

BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY

Mark S.P. Turvin

Characters:

David Hanson-Early 30's. Successful accountant.

Jeff Smith-Late 20's. David's roommate and an avowed animal rights activist.

Lisa Snofsky-Early 20's. Recent college graduate and an associate of Jeff's.

Scene:

The living room of David and Jeff's two bedroom apartment in Tempe, AZ.

Time:

Last Saturday afternoon.

The lights come up on...Lisa sitting on the couch, sloshing around the watery contents of a pail. She wears a PETA t-shirt and jean shorts. There is a loud squirting sound from outside.

Lisa

(Screams out the door)

All right, already! I'll be there in a second.

(She grabs the pail and exits SR. From off SL, we hear a car pull up and a door slam)

David

(Off SL)

Thanks.

(David enters, carrying luggage and wearing a straw hat that reads "Mexico" and power vacation wear. He puts down the bags, then moves toward the upstage door)

Jeff? Hey, Jeff, you around?

(The squirting sound comes from outside once more)

You out at the pool?

(David goes out of the upstage door. We hear the squirting sound again, then David shrieks)

Oh, my God! What the hell?

(David rushes in, completely soaked)

Jeff?! Where the hell are you?!

(Lisa enters. She is carrying the pail and a large square of what looks like dried, shredded cardboard. David has his back to her. She screams and throws the square at David's head, which pegs him and causes him to bend over and start to turn around. She then tosses the contents of the pail at him. He falls to the ground)

Stop! Please! Jesus, take the television, whatever! Here, here's my wallet!

Lisa
(Simultaneously with above)

Stay down, mister. What are you doing here?

David

(Sniffs and looks up)

Good lord, what was in that pail?

Lisa

(With a practiced move, she pushes David to the ground and holds him there with her foot at his throat)

Answer me, what are you doing here?

David

(Gurgling)

I live here! What are **you** doing here?

Lisa

Nice try, mister, but Jeff Smith lives here. Now stay right there until he gets back. I know forty six different ways to kill a man.

David

(Smelling his clothes)

Is throwing rotten shrimp on him one of them?

Lisa

Who are you?

David

David Hanson. I'm the owner of this house. Is that your whale out in my pool?

Lisa

David Hanson is on a two week cruise to Acapulco...

David

Which was cut short because of a shipload of bad seafood. Now, who the hell are you?

Lisa

Information is available on a need-to-know basis, and you don't need to know until I confirm your identity. Now, stand up slowly and keep your hands where I can see them.

David

Or what, you'll stun me with rotten herring?

Lisa

Need I remind you that I know...

David and Lisa
(Simultaneously)

...forty six different ways...

David

Yeah, yeah, I know. Here, let me get my wallet. Will that convince you?

Lisa

Slowly.

(David takes his wallet from his pants just as Jeff enters carrying a few

shopping bags. He quickly throws the shopping bags at David's back. They smash wetly against him. David falls to his knees)

David

Not again.

Jeff

David?

David

Jeff. What the Hell is going on here?

Lisa

Blue, this man claims to be a David Hanson, is...

Jeff

Yes, yes, it's my roommate, Lisa.

Lisa

That's White, Blue. Roger?

Jeff

Yeah, right, whatever. What are you doing home so early? You're not supposed to be back for a week.

David

What did you just throw at me? Smells like something died in Davy Jone's locker.

Jeff

It's leftover shrimp from last night's party at the Buttes. David, you're not supposed to be here.

David

Then I take it that you know there's a killer whale in our pool.

Jeff

David, I'd like you to meet Lisa Snofsky...

Lisa

Blue, we're only supposed to use our code names. You're blowing our cover.

Jeff

This is my roommate, I can tell him our names.

David

(Shouting)

Jeff, there's a fifty ton whale in our swimming pool!

Jeff

And that's Shamu.

(Silence)

David? You weren't supposed to be back...

David

Shamu. You're telling me that Shamu is in **my** swimming pool.

Jeff

Our swimming pool. I live here to.

David

You **rent** from me.

Jeff

It's a temporary thing. There was a snafu in the plans...

David

You signed a contract that said "no pets."

Jeff

David, be serious, can you call Shamu a pet?

David

You're missing the point here. Shamu is in **my** swimming pool.

Jeff

We had to hide him after it got too difficult to hide him in San Diego.

David

Why were you hiding him in the first place?

Jeff

Because the police were looking for him.

David

Keep up with me here, now, why were they looking for him?

Jeff

Because we in the S.L.A.C. had saved him from Sea World.

David

S.L.A.C.?

Lisa

The Society for the Liberation of Animals in Cages.

David

You kidnapped Shamu?

Jeff

Not kidnapped, exactly.

David

Whalenapped?

Jeff

We've taken him from his bondage.

David

And you plan to...

Lisa

To set him free, as he has every right to be.

David

I hate to tell you, but **my** swimming pool does not constitute freedom.

(There is a loud snort from US)

See, he agrees with me.

Jeff

I can see that this is going to be more difficult than I thought. Lisa...

Lisa

It's White. White, dammit. Are we going to drop every necessary formality?

David

Don't get her upset, she knows forty six ways to kill a man.

Jeff

Oh, you learned another one? You'll have to forgive her, she's a little more militant about this than most

Lisa

Listen, mister, your interference in this plan is just another of a long line of miscalculations and bad omens that have fouled up what would have been an efficient and well-run operation if we hadn't depended on unqualified people like

Lisa (cont.)

your roommate here. Now, it's very simple. You have two choices, you can be with us, or you can be against us, and I have a feeling that you don't want to be against us.

Jeff

Lisa...

(She shoots him a withering glance)

White, we can trust him to go along with us. I've known him since I was at A.S.U. Right, David. You'll help out, won't you.

(David looks at them both, then rushes to the phone. Lisa grabs him and drags him to a chair)

David, I wouldn't mess with her. It'll be easier if you help us find a home for Shamu.

David

(As she's duct taping him to the chair)

Jeff, Shamu has a home already, in San Diego.

Jeff

How could you call that terrible confinement a home?

David

It's better than a backyard pool filled with water and Morton's salt.

Lisa

Do you see, Blue, this man will only be a hindrance to our plans. If it weren't for your constant miscalculations and mistakes, Shamu would already be free to frolic in his natural domain. But, no, you and Green wanted to bring him to La Jolla. Whales don't care where they're set free, they're just longing for the sea that they call home. Then, when the police were onto us, you told Orange and Purple that your roommate was away for two weeks, and we could use your, as you called it, unusually large swimming pool to hide him in until we could get a clear shot at the ocean. You failed to mention that Phoenix is an eight hour truck ride from San Diego. Now, were stuck with a killer whale in the middle of the desert, scrounging

Lisa (cont.)

shrimp from resorts and kelp from natural food stores, and we have no idea where Green and Purple are with the truck.

Jeff

Things will work out, White. I promise.

Lisa

What this plan needs now is for some discipline.

David

No, what it needs now is for one of you two animi-nazis to come to your senses and bring the poor fish back where it came from.

Jeff

It's not a fish, David. It's a mammal. Just like you or I. How would you like to spend your entire life in a 10 by 10 cell? Never again to roam the high seas as your nature calls you to.

David

This has gone far enough.

(He begins to slide his chair toward the phone)

Jeff

What are you doing? You can't do this to me. Don't ruin this for me, David. You're always putting me down and mocking my accomplishments.

(David has reached the phone)

No support, no appreciation. You look down on me, since your some hotshot accountant, and I'm just an animal groomer at PetsMart.

(David pushes the phone off of the table)

David, if you were ever my friend, you would try to see that this is my calling, just like accounting is your calling. You wouldn't stand in my way to fulfill my life's ambition.

(David tries to dial the phone with his shoe)

Lisa

I don't want to interrupt your little domestic squabble here, but he's about to blow our cover.

David

(Leaning over)

Someone, anyone. Help me, Shamu's in my swimming pool!

Jeff

Alright, you asked for it, buddy. White, waste him.

(David looks up with horror as Lisa assumes some oddly threatening position)

David

Wait a minute. You can't kill me. Isn't that against your, I don't know, not religion, your, your ideologies!

Lisa

(Drops the pose)

You must have me confused with a humanist. S.L.A.C. is a radical fringe group of Greenpeace, and we're of the opinion that animals mean more than humans do, and we're not above a few human deaths if it means the safety of animals.

(Resumes the pose)

David

Great, leave it to you to get involved with the Animal Hit Squad. Please, don't kill me. Jeff, Jeff, if you let me live, I promise I won't tell a soul. I'll just go to Julie's for the night, and before I come back, you and your radical friends can truck Shamu wherever your bleeding hearts desire. Deal?

(Jeff and Lisa look at each other)

Lisa

You know what I think.

Jeff

He is an innocent bystander, and if he promises he won't tell anyone, then we can trust him.

Lisa

And why should I trust you?

Jeff

Hey, if it's such a problem, then go ahead.

David

Jeff!!

Jeff

All right, let's just knock him out for a little while and try to find Jim and Terry...I mean, Purple and Green.

(Lisa looks at Jeff for a second, then nods)

Lisa

Fine.

(She quickly turns and socks David on the jaw, knocking him unconscious. She then starts to drag the chair away)

Which one's his bedroom.

Jeff

The bigger one. You take him in there, and I'll dump the shrimp into the pool.

(She drags the chair as he picks up the bag of shrimp from the floor. Outside, we hear a loud snort. He screams out the door)

All right, already! I'll be there in a second.

Blackout