

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WITH MONIQUE

By Amy Berlin and P. Ann Bucci

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CHARACTER LIST

All's Well That Ends with Monique can be performed with a minimum cast of 4 actors (2 male and 2 female) or with a cast of as many as 17 actors (11 male and 6 female). While much of the characterization is left up to the director and the actors, it is important that the interaction and reactions be as real as possible.

If role doubling is desired, the authors suggest the following casting:

Woman 1: Monique, 40's, an optimistic, yet deluded, actress

Woman 2: Actress, Theatre America
Frieda, Monique's Therapist
Mother, Monique's Mother
EEO Officer, Finch Studios
Female Puppet

Man 1: Stan, the Stage Manager for Theatre America
Mr. Finch, Director of Personnel of Finch Studios
Puppet (in dream sequence)
Cashier, Big Broadway Theatre Deli

Man 2: Actor, Theatre America
Theatre America Director
Donny, Assistant to Frieda
Bus Station Attendant
Mr. McKenzie, Lawyer for Finch Studios
Monique's Father, a Liza Minnelli impersonator
Manager, Big Broadway Theatre Deli

SET DESCRIPTION

The set should be representational and minimal so that it can move from scene to scene with no pauses and as few set changes as possible. For example, a bare stage with movable boxes would work nicely.

SCENES

SUNDAY: *Much Ado About Monique*

MONDAY: *The Importance of Being Monique*

TUESDAY: *Educating Monique*

WEDNESDAY: *How to Succeed in Business with Monique*

Monique Takes An Intermission

WEDNESDAY: *Continued*

THURSDAY: *Glengarry, Glen Monique*

FRIDAY: *Monique Takes Manhattan*

SATURDAY: *All's Well That Ends With Monique*

PRODUCTION HISTORY

All's Well That Ends With Monique won the Playwright's Theater New Play Competition. *Monique* was also a finalist in the Seven Devils Playwright's Conference and the Panowski Playwriting Competition. *Monique* was given a staged reading at the Firehouse Theatre Project in Richmond, Virginia and developmental readings at the Frontier Theatre Festival in Valdez, Alaska and at Space 55 in Phoenix, Arizona. A prior version of *Monique* was published by Brooklyn Publishers in 2005.

All's Well That Ends With Monique had its world premiere at Richmond Triangle Players in August 2011. The production was directed by Donna E. Coghill. Set Design by Todd A. Schall-Vess, Lighting Design by K. Jenna Ferree, Costume Design by Don Warren, Sound Design by BJ Kocen and Lincoln Mitchell, Original Music by BJ Kocen, and stage management by Tiffany Shifflett.

Monique.....Kristen Swanson

Everyone **BUT** Monique..... Kimberly Jones Clark, BJ Kocen,
and Stephen Ryan

Over the years, *Monique* has taken on a life of her own beyond the play. Follow her blog at <http://allswellthatendswithmonique.blogspot.com/> or like her on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/#!/allswellthatendswithmonique>.
What ho!

SPECIAL THANKS

*Donald Coghill,
Bonnie Coghill & Jimmie Lucas,
Nancy & Tom Coghill,
Sharron & Scott Grzybowski,
Kimberly & Michael Separ,
Ali Weinstein,
and Eileen Wong.*

Do Not Copy

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WITH MONIQUE

by
Amy Berlin and P. Ann Bucci

*This play, formerly titled "Monique's Bad Week," was updated
September 10th, 2012

SUNDAY - MUCH ADO ABOUT MONIQUE

(Slide on backdrop reads SUNDAY: MUCH ADO ABOUT MONIQUE. As with all the slides for the days of the week, the words can be accompanied by photos or caricatures of Monique either in classic sitcoms or movies (i.e. throwing up hat like Mary Tyler Moore) or iconic images (i.e. Mount Rushmore))

(Lights up in Theatre America backstage area, ACTOR and ACTRESS are putting on costumes and make-up.)

ACTRESS: Did I tell you I had an audition for that Persona Hospital commercial yesterday?

ACTOR: No, how'd it go?

ACTRESS: I can never tell anymore.

ACTOR: Did the director bring his children with him who then cried all the way through your reading?

ACTRESS: NO!

ACTOR: Well, then your audition was officially better than mine.

ACTRESS: But, get this . . . Monique was there.

ACTOR: The intern? I saw her audition for CATS at Gazebo Dinner Theatre. She arrived in a kimono with bound feet.

ACTRESS: Seriously . . . ?

ACTOR: Yep, the director asks her what the deal is . . . and she says *(imitating Monique)*, "Since I'm portraying a Siamese cat, I decided my audition should have a truly Asian flair."

ACTRESS: You are kidding me!!

ACTOR: I swear!

ACTRESS: Why do they even let her intern here? I've never seen a 45-year-old intern before.

ACTOR: I heard the only reason they offered her an internship was because her Grandmother made a huge donation.

ACTRESS: This theatre is really going down the tubes. I mean, who hasn't seen *A Midsummer's Night Dream* at least 500 times?

ACTOR: I just hope we get out of here before 2:00 in the morning. What is this – our fourteenth dress rehearsal?

ACTRESS: Oh, my God, I didn't think I ate that much, but I can hardly get into this stupid fairy costume.

ACTOR: Wait!! My top looks like it's almost been shredded.

ACTRESS: (*Examining her costume*) Oh, I don't believe this . . . someone altered my costume!!

ACTOR: Mine too! Who would do such a stupid thing?

(*STAN enters.*)

STAN: Five minutes, fairies.

ACTRESS: Major problem here, Stan. We can't get into our costumes.

STAN: What are you talking about?

ACTRESS: Hello! They don't fit anymore. I mean, look at this, there's hardly any material here.

ACTOR: What are we supposed to wear now?

STAN: I guess you'll just get them on as best you can. They'll cover what they cover. Places, please.

ACTRESS: I can't act ethereal in this! I look like a streetwalker!

ACTOR: And the Act II fairy dance is going to be ruined without the floaty ribbons . . .

STAN: It's just a dress rehearsal, people, pull it together. Places!!!

(*ACTOR and ACTRESS exit, as MONIQUE enters; SHE is wearing a page boy wig and is carrying another wig on a head stand.*)

MONIQUE: Ah, Stanley, when you have a moment, could you bring me an iced mocha with a twist? Oh, and please use Equal instead of Splenda, if you don't mind. It seems to enhance the blues in my aura.

STAN: Monique, please tell me those aren't wigs from the costume shop.

MONIQUE: No need to thank me, Stanley, but frankly these wigs were completely out of date. I have refashioned all of them to modern styles.

STAN: Refashioned?

MONIQUE: Of course. Now, they are perfect for the slate of shows that I've chosen for Theatre America's next season.

STAN: What are you talking about? We rented those wigs for "1776"!

MONIQUE: Oh, I see. Yes, well whereas masses of ringlets would come in handy before the advent of microdermabrasion, Theatre America must join the 21st Century. Hairstyles are much sleeker now.

STAN: (*furios*) Don't you understand? Now we're going to have to pay for these wigs and rent new ones. Look, I don't have time to deal with this now. Monique, I don't want to see you near the costume shop again.

MONIQUE: Stanley, honestly! You needn't worry about that. My feng shui instructor strictly limits my time in musty airless spaces.

STAN: Look, Monique, speaking of costumes, did you by any chance alter the fairy gowns?

MONIQUE: And to think Mother worries that I toil in obscurity! Thank you so much for noticing!! It's good to know I'm not the only one who finds baggy unisex fairy costumes personally offensive!

STAN: This is insane! Grandmother or no Grandmother, we can't baby-sit a lunatic! I am going to speak to the Artistic Director about you! *(HE exits.)*

MONIQUE: How delightful! Only my first week on the job and the Artistic Director and production stage manager are discussing me! And with an infant lunatic on the loose, it's even more flattering that I should be a topic of discussion.

(THEATRE AMERICA DIRECTOR enters.)

THEATRE AMERICA DIRECTOR: Monique! I am not very happy about being called away in the middle of our dress rehearsal. I've just talked with Stan.

MONIQUE: Oh good, I was hoping someone would.

THEATRE AMERICA DIRECTOR: We were discussing you, Monique.

MONIQUE: Oh, please, sir. Thanks are unnecessary.

THEATRE AMERICA DIRECTOR: Monique, I don't think this is working out. I'm afraid we're going to have to find a new intern.

MONIQUE: Indeed. I am honored. Yes.

THEATRE AMERICA DIRECTOR: Yes what?

MONIQUE: Yes, I accept the lead role in Hamlet. It is done.

THEATRE AMERICA DIRECTOR: Wait, I didn't . . .

MONIQUE: Of course, nobody will ever believe me as a man, so perhaps we should change the name? What do you think of Hamletitia?

THEATRE AMERICA DIRECTOR: Monique! We don't need you for Hamlet. Look, I truly hope this won't interfere with your Grandmother's endowment, but I have to let you go.

MONIQUE: "To be or not to be. That is the question."

THEATRE AMERICA DIRECTOR: Monique, you're not listening to me. I am trying to fire you before you ruin anything else.

MONIQUE: Sir, you are distracting me. "Whether 'tis nobler" . . . Line!

THEATRE AMERICA DIRECTOR: Monique, I am firing you.

MONIQUE: "Whether 'tis nobler, Monique, I am firing you." Are you sure? I thought it was something about arrow slings.

THEATRE AMERICA DIRECTOR: Monique, you are fired. FIRED! FIRED! FIRED!!!! Do you understand?

MONIQUE: Frankly, sir, your notes are ambiguous, at best. Let's see if I can make them work for me. I am fire. Fire. Fire. Hmmm. Fires are nature. Nature is beautiful. Thank you for noticing. Sir, you are right, I am a force of nature, and Theatre America is stifling me. Therefore, I

am afraid that I must take my leave. But I shall never forget your kindness. What ho!

THEATRE AMERICA DIRECTOR: You are certainly taking this well, Monique. Break a leg, dear. *(To ACTORS)* Okay people, the break is over. Everybody on stage. Where are my fairies?

ACTRESS: *(Running in)* I just can't be expected to work like this. What in the world is a fairy's motivation for wearing a Flashdance reject?

STAN: *(Following behind)* Places! Places!! Come on, people!!

THEATRE AMERICA DIRECTOR: No, wait a minute. What are you wearing?

ACTRESS: Stan made us. The costumes don't fit anymore. They shrunk or something. I can't wear this!

THEATRE AMERICA DIRECTOR: What are you talking about? Of course you can!! This is amazing!! A highly sexualized *Midsummer* . . . has that been done yet? Stan?

STAN: I'm sure it has. Thousands of times.

THEATRE AMERICA DIRECTOR: Within a twenty mile radius?

STAN: Not that I know of.

THEATRE AMERICA DIRECTOR: It's perfect!! Why didn't I think of it?! In fact, let's have SOME of the fairies just be nude. Ticket sales will go through the roof!

ACTRESS: Now, wait a . . .

THEATRE AMERICA DIRECTOR: Yes, Monique, break a leg in your future endeavors. I need to run. I only have three more rehearsals to fit Puck for a leather bustier. Yes!! Yes!! *(HE leaves)*

STAN: PLACES!! *(HE leaves)*

ACTRESS: It's not a *terrible* idea. I mean, lots of the fairies I know are nudists. Plus, I look really good in nothing!! *(SHE leaves)*

MONIQUE: *(Calling after them)* Well, they certainly were excited about my idea!! . . . I suppose this means Hamletitia is off. Indeed, perhaps it's for the best. After all, I might look a little portly next to Yorrick. The skeleton look is very flattering, if chilly . . . What ho! *(MONIQUE exits).*

(Lights fade as we hear a telephone ring and MONIQUE's voice mail message.)

MONIQUE: *(VOICEOVER)* Hello. This is Monique, the actress. Please leave all audition notices after the beep. No, that wasn't quite right. I need to show more range. *(in the style of an English drawing room comedy:)* Do leave a message, my dear. No. Ridiculous. Oscar Wilde didn't have voice mail. Oh, I know! *(In the style of experimental theatre)* Monique . . . message . . . Leave . . . *(Voice mail BEEP cuts off message.)*

MONDAY - THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING MONIQUE

(Slide on backdrop reads MONDAY: THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING MONIQUE)

(Lights up on DONNY at the reception desk. He is very harried. MONIQUE enters.)

MONIQUE: What ho, Donny.

DONNY: Monique! I think you're early. Your therapy appointment doesn't start for half an hour. Hold on, though, I think your most recent bill is right here somewhere.

MONIQUE: I hope Frieda will understand, but I have to get to my Kabbalah-Pilates class.

DONNY: Actually, it's good you're early. Maybe it'll take Aunt Frieda's mind off the fact that I can't seem to do anything right today.

MONIQUE: Are those new highlights, Donny? I like them. They make you look a bit more feral.

DONNY: Colin Farrell?

MONIQUE: No, squirrel feral.

DONNY: *(crestfallen)* Oh,--

MONIQUE: Don't frown, Donny, you'll spend a fortune on Botox.

DONNY: It's just--

MONIQUE: Spit it out Donny.

DONNY: I spent a lot of money on this hair. I'm going to a new club opening tonight--and there's this guy . . .

MONIQUE: Say no more Donny--You seem to have forgotten that I absolutely KILLED as Truvy in the All-Monique production of Steel Magnolias. *(SHE looks in her bag for hair gel and produces a bottle.)* What ho! *(SHE takes hair gel and fluffs and poofs DONNY's hair until it is spikey and very cool).* There are benefits to method acting, you know.

(DONNY takes a picture of himself with his cellphone and looks at it, shows it to Monique).

MONIQUE: There! Much more flattering. And distinctly less rodent.

DONNY: *(Typing on his phone)* I don't know.

MONIQUE: And, for a finishing touch, I suggest a little black eyeliner.

DONNY: Hmm, it seems a little 1985.

MONIQUE: To each his own, Donald.

DONNY: (*Working on the computer*) Mhmm. Oh, found your bill.

MONIQUE: Oh, Donny, just send the bill to you know who.

DONNY: Who?

MONIQUE: You know.

DONNY: Your mother?

MONIQUE: No, Donny, not my mother. Think bigger and, well, more right wing.

DONNY: Rush Limbaugh?

MONIQUE: (*frustrated*) For heaven's sake, Donny. What would Rush Limbaugh want with my bill? Honestly, you know I don't like to say her name, but you have forced my hand. Grandmother. Send the bill to my Grandmother. These daily therapy sessions were her idea anyway. Can Frieda see me now?

DONNY: I'm sure that's fine. You are her only patient these days. Oops, I'm not supposed to tell anyone that.

MONIQUE: Heavens, perhaps I should look into psychiatry as a part-time job. I never realized there was so much downtime.

DONNY: Apparently, Aunt Frieda can't afford to keep her practice open much longer. And I hear things aren't exactly rosy between her and Uncle Duke Warren anymore. If it wasn't for your Grandmother's money--Aunt Frieda would be even crazier. Come on, I'll take you in.

(*DONNY shows MONIQUE into FRIEDA's office. Lights up on FRIEDA. MONIQUE sits and for the first couple of lines, attempts to recline in her chair.*)

DONNY: Aunt Frieda, Monique is here.

FRIEDA: Donny, please. Call me Dr. Walker in front of the patients.

DONNY: Sorry. Dr. Walker.

FRIEDA: And Donny--your hair looks--You aren't decompensating again are you?

DONNY: (*Confused*) What? I don't think so . . .

MONIQUE: You can thank me later for helping out Donny. I appreciate you seeing me earlier than usual.

(*DONNY leaves dejectedly, trying to comb out his hair.*)

FRIEDA: Yes, well, your Grandmother is a very important person. So, well, let's -- how are you feeling today?

MONIQUE: Frieda, words cannot describe how uncomfortable your couch is.

FRIEDA: It is a chair, not a couch.

MONIQUE: Perhaps you'd have more patients if you were a proper therapist with a couch. As it happens, I do look much younger while sitting so it's not an issue for me.

FRIEDA: Fine. Now, we need to go over the results of your psychometric testing. (*FRIEDA picks up a large folder on her desk and opens it.*)

MONIQUE: Good, I hope I passed.

FRIEDA: Therapy is a process, Monique. You don't pass. Or fail for that matter.

MONIQUE: Well, if that is the case, it appears the whole procedure is rather pointless.

FRIEDA: I hear your concerns, but the results will help us find the root of your fears.

MONIQUE: (*Laughing*) Oh please, I would never have any roots showing.

FRIEDA: Monique, I think if you cooperate for once, we could make some real headway today.

MONIQUE: Very well. I suppose a bit more head shrinking can't hurt. I've been doing the Zone diet, and while my figure is even more stunning than usual, my head seems to have lost no weight at all.

FRIEDA: I see. Yes, well back to your test results. It appears you are actually very bright.

MONIQUE: Thank you, Frieda. I picked this costume for that reason. Can we begin the therapy now?

FRIEDA: Excuse me, Monique. (*Picks up a portable voice recorder and speaks into it:*) Patient displays an inability to focus on test results. Patient is attempting to control the session.

MONIQUE: Excuse me, Frieda. (*Takes out a lipstick and speaks into it:*) Therapist is delaying my therapy and is wearing the wrong glasses for her face shape. What ho!

FRIEDA: Monique, honestly. (*Sighs. SHE takes a moment to compose herself.*) So, I thought we would try a little word association to see what we can uncover. I am going to say a word and I want you to say the first word that pops into your head. Don't think, just talk. Ready?

MONIQUE: I suppose.

FRIEDA: Apple.

MONIQUE: Apple . . . apple . . . Well, Big Apple is New York. You are shaped a bit like an apple. Ummmm. Apple. Oh, I know, Marlon Brando!

FRIEDA: No, Monique. Just the first thing that comes into your mind. Alright, Mother.

MONIQUE: Mother . . . yes . . . moooottthhherrrr . . . (*figuring it out*) mother.

FRIEDA: Monique. I'm not sure you understand. Here, let's switch roles. You say a word, and I'll show you how it's done.

MONIQUE: Hmmm, I'm not usually interested in supporting roles, but heck where would Marissa Tomei be if she felt that way? Academy award.

FRIEDA: Mmmm . . . movie. Did you see how I did that? That's the first thing I thought of. Because Academy Awards are for movies. And then I just said it.

MONIQUE: Frieda, but please stop breaking character. Tony.

FRIEDA: Randall.

MONIQUE: Emmy.

FRIEDA: Divorce.

MONIQUE: What?

FRIEDA: Divorce.

MONIQUE: How do you get divorce from Emmy?

FRIEDA: Well, Duke Warren's ex-girlfriend has begun texting him. Her name is Emi, so . . . No, I'm sorry, Monique, but word association should not be interrupted by analysis. Continue.

MONIQUE: Indeed. Golden Globe.

FRIEDA: Alone.

MONIQUE: Obie.

FRIEDA: Prozac.

MONIQUE: Carrot.

FRIEDA: Suicide. (*Realizing what SHE said, SHE gathers herself.*) Perhaps word association is not a good idea right now, Monique. Let's change gears. Shall we try some Rorschach?

MONIQUE: I'm a vegan.

FRIEDA: No, Monique. It's just inkblots. I'll show you a picture and you let me know what you see. (*Holds up a blot*)

MONIQUE: Where did you get that picture, Frieda? I am appalled that you would try to make money off my nude image.

(*DONNY knocks and enters.*)

DONNY: Excuse me, Aunt Frieda, I mean Dr. Walker, there's a phone call for you.

FRIEDA: I'm in the middle of a session. Just take a message.

DONNY: I would have, but he said it was important.

FRIEDA: Well, who is it?

DONNY: Uncle Duke Warren. He's said there's an emergency with Mr. Paprika.

FRIEDA: Donny, please tell my husband that he is not to interrupt a session to talk about that stupid dog.

MONIQUE: What kind of a name is Mr. Paprika?

FRIEDA: Well, his name was Paprika when we adopted him. But everyone thought he was a girl. So, Donny came up with a new name.

DONNY: Mr. Paprika is much more masculine.

FRIEDA: Donny, if you don't mind, please tell Mr. Paprika, I mean Duke Warren, that I'll call him later.

DONNY: Right, sorry. Oh, one more thing.

FRIEDA: Yes?

DONNY: I just got 30 new friends because of my hairstyle and 10 people like it.

FRIEDA: Donny, please, we are in a session now.

DONNY: Right. (*looking at his cell phone*) And I just got verified on Twitter. (*Exiting*)

FRIEDA: I apologize for the interruption. How is your Theatre America internship going?

MONIQUE: I am fire.

FRIEDA: I see . . . No, I don't. What does that mean?

MONIQUE: I have moved on. All that iambic pentameter was thinning my lips.

FRIEDA: Do you mean you quit?

MONIQUE: Not entirely.

FRIEDA: Monique! Your Grandmother is going to be furious with me! We have to figure out your future right away. Do you have a plan? Her research grant is conditional on you having your own career. We can't let her know until we've found something else. There's no time to waste. Let's brainstorm for ideas.

MONIQUE: Frieda, dear, you are forgetting that Mother is a great supporter of the arts. I'm sure I can convince her to cover my expenses. I'll just practice my Oscar acceptance award thank you speech dedicated to my devoted mother and she'll be putty in my hands.

FRIEDA: (*Holds up a piece of paper for MONIQUE to see*) You can't ask your mother, Monique. At your Grandmother's insistence, your mother came in last week and signed an anti-enabling contract.

MONIQUE: A what?

FRIEDA: Your mother has agreed to stop enabling you. You and I will have to find a way for you to jump start your own career. And keep mine from--

MONIQUE: I know! I will swear off money entirely. The barter system worked fine for the peasants in those old, boring plays.

FRIEDA: Monique.

MONIQUE: For instance, I could give you a color consultation and YOU could tell Grandmother that core toning is a lucrative career. Shall we start? You really need to stop wearing those winter colors.

FRIEDA: No, Monique.

MONIQUE: What do you mean, "no"? I am a licensed colorologist. Or I was. I've actually fallen behind in my continuing education credits. But really, who can spend an entire afternoon on mauve?

FRIEDA: Monique, I know it may sound strange to you, but some people, although not my husband, actually get regular jobs.

MONIQUE: Oh please. Stars don't work. It is unseemly.

FRIEDA: Monique, let's be realistic. You are hardly a star.

MONIQUE: Tell that to "311 Granite Avenue".

FRIEDA: Isn't that your mother's address?

MONIQUE: Yes, but it's also the name of a theatre magazine published by Mother. It covers all my appearances.

FRIEDA: I thought she worked for that baby magazine.

MONIQUE: I can still remember the glowing review "311 Granite Avenue" gave my performance in *Hark, It's Thursday*. It said, and I quote, "A Star was born in our living room today." You know, Mother would insist that I stay home from school if there was a Katherine Hepburn movie on television. She thought I should study the competition.

FRIEDA: You know, Monique, my mother used to let me watch "The Three Faces of Eve" over and over again so that I could learn from the therapist.

MONIQUE: Frieda, perhaps you could explore your issues on your own time.

FRIEDA: I apologize, Monique. Of course. I just have been so -- I need to get a hold of myself. (*To herself.*) Monique, I have an idea. With the help of your Grandmother's grant, I have been developing this new therapy technique. It's not quite ready for human trials, but maybe it could help you explore your career choices and address your feelings to your grandmother. (*Produces HAND PUPPET.*) I call it Puppet Therapy. Well, what do you think? Can you pretend the puppet is your Grandmother?

MONIQUE: Honestly Frieda, I cannot believe you think that Grandmother would wear orange felt.

FRIEDA: Now, let's pretend you are ten years old. Can you do that?

MONIQUE: Frieda, you flatter me. Even I know I can't play any part under 13.

FRIEDA: Just work with me this once, Monique. (*Refocuses*) Okay, Monique, you are 13-year-old Monique. I want you to tell your Grandmother (*shakes PUPPET*) that you are going to be an independent woman. And an actress.

MONIQUE: Yes, of course. (*MONIQUE stands and does some elaborate warm ups. Stretches, rolls her head, and then sits.*) Okay, I am ready. No, I'm sorry Frieda. I need some more time to research the character. Who is this "Monique" person? Why is she talking to a puppet? Is she delusional or merely wise beyond her years? One cannot just jump into a challenging role like this.

FRIEDA: Monique, that really isn't necessary for this exercise. Let's try it again. Now, you are 13-year-old Monique. I want you to tell your Grandmother (*shakes PUPPET*) that you want to be an actress. And remember you are safe here.

MONIQUE: Very well. Grandmother, I have received "The Call". I am going to be an actress. (*MONIQUE then takes cover behind the chair.*)

FRIEDA: Monique, what are you doing?

MONIQUE: I don't like to be too close to the yelling. Stress can age you prematurely, as I'm sure you know.

FRIEDA: Your Grandmother isn't going to yell at you, Monique. You and she are going to discuss this rationally.

MONIQUE: Oh, please, I knew it was just a ruse. Grandmother would never “discuss” anything with me. Unhand Frieda, you imposter!

FRIEDA: Alright, no more puppet. Now what am I going to do?

MONIQUE: Actually, I find the puppet very helpful. (*Snatches puppet from FRIEDA.*)

FRIEDA: Monique.

MONIQUE: Frieda.

PUPPET: (*unless otherwise indicated MONIQUE provides the voice for and manipulates the puppet. MONIQUE is not a good ventriloquist.*)
Monique.

MONIQUE: Puppet.

FRIEDA: MONIQUE!

PUPPET: FRIEDA!

FRIEDA: Monique, stop this!! Just stop!

MONIQUE: Is our time up so soon? I was just beginning to feel warmed-up.

FRIEDA: Monique, I . . . I've spent the last three years on puppet therapy. Have I been wasting my time? I don't have any other choices. If I can't help you, my medical career is over.

MONIQUE: Oh for heaven's sake Frieda, Puppet therapy is not that hard. I played a therapist in my one woman show entitled “Physician, Heal Thyself.” Watch this. (*Both PUPPET and MONIQUE take on the “character” of FRIEDA.*) Tell me about this negative attitude. Where is it coming from?

FRIEDA: What?

MONIQUE: Your negative attitude. What makes you feel this way?

FRIEDA: Monique, this is ridiculous. I don't need a therapist. And even if I did, I think it's unethical to use one of my patients.

MONIQUE: Don't think of me as a patient. Really, I disappear into my roles, so it should be pretty easy!

FRIEDA: Well.

MONIQUE: Now, this attitude. Do you know where it is coming from?

FRIEDA: I don't seem to be able to concentrate on my work. And my husband spends all his time training Mr. Paprika.

PUPPET: What ho! I think we are on to something here. How does the dog make you feel?

FRIEDA: Well, he's very sweet and it's not his fault. Where is this whole trained dog thing getting us? Oh, sure he's a big hit at old age homes, but that doesn't pay well at all. And Duke Warren says he doesn't have time to get another job.

MONIQUE: I see.

FRIEDA: And, me, well, I can't seem to attract any new patients. If it wasn't for your Grandmother, I wouldn't be able to afford to keep my practice or continue my research. Oh, dear, I'm in way over my head.

PUPPET: What did you say?

FRIEDA: I'm miserable. And I'm a terrible therapist.

MONIQUE: No, before that.

FRIEDA: I'm in way over my head?

MONIQUE: What ho! That's it!

FRIEDA: What's it?

MONIQUE: Weigh. Indeed, you are getting a bit rotund; your backside is distinctly broad. Broad. Weigh. That's it! The puppet's brilliant! It's all so clear to me now.

FRIEDA: I don't know what you are talking about.

MONIQUE and PUPPET: Broadway!

FRIEDA: I can't go to Broadway. What would I do there?

MONIQUE: Not you, Frieda. New York would eat you alive. New York is my destiny. The puppet is brilliant.

FRIEDA: My puppet helped you?

MONIQUE: Of course, it's all so clear now. We leave tomorrow.

(DONNY enters.)

DONNY: Sorry Aunt Frieda--uh, Dr. Walker--it's time for your medication. Monique, I have 2,000 more followers on Twitter just because of you. Hey, isn't that Aunt Frieda's puppet?

MONIQUE: What ho, Donny.

PUPPET: What ho, Donny.

FRIEDA: What ho, Donny.

DONNY: Are you ill, Aunt Frieda? I mean Dr. Walker. You better sit down.

FRIEDA: I've never felt better. My Puppet therapy has helped Monique. You must help me document her progress in order to submit my book proposal.

DONNY: Not a problem, Aunt Frieda. I can film this with my cell phone.

FRIEDA: *("Interviewing" Monique on camera:)* Well, Monique, how are you feeling now?

MONIQUE: Frieda, look at the time. Your Mr. Paprika monologue was a little long. It could use some cutting.

FRIEDA: I see, but please, tell us what your plans are now.

MONIQUE: The Puppet and I are on our way to New York. He has given me a strong sense of empowerment. Together, we can make it there or anywhere.

PUPPET: Good bye, Frieda, Donny and what ho!

(MONIQUE and PUPPET bow and exit.)

DONNY: Wow! Congratulations, Dr. Walker!

FRIEDA: Donny, sweetheart, why so formal? My favorite nephew should call me Aunt Frieda.

DONNY: Congratulations, Aunt Frieda!! Aren't you excited? I can see it now . . . Puppet therapy sweeps the nation. You'll be on Dr. Phil, The View, maybe even Letterman. Just wait until I post this on YouTube.

FRIEDA: I can't believe this is happening. I can write up the Monique sessions and submit my proposal. That way I can convince Monique's Grandmother to extend my grant for a portion of the book's proceeds.

DONNY: Is there a Nobel Peace Prize for therapy?

FRIEDA: Let's not get ahead of ourselves! Can you give me a moment?

DONNY: Of course! (*DONNY exits*) Oh and I'll be leaving early today.

FRIEDA: (*Dictating into recorder*) Finish book proposal for "Puppet Pedagogy." Rent "The Three Faces of Eve." Neuter Mr. Paprika. (*FRIEDA places tape recorder down and smiles.*)

(Lights fade on FRIEDA. SHE exits. The telephone rings, and MONIQUE'S voice mail is heard.)

MONIQUE: (*VOICEOVER*) Hello, you've reached Monique. Please sign my petition to bring back bartering to support the arts. It can be found at www.martherbonique.com. Thank you. (*BEEP.*)

TUESDAY - EDUCATING MONIQUE

(Slide on backdrop reads TUESDAY: EDUCATING MONIQUE)

(Lights up on BUS STATION ATTENDANT. MONIQUE enters and bows.)

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: Welcome to Dalmatian Busing, where your travel dilemmas mean big business. How may I assist you with securing travel on the cleanest buses in the Tri-state area?

MONIQUE: I am Monique and I am in need of a bus ticket to New York City.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: Good choice. It's a popular destination. We have air conditioned coaches equipped with clean restrooms leaving for New York City every hour on the half-hour until 10:30 PM. The fare is \$125.00.

MONIQUE: Yes, well about the fare. I am prepared to barter for my ticket.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: What?

MONIQUE: I have decided to eschew money.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: Bless you.

MONIQUE: Thank you. As I no longer have a need for money, I shall barter for my first class ticket instead.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: Hmmm. Barter? Jeez, what's that?

MONIQUE: Bartering is just like money, only without the tiresome counting. So, I shall provide priceless entertainment, and you'll allow me to travel to New York.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: That seems shady, and I don't remember anything in my training about bartering, so I'd better look it up in the manual. It'll just take me a minute.

MONIQUE: Yes, while you are drawing up a receipt (and FYI, that's Monique with one q), I shall prepare to perform a scene from my award winning act entitled "The Dreary Lives of Workers-Part I". However, as this scene requires two people, you shall be my scene partner. Don't worry, yours is a supporting role. Here is your side. *(Hands him side.)*

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: *(Thumbing through manual)* Like I thought, the manual doesn't address the issue of bartering. However, it states on page one that "Dalmatian Busing accepts only cash or credit cards. No checks or money orders." So, I am afraid that bartering is out of the question. *(Notices the sides)* What the heck is this for?

MONIQUE: It's your lines for the scene. Now, take a moment to look them over so you are not stumbling over your words.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: *(Hands back the sides)* No bartering. Cash or credit cards only.

MONIQUE: *(Gives the attendant back the sides)* Now I am sure you will reconsider once you see my act. I usually wear a librarian costume for this particular scene, so you will have to use your imagination.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: Librarian outfit? *(Looks at sides)* Wait, I think I remember your act from Hugo's Girl Palace. You were so -- wow, I didn't recognize you. I don't really remember you saying much of anything. Except of course telling Johnny that you couldn't make change for a fifty. That was classic. What a lunch hour!!

MONIQUE: Hugo's Girl Palace? That does not ring a bell. Still, it is always gratifying to meet one of my fans.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: Yes, well, I didn't know you could do that with eyeglasses . . . wait a minute, is this set-up?

MONIQUE: Sir, this is your set, not mine.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: Oh, I get it. Sheila's testing me. She probably has the place bugged!

MONIQUE: Sheila?

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: Sheila, is this you? Are you taping this? Sheila!? Sheila!!!!

MONIQUE: Young man, this is not an audition for "Streetcar."

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: Sheila didn't send you?

MONIQUE: Goodness, no. I don't know a "Sheila."

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: I'm sorry. It's just that if she knew about Hugo's . . . oh boy.

MONIQUE: You know, it's a good thing you are good looking because you do not take direction well. Let's begin again.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: Right. New York bus. \$125. Cash or credit card only.

MONIQUE: (*Whispers*) That is not the opening line in the act.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: You are still talking about your act?

MONIQUE: You have the first line. I am waiting for my cue.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: Are you crazy? You can't do that act here. I'll get arrested. I'll lose my job! And Sheila would be PISSED!!

MONIQUE: Dear, sweet boy. This is not an improvisation.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: Are you sure Sheila didn't send you?

MONIQUE: Say the correct line. I await my cue!

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: Things with Sheila haven't been the same since I got this job you know. We met when I was in a band, but I quit when we got together. I don't think she thinks a bus station attendant is a very sexy job.

MONIQUE: This is a train wreck.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: I really miss singing, you know. And I miss how Sheila used to look at me when I sang our song.

MONIQUE: If your singing is anything like your acting, I can well imagine.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: What? I'm sorry. I'm a little distracted. (*Picking up side again*) Now, what is this again?

MONIQUE: This is absurd. I can't work like this. May I just have my ticket, please?

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: Sorry, lady, I can't let you board without money. Dalmatian Busing manual, page one.

MONIQUE: This is appalling.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: I didn't write the rules.

MONIQUE: Ah yes, well, I didn't think you did.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: Look, I don't know who sent you, but you really got me thinking. I'm going to sign up for open mic tonight at The Cellar and text Sheila to meet me!

MONIQUE: A delightful plan, once you issue me a ticket to New York.

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: Sorry, you seem like a nice lady, but since you ain't got no cash, I'm going to have to ask you to leave my window or I'm calling the cops. (*Hands her back the side.*) Hey, that was pretty good!! Sheila always likes it when I'm a tough guy!!

MONIQUE: (*Takes side and steps aside*) Fine. I don't wish to be interrogated by the police . . . again!

BUS STATION ATTENDANT: Yea!!! And you know what else??!!! We're closed!!! Sheila, I'm coming home early -- this is your lucky day, baby!!! I might even let you listen to me do karaoke!! (*BUS STATION ATTENDANT leaves*).

MONIQUE: New York suddenly seems as far away as my first age spot. (*Puts sides back in purse and sees PUPPET*) Well, hello there!

PUPPET: Monique, were you serious with this bartering nonsense? Your performance of a short scene is worth precisely nothing.

MONIQUE: You can hardly judge by that debacle. My partner refused to learn his lines.

PUPPET: Well, let's focus on a way for you to get bus fare that is not dependent on your having any talent. *(Beat.)* Hmm. Oh, I know -- ask your Mother. She is unable to resist your charm!

MONIQUE: Didn't you hear what Frieda said? Mother has signed some sort of cable contract and won't give me any more money.

PUPPET: I'll put in a good word for you.

MONIQUE: *(thinking)* Well . . . I don't believe YOU are a party to the contract, and I studied law for one long afternoon in preparation for my performance as "Monique at 30" in one of my biggest hits: "The Audit." . . . But since I don't have a better idea, let's go see Mother!! What ho!!

(Lights up on MOTHER, who is researching baby food for an upcoming article. Throughout the scene, SHE samples from a multitude of baby food containers and takes notes.)

MOTHER: Strained peas . . . hmm, too many peas and not enough pods. Just as I said last year. They probably think I'm above repeating myself, but I'm not.

(MONIQUE enters with PUPPET on her hand.)

Hello, sweetie. And who's your little friend?

PUPPET: That's Monique.

MOTHER: *(Laughing)* Oh, your new friend is really a riot. Did you meet him at the theatre?

MONIQUE: Mother, he is made of felt.

MOTHER: Oh, of course. I knew that, but I wasn't sure you did. Sometimes it is difficult to know when you're kidding and when you're off on one of your delightful flights of fancy. And how was your week?

MONIQUE: I have the most marvelous news to share. I am fire.

MOTHER: That is wonderful dear. What exactly does that mean?

MONIQUE: Theatre America was stifling my creativity. Besides I heard Shakespeare didn't even write his own plays. So, I quit my Shakespeare internship.

MOTHER: Well, Monique, as long as you write Mr. Shakespeare a note, thanking him for the opportunity, I'm sure he'll understand. What have you decided to do instead, honey?

MONIQUE: Mother, I have received "The Call." *(Stands.)* I am going to New York to audition for Broadway. *(Bows then sits.)*

MOTHER: I'm very proud of you, Monique. Broadway is lucky to have you. Goodness, no matter what they do to tapioca pudding, it still tastes like tapioca. Now, Monique, tell me who you spoke with about your Broadway audition! I can't wait to hear.

PUPPET: Yes, tell us!

MONIQUE: (*Searching*) Hmm . . . umm. Oh, the TKTS answering service was very positive. I feel my chances are good.

MOTHER: Dear, isn't TKTS to buy tickets for current Broadway shows?

MONIQUE: Yes, of course it is Mother. I plan on meeting the directors after the performances.

MOTHER: (*disappointed*) Oh.

MONIQUE: Honestly, Mother . . . with talent like mine an audition is hardly a necessity.

MOTHER: Dear, there are a lot of talented actresses in New York.

MONIQUE: (*hurt*) But surely I will stand out.

PUPPET: Oh, you'll stand out all right.

MONIQUE: (*hurt*) What does that mean?

MOTHER: It's just that Broadway is a big step and I don't want you to get discouraged.

MONIQUE: If Father were here, he'd encourage me instead of hurting my feelings. And I'll bet he doesn't eat mashed food. Too bad he's always on tour.

MOTHER: Not just any tour though. He's the best Liza impersonator I've ever seen.

MONIQUE: I do wish I'd known him.

MOTHER: I remember taking one look at his talent, good looks, and fashion sense and just knowing that he would be the perfect man to father my child! Of course, he was a little difficult to convince.

MONIQUE: Why was that?

MOTHER: I don't know. And that darn Cher impersonator was always hanging around. But when I set my mind on something, just watch out!! All it took was a little ingenuity . . . oh, and a few pills slipped into his drink.

MONIQUE: MOTHER!!

MOTHER: Oh, Monique, don't act so self-righteous. If I hadn't done it, you might not know all the songs from "New York, New York." I suppose performing is in your blood!!

MONIQUE: So, Mother, can you loan me \$125 to go to New York ?

MOTHER: Of course, darling, (*SHE reaches into her purse, but then stops herself*) No, Monique, no. I can't lend you any more money. I signed an anti-enabling contract with Frieda last week. She was supposed to tell you about it.

MONIQUE: Mother, Frieda was talking to a puppet. (*PUPPET nods.*)

MOTHER: Really? That is odd. But I'm sorry, Monique, I'm afraid you will have to earn your own money to pay for the bus ticket.

PUPPET: How can she possibly do that?

MOTHER: You stay out of this. Now, let's think hard. How could you earn \$125? What do people do to earn money?

MONIQUE: Eat strained artichokes?

MOTHER: Touché, honey, but I really think it might be time for a job. It breaks my heart to dampen your spirits, but after all, darling, you're 45 years old.

MONIQUE: In theory, yes. But I could never be cast as anything over 35, so I'm not sure that I should have the responsibilities of a 45 year old.

MOTHER: Well, Monique, even 35 year olds have jobs, and it won't take you very long to earn \$125.00. You know, Frieda faxed over the want ads from yesterday's paper. Perhaps you could read through them. *(Hands want ads to MONIQUE)*

MONIQUE: Mother, I am not prepared to do a cold reading right now. And I don't even know anything about the character. What is my motivation? Why am I reading the want ads?

MOTHER: Because you need a job. Why it could be fun!! We might find something that will really suit you! Why don't you just scan them and see if anything appeals to you.

MONIQUE: Very well . . . No . . . Heavens no . . . What ho! What is this? Brain surgeon for up and coming suburban hospital? Why, that's perfect! I look stunning in white and medical shows are all the rage.

MOTHER: Oh, Monique, these are not listings of roles, dear. They are actual, real-world jobs. You know, like I am a writer, and your Grandmother is in mergers and acquisitions.

MONIQUE: *(MONIQUE continues to look at the want ads.)* Hmmm . . . please . . . no . . . Ooooo, a mathematician. That could be fun.

MOTHER: I doubt it, Monique.

MONIQUE: Oh, how about this one? "Director of Personnel for Finch Studios seeks bright, dependable secretary." A casting director, how perfect!

MOTHER: Monique, I really don't think . . .

MONIQUE: Don't rain on my parade now, Mother. I'm doing what you asked, am I not? A secretary is a normal paying job if I am not mistaken. The fact that I will have the ear of the casting director for Finch Studios is just a small karmic bonus.

MOTHER: Monique, what I am trying to say is that I don't know--

MONIQUE: Chatter, chatter, Mama-dearest. I must go select my costume for the audition.

MOTHER: Interview, Monique. Not audition.

MONIQUE: Yes, of course. Details are always important. I must go select my costume for the "interview."

MOTHER: I will pack up some shredded mango for you. It's really quite stellar this year. Good lu-- *(Hands mango to PUPPET.)*

MONIQUE: AAAAAHHHHHHH!

MOTHER: I'm sorry. I mean, break a leg, Monique.

MONIQUE: I shall try. What ho! *(MONIQUE exits.)*

(Lights fade on MOTHER. SHE exits. Telephone rings and we hear MONIQUE's voice mail:)

MONIQUE: (VOICEMAIL) Hello, this is Monique. (As PUPPET:) and a puppet! (As MONIQUE) Please leave all ventriloquism offers after the beep. (BEEP)

WEDNESDAY - HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITH MONIQUE

(Slide on backdrop reads WEDNESDAY: HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITH MONIQUE)

(Lights up on FINCH's office. FINCH is sitting at a desk, next to him is the EEO OFFICER who observes FINCH and makes notes in her laptop/IPAD/notepad. MONIQUE enters with a dramatic flourish.)

MONIQUE: I have arrived! It is I. (SHE bows.)

FINCH: I'm sorry. Who are you?

MONIQUE: I am a secretary, of course. Why? Do I look like an actress?

Although everybody says that I look like an actress, I am a secretary.

FINCH: Oh, you're here for the interview for the secretarial position.

MONIQUE: Yes, I am here. I am Monique.

FINCH: Well, please have a seat, Monique. My name is Roger Finch, and I am the Director of Personnel for Finch Studios.

MONIQUE: Yes, and it is an honor to meet you, Sir. I must say, you look surprisingly young to be the head of your own studio.

EEO OFFICER: Discussion of the age of applicants is strictly out of bounds, Finch.

FINCH: (To EEO OFFICER) Well, yes of course, I know *that*. (To MONIQUE) I'm actually not the head of the studio. That's Father. Also Mr. Finch, you see, so I can understand the confusion. Where were we? Oh yes, let me tell you a bit about Finch Studios. We are an agency whose mission is to help young, single people find studio apartments in urban cities.

MONIQUE: Why do you call them apartments?

FINCH: Well, that's our business. That's what we do here. And we do it better than anyone.

MONIQUE: Of course, you must call them apartments. If you called them "sets" surely this place would be overrun with sub par actresses.

FINCH: Mmmhmm. Do you have a resume?

MONIQUE: Yes, I have prepared this resume with my headshot. I mean -- with a photograph of me. (*Hands FINCH her resume.*)

FINCH: Well, we don't wear boas much around the office, but this certainly is a flattering photograph of you.

EEO OFFICER: Tread lightly, Finch.

FINCH: (*Skims resume.*) Well I must say that your resume certainly is impressive.

MONIQUE: Yes, it should be. I copied it from a book.

FINCH: A book? Oh, I get it. That's funny, right. (*Laughs.*)

EEO OFFICER: Finch.

FINCH: Okay, I have a series of 8 questions that I am required to ask each job applicant. Finch Studios is in corrective action regarding our hiring procedures, so I don't have a choice. But I'm sure you read about that fiasco in the tabloids. Honestly, how was I to know he was a Trappist monk? I simply told him robes were unacceptable business attire.

EEO OFFICER: Finch. I am right here.

FINCH: Yes, sorry. Now, where was I? Ah yes, I have to ask you all 8 questions as part of the Court Order. So, bear with me. Okay, tell me about yourself.

MONIQUE: (*Describing her costume*) I am wearing a red suit with a white blouse. My shoes match. I have my day make up on. The office light is making my complexion appear a little pale, but my sunscreen protective layer is counteracting that. (*Knowing look to FINCH*) Oh, and I adore studios. Of all kinds.

FINCH: I see. Well, that is good. (*Pause*) Let me tell you about the position. You would be my secretary, make all my appointments, answer the phones, take messages, and do correspondence. Tell me how your background prepares you for this job.

MONIQUE: It doesn't.

FINCH: It doesn't? Well, that's . . . honest. As you have no experience, Monique, why don't you tell me about your strengths?

MONIQUE: My strengths are threefold. First, I know all the words to all the songs in the Liza Minnelli songbook! In addition, I have no fear of plastic surgery. And, I include in that radial keratotomy.

FINCH: Oh, you've had that done?

MONIQUE: No, why? Is it a requirement for the job?

FINCH: No, but you said . . . Never mind. And your third strength?

MONIQUE: Yes, my third strength is very strong.

FINCH: And, it is?

MONIQUE: Exactly.

FINCH: Exactly what?

MONIQUE: Yes, I agree.

FINCH: To what?

MONIQUE: To whatever you said.

FINCH: But I didn't say anything.

MONIQUE: Then neither shall I.

FINCH: This is absurd. Obviously, this isn't going to work. Thank you for coming in today.

EEO OFFICER: Finch, finish asking ALL the questions. And sit up straight.

FINCH: But, but . . .

EEO OFFICER: ALL the questions, Finch. Or your Father will hear about it.

FINCH: Fine. Please excuse the interruptions, Monique.

MONIQUE: That is quite all right, Sir. I understand what it is like to work with agents.

EEO OFFICER: Agent? I am the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer. Stop fumbling about, Finch.

FINCH: Yes, she's here because of the whole Monk-fiasco. Really!! I think robes are a safety hazard. I was concerned about his well-being! . . .

EEO OFFICER: Finch. You're slouching again. And kindly remember the gag order.

FINCH: Yes, well, anyway, the next question is: Do you have any weaknesses?

MONIQUE: Well, I am certain that I do not. But I could, if you wanted me to have a weakness. But, I really do not.

EEO OFFICER: Excellent answer and perfect posture.

FINCH: Alright, that's it. I don't have time for this. I am a very busy man.

EEO OFFICER: Finish the interview or you'll be busy looking for a new job.

FINCH: This is ridiculous. I don't have to put up with this.

EEO OFFICER: Actually, according to your Father, you do. Unless of course, you'd like to quit!

FINCH: FINE! *(To MONIQUE)* Well, then, what is your greatest accomplishment?

MONIQUE: Well, there are so many, Sir. However, I am extremely proud that I look equally stunning in period or modern costumes.

FINCH: Well, who wouldn't be proud of that? *(Looks at EEO OFFICER, then tries to sit up straight.)* Where do you see yourself in five years?

MONIQUE: In a doctor's office, discussing liposuction, naturally.

FINCH: *(Getting pushed to the edge)* Naturally. Of course you would. This is -- *(stops himself)* . . . this is . . . so, that is to say . . .

EEO OFFICER: Finch, Finch, Finch, Finch. You are stumbling and stumbling. Again.

FINCH: *(Sits up straight)* So, what would your former supervisor say to me if I called her?

MONIQUE: She'd say: "Hello, this is Jane Smith. May I help you?"

FINCH: No, no, after that. What would she say about you?

MONIQUE: Well, she'd probably say that I have good posture. *(Wink to EEO OFFICER).*

FINCH: Really? I don't believe this. You are -- *(Looks at EEO OFFICER)* Well, we're almost done. What changes would you make if you had my job?

MONIQUE: First, I must take several deep breaths to envision myself being the head of a studio. No, that's not helping. Let me put myself into a

light trance. No, it can't be done. I am sorry. I find the thought of having your job too remote to answer that question.

FINCH: That's it. This interview is over. This is ridiculous.

EEO OFFICER: Finch. That is not your call.

FINCH: Oh, alright! So, if we offered you the job, how soon could you start?

MONIQUE: Good, question Sir. Let me consult my prop Day Timer. *(MONIQUE takes a day timer from her purse and flips through the pages.)* Okay, daily tasks . . . Well, I sleep until noon. Beauty rest is so important.

Plus, the sun is most dangerous at 9 am. Then, I must put my office make up on, eat a half grapefruit, drink a 12 ounce protein shake, do one half hour of yoga, then purge. So, I could start at about 4.

FINCH: That's 8!! *(To MONIQUE)* Thank you for coming in Monique. You will be hearing from me shortly as I shall make my decision in a couple of hours. However, I have quite a few other people to see, so I would suggest looking beyond Finch Studios.

MONIQUE: There is no need for that.

FINCH: I believe there is.

MONIQUE: I see. *(Beat while SHE processes and then:)* What ho, sir! How perfect!! It is heartening that you understand that Finch Studios will be a mere pit stop on my way to fame and fortune. *(SHE stands and bows to FINCH and EEO OFFICER.)*

FINCH: Yes, well. Goodbye, then. *(Glares at EEO OFFICER, then stands and ushers MONIQUE out the door.)*

MONIQUE: Goodbye Sir. No applause necessary. *(MONIQUE leaves)*

FINCH: So what was that? Some sort of test? Did my Father put you up to this? Or was it that little weasel McKenzie?

EEO OFFICER: I don't know what you're talking about. I liked her. Latte one sugar. What are you waiting for?

(Lights fade on FINCH's office and FINCH and EEO OFFICER exit. Telephone rings and we hear MONIQUE's voice mail:)

MONIQUE: *(VOICEOVER)* Hello, this is Monique. Please leave all job offers from Finch Studios, after the beep. In addition, please describe all benefits and note if puppet beneficiaries are covered. Thank you.

(Slide on backdrop reads LATER WEDNESDAY NIGHT)

(Lights up on MONIQUE. SHE is preparing for bed.)

MONIQUE: Well, Mr. Finch has not yet called, but I am quite certain he will expect me bright and early in the morning. To properly prepare, I must

get a full 14 hours of sleep. And so, to sleep!!! I'll just relax by taking a few moments to visualize myself excelling at Fincheriffic Studios . . . ah, Fincheriffic!! That's a much better name than Finch Studios. I must remember to order new stationary. (*SHE closes her eyes. Beat*) How can I not be asleep yet? Usually I pass out at a moment's notice. What to do? Counting sheep is smelly. Well, perhaps I could count Emmy's. Yes, 1 . . . 2 . . . I think I am getting sleepy . . . 3 . . . 3 ½ (that one's just for supporting actress) . . . 4 . . . Oh for heaven's sake, it's simply not working. I think I must resort to the old stand-by. Something that never fails! A trip to the restroom, a snack, and a blackout!!!

(Blackout.)

Do Not Copy

INTERMISSION

WEDNESDAY - CONTINUED

(Slide on backdrop reads EVEN LATER WEDNESDAY NIGHT)

(We are now in MONIQUE's dream. The theme song for MONIQUE's WEEK plays, and the various slides shown earlier of MONIQUE are shown. The actual interview can be done live or pretaped, whichever is easier.)

MONIQUE: *(VOICE OVER, singing Theme Song)*

Everything is falling into place
I'm putting my make-up on my face
I don't look a day over thirty-five
Oh, it's so good to be alive
I'm Monique
Here's my week
I'm so chic

There's a leek
I'm Monique
It's Monique's Week!!!!!!

PUPPET: (*ACTOR dressed as PUPPET, wearing a "toupee" of yarn and sunglasses*) Thank you, thank you! And now, let's give it up for that lady with the youthful glow and the botoxed brow, it's . . . MONIQUE!!!

(We hear thunderous applause.)

MONIQUE: Thank you so much. Thank you, Ed.

PUPPET: (*Ed McMahonish*) What ho-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-!!!

MONIQUE: What ho indeed! We've got a great show planned for you today!

(We hear thunderous applause.)

(speaking over the applause) And none of those tacky car giveaways here. We don't need to bribe our audience!!!

(The applause stops.)

Uh, and how are you tonight, Ed?

PUPPET: No complaints, Monique, baby.

MONIQUE: Excellent to hear, Ed. Although you might want to check into the settings on your tanning bed. You are looking a bit orange.

(SHE holds for audience response. There is none.)

PUPPET: I'm made of felt, Monique. Orange felt.

(We hear hoots of approval from the audience.)

MONIQUE: Hmm, so you are Ed. Orange you funny!??? (*MONIQUE holds, expecting a laugh, which SHE doesn't get.*) Never mind, Ed. Uh, so, anyway, why don't you introduce our first guest?

PUPPET: My pleasure. Today we have only one guest, but he is a very special one indeed. He's performing tonight in the Cabaret Revue, it's Monique's father.

(Lights dim. Spotlight comes up on MONIQUE's FATHER (dressed in drag as Liza Minnelli.) HE does an opening number.)

MONIQUE'S FATHER: *(from Cabaret)*

What good is sitting alone in a drawer?
Waiting for divas like her.
Life is a Cabaret, dear Ed--
Come to the cabaret.....

(From New York, New York)

These puppet blues are melting away
Thanks for the great new gig here in old New York
If I can earn my pay or get paid anyway
Thank God for Ed, New York, New York.....

(from Bye Bye Blackbird)

Pack up all my wigs and hose
Here I go to another drag show,
Bye bye Monique.

I'm just like Liza, so they've said
Sugar's sweet, so is Ed
Monique . . . Bye, bye. *(Ends with Fosse Jazz Hands)*

(The audience goes wild.)

MONIQUE: Alright audience, let's not overdo it. Father, I haven't seen you in . . . well, ever.

MONIQUE'S FATHER: Please, honey, call me Liza while I'm in costume. I love the set. Thanks for inviting me, Ed.

PUPPET: Well, you promised if I didn't mention your number in *Sex and the City 2* you would tell Monique all about how proud you are of her.

MONIQUE: Oh yes, Liza, please tell the audience about all my talent.

MONIQUE'S FATHER: Sure, sure honey, be glad to. You are the apple of my eye. The cream of the crop. I am so proud of you for being a huge star and a wonderful actress.

MONIQUE: Oh, Liza stop. You're making me blush.

MONIQUE'S FATHER: And congratulations on your Oscar!

MONIQUE: Oh, Papa, I haven't won that yet!!

MONIQUE'S FATHER: Stop being so modest. You were brilliant in *Precious!* Stunning! Your Grandmother would have been so proud! Actually, she would have been jealous. She thought she was a shoo-in for *A Star is Born*.

PUPPET: Uh, Liza. This isn't THAT Monique. It's your daughter, Monique.

MONIQUE'S FATHER: I see. I wondered why you didn't look familiar.

MONIQUE: (*singing*) Papa, can you hear me?

MONIQUE'S FATHER: (*singing*) What good is sitting, alone in your room?

MONIQUE: (*singing from Oliver*) Where is love?

MONIQUE'S FATHER: (*Singing from All That Jazz*) C'mon Ed, why don't we paint the town, without Monique....?

MONIQUE: (*from Fiddler on the Roof*) Is this the little girl I carried?

MONIQUE'S FATHER: (*Singing*) Maybe this time, I'll be lucky

ED: (*singing joining in*) Maybe this time, he'll care!

(*Audience claps and roars.*)

MONIQUE'S FATHER: And that my dear is the best feeling in the world.

MONIQUE: Finally meeting and hearing your daughter sing?

MONIQUE'S FATHER: The love of audience, dear. They love me! Thank you everyone!

MONIQUE: Oh, Liza, now that you're here, we can really get to know one another!!

MONIQUE'S FATHER: Sorry, sugar I really gotta go. If that Cher finds out I'm here, I'll never hear the end of it. Remember sweetheart, you're a star!! Always leave 'em wanting more! Bye honey! Bye Ed! (*Exits.*)

MONIQUE: Bye Liza! Isn't it wonderful? Liza Minnelli said I'm a star.

PUPPET: Yeah, well . . .

MONIQUE: I mean, I knew I had talent, but now I know that I really am a star and a celebrity. I'm sure the audience wants to hear about my childhood as the daughter of a famous movie star.

PUPPET: Here's the thing with that, though, A) that was your Father, not Liza Minelli and 2) you spent your childhood watching sitcoms and movies on television. Alone. Not exactly interesting.

(*Audience: "Oooooooh."*)

MONIQUE: You heard what Liza said.

PUPPET: Monique . . . he was just being kind.

MONIQUE: What about those You Tube videos I did? We got hundreds of hits!!! That has to mean something.

PUPPET: Actually, it doesn't. That hippo who lives in a house has millions of hits!!

MONIQUE: (*Desperately searching for something, anything*) Well . . . what about Mother? She's reviewed everything I've ever done -- and the reviews have been glowing. Incendiary, I tell you!

PUPPET: True, but your mother also thought you'd make a wonderful chef when you got hooked on the Food Network. She even loved your idea

for a show called, "Recipes for a Busy Anorexic." I think she might be biased.

MONIQUE: Impossible.

PUPPET: She's your mother. She can't be objective.

MONIQUE: That's absurd. She's a journalist.

PUPPET: (*Sighs.*) Although, the recipes weren't bad -- tasty, if not exactly filling.

MONIQUE: Thanks for the bone, Ed. Don't tax yourself.

PUPPET: What Ho-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-!!

(Thunderous audience applause and laughter.)

PUPPET: Monique, I'm just trying to get you to accept reality. I'm being honest with you.

MONIQUE: Ed, this is ridiculous. You're a sock puppet. Why in heaven's name should I listen to you? I'm a star! A star!! A star!!!!

(Audience chants ED! ED! ED!!)

PUPPET: 'Nique, baby, at the risk of being stuffed back into a drawer, I want you to realize that you are not really a star. (*Beat.*) Or talented. (*Beat.*) Or an actress.

(Thunderous audience applause.)

MONIQUE: I can't . . . wait. This is . . . I need to talk to our producer. NOW. Sydney!!!! We need you on set. RIGHT NOW!!

(FEMALE PUPPET enters wearing headset and carrying clipboard. SHE might be dressed in the identical costume PUPPET wears).

FEMALE PUPPET: Monique, you're on live television. Plus, I don't take orders from you. Please try to be professional.

MONIQUE: Wait?! Who are . . .? Where's Sydney?

FEMALE PUPPET: They outsourced her position. We puppets work much cheaper. And better. Hey Ed!

PUPPET: What hooo!

FEMALE PUPPET: Love that catch phrase! The t-shirts and shot glasses are on the way!

MONIQUE: But that's . . .

FEMALE PUPPET: Get with it, Monique. You're on thin ice. Ed's Q-rating is nearly twice yours. And he works for peanuts -- and a new sachet every six months.

MONIQUE: That's . . . that's . . . just . . . silly! This is MY show! The audience loves me!!!

(Audience chants ED! ED! ED! and FEMALE PUPPET joins in.)

FEMALE PUPPET: I think you've got your answer Monique. If you two can't work it out, looks like you'll be out on the street. Ed, cutie, when you finish up here, I'll be in my office.

PUPPET: What hooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo!

(FEMALE PUPPET leaves.)

MONIQUE: *(Beat)* I am utterly stunned. I had no idea. *(To the audience.)* How long have you all known that I . . . how long have you felt this way?

PUPPET: Nique baby, don't let it get you down. There's lots of untalented people who have careers in entertainment for no good reason. Now if you don't mind, I think I'll slip out of here. I've got a new career to discuss with management . . . and potentially a date!

MONIQUE: Wait, Ed! Wait!!

PUPPET: What is it, Monique? You need me, don't you?

MONIQUE: Well.

PUPPET: Think about it, Monique. Who was it who helped you talk to your Grandmother during therapy? Hmmmm? Who aided you in requesting money from your mother? Who holds the audience in the palm of his hand?

(Audience chants "Ed! Ed! Ed! Ed!!")

MONIQUE: Well.

PUPPET: Yes?

MONIQUE: Give me a second. These are not easy questions.

PUPPET: I'm happy to leave . . .

MONIQUE: I . . . well . . . *(Giving in)* OK fine. It was you. OK? You did all that! Not me!!

PUPPET: And?

MONIQUE: Stay.

PUPPET: Say please.

MONIQUE: Please.

PUPPET: Say I complete you.

MONIQUE: Ed. Fine. You complete me.

PUPPET: I'll think about it. My people will be in touch.

MONIQUE: Yes, well . . . good enough, I guess. Ummm, anyway, we're almost out of time. If I hold off one more second, we'll miss part of the closing credits. We certainly can't let that happen. They are so popular with the audience. *(To camera, waving)* What Ho, everybody!

(The credits roll (or appear as slides) while the end theme is sung.)

ED: *(VOICE OVER singing theme song)*

My felt is pristinely bright
And I can always find my light
My wit is beyond the pale
And I get chicks' numbers without fail
I'm Ed
That's my shed
I'm so well fed.
There's a bed!
I'm Ed!
This was Ed's Homestead!

STARRING	ED
WRITTEN BY	ED
DIRECTED BY	ED
BASED ON AN IDEA BY	ED
PRODUCED BY	ED
MAKEUP ARTIST	ED
WARDROBE COMPLIMENTS OF	ED
ED PERFORMS COURTESY OF	ED
ACTING INTERN	MONIQUE

(Lights go to black and we hear MONIQUE screaming. Lights up. MONIQUE is still in bed.)

MONIQUE: AAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH! Help!! Help!! Huh? Oh, of course. Why yes, a dream. Why didn't I see it at the time? My, they say that dreams are a window to the soul -- if that is so, I had better invest in some blackout blinds at once. Monique, pull yourself together!

(Looks through her purse and pulls out the puppet.)

(tentatively) What ho?

PUPPET: What ho!

MONIQUE: You're not going to talk anymore about my past are you?

PUPPET: What?

MONIQUE: You don't remember?

PUPPET: Sorry Monique, but morning is not your best time.

MONIQUE: Well, never mind then. It's time to conquer Fincheriffic Studios!

PUPPET: Break a leg, Monique.

MONIQUE: If not two, Ed. If not two. *(MONIQUE starts to leave)*

PUPPET: You might not want to wear your robe to the office. Mr. Finch doesn't like robes.

MONIQUE: Yes, well, when you're right, I suppose you are partially correct.

(MONIQUE stuffs PUPPET back in purse and exits. Lights fade to black.)

THURSDAY - GLENGARRY, GLEN MONIQUE

(Slide on backdrop reads THURSDAY: GLENGARRY, GLEN MONIQUE)

MONIQUE: *(VOICEOVER)* Hello, this is Monique, new executive assistant for Fincheriffic Studios. If you are Mr. Finch, press 1. If you are anyone else, I may be reached at Fincheriffic Studios, where our new motto is, "We Don't Take No for an Answer."

MOTHER: *(VOICEOVER)* Monique!!! A job so quickly. How thrilling!!! Your Grandmother is going to be beside herself! Please pencil me in for lunch today -- I'm sure your boss won't mind -- it is your first day!! Congratulations, sweetie!

(Phone ringing)

MONIQUE: *(VOICEOVER)* Hello, this is Monique, new executive assistant for Fincheriffic Studios. If you are Mr. Finch, press 1. If you are anyone else, I may be reached at Fincheriffic Studios, where our new motto is, "We Don't Take No for an Answer."

(Sound of FINCH pressing number one.)

FINCH: (VOICEOVER) Monique, uh, this is Mr. Finch, from Fincher -- that is to say, Mr. Finch, from Finch Studios. I wanted to thank you for taking the time to interview with us, but unfortunately...

(Sound of door opening and footsteps.)

MONIQUE: (VOICEOVER) It is I. I am here.

FINCH: (VOICEOVER) Oh, uh Monique, I was just leaving you a voice mail.

(Lights up on FINCH's office where scene continues.)

MONIQUE: Well, now you can tell me in person.

FINCH: Yes. Monique, I am unable to offer you the position at this moment.

MONIQUE: Of course, you are.

FINCH: No, I am not.

MONIQUE: That is why you hired me.

FINCH: I did not hire you.

MONIQUE: You did.

FINCH: Did not.

MONIQUE: But, you should.

FINCH: No.

MONIQUE: You are certain?

FINCH: Positive.

MONIQUE: Sir, I am stunned.

FINCH: I'm sorry.

MONIQUE: I am disheartened.

FINCH: Honestly.

MONIQUE: I am appalled.

FINCH: Really.

MONIQUE: You leave me no choice. I will have to hire me for you.

FINCH: You can't do that.

MONIQUE: Sir, you are forgetting that at Fincherrific even the impossible is possible.

FINCH: Well, I don't disagree, but honestly.

MONIQUE: You can thank me later. We don't take no for an answer.

FINCH: Absolutely not. You are not Finch material.

MONIQUE: But I am Fincherrific material and I look forward to taking Fincherrific Studios from the fringe theatre to one of the top studios in New York.

FINCH: Actually, we don't have a branch in New York. But our Board of Directors has been pushing us to open a New York office before the end of the fiscal year.

MONIQUE: I have a lot of experience with bored directors, Sir.

FINCH: What? Frankly, I can't understand why you would even want this position. It doesn't seem like something you'd be interested in.

MONIQUE: Does it pay? In money, I mean.

FINCH: Well, of course.

MONIQUE: Than it is precisely what I am interested in. I need \$125.00 as quickly as possible.

FINCH: I see.

MONIQUE: Do you?

FINCH: Not really.

MONIQUE: Mother said not to tell you, but let's just say that once I earn \$125, I'm going to Broadway.

FINCH: Yes, well, you won't get paid for three weeks. If you were hired. Monique, I'm sorry, I have quite a bit of work to do. Could you please leave?

MONIQUE: Certainly not, the sun is most dangerous at this hour.

FINCH: Well, there's no sun in the lobby. Perhaps you could wait there.

MONIQUE: Fine. (*looks in purse and sees PUPPET and nods.*) Yes, well, then I'm sure you won't mind if I use the lobby phone to discuss the seminal sexual discrimination suit of Monique vs. Finch Studios with my lawyer.

FINCH: Lawyer? Oh, no. No, no, no. Um, perhaps I've been hasty. Look, why don't you just sit here at the secretary's desk and answer the telephone, and we'll give you a little tryout. I'll be in my office preparing my reports if you have any questions. And I'm NOT hiring you. This is just a temporary thing until I talk to Daddy, uh, Father, uh, the CEO. Right.

(*FINCH exits to his office space. Lights dim on FINCH's office space and up on MONIQUE's desk.*)

MONIQUE: Very well, Sir. (*SHE walks to her chair and sits.*) No, that blocking did not feel right at all. I did not follow my impulse. (*SHE stands and walks back, then turns around.*) My walk should convey confidence and a positive attitude. (*Walks and sits in chair, poses.*) Goodness, now I was telegraphing to the back row! That will never do for New York directors. (*Rises and walks back again and turns around.*) Now, I am confident and positive but layered underneath that is my trepidation about moving to New York.

(*Telephone rings.*)

Excellent, a chance for me to practice my vocal work. (*MONIQUE does some neck rolls while phone keeps ringing and then answers in a bad Cockney accent.*) Hello. It's Fincheriffic Studios, where we don't take no for an answer. Hello? Hello? (*In her regular voice*) It must have been a wrong number.

(*Telephone rings again.*)

(*Answers in a bad Italian accent.*) Hello. It's Fincheriffico Studios where we don't take no for an answer. Si, Signor Finch is in. Si, Si, Si, Si. Fincheriffico Studios will be 'numero uno' in New York. (*SHE places the telephone back on the receiver and speaks in her regular voice.*) What ho! I am fabulous at this.

(*Telephone rings.*)

Goodness, does this phone ring all day long? No wonder people hate their jobs. I could use a break. (*Answers in a bad Steel Magnolias accent.*) Hi y'all. It's Fincherrific Studios where we don't take no for an answer . . . Why, yes sir, I'm in charge of every little thing here at the moment. And let me say that I'm very much in the moment . . . No, we are busy planning our wardrobe for our trip to New York . . . I think plaid is making a comeback. I couldn't agree more . . . I know . . . Yes, I will tell Mr. Finch that you called. Why thank you. (*Hangs up.*)

(*MONIQUE stands, walks toward MR. FINCH's office, and knocks. Lights fade on MONIQUE's space and up on FINCH's space.*)

FINCH: Come in.

(*MONIQUE enters, twirls, and bows.*)

Oh, hello Monique.

MONIQUE: Sir, a person called and asked to speak to you. He sounded like he was in a hurry. (*SHE turns to exit.*)

FINCH: Monique, well who was it? Why didn't you transfer him to me? Is he still on the line?

MONIQUE: Oh heavens no, he hung up several minutes ago.

FINCH: He hung up? Well, who was it? Did he leave his phone number?

MR. MCKENZIE: (VOICEOVER) FINCH!

MONIQUE: That sounds exactly like his voice. Central Casting couldn't have picked anyone better.

FINCH: What?

MONIQUE: The man in a hurry who called you (*points to intercom.*)

MR. MCKENZIE: (VOICEOVER) FINCH!

MONIQUE: He was much nicer to me.

MR. MCKENZIE: (VOICEOVER) Finch! Finch!

FINCH: That is Mr. McKenzie -- the company attorney. All of his calls MUST go through to me immediately or else -- (*into intercom*) Finch here.

MR. MCKENZIE: (VOICE OVER) It's about time. I need to talk to you right away. I'll be right down.

FINCH: (*Into intercom*) Right. (*To MONIQUE*) Monique, (*hands her a pile of papers from his desk*) why don't you alphabetize these reports while you are answering the phone. Thank you. And when Mr. McKenzie arrives, send him RIGHT in.

MONIQUE: Absolutely. I'll send him right in. And I'll take these, Sir, because at Fincherrific Studios, we don't take no for an answer!

FINCH: And stop saying that!

(*MONIQUE returns to her desk, as lights fade on FINCH. MR. MCKENZIE enters.*)

MONIQUE: Hello, sir, welcome to Fincherrific Studios, where our motto is, Line!

MR. MCKENZIE: What kind of motto is that? I liked the other one better.

MONIQUE: No, I'm sure that's not it.

MR. MCKENZIE: Well, we can discuss. I am thrilled with all the new ideas permeating the building today! Thrilled!

(*Strides into FINCH's office as lights go down on MONIQUE, up on FINCH.*)

MR. MCKENZIE: Finch, your father called me this morning.

FINCH: Father? I didn't know that he -- Oh, no.

MR. MCKENZIE: Yes, he told me he spoke to an Italian woman with an unusually bad Cockney accent.

FINCH: What?

MR. MCKENZIE: I spoke to her as well. She's just as pleasant in person, although apparently I was disturbing her brainstorming session at her desk.

FINCH: Yes -- well I haven't hired her yet --

MR. MCKENZIE: Brilliant move, Finch. She's bright, delightful, and full of great ideas. I completely disagree with her on the whole plaid issue, but she's got guts -- I tell you guts.

FINCH: Plaid?

MR. MCKENZIE: Her attitude is what we need to take Fincheriffic Studios from the fringe into the upper stratospheres.

FINCH: It's actually Finch studios.

(Cell phone ringing.)

Excuse me. *(Looks at phone.)* I have to take this. *(Into phone)* Hello father . . . yes, I agree . . . I see . . . yes, yes, of course, whatever you say . . . what? Oh, no he's right here. *(To MR. MCKENZIE)* Father wants to talk to you.

MR. MCKENZIE: *(Takes phone from FINCH and whispers)* Hey there big guy! . . . I know, I missed you too! . . . I hear The Full Monty is selling out. Do you think you can get the tickets? . . . Oh, I know, you can do anything . . . Okay, bye . . . Not now, I can't . . . I can't . . . *(In a lower whisper)* Me too. *(In louder voice)* Right, then -- Finch and I will be right there. *(Hands phone to FINCH.)* Your father wants to see me -- us -- right away. He is so excited about your New York idea that he has called an Emergency Board meeting tomorrow to discuss the official opening of our New York office.

FINCH: Well, it wasn't exactly my . . .

MR. MCKENZIE: He thinks -- and I quite agree -- that hiring that woman was the best move you ever made. And, we both LOVE the new company slogan. Where did you come up with that one? It's brilliant. At Fincherrific Studios, we don't take no for an answer!!! Brilliant. I am filing for trademark protection as we speak.

FINCH: Yes, only that wasn't my --

MR. MCKENZIE: Stop fumbling around. Your father wants to speak to us immediately so that we can plan the itinerary for the New York meeting. And I won't take no for an answer.

FINCH: Yes, sir, I'll meet you up there in five minutes. *(MR. MCKENZIE exits FINCH's office.)*

(Lights fade on FINCH's desk and up on MONIQUE's desk.)

MR. MCKENZIE: *(To MONIQUE)* And I'll expect you at the meeting as well. Keep up the excellent work. *(HE exits.)*

MONIQUE: What ho! My first big corporate part.

(FINCH crosses to MONIQUE's space.)

FINCH: Monique, the most marvelous thing has happened. I have been waiting for years to show Father that I am ready to take over the company, and now it looks like it might actually be happening! And it's all thanks to . . . well, that is to say . . . Monique, I am going to be in an important meeting. If anyone calls, please take a message for me.

MONIQUE: Oh, but Sir, I am going as well.

FINCH: No, Monique. You need to stay here and answer the phone.

MONIQUE: At Fincheriffic Studios, we don't take no for an answer.

FINCH: Monique, this meeting with father is about MY future. It's very important to me. I can't have you taking credit for your ideas . . . or well, being there.

MONIQUE: I received a call-back also.

FINCH: Look, Monique. Umm . . . I want to give you a bonus, yes a bonus, for your excellent work so far. Here's . . . well . . . \$125.

MONIQUE: This is most delightful, Sir. You realize, of course, that I won't be here when you come back.

FINCH: (*Leaving*) Fine. Fine.

MONIQUE: I will never forget you, Sir. We've been through so much. But, before you go --

FINCH: Yes, what is it?

MONIQUE: I must share my secret to success with you.

FINCH: I really don't think you're in any position to be offering me advice.

MONIQUE: (*waving money*) I did get exactly what I came for, didn't I? Don't you want to know the secret?

FINCH: Don't waste your time. I've already made vision boards and chanted and the only thing I've ever manifested was a nasty rash.

MONIQUE: I wouldn't mention that at your meeting, Sir. And I wasn't talking about The Secret. I was talking about My Secret.

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