

RAT BOY
The Hero of the Universe

A Comedy in One Act

By

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

This COVID play is written for five comedic actors, three men and two woman. Some play several parts. They are dressed in black until they assume a character each of which is defined by an article of clothing or prop of their choice.

RAT #1: Is a Rat. She wears no surgical mask because she is a Rat. She plays two other parts:

- 1) **CATHY:** Is early middle-aged and the bartender at Dumpster Alley Bar & Grill.
- 2) **COOKIE:** Is a patron of the Dumpster Bar & Grill.

RAT #2: Is a Rat. He wears no surgical mask unless he is being Goon.

- 1) **GOON:** Is a mobster. He is defined by a trench coat with a machine gun hidden underneath it, prescription sunglasses and an unlit cigar in his mouth. He always wears a surgical mask (with a hole in it for the cigar) because he is hiding that he is a rat until he takes it off.

ALFA: Is the owner of Dumpster Alley Bar & Grill. He is an early middle-aged male who plays one other part:

- 1) **BOUND:** Is a lawyer. Founding partner of Bound & Gagged, P.A. He is defined by a leather brief case, bow tie, top hat.

BETA: Is a horny late-middle aged male.

DEBRA: Is a female minister in her late thirties. She plays one other part:

- 1) **BAT #1:** Is a bat. She wears no surgical mask because she is a bat. She is dressed like Bat Woman and has a black cape.

SET

The Dumpster Alley Bar & Grill is a messy dive. On the upstage back wall hangs a large sign which states: NO POLITICS & NO RELIGION OR ELSE!!! YOUR BELL GETS RUNG!!! The rest of the back wall is covered with bottles of alcohol. The bar stretches the full length of upstage except for a door, upstage right, to the kitchen, bathroom and alley where there is a dumpster. Upstage left there is a door to the bar's entrance which opens onto an inner city street in a large faceless sprawling metropolis. Downstage holds several small tables with red checkered tablecloths, a candle, an ashtray and the bell, (which is like a bell used to get service at a cheap hotel), to be punched in the event of political or religious speech in violation of the bar's posted rules. Mid-stage right, hung from the ceiling is a burlap bag full of rats which occasionally moves as the rats move inside it. Beneath the burlap bag there is a bucket of feed marked "steroids."

Author's Note on Production

The crazier the better.

ACT I SCENE 1

RAT #2 is sitting at one of the little tables downstage. He is dressed like a gangster in a long coat with a gun hidden under it. He is holding his Covid mask in his right hand and eating a piece of cheese with his left. He is dejected. RAT #1 is pacing behind him. She is very angry. Both are drinking morning coffee and eating big slices of Swiss cheese. ALFA is asleep on the bar.

RAT #1

The entire God damn world has been waiting six months for you to do it and now I get this? You go back a hundred years. Go back a thousand years. Go back ten thousand years. Go back a hundred thousand years. Not one rat has ever asked to see a psychiatrist!

RAT #2

Well we've been eating out of dumpsters for the last hundred years. You don't think that might be depressing?

RAT #1

Rats aren't supposed to be picky eaters... What's the matter with you?

RAT #2

Maybe it is an eating disorder.

RAT #1

An eating disorder?

RAT #2

I'm trying to cut out gluten.

RAT #1

And next you want to be vegan?

RAT #2

Don't ask.

RAT #1

Rats don't have eating disorders! Maybe you should cut the cheese.

RAT #2

Starts laughing hysterically and slapping his knee.

I made you say it! I made you say it!

RAT #1

What's funny?... I don't get it.

RAT #2

You see that's another way we are different. I have a sense of humor.

RAT #1

Rats aren't supposed to have a sense of humor! All your father and I ever wanted to make us proud was a patriotic rodent. Put on your stupid disguise and your Covid mask and get a human to perform a revenge murder and get the body in the dumpster! That has to happen now! The entire future of the pandemic is waiting for you!

RAT #2

I'm sorry but it's not my fault.

RAT #1

A patriotic rodent would never say that! What is the matter with you? Forget the eating disorder, the sense of humor and the psychiatrist. Go deep into "your natural inner ratness!" We go way back! Way back before dumpsters, flushing toilets, and even sanitation! Your people! Our people! We go all the way back to the heroes on the front lines before the "plague" was put down over four hundred years ago!

RAT #2

I didn't want to be born into the aristocracy! I just want to live a quiet life of thoughtful contemplation!

RAT #1

No. I think it is worse than that. What happened to your patriotism? I don't want to even say it - what happened to your compassion?

(RAT #1 points to the
hanging bag.)

That should bring you to tears! Look at that bag.

(The bag moves and makes
squeaking noises.)

Do you see what they are feeding them?

RAT #2

Steroids and dumpster scraps.

RAT #1

(Sarcastic)

And what are they going to do with them? Shoot them in the
dumpster.

RAT #2

Yes they are. That's how they advertise the bar. They are
even advertising for a Game Warden.

RAT #1

Do you know what is in there? Do you understand what is in
there?

(RAT #1 points at the bag.)

RAT #2

(Beat)

The next generation?

RAT #1

"The next generation!" Say it "Hunt them in the alley!"
Have you no shame? Have you no compassion, or, or, and I
can't bring myself to say it... Is it "Stockholm
Syndrome?"

RAT #2

No! No! I am trying!

RAT #1

We are at the crossroads! Everybody is ready! The birds.
The bees. Even gold fish. Think about all those fish in
captivity in fish tanks: Chinese restaurants and at old
age homes. Trust me! They are real pissed off in those
tanks! Think about the fleas and the deer ticks - valiant
little warriors - waiting at the front lines... Waiting!
Waiting! Rumor has it the deer ticks are so pissed off
they've gone rogue! They are biting everybody!

RAT #2

It is not my fault!

RAT #1

All we ever dreamed of was our second chance to save the world... And this was it!

RAT #2

So now I am the Judas Iscariot of the rat world?

RAT #1

...And, and, and to be vindicated by one of our very own!
You, yes, you the chosen one!

RAT #2

Oh please! Not the "Chosen One."

RAT #1

Yes, chosen. Chosen to give that signal that will save the world... and perhaps the universe! But no?...

RAT #2

I can't take the pressure...

RAT #1

Do you have any idea what kind of strings I had to pull to give you this opportunity.

RAT #2

It is not my fault.

RAT #1

The world has been waiting for you - yes, you - to become the hero of the new world and I've got a kid who wants to see a psychiatrist and has an eating disorder? How can it not be your fault?

RAT #2

People are too stupid.

RAT #1

What? They rule the world!

RAT #2

They are not like rats. They are different. They don't care about the world they live in. It is perfectly okay to

be passive aggressive because they all love non-violence but they've got more guns than people. They have been at war with each other since the beginning of time. They lie to each other and themselves. They live for themselves not each other. Once they make up their mind any reason will do. Why do you think there are so many lawyers?

RAT #1

So this should be easy for you!

RAT #2

No. What makes it even more dangerous is they are relentlessly optimistic: "Have a nice day!" Why not if you can self-medicate with prescriptions, alcohol and recreational drugs? Next door they have a drive by church that absolves them of all guilt. The woman minister does nothing but drive by confessions and destination weddings at the bar. All they really live for is sin, forgiveness and sex! They are not like rats. They don't recognize global responsibility. They can't see the big picture.

RAT #1

Why do you think all this is happening? We know all that. Global warming? Polluted planet?

RAT #2

That's why the plan won't work. People are too stupid! They sneeze on each other. They cough on each other. They won't wear masks! They won't get vaccinated. They are killing each other but there is not the slightest question about justice or revenge against those who have spread it! Do you believe that? Half a million dead and nobody is to blame?

RAT #1

We all know all this! All we need to set off the planet's homo sapien rebellion and polarized infighting is one political revenge murder found in a dumpster. Your father and I found this place - the Dumpster Alley Bar & Grill - and... Yes. It even has a dumpster!

RAT #2

They are too stupid! They can't even do it here.

RAT #1

But at least here they are trying? Aren't they trying to find the person who gave some little old lady at a retirement home COVID and it killed her? They want revenge? One act of revenge in the name of justice...

RAT #2

I'm trying! But they... They can't find a guilty person!

RAT #1

Wait! They are all guilty! They are all giving it to each other!

RAT #2

They require due process of the law!

RAT #1

What's wrong with that?

RAT #2

Nothing! They will kill anybody as long as there is due process of law.

RAT #1

That works!

RAT #2

They hire a Game Warden. They pay him with beer. If you talk about politics or religion they ring the bell and the Game Warden throws you out!

RAT #1

So kill the Game Warden!

RAT #2

They would be perfectly happy to kill the Game Warden but they are politically correct so...

RAT #1

So?

RAT #2

The only thing they agree on is no cruel and unusual punishment. It has to make them feel good about themselves, but feel like justice.

RAT #1

They must "have a nice day?"

RAT #2

Yes! So they decided never to tell the Game Warden he is on trial so when they kill him it won't hurt.

RAT #1

That's ridiculous! They have religion. Why do they care?

RAT #2

So that's what I'm up against. They are humans. That's who they are. Once they make up their minds any reason will do!

RAT #1

Please! Please! Please! Just get them to kill a Game Warden as long as it appears to be revenge in the name of justice.

RAT #2

I'm trying! They acquitted the last Game Warden last night! He went screaming into the night! So now I'm trying to do it for them! I had to find - all by myself - someone who could have visited the old age home. Someone to put on trial tonight. I had to get that someone to come here. How was I going to do that? I'll tell you! You think I'm not trying? I went deep. I had to write and send - as if it came from Cathy, the bartender - a job invitation for the new Game Warden position and - email porn...

RAT #1

Email porn?

RAT #2

The guy emailed me back emoji kisses! So I emailed him back that he got the job. I've been working on this all morning and a lot of last night.

RAT #1

Email porn?

RAT #2

...And the secret is the more he confesses to Cathy that he is a COVID spreader the better the sex gets!

RAT #1

Jesus Christ!

(RAT #2 rings the bell on
the table.)

RAT #2

You can't do that in here.

(Points at the sign on the
back wall.)

You can't say that in here!

RAT #1

Email porn? The more he confesses...? That won't work!

RAT #2

Well then it's the bats' fault! We can't be blamed. It's
the bats' fault! The bats can't understand that if humans
are too stupid to seek justice for causing global warming
or ocean polluting they sure won't care about justice for
who spread a pandemic that is killing them! We are not to
blame!

RAT #1

(Dejected)

Wrong! We didn't finish them off with the black plague.
Admit it. The bats are smart! They figured out humans
don't rely on science. They rely on gossip, and conspiracy
theories or whatever they want to believe.

RAT #2

What if it came from a lab...?

RAT #1

Who the hell cares? The bats are right. If the internet
or the news feeds report just one political COVID revenge
murder, it will catch on like wildfire - riots- revenge!
Human versus human! This pandemic will finally have a
chance! The pandemic will go "viral"...

RAT #2

(Starts laughing and
slapping his knee.)

You see you do have a sense of humor...

RAT #1

(Stone-faced.)

...What's funny? I don't get it.

RAT #2

...Oh My God you don't.

(He rings the bell on
himself.)

RAT #1

It can't wait! You've got to get this done tonight! You understand? Because I'm getting big outside pressure - from Wuhan! Trust me! Do you know the strings I pulled? You got to...

There is a knock on the front door
stage left. RAT #1 and RAT #2
freeze.

RAT #2

They open at noon. We've got to get out of here now! Come on!

RAT #1

I need a revenge murder in the dumpster! Then you have to call it into the cops and the press and that will start it - all the animals of the world united in the destruction of all humans and the humans killing each other and you will be a hero and we all will be free of them! Nothing will save them... You got that?!

There is another knock on the
door.

RAT #2

(RAT #1 and RAT #2 exit out
the side door stage right,
to the alley.)

...Except they may be too stupid! I'm trying!

ALFA

(Wakes up)

We're not open yet!

BETA

Entering with a bouquet of flowers
and wearing a surgical mask. He
takes it off and looks around.

Yeah! Hi there big fella - Is this where Cathy works? I'm
horny and in love! I'm the new Game Warden. Mr. Covid
right here! And I'm so guilty! This is kinky baby! I'm
loving it! I'm perfect for this job. I used to be a dog
trainer at PetSmart.

(Beat)

Sorry - you require a mask?

ALFA gets off the bar and hides
the pillow and alarm clock and
half pays attention as he sets up
the bar.

ALFA

Wait. What's this thing about Cathy? She's sort of... my
girlfriend...

BETA

(Takes a seat at the bar.)

Yeah! Loving it! Yeah baby! I'll bet she is! Game
Warden! Do I get a uniform or just a badge on my G-string?
Whoa! Excuse me.. I get - flashbacks and

(Looking around to see if
the room is closing in
around him.)

wicked claustrophobic after my deer tick bite.

ALFA

Tick bite?

BETA

I got swarmed. It was a tick attack.

ALFA

Did you have to "give a dog a bone?" What's the matter
with you?

BETA

Yeah. I was delivering this poodle to this old age home. I
got this major flashback. They put me in a wheelchair and
rolled me up to look at a fish tank. You believe that?

ALFA

If you went to the Emergency Room at PetSmart.

BETA

...I think it was Cathy who took me to this little room for Covid testing and I looked around and said "This room's too small. I'm getting claustrophobic." So they took me to a big room next to the elevator with a fish tank...

ALFA

Really? Sounds like you got rushed to the receptionist.

BETA

...Yeah! I was watching the bubbles raising. The fish started staring at me. I got paranoid. They were conspiring against me... It was almost like nature was attacking me! I had to get out of there!

ALFA

So you like Cathy?... Maybe I'll get a fish tank. To them, maybe, you look like one of those people who likes Sushi.

BETA

...I lost it. I flipped the wheelchair and ran like hell!

ALFA

Maybe I'll fill that tank with real aggressive goldfish... with real big eyes.

BETA

You'd do that for me?

ALFA

No. We self-medicate here. I got an idea. You order a beer and I'll serve you. And if it makes you feel better you can call me doctor.

BETA

Yeah. Draft and a shot. Where is Cathy? I'm going to move in around the corner. I'm in love! How much? I'm going to be a regular.

ALFA

No discount. We need another paranoid claustrophobic. Buck seventy-five. What's this thing about Cathy?

She told you to come over here? ...On the other hand if you're her Game Warden maybe I'll just run a tab.

BETA

The door was open.

ALFA

We had another crazy night last night.

BETA

Politics? You had looters? Is that why you are sleeping on the bar?

ALFA

No. Worse! Next door I got a church of "feel good - credit card Christians."

BETA

Why you scared of "credit card Christians?"

ALFA

I'm normal.

BETA

I thought they weren't supposed to drink.

ALFA

One of them is a lady minister. She figures none of the congregation will find her here and if one does she just jumps up and yells, "Gotcha!"

BETA

Haven't they been quarantined for months...?

ALFA

Not here. We believe it violates their Constitutional rights.

BETA

The right to drink?

ALFA

Both "In God we trust" and the Twenty First Amendment!

BETA

What's to worry about if you got money, God and the Constitution?

ALFA

Exactly. Quarantine made it better!

BETA

How?

ALFA

Big tippers... Act of God.

BETA

What's the tip on a Virgin Mary?

ALFA

No Virgin Marys. Double vodka with a twist. No olives. No onions. The congregation could smell olives or onions. Twenty-five dollar tip for each round.

BETA

Each round? If the church is closed where do they get the money?

ALFA

Confession! Confession is big money. This is America!

BETA

The churches are all closed.

ALFA

Drive-by. If its real bad you can text. They take your credit card when you join.

BETA

That makes me feel better. No one should live with guilt.

ALFA

The lady minister says she can't do more than three back-to-back confessions. She is a specialist.

BETA

All you need is a lunch menu.

ALFA

Double stolichnaya and my tuna salad, chips and sweet pickle. "The Born Again" It'll pick you up and set you straight.

BETA

Wow! Perfect! You got it all! A light lunch, put on your mask and drop your pants. Where is Cathy?

CATHY

(CATHY enters from the street and takes off her mask.)

We got nobody.

ALFA

(To CATHY - pointing at BETA)

Yes you do! And he is apparently confessing.

(Introduces BETA to CATHY)

Oh sorry this is....

Looks over at BETA to get his name but BETA waves off the chance to give his name.

BETA

I'm so horny!

ALFA

(To CATHY)

...This is a nameless paranoid claustrophobic who claims to be new to the neighborhood... Or maybe it's just Mr. Horny?

(Introducing CATHY to BETA.)

Cathy is our part-time barkeeper. She has been renting the place for her hunting season. She keeps us busy.

BETA

(To Cathy)

I know. I get it. I recognize you from when you took your mask off that time I came to visit the retirement home. I love your lips.

ALFA

(to BETA)

You single?

BETA

I'm Mr. Horny! Looking to get married. Move into the neighborhood and have a few kids.

ALFA

(To CATHY)

Is this our man?

CATHY

(To ALFA)

Wow! Yeah! A walk in from the retirement home. It's a miracle! Life is good! Put out the sign. Opening Day: "Dumpster Alley Hunting Season:" COVID Justice! COVID Revenge! Kill a rat!

(To BETA)

Free one day hunting license and after your third Singapore Sling, a sling shot. Pellet gun after six, your own personal hand gun after dark.

(To ALFA)

Wheel the dummy out there and put him in the combat fatigues. We've got a live one.

(Looking over at BETA.)

ALFA

Great!

(To CATHY)

Done! I'll call the lawyer. He's running a tab. The paranoid claustrophobic is our new Game Warden?

CATHY

(To ALFA)

Tonight we'll get it right. We got one. It's a confession.

BETA

Oh yeah.

(He gets on one knee.)

I'm confessing my love to you baby! And I'm so infected!

(Hands her the flowers.)

CATHY

Whatever works for you Mr. Horny.

ALFA

(To CATHY)

Okay I'm putting the sign out. Show him where the fatigues and pistols are.

(Exits to put up the sign.)

BETA

(Referring to ALFA)

Is he your boyfriend?

CATHY

In his dreams.

BETA

Alcohol, guns and porn? Kinky! Mr. COVID - I don't wear no mask and I cough on people and never been vaccinated and I blow my nose on my sleeve and I love door knobs! I'm ready! So what is this Game Warden thing? Oh, I think I've got it... What kinda underwear you got on?

CATHY

How about a chastity belt with a padlock. You need another beer? He's just my landlord. You confessed?

BETA

Very cool! A padlock. ...Sure. And a shot. ...Honeycakes.

CATHY

You are perfect for the job. The dumpster is brimming and waiting for you!

(Puts a fresh beer and a shot in front of him.)

Put on your uniform.

Reaches under the bar and hands him Game Warden hat.

Put it on. You are our Game Warden !

BETA

When was the last time you had an opening day?

CATHY

Yesterday.

BETA

What happened to the Game Warden?

CATHY

Not sure. Hey. Feed the rats.

CATHY exits.

BETA

(to himself)

Kinky! Oh my goodness! Is this love at first sight? Rats? Dumpster? And steroids... and... I'm the Game Warden? Kinky! Kinky!! Yes!!! How can it get better than this? Oh. I know. I get to feed the rats!

He takes a long look at the rat bag, and then the bucket of steroids, looks at the bar and drinks from his beer, waits and then looks back at the bag and the bucket of steroids and then gets up and goes over to the bag and thinks about poking it.

You in there?

(Beat - the bag moves.)

You hungry for some ...candy?

(As BETA is about to poke the bag CATHY re-enters.)

CATHY

You better use gloves. They bite through the bag.

BETA

(Lecherous)

Really?... Are they big?

CATHY

Sure. Free range pretrial warm up for the dumpster in the alley.

BETA

(More lecherous)

Really... Which way is the alley?

CATHY

Next door. We put up the piece of stockade fence to hide it. It's dramatic. Like a hunting preserve with a stockade fence! You enter through the kitchen, past the dumpster up the alley. The lawn chairs are for the jury

backed up to the stockade fence. Light turned on over the dumpster. The chairs in the dark. Ring the bell and I serve drinks on a tray. I'm the judge.

BETA

(More lecherous)

Oh I bet you are! Can I see?

CATHY

Sure, you're the Game Warden. Put on your hat.

BETA

(Puts on his Game Warden hat.)

Who the hell are your regulars?

CATHY

Everybody. We got rules though. No talking politics or religion. Strictly passive aggression, and as Game Warden, you've got to enforce that.

BETA

Everybody? You trying to make me jealous?... Everybody? Including that guy... But doesn't the church come in here? Don't they talk religion when they are in here?

CATHY

No. We are strictly polarized: No talking politics! No religion! We love justice. It feels so good... It is strictly enforced. Atmosphere is everything. Don't say what you mean. Hear what you want. Be happy and live in your moment. See the little bells on the tables. Somebody rings the bell. You as Game Warden must enforce it.

BETA

I'm not crazy! Enforce the rule against double stoli drinking-slopped up-born again - live in the moment - credit card christians?

CATHY

They just count the money. Try this stuff on. You have to wear a safety hat and glasses. We consider ourselves to be a highly specialized concept driven sports bar. We believe in justice so we don't get sued.

BETA

(lecherous)

Wow! Sports bar - Specializing in secret dumpster safaris that never gets sued? How can you do that?

BETA starts trying on fatigues, glasses and safety hats as the conversation continues.

CATHY

Easy. You've got to learn it from our politicians. Tom foolery and self deception is everything. We advertise it as the truth and nobody believes it. It is sorta like if you walk around naked nobody looks. We sell masks. We sell them on the street. Nobody's going to drink with a straw hole in a mask. We don't want customers during hunting season. We just want to pick an impartial jury.

BETA

So if the cops come this is just a bar serving drinks and shooting rats in a dumpster behind a stockade fence blocking off an alley next door and I'm the Game Warden?

CATHY

I know what you are thinking.

BETA

It's not good...

CATHY

Well it is all pretty much sling shots until the sun goes down and then the pellet guns don't make much noise and by the time we bring the handguns out it is dark and the cops don't bother you.

BETA

I should have known.

CATHY

Don't feel bad. It's your first day on the job.

BETA

Job? As Game Warden? ...You pay me!

CATHY

Well. We pay over the counter... in beer.

(They both laugh.)

You think I'm kidding? Wait 'til our lawyer - James Bound - shows up. Be nice to him - it is very important to him that he is a lawyer.

BETA

(Lecherous)

A lawyer? What a concept. Lawyers as foreplay? I get it. I'm about to get screwed? You ever sleep with your lawyer?

CATHY

No, I have too much self-respect. It would mean he would have a fool for a client.

BOUND

(Enters through the front door. He puts his top hat on the bar, his briefcase on the bar and takes a seat.)

Martini up. Shaken not stirred.

CATHY

(To BETA)

This is our lawyer.

BETA

You also do marriage and estates and trusts?

BOUND

We litigate the First Amendment. I never lose. I know my way around a court house. Just ask me.

(He hands BETA his card.)

I prefer champagne but I have to order martinis because of my name - for marketing purposes, you know.

BETA

(BETA reads the card.)

Bound & Gagged?... Wow! You'd be perfect for marriage and estates and trusts though.

BOUND

Okay. I will admit that, now.

BETA

Why did you lie about marriage and estates and trusts?

BOUND

I was withholding information.

BETA

Why?

BOUND

We hadn't been introduced.

BETA

Yes we had.

CATHY

(TO BETA)

He's a passive aggressive litigator. We use him for our Game Warden contracts. I chose him when I asked him if he litigated Constitutional Freedom of Choice cases. Trick question. He's real smart. I didn't fool him. That's Burger King.

BETA

Are you a passive aggressive litigator?

BOUND

What makes you think that?

CATHY

(To BETA)

Don't attack! You want me to teach you how to handle this?

BETA

He's your lawyer!

CATHY

Don't you understand he is negotiating with you.

BETA

Are you negotiating with me?

BOUND

What makes you think that?

BETA

This is starting to piss me off.

CATHY

He wants that.

BETA

Why does he want that?

CATHY

He is here to negotiate your contract.

BETA

I can quit anytime I want.

CATHY

He is delaying until you use the men's room.

BETA

(To BOUND)

Is that what you are doing?

BOUND

What makes you think that?

BETA

Might be exercising my Freedom of Choice!

CATHY

(To BETA)

I told you not to take him head on! You've got to be more passive aggressive than he is.

BETA

(To CATHY)

Like don't make eye contact, don't say anything and just get up and go to the bathroom.

(To BOUND)

Is that what you want?

BOUND

Do you have to go to the bathroom?

BETA

What makes you think that?

BOUND

Deductive reasoning but it is only hearsay if the truth of the matter asserted is you went to the bathroom and actually peed.

BETA

It is important to you as an officer of the court that I peed?

BOUND

Yes.

CATHY

Nice! You broke him.

BOUND

Now wait a minute! This may have broken my passive aggressive cross examination that is so smooth you didn't even know it was happening but I am - in all honesty - still being devious.

BETA

Yes, I actually have to go to the bathroom! I have had two beers and two shots. I'm not looking you in the eyes, not saying anything more to you and yes I am now going to the bathroom and I will have peed when I return...

BOUND

Good! An admission! One last question... which you don't have to answer. Are you running a tab?

BETA

Yes, I am running a tab!

(To CATHY)

But don't let him buy me a drink because I am not his friend and I think I hate him.

CATHY

Good. He wants that!

BOUND

Confirmed! I am a lawyer and I like that you may hate me. But just to confirm you are admitting that you have to go to the bathroom and you will pee in said bathroom?

BETA

(Growing madder)

You can come into the men's room and watch if you want!

BOUND

No! I don't want to be a witness! I would have to cross examine myself - which I can't do if I remain passive aggressive!

(BETA exits to go to the bathroom and as soon as he does BOUND turns to CATHY.)

Hand me his tab. But before you do put another beer and shot on it and put them on the bar. So tonight we got the right guy?

CATHY puts the drinks on the bar and marks them on the tab and hands the tab over to BOUND.

CATHY

I think so. I think he wants to confess but he's got some weird sex addition.

BOUND

You want me to research him?

CATHY

He won't give you his name but I know I recognize him.

BOUND

...From the retirement home?

(Beat)

When you weren't wearing a mask?

GOON

(Enters wearing a mask and looks around. He is a gangster in a rain coat hiding a machine gun.)

You got any unusual, suspicious looking people recently come in here?

BOUND

(Beat)

Other than you, no. But I just got here.

CATHY

There is a guy who went to the men's room.

GOON

(Beat)

So, what's unusual about that?

BOUND

He said I could watch.

GOON

Has he confessed to giving people COVID?

CATHY

Yeah.

GOON

(To CATHY)

Did you recognize him from the retirement home?

CATHY

How did you know that?

GOON

I asked you a straight question!

BOUND

(To GOON)

Hold on buddy! Nobody gets aggressive around here!

(To CATHY)

Want me to get passive aggressive with him?

CATHY

(To GOON)

How do you know that?

GOON

Let me help you along. I'll give you a hint. You're afraid you got the right guy but nothing is going to happen?

CATHY

Yeah,

(Beat)

I recognize him...

GOON

I can fix that problem but you've got to promise me something.

CATHY

You can stop everybody from being found innocent?

GOON

Absolutely. And I've got back up. I've been working all morning on getting you witnesses and I've even got a conspiracy theory.

CATHY

Okay. Promise you what?

GOON

I've got to see him dead in the dumpster. I'm coming back here tonight but I'll be undercover and in disguise. You can recognize me because I'll be wearing my prescription sunglasses and be smoking this cigar inconspicuously through the surgical mask with a hole in it... but first we have to learn to talk in code. We have to be absolutely clear. Suppose I say: "Do the Singapore slings have to be back to back?" Then what would you say?

CATHY

...I can do shots?

GOON

No! No! No shots!

CATHY

You want a Singapore sling that you can snort through a swizzle stick?

GOON

...Okay, forget the code. Do I look like a para-military right wing assassin or like a rodent aristocrat?

BOUND

Gee... What makes you think either?

GOON

What if you can't tell if I'm in disguise later so you won't know?

CATHY

Don't worry about it. You don't look like a para-military right wing assassin or a rodent aristocrat. What's the conspiracy theory?

GOON

I heard - from a very reliable source - people are talking that the guy is going to propose to you and he inherited lots of money!

BOUND

He inherited money?

CATHY

Wow!

GOON

...He only says he's come here to confess... but after you marry him he is going to deny the COVID stuff, like everybody does and he'll get off unless... you absolutely kill him and put him in the dumpster.

CATHY

That is so wonderful! I promise you no one will recognize you tonight!

GOON

The conspiracy gets worse. After he is acquitted tonight if you don't marry him he is going to accuse you of killing that little old lady - who was your grand mommy - to inherit all her money.

BOUND

(To CATHY)

You inherited money?

GOON

(To CATHY about BOUND'S
comment.)

See how fast that would travel?

CATHY

(To GOON)

Yeah! Wow!

GOON

Don't tell the guy in the bathroom that I was here. I'm coming back later. Don't recognize me or... Who do I look like?

CATHY

A gangster! A gangster of love?

GOON

Yeah? You like the outfit? I'm flattered. I'll be back

(GOON exits)

BOUND

You think he knows the guy in the bathroom?

CATHY

The guy was positive for something at the retirement home. He left screaming after he lost a staring contest with a fish tank.

BOUND

Given the fact that he gave up a great conspiracy theory and he clearly has a machine gun under his coat and based on my overwhelming powerful logical legal mind I would conclude he probably is telling the truth.

CATHY

Why?

BOUND

Lawyers like people with money.

CATHY

How do you know that?

BOUND

Two proofs: First, lawyers don't like people who don't have money and second, I am a lawyer.

CATHY

Exactly! And even though he may want to confess we cannot let him know he is part of a conspiracy theory. He might deny it! It won't be fair to us to let him know. We want justice!

BOUND

Exactly. So you want me to seal the deal for him?

CATHY

Yeah. Tonight we got the right guy. It will get done tonight. Sign him up. He's the guy. Lock him in.

BETA re-enters from the men's room
zipping up his fly as BOUND give
CATHY a thumbs up.

BETA

(Noticing the new drinks on
the bar.)

More payment for my services?

BOUND

You can't quit now.

BETA

I can quit anytime I want!

BOUND

(Shows him the bar tab.)

I've got your bar tab.

BETA

So what?

(BOUND rips the bar tab in
half.)

Hey!

BOUND

We paid you in beer...

BETA

So what?

BOUND

You want to quit? Give it back.

BETA

I can't give it back I just went to the bathroom!

BOUND

That was up to you - wasn't it? Anybody force you?

BETA

Is this bathroom entrapment?

BOUND

No! You could have peed on the floor! But that doesn't matter because you can't return the beer!

BETA

What?

BOUND

Welcome. Just drink up and put on your hat and uniform.

BETA

Is that legal?

BOUND

Trust me.

BETA

I thought we were talking law not religion!

CATHY

(Rings the bell on the bar.)

No! No! No!

BOUND

Why would you say that? When a lawyer says "trust me" that's not religion. It might even be blasphemy.

BETA

Is that legal?

BOUND

Trust me.

BETA

No! I understand the logic. You're a lawyer...

BOUND

Why would you say that?

BETA

I'll prove it to you... once you understand this it evolves. It is like your own personal Garden of Eden.

BETA (Con't)

Once you see it and understand it, you can't unsee it and it gets better and better. God's gift to man: self-delusion fueled by short term greed! Everybody's safe as long as they have a lawyer and go to church. Accept it. Recognize it!

BOUND

Wow! A new reality? Cosmic!... And you're not even a lawyer?

BETA

I'm a dog trainer. It costs less than law school. E.B.R.T.: Ego Based Reality Training - "Don't say what you mean. Hear what you want." You are speaking a new language for our new reality. I could teach you to bark and roll over. If you say, "Why would you say that?" it really means "No." And if you say or do anything else it means "Yes." It's your new religion.

(CATHY rings the bell.)

Okay it is just dog training.

BOUND

I don't understand.

BETA

It's easy. You just said "yes".

BOUND

Why would you say that?

BETA

See? You just said "no." You appear to have a gift for languages - so listen up and I will prove it to you. You are the lawyer for this bar?

(BOUND shrugs)

Okay this is a yes. And you just employed me to be an employee, to be the Game Warden, for an opening day?

(BOUND shrugs)

Okay some languages have overlapping words - you just agreed in two languages.

(Beat)

So you represent the bar and I'm employed by the bar to work for the bar and so...

BETA (Con't)

He picks up BOUND's bar tab and
rips it up.
Now you are representing me! You are my lawyer.

BOUND
That doesn't make any sense -

BETA
Perfect! Yes? And yes it doesn't make any sense but it
gets better now you understand... "Trust me!"

BOUND
(Rings the bell.)
No!

BETA
Yes? Good. We are communicating so well! Okay let's go
look at the alley. I'm going to tell you some stuff you
can't tell anybody. Now it is all Attorney Client
Privileged Communication! Agreed?

BETA stands and heads toward the
alley door and BOUND follows
holding his martini glass as he
grabs his top hat and briefcase as
they exit.

BOUND
Why would you say that? Oh silly me!
(Both exit through the door,
stage right, to the alley
as BETA grabs his flowers.)

CATHY
As they exit CATHY'S phone starts
to ring. CATHY lets the phone
ring and then picks it up and
speaks into it. DEBRA enters from
the outside - stage left. She is
dressed like a minister. She
stands and waits for CATHY to get
off the phone.

CATHY

(On the phone.)

Who is this? Speak up. You sound like you are in a bat cave in China...

(Beat)

Are you trying to scare me? What do you mean by "a status update?" What do you mean, "Do I recognize you?"

(Beat)

What do you mean? Call what number? Who is this? I don't recognize you!

(beat)

Okay! Okay! I'll call the number. What is it again? This is about the witnesses?

CATHY hangs up and begins to dial a phone and then puts it up to her ear as DEBRA is surprised to hear her phone ring.

DEBRA

Hello?

CATHY

Hello?

DEBRA

Who is this?

CATHY

Who is this?

DEBRA

Hello? Hello?

(She looks at CATHY and abruptly hangs up.)

CATHY

Hello? Hello?

(The phone goes dead in her hand.)

Son of a bitch! Hello? Hello?

DEBRA

(Putting her phone in her pocket hastily and looks at CATHY)

Hello? Excuse me?

CATHY

(Hangs up her phone and looks at DEBRA.)

Sorry. Double vodka with a twist?

DEBRA

Absolutely! You cannot believe what people confess to! Today was the worst and I have to go back in fifteen minutes and start all over again.

CATHY

(Making the drinks)

Are you allowed to talk about it?

DEBRA

No! Absolutely not!...

(Beat)

So this goon comes in and he is wearing a trench coat with - I swear to God this is true - And I mean that is saying something given my line of work - but the guy had a machine gun under his coat and he's in for confession. And he asks me "if you are a vegan rat who lives in a dumpster do you have to 'eat what they kill'?"

(Beat)

I don't do hand clapping or a tree falls in the forest. That is way above my pay grade! I need a drink!

CATHY

How long ago?

DEBRA

Like an hour ago. But listen, the next two people talked about the same death in an old age home but they told completely different stories. And I swear to... You see that is my real problem - I was scared to say "Swear to God" because this is so screwed up I don't believe there is such a thing as "true facts" or, or, or there even is a God.

CATHY

Wow!... You want a triple?

DEBRA

I need a Born Again ...I swear I think the goon was outside the booth and holding the machine gun on them! The two people came in with different true facts for their confessional. Not only were they different but - the goon was trying to get them to change their stories!

CATHY

Jesus! You do need a Born Again! And the goon confessed?

DEBRA

He just kept repeating that he just wanted to live a quiet contemplative life.

CATHY

But then he held a gun on the other two and they talked about -

DEBRA

The same death at the retirement home. The goon was desperate to get the two to tell the same story.

CATHY

Wow! That goon really does want justice!

DEBRA

It is all about this guy tonight. I came over here right after the last one left because they said they all were coming in here tonight or maybe even earlier.

CATHY

All good! We got our guy. We got testimony. We got dumpster pick up tomorrow. We got revenge. We got justice.

DEBRA

...I'm not sure I can talk about that. Maybe he'll confess.

CATHY

Wait a minute! You can talk to me. First, they all got different "true facts" so God isn't getting the straight story so you're not giving up anything and second, it's okay, you said you don't believe in God anymore...

DEBRA

Yeah. I may have to hedge my bet on that... I need this job. Don't quote me. I may be looking for a second opinion on that...

CATHY

I know a lawyer but he is in the alley.

DEBRA

If there is a God I'm pretty sure he doesn't want a second opinion from a lawyer. There was conflicting confessional testimony.

CATHY

It's not murder. It is justice. Why you getting all moral on me all of a sudden? You've got two people confessing to God and the other one will be under oath.

DEBRA

If we knew there was false testimony and he was innocent and we kill him it is murder.

CATHY

Okay! Fine! We'll put them all under oath. As long as everybody's under oath what's wrong with that?

DEBRA

I'm not sure I can talk about that... maybe I do need a lawyer... I'm considering pleading the 5th at my confession.

CATHY

Relax. He's a passive aggressive litigator. Even God won't know what he is talking about. He'll forgive you on that. And the third thing, the Game Warden said earlier - in my mind pretty persuasively - That nothing makes any sense ...I think he's going to plead insanity. He's a walk in. He can't do that. He is already in communication with the lawyer.

DEBRA

Really?

CATHY

Does that mean he can't confess?

DEBRA

I don't know.

CATHY

He may not even know he's guilty! We need a confession?

DEBRA

I definitely can't talk about this anymore. Just think about this for a second...

(beat)

...So everybody dead of this thing is an unsolved murder? Does that mean everybody who encouraged people not to wear masks or social distance or said it was a hoax is a co-conspirator? They can't prove it. Does that mean everyone who didn't wear a mask, social distanced or refused to get vaccinated could be a co-conspirator?

CATHY

Yes. This is a national disgrace! We've got to get more guns! In the confession - could they see you?

DEBRA

Why?... I'm not going to admit to that. ...No!

CATHY

This guy is a walk in! That's as good as a confession. I have always been happy with circumstantial evidence. We just can't have any more innocent people.

ALFA

(Entering from the alley door.)

We may be low on rats. The new Game Warden and the lawyer are out there kicking the dumpster to get the rats revved up but we may have to stock it from the bag.

(He points at the bag of rats on the wall.)

CATHY

You know why?

ALFA

Why?

CATHY

You didn't dump the garbage out there again last night.

ALFA

Damn, I must have passed out.

CATHY

I'll do it...

(Picks up the trash.)

Wait a minute! What is this? Am I having a cosmic moment of enlightenment? Justice? Do we share this planet as God's creations along with all God's animals and God's living things, like plants, flowers, trees and all the precious little bugs and ants and even rats?... This is not fair to the rats! For Christ Sake! Oops. Naaa. Sorry... Jesus Christ what a hot flash!

CATHY rings the bell and exits
with the trash into the alley.

ALFA

(To CATHY after she exits.)

Who the hell rings the bell and then leaves? A rat humanitarian?

DEBRA

(To ALFA)

Man that bell could be the end of my business.

COOKIE

Enters from the alley. She is
hung over, and goes right to the
bar and looks for the bartender.

Okay, I got some questions. There are two assholes in the alley. The guy who won't admit to being a lawyer, but at least does answer to "Asshole" - He even seems to like it. He woke me up in the lawn chair. I need three Singapore Slings and a sling shot. And I mean need!

(Beat)

I'm starting to worry.

ALFA

(Goes behind the bar)

You want that as a shot?

COOKIE

No. I'm looking for a drink. I'm starting to have second thoughts. And the other guy out there said you were thinking of buying a fish tank?

ALFA

Goldfish chasers. It's retro.

COOKIE

Goldfish chasers? Pretty soon this place is going to have no class at all! What are you looking for? One star at a biker bar.

(Beat)

So what happened last night? So why are those guys out in the alley talking about a new Game Warden? What happened to that guy last night? Is the guy in the dumpster?

ALFA

(Making the Singapore slings
behind the bar.)

...Okay, three Singapore Slings on the rocks. Three highball glasses gin, cherry liquor, cointreau, benedictine, grenadine, pineapple juice, lime juice, angostura, bitters and a maraschino cherry. There's a lot of stuff in this. You want the fruit on the side?

COOKIE

That would be quite nice. How about the fruit in a chilled martini glass? I'm a tiny bit thirsty so the sooner the better. I am a little worried about last night. ...Maybe I should up my meditation.

ALFA

You want the gin from a fire hose?

COOKIE

That would avoid the plastic.

ALFA

What's missing? Protein? For a dollar more imagine a goldfish chaser.

COOKIE

I just don't want the place to lose its character. I particularly love this place because after dinner I got a handgun.

ALFA

Yesterday when you came in here you said you didn't drink.

COOKIE

Being on a jury is not exactly like a support group.

ALFA

That Q & A after the trial was intense.

COOKIE

I swear I don't remember any of that. The guy was supposed to be confessing to something?

ALFA

He wouldn't confess. I didn't realize you were left out there in the alley when we turned the lights out last night.

COOKIE

No problem! Hey, the perks keep on coming. After a long night of deliberation I also got room and board and a free ride to church.

(frisking herself)

I must have left the hand gun at confession this morning after that goon woke me up and took me to church.

(Beat)

Why did the goon take me to church? Is the guy in the dumpster? They want me to do it again but this time I'm a witness too?

DEBRA

You were at confession this morning?

COOKIE

Yeah, but don't tell anybody what I said or...

DEBRA

From your lips to God's ears.

COOKIE

Or lightening baby! It is in the Old Testament somewhere... like a couple of places.

ALFA

(ALFA rings the bell.)

You got lucky, no Game Warden to enforce it.

Serving the drink to COOKIE. He puts a martini glass full of the fruit up on the bar and a bottle of gin with a straw in it.

COOKIE

Is the guy out in the dumpster? I slept out there last night.

ALFA

The drinks this morning are on Cathy as long as you are on the jury and you are a witness.

COOKIE

Last night that lawyer tore up my tab.

ALFA

Cathy's got a walk in for tonight.

COOKIE

That's great. What's going on?

ALFA

He's going to confess. Well I've got to go and not sell face masks outside.

(ALFA exits)

DEBRA

(To COOKIE)

He's not going to answer you. He maybe doesn't want to bias the jury. Due process and all... or maybe a conspiracy.

COOKIE

I have no idea what but he knows more than he's telling - Looks like to me. You think he's got a conspiracy theory he is not sharing?

DEBRA

Could be. I'm starting to worry.

COOKIE

You got a conspiracy theory? You holding back?

DEBRA

I have to.

COOKIE

Because you know more than you're telling?

DEBRA

It is starting to add up.

COOKIE

What the hell happened last night?

DEBRA

Yeah, maybe they don't have the right guy even now.

COOKIE

From what I told you?

DEBRA

Was that goon holding a gun on you?

COOKIE

He took me over there to confession and told me what to say... You are starting to freak me out.

(Beat)

Wait a minute... Am I part of your conspiracy theory?

DEBRA

Was what you told me true?

COOKIE

I guess so.

DEBRA

Which part did he tell you to say?

COOKIE

All the good parts.

DEBRA

There were a lot of good parts.

COOKIE

I was confessing to God.

DEBRA

Did you commit a crime?

COOKIE

If I confessed to a crime that was to God and the rest was to you. Can I be part of a conspiracy theory if I don't know what the conspiracy is? What part of my confession was a crime?

DEBRA

The goon said he was coming here to meet you?

COOKIE

With the other witnesses, yeah.

DEBRA

Why?

COOKIE

Something about testimony tonight?

DEBRA

Who chose you to be on the jury last night?

COOKIE

Cathy. The bartender.

DEBRA

Did you know her before?

COOKIE

Yeah. We both were working at that retirement home before we both got the Covid and had to quit after her grandmother died.

DEBRA

Did you see a guy looking in a fish tank?

COOKIE

This morning the goon told me I did.

DEBRA

But did you?

COOKIE

Would that be a crime?

DEBRA

Wait a minute. You and Cathy had to leave the retirement home after you both got COVID and her grandmother died?

COOKIE

They couldn't prove it was us.

DEBRA

So why did you have to leave?

COOKIE

Circumstantial evidence. Somebody was guilty. Could have been us. They couldn't just look the other way. Somebody had to be punished.

DEBRA

Why?

COOKIE

There's got to be punishment. Why are there wars? Why are there murders? Why is there the death penalty?

DEBRA

I see what you mean. It is for the public good. Each generation has more people and we've got to keep order. There is never enough punishment.

COOKIE

Exactly. Cathy definitely is guilty. She infected her grandmother and it killed her.

DEBRA

How do you know that?

COOKIE

She told me. She confessed. But no one can prove it and someone has to pay.

DEBRA

I got it. And that's why there are wars, murders and the death penalty?

COOKIE

Sure. I had some time to reflect on this while I was out in the lawn chair in the alley. Guilt, revenge and justice. It's all in our D.N.A. You ever seen a jury of antelopes?

DEBRA

...Or ants, or whales or butterflies... Of course not. It's not in their D.N.A. For them its eat or be eaten and just nature.

COOKIE

It's all about justice! Someone must pay. It's who we are. And it keeps us happy. No other animal even thinks about justice! It is up to us. It's why God put us on the planet.

DEBRA

Wow! Thanks! Now I understand my place in the universe... you had a productive morning.

COOKIE

Yeah. I can prove that with logic and also why sex is not dirty.

DEBRA

Sex is not dirty?

COOKIE

We were born to this planet to bring justice. Right? Think about this: What if we weren't born? What if your parents didn't have sex? Most likely you won't either! So what happens to justice then?

DEBRA

Yeah. Somebody must pay. It doesn't really matter who as long as it is justice.

COOKIE

The only problem is what if we don't get all of the facts?

DEBRA

(Beat)

You mean like somebody is not telling us everything?

COOKIE

Yes! Do you smell a conspiracy theory? So then what happens to us?

GOON

Goon enters wearing a surgical mask with a cigar jutting from the hole in it, dark glasses and machine gun under his coat.

Okay. Let's go over the testimony for the trial tonight. I know you don't recognize me but...

DEBRA

(To Goon)

How did you get past the owner at the front door? Is this a conspiracy?

GOON

Good. You don't recognize me!

DEBRA

Wait a minute I'm getting a little freaked out here. Cathy, my bartender, and the owner out there gives a machine gun toting goon a passcode, but I don't need one?

(To COOKIE)

Could we be part of a conspiracy theory and you don't even know about it? You can't fool me! I refuse to be punished!

GOON

In all honesty you don't know this is me. You admitted that. Wait a minute. No! No! Please don't be too stupid!

DEBRA

No, you wait a minute! I'm not part of this! I was only there last night for the last rights!

COOKIE

(To DEBRA)

No! You wait a minute!

COOKIE (CON'T)

So if I just pray, why do I need to give you a confession? If nobody can prove that any one person infected another and if it is all circumstantial evidence and even with a confession it is all circumstantial... I definitely want my credit card back! I'm not doing this anymore! I'm out of here!

(Exits)

GOON

Wait a minute! Wait! Wait!

DEBRA

(Screaming after COOKIE as she exits.)

Forget justice! That's blasphemy! That's a sin!

GOON

No! No! No! This can't be happening! We have to go over the testimony for tonight!

DEBRA exits and confronts GOON as she leaves.

I refuse to be confused! I'm going back to God's work!
(Slams the door behind her.)

GOON

(Standing alone on the stage facing the audience. Long beat.)

"To be, or not to be, that is the question: Whether 'tis nobler..."

RAT #1

(Races on stage. He has been listening to the prior dialogue between DEBRA, COOKE and GOON.)

This ain't good! It is all falling apart! I told you it would never work!

GOON

I'm trying! I'm trying! People are just too damn stupid!

RAT #1

All your father and I ever wanted...

GOON

No! No! I can't take this anymore!

RAT #1

Do you realize the strings we had to pull...

GOON

No! No! I can't take this anymore!

RAT #1

I got another call from Wuhan. It has to be tonight! It has to be...

GOON

No! No!

BETA, carrying the flowers, and
BOUND enter from the alley and
GOON and RAT #1 hide.

BOUND

...You want some free advice on this Game Warden job?
Never trust email porn. They are going to try to kill you
tonight.

BETA

I thought the ethics of your profession prohibited free
advice.

BOUND

Not if you are too stupid to understand it. You want some
more free advice?

BETA

I'm in love and I am going to get married!

BOUND

So legally I must advise you that the law prohibits you
from getting married after being pronounced dead.

GOON charges BETA and BOUND, rips off his mask and reveals that he is a rat and starts firing at BOUND and BETA and apparently kills them both.

RAT #1

(Races up to GOON)

What the hell is this?

GOON

I can't take the pressure anymore!

RAT #1

What the hell did you just do?

GOON

The dumpster's going out tomorrow!

RAT #1

This has been carefully orchestrated! What is the matter with you?

GOON

Human beings keep screwing it up!

RAT #1

The police have to find a pandemic related murder in the dumpster!

GOON

We gotta think outside the box!

RAT #1

What does that mean? Why can't you follow directions? This is my fault. You are overeducated.

GOON

You get what you pay for.

RAT #1

What? A dumpster at a prep school?

GOON

That's the only way I could get into a dumpster at medical school.

RAT #1

You were supposed to infiltrate not graduate!

GOON

But I loved my liberal arts education.

RAT #1

English literature pass fail? I'm amazed that you found a box to think outside of...

GOON

"First, we'll kill all the lawyers." This is how you start a revolution! And I just got me one! And...

RAT #1

You can't go rogue! We are six months late! This was supposed to all be coordinated, remember?

GOON

That's why we got to do this now! Let's kick this into high gear!

GOON slaps the rat bag and it
explodes into action and the rats
inside start jumping around.

RAT #1

This is such an embarrassment. Six months in the stupidest county in the world. Four percent of the world's population and 20% of all the infection and we can't find one revenge murder! I hate it when the bats get all the credit.

GOON

Glory Days? Don't put it all on me. That's the trouble with rats! We are not closers. People are. I learned that!

RAT #1

There you go again. All you learn with higher education is how to not follow directions and to get extensions.

GOON

Us rats almost had them four hundred years ago but we didn't finish them off. You want Glory Days or you want to do this thing?

RAT #1

What is the matter with you? Come on! You've got to get both of them in the dumpster and get the flea bag in there quick.

RAT #1 exits to the dumpster so she can enter as DEBRA from the street.

You really screwed this up!

GOON desperately drags BOUND off the stage into the alley and exits and the rats go wild in the bag. Beta is left on the floor.

DEBRA

(Enters from the front door, stage left, dressed as a priest and sees BETA on the floor and screams.)

Oh Jesus!

(Beat. She looks around and then rings the bell.)

You can't be dead! I need a drink!

ALFA

(Rushes in and sees BETA on the floor.)

He didn't even get a fair trial!

DEBRA

I found him dead on the floor!

ALFA

Sure! Too much pressure? You've got to mix it up. Do some baptisms!

DEBRA

I'm a specialist.

ALFA

Well you double fucked up. Now you got to do last rights and confess to yourself.

DEBRA

I can't do that.

ALFA

You killed the new Game Warden!

DEBRA

You think this is new business? Why would I shoot the Game Warden? I do confessions! Dead people don't confess! Game's over! It's your place! You do the last rights. I'm outta here!

ALFA

At least close his eyes.

DEBRA

You close his eyes!

ALFA

Why do people do that?

DEBRA

I'm supposed to know that? Maybe people don't like dead people looking at them!

ALFA

There is a loud bang outside in
the alley and the dumpster lid
gets slammed shut.

There is somebody out in the dumpster!

DEBRA

You better hide the Game Warden!

ALFA

What will we do without the rule of law?

DEBRA

Forget about it! It's a dead end job!

ALFA

We better do something quick!

DEBRA

Put him on the bar!

ALFA

I sleep there! Help me drag him behind the bar!

They drag him behind the bar and
DEBRA grabs a bottle of liquor off
the shelf from behind the bar.

DEBRA

I'm outta here! I don't need this place. I've just had a
religious awakening! I love my work. I can drink on the
job. That was disgusting!

(DEBRA exits out the front
door with the bottle as
she hears GOON enter from
the alley.)

GOON

Enters stage right from the alley
and is surprised to find ALFA and
nobody lying on the floor. He
desperately puts on his mask to
hide that he is a rat.

What are you doing here?

ALFA

I own the place! What were you doing out at the dumpster?

GOON

Looking for the Game Warden. You seen the Game Warden?

ALFA

(Trying to make sure GOON
doesn't go behind the bar
and discover BETA.)

He must have stepped out.

GOON

Mind if I look around?

ALFA

Na! You don't have to do that! You want a sling shot to
shoot some rats in the alley?

GOON

No.

ALFA

Oh, that's right, I forgot. You have a machine gun under your trench coat.

GOON

You don't know that for sure.

ALFA

Tell me it's a "have a heart."

GOON

Yes... It is... and... I'm Vegan?

ALFA

The last time you used it, you didn't put a herd of elephants asleep?

GOON

Maybe I did... Maybe I didn't.

ALFA

No one sells semi-automatic stun guns. And this one has been recently fired! I can smell it.

GOON

I got it used. I want to look around. I'm looking for the Game Warden. Was there anybody here when you came in here?

ALFA

No, go on out and take a lawn chair. I'll bring you a drink. What would you like?

(Beat)

Not a living soul.

GOON

Any dead ones?

ALFA

The Game Warden must have gone out for a little fresh air.

GOON

Did he just walk out of here?

ALFA

He just vanished.

GOON
I sure hope so.

ALFA
Wouldn't that be great? ...You do? ...Why?

GOON
Mind if I look around?

ALFA
(Still stalling for time to
try to stop GOON from
looking around.)
Not until you tell me the truth.

GOON
About what?

ALFA
You trying to tell me that anywhere! Anywhere! On this
continent there are dangerous elephants?

GOON
I haven't seen any.

ALFA
So they are invisible?

GOON
Must be. Which means... You haven't seen any either, have
you?

ALFA
Then give me the stun gun and let me shoot you to see if
you disappear. Then you are completely free to look around
as much as you want.

GOON
No.

ALFA
Why not?

GOON
If it is a real gun you'd kill me.

ALFA

It would be in self-defense.

GOON

Not if you have the gun!

ALFA

See. I proved it! You are holding a machine gun under your trench coat! I want to shoot you with your "stun gun" then you can look around.

GOON

I'd be asleep.

ALFA

Yeah and I'd be "stunned" if you weren't dead.

BETA

Jumping up from behind the bar,
grabbing his flowers and rubbing
his eyes.

I can get married! I'm not dead.

ALFA

Oh my God!

(GOON rings the bell.)

I've never seen somebody rise from the dead and want to get married.

GOON

(To BETA)

You've got to enforce that. You are back. You are the Game Warden. That is a clear violation. Maybe two!

BETA

Where is my lawyer?

ALFA

You're right. This is a very litigious country. I want to bring back the church lady.

GOON

Why? Because you are a homo sapien demonstrating your propensity to believe in a church which you all have manufactured in order to feel good about yourself and because you just witnessed someone rising from the dead?

ALFA

No! I want to tell the church lady that we can now hold communion at the bar.

GOON

So you're being selfless and homo sapiens are really good?

ALFA

Absolutely! She doesn't have to be a specialist. Can't you see the repetition is driving her crazy!

BETA

Can I get a word in edgewise?

GOON

Sure, you just rose from the dead.

ALFA

You're a holy Game Warden now!

BETA

Where is my lawyer?

GOON

In the dumpster.

BETA

He went there without me?

GOON

Don't worry about it. I'm pretty sure he'll rise from the dead, too.

ALFA

Oh my God!

(GOON rings the bell.)

GOON

(GOON addresses BETA.)

Will you please enforce that!

ALFA

Oh my God!

(GOON rings the bell again.)

I want the church lady. A lawyer will be rising from the dumpster?

GOON

Yes

ALFA

Both of them right here? I got to get the church lady to see it when it happens. We are talking about the Cathedral of the Holy Dumpster! Right here! I've got to go out there. We've got to collect relics!

(ALFA exits)

BETA

(TO GOON)

You can put that gun away.

GOON

No.

BETA

You can't shoot me. I'm a ghost. I'm the Game Warden that has risen from the dead!

GOON

You are living in your imagination like all homo sapiens. I wish it wasn't that way.

BETA

Like we imagine we are safe and we trust what we don't understand?

GOON

Yeah. I wish it wasn't true.

BETA

Like electricity, nuclear power and our computers save all of our data in a cloud and our government?

GOON

Yeah and like air pollution, water pollution and global warming... Homo sapiens are destroying the planet. You live in your imagination if you don't think so!

BETA

That's not real nice.

GOON

...And you think you have been resurrected from the dead. "Mankind cannot stand much reality." That's T.S. Elliot.

BETA

Why would I believe an English major?

GOON

"Love thy neighbor?" "Do unto others?" For religious and political reasons, you people don't wear masks? What would happen if I shoot you again?

BETA

Wow! Untested territory! Nobody has risen twice. That would make me a new religion! ...And imagine my déjà vues!

GOON shoots BETA again and RAT #1 charges in again.

RAT #1

Again? You can't even keep them dead? We are really in trouble now! The bats are coming here and they are pissed off!

(RAT #1 looks at BETA)

You did it again! What is the matter with you?

GOON

I wanted to go to Princeton and you made me go to a dumpster? I wanted to love classical music, eat French food, drink Irish coffee before a warm burning fire and get gout!

RAT #1

Rats are killed in labs all over the world every day, every minute, every second... and my kid ends up with "Stockholm Syndrome" and a Master's Degree? The bats, the fleas, the ticks and all the other gentle creatures on this earth...

Even the fish were watching!... The Commander in Chief
flew a general all the way from Wuhan.

BAT #1

Crashes through the wall above the
door stage left and scrambles to
her feet. She is wearing tights
and a cape.

I'm bat shit! This was supposed to have gone down when we
kicked off COVID months ago! This is pathetic! Your
dumpster is going down!

RAT #1

No, wait!

BAT #1

Get your kid out of here and give me his gun!

(Points to GOON.)

Go to the dumpster. We will call you when we have made up
our minds what we are going to do!

(GOON hands over his gun to
BAT #1 and exits.)

RAT #1

He's my kid!

BAT #1

What's this rumor about a liberal arts degree?

RAT #1

Absolutely false!

BAT #1

You know why I'm here? I get an order to fly here from
Wuhan? It took me a month! You think that was a
promotion?

RAT #1

Did you get following winds?

BAT #1

That is like asking if the rest stops are good on the New
Jersey Turnpike!

RAT #1

I was just trying to be a good host.

BAT #1

You were supposed to be a good host. We all were! This may have been our last chance to save the planet. Until you rats couldn't kick off your plague... Maybe this was our last chance to save the planet and it got screwed up by a rat in Higher Ed!

RAT #1

We come from a long history of patriotic rats...

BAT #1

You don't realize what a big screw up this is?... I was sent here to tell you it had to happen now and then there is another screw up? And another screw up? It is out of my hands... Again we get nothing?

RAT #1

No, wait...

BAT #1

No, you wait! We got you the stupidest country on the planet. They elect a leader who denies it and then gets it and denies it again and the vote was almost 50/50? We get you a dumpster where they are shooting your kind and all we ask is put a COVID revenge murder in your dumpster, call the cops and the news will broadcast it, trigger the media and everything world-wide cuts loose and the revolution will begin... And the world will finally be safe! But no! The rats screw up? Again!

RAT #1

The humans were too stupid for the plan to work. It's not my kid's fault! They are too stupid for revenge!

BAT #1

Enough!

RAT #1

Don't do this!

BAT #1

Different trigger now. Best we can do. Fire in your dumpster. When I hit the button the cops come.

RAT #1

And what?

BAT #1

Fire in the dumpster! Cut loose the fleas in the rat bag.

RAT #1

Don't do this!

BAT #1

(Pushes the button to
release the plague.)

I'll tell them a good story when I get back...

RAT #1

It is done?

(Sound of Police car sirens
in the distance.)

BAT #1

Go be with your son - quick! Go! I'll turn out the lights
and cut the bags. Go! God let's pray it is not too late.
God save us from mankind! From global warming, endless
plastics and pollution from these animals that live in
their logic and imagination and only think of themselves.
Go!

RAT #1 exits and BAT #1 turns out
the lights as the sirens get a
little louder and the fire engines
can be heard coming from the
distance. BAT #1 cuts the bag and
the rats empty out across the
floor and are squealing in the
darkness.

Our only hope now is if mankind kills itself! No this will
never end until we win! Dear God have mercy on this
beautiful planet! God have mercy!!! God have mercy!!!

(BAT #1 exits.)

BETA

(Wakes up and abruptly
stands up from behind the
bar and grabs his flowers.)

You called! It's a miracle! I'm a miracle!

Well God damn!

(Laughs, embarrassed as he realizes and puts his hand over his mouth.)

Oops.

(He rings the bell and laughs.)

Sorry!

END OF PLAY