess:** *(To CHIEF)* Don't start *that* again.

*RICK enters.*

**Rick:** *(To LOLA)* What are you still doing here?

**Candy:** Leave her alone, Dad.

**Rick:** Go do your homework.

**Candy:** Dad, it's summer vacation!

**Rick:** Well start next year's!

*CANDY storms off.*

**Chief:** You Boss-man?

**Rick:** Yeah, me boss-man. Who you?

**Lola:** Why are you talking like that?

**Rick:** Me speak their language.

**Princess:** I can't take much more of this.

**Chief:** We have legal documents proving you build casino on tribal land. We want land back and casino with it.

**Princess:** Me show you papers.

*She opens briefcase and hands RICK papers.*

**Rick:** *(Talking like Bogart)* Every time someone serves me papers *(Looks at LOLA)*, I lose another casino!

**Princess:** Why him talk like that?

**Chief:** Who cares? We have our own casino!

**Rick:** Not so fast, Tonto, I'll need my lawyer to look at these papers.

*DUDLEY enters.*

**Dudley:** Sorry Rick, I've already looked at them. Nothing we can do. Sorry.

**Rick & Lola:** What?!?

*DUDLEY winks at CHIEF and PRINCESS.*

**Dudley:** That's right, it's all theirs now. And since you're out of business, Rick -- Chief, I'd be happy to be your new legal counsel.

**Princess:** Casino ours now.

**Chief:** And we start busing in senior citizens and make big bucks!

**Rick:** I'll fight this. You won't get away with this.

**Chief:** You fight all you want. In meantime, get out. But no hurry. Have fire water first, on me.

**Princess:** Is great day for tribe. *(Walk to right or left stage and observe the following YMCA bit)*

**Chief:** Yes, we must celebrate. We must perform Native American victory dance! Me need some help from the audience to performance dance!

*Before the show, the MC should select 5 people from the audience by asking them simple question, such as "Who was Humphrey Bogart's leading lady in Casablanca?"*

*If they answer correctly, he hands them a card that says they won a prize. At this point in the show, the CHIEF now asks the 5 prize winners to come forward to receive their prizes. The prize is actually taking part in the YMCA dance described below. The CHIEF arranges the 5 people in a line facing the audience. He demonstrates the following moves to them:*

**Chief:** First, we must do March of Victory! (*CHIEF and 5 people march in place.*)

**Chief:** Then, we must offer thanksgiving to the gods! (*CHIEF has them slowly raise arms in a “Y” position over their heads.*)

**Chief:** Next, we must receive back their blessings! (*CHIEF has them slowly bring arms into the “M” position in front of their chests*)

**Chief:** Now, we must set free the news of our victory and let it ride the winds! (*CHIEF has them slowly bend and form the “C” position, like a tree blowing in the wind*)

**Chief:** Until the good news of our victory reaches the teepees of our ancestors! (*CHIEF has them slowly raise arms above their heads to form the “A” position, like a teepee*)

*CHIEF can demonstrate these moves a couple times to make sure they understand, but he must repeat what they mean and perform the moves slowly; otherwise, the audience will realize they spell “W-M-C-A.”*

**Chief:** We must now go into “Trance of the Dance.” You must close eyes. Do not open eyes or trance will be broken and evil spirits will enter! Now, repeat after me: Hi ya ha ha, hi ya ha ha, hi ya ha ha . . .

*(CHIEF keeps them repeating this chant)*

**Chief:** Keep eyes closed! Do not let evil spirits in! Keep repeating ancient words while we place on your heads traditional victory dance headdresses!

*Cast members then come up behind participants and put Village People hats on their heads. CHIEF continues to tell them to “keep eyes closed.”*

**Chief:** Now, keep eyes closed while traditional victory dance music starts. First, march in place! (*Music cue: tom-toms*) When I tell you to open eyes, you must only look at me and not each other or evil will come. We will do victory dance together!

*Music cue: YMCA (play only a minute or two of song while CHIEF and participants spell out YMCA. CHIEF prances around between spelling out letters.)*

*When YMCA is done and people are back in their seats, RICK and LOLA return to stage.*

**Rick:** *(Talking like Bogie)* Enjoy your celebrating, Wooden Nickel. It won't last long. I'll find a way to keep this casino if it's the last thing I do!

**RICK exits.**

**Lola:** Rick, wait! I want to help!

*LOLA runs after RICK. DUDLEY enters from behind and eavesdrops on the following conversation between CHIEF and PRINCESS.*

**Chief:** *(To PRINCESS)* We did it!

**Princess:** I know! I can't believe how easy it was. No one even questioned the documents.

**Chief:** And no one will with that crooked lawyer working for us.

**Princess:** He might realize they're forgeries. Are you sure we can trust him?

**Chief:** Of course we can. He's only interested in latching on to whoever ends up with the casino, and then busing in seniors with his new bus company.

**Dudley:** So, you two are a lot more savvy than you're pretending to be.

**Chief:** *(Startled)* Uhhhhh . . . what you mean, Paleface?

**Dudley:** Knock it off. I've been listening to everything.

**Princess:** *(Nervous)* And you heard about the documents?

*STELLA and CARMELLA enter and stay on one side of stage. They're eavesdropping. One of them seems to have a recorder. They're holding out a microphone to record everything being said. DUDLEY, CHIEF, and PRINCESS don't notice them.*

**Dudley:** I knew they were phony the minute I laid eyes on them.

**Chief:** So why didn't you say anything?

**Dudley:** Think about it, Chiefie. *(Takes stage, saying lines overdramatically while music plays in background).*

*Music cue: Music from "Superman" TV show plays in background while DUDLEY talks..*

**Dudley:** I, Dudley Wadsworth III, Esquire, will champion your cause! I will take on Rick, Lola, and everyone else to make sure you and your tribe are not stripped of what's rightfully yours. I will fight for you, the Native Americans, in your battle for truth, justice, and the American way!

**Princess:** Yeah, sure. Now why are you really helping us?

**Dudley:** For the money, of course. And the publicity. I want 10% of the casino's earnings for doing your dirty work and keeping my mouth shut. I'll add to that fortune I'll make by busing in thousands of seniors every year on my bus line. On top of that, I'll become famous for defending Native Americans. I'm going to be the next Johnny Cochran!

**Chief:** Ten percent? I don't know . . . .

**Princess:** Yeah, 10% is a big chunk of change.

**Dudley:** I know how to keep people from discovering those documents of yours are phony. You need me -- legally -- *and* for my buses. Think of the money we're going to make! The vaults will be full of social security checks! So what do you say? Deal? (**He extends hand**)

**Chief and Princess:** (**Hesitate at first, then smile and shake hands**) Deal!

**Stella:** (*Stage whisper, to CARMELLA*) This is just what we need! It's the icing on the cake!

**Carmella:** Cake? Here, I got cake. (*Takes cake out of her purse*) I took it from the buffet line.

**Stella:** Shhhhh . . . here come Rick and Lola. Maybe we can get some more information.

**RICK and LOLA enter.**

**Rick:** Look, Chief, I just got off the phone with Ronald Frump. He's not happy. He says if you take the casino, he wants all the money I owe him, immediately. I told him I don't have that kind of cash.

**Princess:** Tough luck, Paleface.

**Rick:** Look, this deal with Frump isn't exactly legit. There's some money laundering involved. He's got me over a barrel. He said if he doesn't get his investment back, I'll be taking a trip to the "Happy Hunting Grounds."

**Chief:** Say hello to my ancestors.

*The PORTABELLA SISTERS come into the open.*

**Stella:** Aha! We've got enough evidence on tape to close this place down, no matter who gets it!

**Dudley:** What are you two talking about?

**Carmella:** We'll show you what this is all about!

*The SISTERS begin to rip open their shawls. Everyone gasps and hides their eyes thinking they have nothing on underneath. They're actually wearing T-shirts with dice in a circle on the front and a big slash through the circle. In other words, "NO DICE."*

**Dudley:** Don't look! You could go blind!

**Princess:** This wasn't part of the deal.

**Rick:** Ladies please, this is a respectable joint. Cover up those headlights of yours before we get raided.

**Dudley:** By who? AARP?

**Chief:** Hey, wait a minute. Look, them not naked!

**Princess:** Figures you'd be the one to look.

**Lola:** *(Sees their T-shirts)* Oh no, they're from "NO DICE"!

**Chief:** What's "NO DICE"?

**Lola:** Our worst nightmare. I dealt with them in Vegas.

**Stella:** We're a national organization determined to keep senior citizens out of the casinos!

**Rick:** But with no senior citizens . . . .

**Chief:** The casinos would shut down!

**Carmella:** That's right. And who gives a damn? We're tired of you luring senior citizens into your casinos and getting them to spend their entire social security checks with false hopes of striking it rich!

**Stella:** Well put, Carmella.



**Carmella:** Really? Thank you. Are we finished? Because the go-go boys are due back on stage across the street.

**Stella:** Why not, with the evidence we got, by this time tomorrow, this place will be shut down. Come on, let's boogie!

*The SISTERS dance out.*

*CHIEF and PRINCESS run after them.*

**Chief:** Wait, ladies! We can get go-go boys here!

**Princess:** Yeah, you can audition them for us!

**Dudley:** I better keep an eye on those two old biddies.

*DUDLEY exits.*

**Lola:** This isn't good, Rick. No Dice is a powerful organization. When I had the Vegas casino, I ran into them . . .

**Rick:** What do you mean, "had"?

**Lola:** Oh Rick, there's no use hiding it from you anymore. I'm broke. I lost everything. All my money, the house, and yes, the casino. I mismanaged everything and owed the IRS big time. They came and took everything away.

**Rick:** (*Talking like Bogart*) So, you didn't come here because you're still interested in me. You came back because you're broke. Well, forget it, sister. As you can see, I have nothing left for you to take.

**Lola:** No, Rick. You've got it all wrong.

**Rick:** Get out of here while you still can. I have to figure out how to get out of this before Frump has me wearing cement shoes. (*End of Bogart voice*)

*RICK exits.*

**Lola:** Rick, wait!

*LOLA runs after Rick.*

*The CROC CHASER enters looking really depressed*

**Croc Chaser:** Wow, what a run of bad luck. I can't believe what's happened.

*He sits there looking dejected. CANDY enters.*

**Candy:** Hi!

**Croc Chaser:** What? Oh, hello little girl.

**Candy:** My name is Candy. Why do you look so sad?

**Croc Chaser:** Oh, it's big people problems. You wouldn't understand.

**Candy:** All I'm ever around is big people. You'd be surprised what I understand.

**Croc Chaser:** Well, I've been gambling rather heavily. It's like a disease with me. The bottom line is, your father extended my credit in exchange for my What a Croc Farm. Well, I bet the farm and lost! Now what am I going to do? That was my bread and butter.

**Candy:** You can start another farm.

**Croc Chaser:** It's not that simple. Everything revolved around that farm. My TV shows, my movies, everything. Without it, I'm nothing. And I have no cash to start again. I've got to get your father to give me back my farm. Or at least give me some more credit so I can try and win it back!

**Candy:** I wouldn't count on that. You know those two old ladies that have been hanging around?

**Croc Chaser:** The ones that like my butt?

**Candy:** Those are the ones. I don't understand it all, but they have some kind of evidence that's going to force the casino to shut down tomorrow. It'll be too late for you, and my parents will never get back together again. And I'll never be a Vegas showgirl!

**Croc Chaser:** Oh no! Somebody has to stop them!

**Candy:** But how? Say, where's your snake?

**Croc Chaser:** Right here in my shirt. *(Pats shirt)* Ow! *(Takes out antivenin and slugs it)* I'll see you around, kid. I have some thinking to do.

*CROC CHASER goes off.*

*RICK enters looking really depressed. He sits at table. CANDY speaks during opening music, just before RICK starts singing.*

**Candy:** You're about to lose everything, Dad. Again! How can you just sit there when they're about to take the casino away from you?

**Music cue: RICK sings “My Way”**

**Rick:** And now, the end is near;  
And so I face the final curtain.  
My friend, I’ll say it clear,  
I’ll state my case, of which I’m certain.

I’ve lived a life that’s full.  
I’ve traveled each and every highway;  
And more, much more than this,  
I did it my way.

**Candy:** (*Speaks quickly, between verses*) Go ahead, act tough. You’re going to regret this someday.

**Rick:** Regrets, I’ve had a few;  
But then again, too few to mention.

**Candy:** Why did you open another casino?

**Rick:** I did what I had to do  
And saw it through without exemption.

**Candy:** Didn’t you know what you were getting into?

**Rick:** I planned each charted course;  
Each careful step along the byway,  
But more, much more than this,  
I did it my way.

Yes, there were times, I’m sure you knew  
When I bit off more than I could chew.  
But through it all, when there was doubt,  
I ate it up and spit it out.  
I faced it all and I stood tall;  
And did it my way.

**Candy:** (*Grabs his arm*) You sure did, Dad.

**Rick:** I’ve loved, I’ve laughed and cried.  
I’ve had my fill; my share of losing.  
And now, as tears subside,  
I find it all so amusing.

To think I did all that;  
 And may I say, not in a shy way,  
 Oh no, oh no not me,  
 I did it my way.

**Dad:** That's my Dad!

**Rick:** *(Throws his arms out to be dramatic, sending CANDY flying)*

For what is a man, what has he got?  
 If not himself, then he has naught.  
 To say the things he truly feels;  
 And not the words of one who kneels.  
 The record shows I took the blows  
 And did it my way!

**Candy:** Mom's right. You are nuts! *CANDY exits.*

*LOLA enters.*

**Lola:** What did you do to the kid?

**Rick:** *(Talking like Bogie)*

**Rick:** The real question is, what are you here to do to me again?

*Music cue: "As Time Goes By" plays in background*

**Lola:** Oh Rick, it's true I came here because I had no place else to go. But when I saw you again, my heart melted like a Reese's Peanut Butter Cup on the radiator of a Rolls Royce. You're the only guy for me, and I think if we give it one more chance, there's hope for us.

**Rick:** *(Still talking like Bogie)* I'd like to believe you Lola. The truth is, I never really got over you either. You're some dame. And I think it would be good for the kid, too. Oh, what am I saying! There's no hope for us! After tomorrow, we'll both be living in a cardboard box on a street corner somewhere. It'll never work, doll. We're through, finished, it's over.

*RICK exits. Fade music.*

**Lola:** *(To herself)* We're not through, finished, it's *not* over! But if we're going to get together again, I've got to get that Bogie thing fixed! And this casino problem. I'll be happy to get Rick back, but I'll be a lot happier with the casino, too. The Portabella Sisters have got to be stopped!

*The PORTABELLA SISTERS enter. CARMELLA has a shopping bag.*

**Carmella:** (*Rummaging in bag*) What a Vegas souvenir! (*Pulls out g-string, studies it*)

**Stella:** What are you looking at?

**Carmella:** I've heard there's a front and a back to these things

**Stella:** I can't believe you gave that go-go boy 20 bucks to give you his g-string.

**Carmella:** I got him to take it off, didn't I?

**Lola:** Ladies, may I talk to you for a minute?

**Stella:** Say, I remember you. Didn't we boycott your casino in Vegas?

**Carmella:** Yeah, weren't you shacked up with Wayne Newton?

**Stella:** No, I think she was shacked up with Wayne Newton's boyfriend.

**Carmella:** Oh yeah . . .

**Lola:** It was not. It was his pool boy! (*Exasperated, realizes she's revealed too much*) Look ladies, I'm asking you to rethink this whole thing. If you play your tape for the authorities and this place gets shut down tomorrow, think about all the people you'll be putting out of work.

**Stella:** Yeah, the same people who have no problem taking senior citizens' money away from them day after day after day . . . my heart's bleeding for them.

**Carmella:** Besides, you don't care about them. All you care about is yourself.

**Lola:** Look, ladies, Rick and I are getting back together. And when we do, I'll have control over half of finances. I could send you a substantial amount of money every month, a lot more than you're getting from social security. You'd be silent partners.

**Stella:** Silent partners, huh?

**Carmella:** (*Looking at g-string*) All my partners have been moaners.

**Stella:** Will you shut up!

**Lola:** What do you think, ladies? Do you think you could keep your mouths shut long enough to be silent partners?

**Stella:** You're bribing us? (**Whips open shawl again**) NO DICE! Who do you think you're messing with, sister?

**Carmella:** Yeah, who do you think you're messing with? *(To STELLA)* Who *is* she messing with? *(To LOLA)* Sister!

**Stella:** We may look like a couple of senile citizens, but believe me, we're playing with a full deck. We've been recruited by NO DICE to keep casinos from exploiting seniors, and damn it, we're going to do it!

**Carmella:** Stella, watch your language.

**Lola:** *(Threatening)* You'd better watch a lot more than your language. Look ladies, you're not keeping me from getting back Rick or the lifestyle I deserve. Put love and greed together and you have an explosive mixture. I'd hate to see you get caught in the blast!

*There's a brief stare-down and for the first time, the SISTERS look scared. LOLA storms off.*

**Stella:** Come on, Sis. We've got work to do.

**Carmella:** I thought we were on vacation.

**Stella:** *(Shakes head in dismay)* You must have been adopted.

*The SISTERS exit.*

*The CHIEF, PRINCESS, and DUDLEY enter.*

**Chief:** We've got to think of something. Those two old ladies have got to be stopped!

**Dudley:** I agree. They'll ruin everything.

**Princess:** Yeah, but how?

**Chief:** *(Raising his hand)* How!

**Dudley:** *(Slaps CHIEF'S hand down)* Will you knock it off!

**Chief:** Sorry, habit. Look, how are we going to stop the mushroom sisters?

**Princess:** Portabella Sisters. I don't know.

**Chief:** What do you mean you don't know? You're the one who went to Harvard Business School.

**Dudley:** Harvard? Impressive.

**Chief:** I still don't know how she came up with the money.

**Dudley:** I'm sure there's an interesting tale there.

**Princess:** *(Doesn't want to talk about it)* Uh . . . I told you, it was a mysterious benefactor.

**Chief:** And you never found out who it was?

**Princess:** No! Now I don't want to talk about it anymore.

**Chief:** But we're all in agreement we have to stop those two old ladies for the good of the tribe, right?

**Princess:** Uhhhh, yeah, right.

**Dudley:** Absolutely. *(To self)* Not to mention for my bus company. I've got to start putting butts in those seats soon or I'm going to lose the entire fleet! Not to mention a fortune. The Golden Girls have got to go!

**DUDLEY exits.**

**Chief:** Our people have suffered long enough. I'm in way too deep now. I showed up with forged documents. There's no way I'm going to let two old ladies stop me from getting this casino for the tribe. I'll take care of them -- one way or another!

**CHIEF storms off.**

**Princess:** Yeah, right. Go take care of them. You can't even tie your moccasins without my help. *(Gets on cell phone)* Hello, Ronald Frump, please. Tell him it's his princess. Hi, Ronnie. No, things are *not* going smoothly. I thought once the Chief got the casino with the documents I forged, I'd be able to get him to sign everything over to me without him realizing what he was doing. I knew he'd never read the fine print. Hell, I'm not sure if he can read at all. And then it would be mine . . . ours. But if these old ladies I told you about turn over their tapes to the authorities, we all lose. What? No! I couldn't do anything like that. But I . . . of course I remember who paid my way through Harvard. I've always been grateful. But . . . all right! I'll do whatever I have to . . . for us!

**PRINCESS hangs up the phone and exits.**

***There's approximately 6 more pages to the end of the script and we find out who is murdered. Then there's the voting, the judging and the handing out of prizes.***

***Any questions, just contact us and we'll be glad to answer them.***

***Tony & Marylou***

