

ACT I SCENE 1

RAT #2 is sitting at one of the little tables down stage. 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.

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 glutens.

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. 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

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.

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 "revolution" 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?" And they are advertising for a Game Warden!

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! 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 agree on 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 confusing is they are relentlessly optimistic: "Have a nice day!" 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" here at the bar. All they really live for is 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! Your father and I found this place - the Dumpster Alley Bar & Grill - and...

RAT #2

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