

BLUNT FORCE DRAMA

Written by the Borkoshavski Academy Drama Club

SCENE 1

(Lights up on the set for Alice in Wonderland. A few beats of silence before Dr. Ala enters and takes center stage.)

Dr. Ala

Good evening, everyone! I hope you've been enjoying our 2025 spring production of Alice in Wonderland. Unfortunately, I have some very sad news. Heather, who was playing Alice, has fallen horribly ill. As a method actress, she consumed 321 pieces of shrimp. They were spoiled. Seeing as she has fallen horribly ill, and is currently taking a nap outside in the ditch. Please keep her in your thoughts and prayers as she recovers. Thankfully, the show will be able to go on, as her understudy, Heather M. will be going in her place for Act 2. We hope you enjoy-

(Sky runs on stage and whispers something in Dr. Ala's ear.)

Dr. Ala

I am so, so sorry, folks... Heather M. has also fallen horribly, horribly ill. She ate 322 shrimp. I don't get it either, they just kept saying "Trust the process" over and over again? I don't know. Anyways, we will unfortunately not be able to finish tonight's performance. You can find refunds at the door, we are greatly sorry for this—

Elanor (Offstage)

WAIT!!!

(Elanor, dressed as the Mad Hatter enters)

Elanor

We *have* to finish the show! I have to have my big moment!!

(A couple of beats pass)

And, like, the audience deserves to see the rest of the show. Or whatever.

Dr. Ala

But... we don't have an Alice.

Elanor

Nonsense! Anyone can be Alice! Let's just pull someone from the audience!

Dr. Ala

Elanor, I don't think that's—

Elanor

Can. It. Any old *schmuck* can be Alice! So, who wants to be tonight's lucky schmuck?

Dr. Ala

Whatever. Just have fun.

(Dr. Ala exits. Elanor takes off her top hat.)

Elanor

Whoever catches this hat will be our Alice for Act 2! Doesn't that sound fun?? Ready? 1, 2, 3!

(Elanor acts like she's going to throw the hat before running into the audience and placing it on Daphne's head. She then pulls Daphne up on stage, who is wearing a perfect Alice costume.)

Meet our new Alicееееее! What's your name, sport?

Daphne

Hi! I'm Daphne! I'm so excited to be up here, this is my favorite show! I already know all my lines and everything.

Elanor

Great! And look at your outfit! You're perfectly made for this role. Let's get started.

(Daphne sings a little bit of Somewhere Over the Rainbow.)

Elanor

What... What are you doing?

Daphne

The show? Isn't this... The Wizard of Oz?

Elanor

No! No, no, no! THIS IS ALICE IN WONDERLAND! YOU'RE ALICE! YOU'RE IN WONDERLAND! YOU'RE DRESSED AS ALICE FROM ALICE IN WONDERLAND!

Daphne

Oh! No, no... This ol' thing? This is my older sister's, she had a bunch of them.

Elanor

Was... Where is your sister right now?

Daphne

Outside. She got sick.

Elanor

Great. Great. Guess we got a nepo baby Alice. This is great. Look, just- just follow my lead and improvise.

Daphne
Okay!

(Transition to *Alice in Wonderland* scene)

CHESHIRE CAT
Have a seat!

EVERYONE BUT Daphne
No room! There's no room!

Daphne
Huh?

Elanor
No room for you here!

Daphne
There's a chair right here. Unless someone else is sitting here?

(Awkward silence. Daphne sits in the chair.)

MARCH HARE
Have some grape juice!

Daphne
Ehh, I'm not a grape juice fan. Do you have some Dr. Pepper or something?

Elanor
Your hair wants cutting!

Daphne
No it doesn't! I just got it cut!

Elanor
How is a raven like a writing desk?

Daphne
What?

Elanor
How is a raven like a writing desk?

Daphne
What are you even talking about?

Elanor
Nevermind. Let me just pour you some tea.

(Elanor notices that the teapot is missing.)

Elanor
Oh, teapot!

(Nothing.)

Elanor
Oh, teapot!

Ajax
I will go get the teapot, Sir Hatter!

Elanor
Thank you, kindly!

(Ajax exits. A beat passes and then she screams.)

Elanor
What is it?

(Ajax re-enters)

Ajax
He's dead!

Elanor
What!?

Ajax
Olivia! She's dead!

(Elanor goes to investigate. Her and Ajax drag Olivia's body onstage.)

Elanor
Okay, yeah, that's— that's a corpse. Okay. Please remain calm everyone, help is on the way.
BUT THE SHOW MUST GO ON!

(Elanor launches back into the show. Dr. Ala enters.)

Dr. Ala

Elanor! NO! NOO NOO NO NO! WE HAVE TO STOP! THERE IS AN ACTUAL DEAD BODY ON THE STAGE!!

Elanor

NO! I have to have my big moment!

Dr. Ala

Elanor, this is serious! There is a murderer on the loose!

Elanor

It's just one person, broski. It's not that big of a deal.

(She continues. We hear a scream. Sky enters and collapses on the stage.)

ABI

Nope!

(Abi flees. Mr W. looks around and exits to get help.)

Elanor

Ugh, fine. I guess I have no choice.

(She snaps at Ajax)

Detective costumes! We keep them in the back for when these things happen.

(Ajax exits into the offstage closet.)

Daphne

I- How often do these things happen???

Elanor

Like... every other performance...

Daphne

That's disturbing.

Elanor

Your aunt's disturbing!

Daphne
Hey!

Elanor
I'm sorry. (to the audience) Sorry, Daphne's aunt!

(More riffing if needed.)

Daphne
At least we get to be detectives? Yay! But... there's only two costumes here.

Elanor
Oh... no. No no. Me and Ajax are going to be detectives. I've been certified since I took this online course last December, and... she's my assistant. We don't need you anymore. We don't know you. The exit is that way.

(Daphne exits)

Ajax
Shouldn't we just call the R.A. Agents and-

Elanor
No R.A. Agents! Not when Elanor Mothanon Yazzie Hall is on the case!

Ajax
And her assistant, Ajax!

Elanor
But mostly me! Alright, let's investigate!

(Elanor and Ajax survey the stage, probably with a magnifying glass or a notepad.)

Elanor
Just as I suspected! They're both dead!

Ajax
I concur.

(REPEAT CONCUR BIT)

(Agent Simon enters from the house)

Simon
Woah, I haven't seen a crime scene this brutal since the Bite of 87.

Elanor

What are you doing here? (to Ajax) I said no R.A. Agents!

Ajax

I didn't call him!

Simon

You didn't need to. I was in the audience watching the show. I love the theatre. You know, I always wanted to be an actor...

(Music begins to swell as if Simon is about to break into song)

Elanor

Yeah, yeah, and your dad forced you to go to the R.A. Academy and blah blah blah. Now can you please get out of here, I'm on the case!

Simon

I don't think so. This isn't your jurisdiction.

Elanor

Um, everywhere is my jurisdiction! I'm certified, see!

(Ajax pulls out a scrapbook and shows everyone a certificate.)

Simon

Dagnabbit! This is the third time this week. Alright, you two have fun.

(Simon exits. Elanor sees something at the edge of the stage.)

Ajax

This is the most spotless crime scene I've ever seen. I'm not seeing anything.

Elanor

Wait, what's this?

(Elanor grabs the object. It's a large fake whisker from a mask.)

Ajax

Is that a hair?

Elanor

Maybe? It feels kind of like a whisker from an animal or something.

Ajax

Do you think the murderer is a lion? A tiger? A bear?

Daphne (offstage)

Oh my!

Elanor

No, don't be ridiculous! It's obviously a cat. A little orange cat. Perhaps a tabby. We'll send this to the lab and get it looked at. We need to come up with a list of suspects too. Let's start asking some questions.

Ajax

Who are we going to talk to? Everyone here is either dead or they fled in terror.

Elanor

There's gotta be someone we can talk to. You know who was really good at knowing who to interrogate? Lee Claude, my old assistant. Of course, the last case I worked on, it turned out she was the killer all along. I guess it really takes one to know one, huh?

Ajax

That's it! Maybe the way we can track down the killer is to get into the mind of one! We should talk to her.

Elanor

Shhh! I'm thinking!

(Beat)

I've got it! Maybe the way we can track down the killer is to get into the mind of one! We should talk to her.

Ajax (Sarcastically)

Great idea, boss.

Elanor

Thank you! Let's get down to that jail and start asking some questions.

SCENE 2

(A jail cell. Lee paces back and forth. Joey is sitting in a chair behind her.)

Joey

Are you nervous?

Lee

No, I'm just getting in my steps for the day. If anything, *she* should be nervous.

Joey

You're not going to do anything crazy, are you?

Lee

No, I just got my 90 day chip from Murderers Anonymous. I've come too far to relapse.

Joey

Good for you.

(Simon escorts Elanor and Ajax in.)

Simon

Alright, now you better play nice, Claude. I'll be watching you from over here.

(Simon stands off to the side and eats a chicken leg.)

Elanor

Lee.

Lee

Elanor.

Ajax

Ajax!

(Beat. Elanor and Lee look at her.)

I just wanted to be included.

Elanor

Just take notes or something.

Ajax

Okay.

Lee

You look well.

Elanor

You look... fine.

Lee

Thank you, I've been trying a new skincare routine. It's called water. So what brings you here?

Elanor

Two people were murdered at our production of *Alice in Wonderland* a few days ago. Considering that you were my old assistant and that you know a thing or two about theatre related crimes, I figured you could help us out.

Lee

You really think I'd help you out after you put me in here? You know what it's like to be in prison?

Elanor

Well, I saw *Chicago*, and there was a lot of jazz and Fosse choreography, so something like that?

Lee

No! It's a lot of sitting around, with some occasional time in the yard, and some mandatory community service.

Elanor

Well, I'm sure the community service isn't that bad.

Lee

Trust me. It's bad. I have to work... Bingo.

(Lightning crash)

Elanor

Oh I love Bingo! I'm a certified Bingo Lover. See?

(Ajax flashes a Bingo Lover certificate.)

Lee

You have no idea what you're talking about! It's a nightmare! All those old ladies... makes me sick!

Joey

Hey, prison's not that bad. We get three square meals a day.

Lee

Yeah, but they literally feed us squares! Just squares of who knows what!

Elanor

Look, I'm sorry you're here, but I really need your help on this. I need to find who's been doing this and bring them to justice. Think of it like you're helping me out again. Y'know, one more case for old time's sake?

Lee

What's in it for me?

Elanor (Searches pockets)

I have some lint!

Lee

Ew!

Elanor

I can get you some of Agent Simon's chicken!

(Simon growls at her)

Nevermind.

Lee

You're going to have to do better than that.

Elanor

I can give you a full pardon?

Lee

Nah, I need something better.

Elanor (Still searching)

Aha! A Barnes & Noble gift card! I think I still have a couple of dollars left on it.

Lee

I'll take it! I can get a bookmark with this!

Elanor

Yay! Elanor and Lee are back in action!

Ajax

And Ajax!

Elanor

Sure, sure. Okay, let's start with some questions. Question 1: How's it going?

Lee

Really?

Elanor

What? It's been so long, I'm just wanting to catch up with you.

Lee

Just get right to the case. Tell me more about what happened the night of the show.

Elanor

Well, everything was going great until our Alice and her understudy got sick. We had to pick an Alice from the audience, and-

(Daphne enters)

Daphne

Where's the exit again?

Elanor

That way!

Daphne

Thanks!

(Daphne exits)

Elanor

Anyway, the teapot wasn't set for the scene. So I called for it and nothing happened. Ajax went to get it, and she found our stagehand, Olivia, dead. And then a few minutes later, Sky, our other stagehand, died. We think it might be someone who has it out for stagehands.

Lee

That's mad suspicious, yo. But I don't know anyone who has beef with stagehands.

Joey

I had beef with stagehands once!

Elanor

Really? What happened?

Joey

Nothing crazy. I was over at a friend's house and her mom made it for dinner. It was delicious.

Ajax

I think that's beef stroganoff.

Joey

Oh, yeah! That's what it was.

Elanor

So you don't have anything against stagehands?

Joey

Nope. But I'll tell you who I do have a problem with.

(Beat)

RATS! I hate rats. They just-

Elanor

We don't have time for this!

Lee

Ignore her. Did you find anything at the crime scene?

Elanor

Not really. The only thing we found was this random hair, but it was fake. It kind of looked like a whisker or something.

Lee

A whisker?

Elanor

Yeah. That's such a weird word. Whisk-er. It sounds even funnier if you say in a southern accent. Whisker.

(Everyone but Lee begins to say whisker in a funny voice. She then has an epiphany.)

Lee

Wait! I think I know who it may be.

Elanor

Really? Who?

Lee

There's this mysterious masked criminal I've been hearing people talk about. They call her the Rat King.

Joey

Rats?

Lee

Shhh! They say she's a mad scientist. She's done a bunch of experiments and they've never gone well. Legend has it that the failure got to her head and she had a mental breakdown. At first, she was just doing petty crimes, shoplifting, vandalism, ripping tags off of mattresses... But now, I guess she's murdering people.

Joey

Don't forget about Sleat!

Elanor

Sleat?

Joey

Yeah, Sleat!

Ajax

Like that stuff that's somewhere between rain and snow?

Joey

No, no, Sleat is-

Lee

This isn't important right now. We don't have time to talk about "Sleat". We need to figure out why the Rat King would be targeting a high school theatre group.

Elanor

This just isn't adding up. What else do you know about this Rat King?

Simon

Alright. Visiting hours are over.

Elanor

It's only been a few minutes!

Simon

That's not my problem! You two showed up late!

Elanor

We had to have our pre-interrogation high tea!

(Elanor and Ajax curtsey in unison.)

Simon

Ooh, Fancypants Rich McGee over here!

Elanor

Hey, you can't talk to me that way! I'm a Detective! And a Park Ranger! And a Dentist!

Simon

That's nice and all, but rules are rules. You two can come back tomorrow.

Elanor

Fine.

(To Lee) See if you can get some more intel on The Rat King.

Joey

Rats!

Elanor

Is he always like that?

Lee

Yes. But I'll see what I can find.

Elanor

Thanks. It's good to be working with you again.

Lee

You too.

Elanor

Come along, Ajax. We've got to see if Dr. Ala has any info that can help us.

(Blackout)

SCENE 3

(Dr. Ala enters and sits in a chair.)

Dr. Ala

Why? Why does this always happen? I just wanted to put on a good show, no issues or anything, and what do I get? The stage is a crime scene, two students are dead, and two other students are suffering from food poisoning from all that shrimp they ate. This is a nightmare. Maybe it's a sign. Maybe I need to return to my real passion in life: ducks. Ducks are majestic, noble creatures, and they would never murder each other... I think. Maybe it's time to open up that duck sanctuary I've always dreamed of. A place that makes The Peabody look like a Motel 6. But with a nice field where they can run around, and a big pond where they can swim. People can adopt them if they want, or they can just hang out and feed them. And I'd have a gift shop filled with duck related merchandise. And rubber ducks! And with the money I make, I can buy

Dr. Ala (Cont.)

more rubber ducks for my own personal collection! It's perfect, just me, my real ducks, and my rubber ducks living together in peace. What a life.

(Mary sneaks up behind Dr. Ala and kills him. Shortly after, Elanor and Ajax enter.)

Elanor

And that's how I almost out-pizza'd the Hut.

Ajax

That's... gross.

(They both see Dr. Ala's dead body)

Elanor

Okay Dr. Ala, let's get this interrogation over with. Where were you on the night of the 4th?

(Silence)

Elanor

Oh, not talking, huh. Don't make me call in my partner, she's the bad cop in this situation.

Ajax

Um, Elanor...

Elanor

Yeah, she's crazy! You don't wanna mess with her!

Ajax

I think he's-

Elanor

Go on, get 'em Tiger!

(Elanor pushes Ajax towards the body)

Ajax

But he's-

Elanor

You're embarrassing me! Come on!

Ajax

Uh, hey punk? You think you're funny, don't you? Just laying there, definitely alive and not dead?

Elanor

Ugh, fine! I'll be bad cop today.

(She shakes Dr. Ala)

Tell us everything you little-

(She realizes he's dead)

Elanor

Oh. He's...

Ajax

What do we do now?

Elanor

I don't know.

(Beat)

You want Raising Cane's for dinner tonight?

Ajax

Elanor! Our teacher is dead!

Elanor

Right, right that's sad and all, but I'm hangry. Let's look for clues.

(They investigate.)

Ajax

Is this... a piece of cheese?

Elanor

Food!

(Elanor grabs the cheese out of Ajax's hand.)

Ajax

Elanor! No!

Elanor
I'm hangry!

Ajax
Elanor. Put the cheese down. You don't want it. It's been here for who knows how long.
(Elanor acts like she's about to eat the cheese.)

Ajax
Drop it. Drop it.

(Elanor puts the cheese down.)

Ajax
Good, now lets continue.

(Elanor eats the cheese. Ajax finds a tuft of hair)

Ajax
Ew, what's this?

(Elanor tests the hair in some way.)

Elanor
That's goblin hair.

Ajax
Goblin?

Elanor
Yeah, I'm working on my Goblin hair identification certification.

Ajax
Wait, goblins are real?

Elanor
Duh!

Ajax
Okay then.

Elanor
We have to get back to Lee. Surely, she can help point us in the right direction.

SCENE 4

(Darkness. Cell Block Bingo begins as the lights come back on.)

Lee
B 12

PRISONER #1
I 34

PRISONER #2
N 47

Joey
G 21

PRISONER #3
O 3

Simon
And now the 5 Evil Inmates of the Angelgrove County Jail in their rendition of Cell Block Bingo

Lee
B 12

PRISONER #1
I 34

PRISONER #2
N 47

Joey
G 21

PRISONER #3
O 3

EVERYONE
We wanna win it
We wanna win it
We wanna take it all tonight
If you had seen it you would have known
that we're gonna take that Bingo prize

Lee

You now how old people just love Bingo

And they get really competitive about it?

Like Gladys, Gladys likes Bingo

No, not likes, LOVES

So I come in one day to Bingo

And there she is in MY Bingo chair with MY lucky Bingo card

And So I told her "Gladys, this is the 3rd time you 've stolen my lucky card this week. If you do this one more time, I swear..."

And she did

So I took A Bingo ball and I shoved it... I shoved down her stupid bingo loving throat.

EVERYONE

We wanna win it

We wanna win it

We wanna take it all tonight

If you had seen it you would have known

that we are gonna take that Bingo prize

PRISONER #1

I met Martha about 2 years before I ended up in this prison.

She was great. She told me she loved Bingo.

We were just perfect for each other, hit it off right away.

So we started going to bingo night at the old nursing home down on main street.

We would go and she would always run to the bathroom and miss the entire game.

Said it was constipation. Yeah right, loved bingo my butt... So I gave her something to really be constipated about.

EVERYONE

We wanna win it

We wanna win it

We wanna take it all tonight

If you had seen it you would have known

that we are gonna take that Bingo prize

PRISONER #2

(Ad-libs random languages and occasionally adds in "Bingo". The music stops and everyone looks at her.)

Lee

Who even are you? What are you even saying? Get out!

(Prisoner leaves)

Lee

Who even was that girl?

Joey

I have no clue. She just kinda shows up and starts angrily saying a bunch of stuff in other languages.

PRISONER #3

Anyways...

EVERYONE

We wanna win it

We wanna win it

We wanna take it all tonight

If you had seen it you would have known
that we are gonna take that bingo prize

Joey

Now I'm standing in the sewer just splashing around minding my own business and in storms an army of RATS! Just going "skwek skweakkkk" with their crazy little eyes crazy i was crazy onc-

Lee

Okay, okay, enough of that. (Lee drags Joey off stage then comes back.)

Lee

Okay let's continue on 3

1

2

3 -

Elanor

Hey, what's going on here? Can I join? I'm a Certified Bingo Lover, so don't worry!

Lee

OH MY FREAKING GOSH YOU HAVE TO BE KIDDING ME! (to the other prisoners) Go back to your cells. The show's over. It's been ruined.

(The Prisoners exit, except Prisoner #3)

PRISONER #3

Wait! Hey! I didn't get to do my special part! This always happens.

Lee

I don't care, just go! (very angrily)

(Prisoner #3 storms off stage in a pout.)

Elanor

So prison IS like *Chicago*!

Lee

No it- What are you doing here?

Elanor

We found some news on the *Alice in Wonderland* case.

Lee

Alright, spill it. What did you find out?

Elanor

Okay, first things first: Dr. Ala is dead.

Lee

Really?

Elanor

Yeah, it looks like he's the Rat King's latest victim. We got there shortly after the murder, and we found this.

(Ajax pulls out the tuft of hair.)

Lee

More hair?

Elanor

And some cheese, but... I ate it.

Ajax

Elanor!

Elanor

What? I was hangry!

Joey

Is that goblin hair?

Lee

That's definitely goblin hair.

Ajax

Did everyone else know that goblins were real except me?

EVERYONE

Yeah, of course, other ad-libs, etc.

Elanor

Do you happen to know any goblins?

Lee

No, but surely there's someone out there who's a goblin expert.

Joey

I used to work for a goblin expert!

Elanor

Look, we don't have time for your crazy ramblings right now!

Joey

No, I actually did! I worked at a research facility before I got locked up in here. My boss was studying goblins to find a cure for cancer. She believed that they had some kind of curative powers. I worked with her because as you all know I can't stand rats.

(Beat)

RATS!

(Joey slaps himself and regains composure.)

Sorry. Anyway, we did all these experiments, but none of them worked. The head of the research center pulled our funding, and that was that. The next day, I came in to collect my things and the lab was a wreck. Seems my old boss trashed the place and took one of the goblins with her. It was wild.

Elanor

Do you remember her name?

Joey

Sure, the goblin's name was (ad-lib horrible noise). But we called her Sleat.

Elanor

Not the goblin- Wait, Sleat is a Goblin?

Joey

Of course she is! Anyway, last I heard, she's been committing a bunch of crimes.

Elanor

Do you think it's possible that your old boss might be the Rat King?

Joey

Well, yeah. That's because she is the Rat King.

Elanor

Why didn't you tell us sooner?

Joey

You never asked.

Elanor

For crying out- What was your boss's name?

Joey

It was... Elaine? Edgar? No, Mary!

Elanor

Looks like we need to pay this Mary a visit. Let's go!

(Elanor and Ajax exit.)

Lee

What are you in here for again?

Joey

I wanna say... arson?

(Blackout)

SCENE 5

(Mary enters. She's tired after a hard day of murdering. She looks around for a glass of buttermilk. It isn't there.)

Mary

Sleat! Where is my buttermilk?

Sleat (offstage)
What?!?

Mary
My buttermilk, Sleat! You know I like to have a nice glass of buttermilk when I get home from work!

Sleat (offstage)
I don't know, have you checked the fridge?

(Mary and Sleat riff. We are also introduced to Leviticus the dogboy in this scene.)

(There's a knock at the door.)

Mary
Coming! Leviticus! Back to your kennel!

(Leviticus goes to his kennel. Mary opens the door.)

Elanor
Hi, I'm Detective Elanor Hall and this is my assistant, Ajax. Are you Mary?

Mary
Yes, is everything okay?

Elanor
No, we just need to ask you a few questions. May we come in?

Mary
Of course, please. May I offer you two some refreshments?

Ajax
That won't be-

Elanor
You wouldn't happen to have a 3 Finger Combo with extra Cane's sauce, would ya?

Mary
No, but I did just make a huge pitcher of my famous punch.

Elanor
That sounds lovely. We'll both take some please.

Mary

Two punches coming up! I'll be right back.

(Mary exits)

Elanor

This is an... interesting place you've got here.

Mary (offstage)

Thanks! It used to be a stage!

Elanor

Oh!

(Mary returns with drinks.)

Elanor

Thank you!

Ajax

Thanks.

Mary

So, you were saying something about some questions?

Elanor

Yes. Did you by any chance happen to see the Borkoshavski Academy production of *Alice in Wonderland*?

Mary

Oh no, I wanted to go, but my dogboy- I mean, my dog and my boy got sick.

Elanor

You have a child?

Mary

No, I mean my boy as in my friend, my pal, my bro!

Elanor

I see.

(Takes a drink)

Elanor

So you wouldn't know about what happened that night?

Mary

I don't think so. I'm kind of off the grid these days.

Elanor

Gotcha.

(Takes another drink)

Elanor

This is some interesting punch. I'm getting notes of something that I can't place. I'm getting cherry, citrus, pineapple...

Mary

You're probably tasting my secret ingredient: sleeping pills.

Elanor

Sleeping pills! That's what it is.

(Elanor and Ajax immediately pass out. Blackout)

SCENE 6

(Elanor and Ajax are tied up. Mary enters with the rat mask and begins monologuing, but we can't understand her.)

Ajax

What?

(Mary tries again.)

Elanor

We can't understand you.

(Mary adjusts the mask.)

Mary

Is this good?

Elanor

Yes, we can hear you.

Mary

Good...

Mary (Cont.)

You're quite the detective, Letitia. I'll have to give you that. You've managed to find your evidence, your suspect, all the victims... You've done quite nicely, you know. But there's just one thing left for you to discover...

My motive. Why did I do all of the things I did?

Elanor

Because you're a psychopath. You're a monster!

Mary

WRONG! Monsters are creatures of fable, and I assure you, I am very, very real... Why do you think I chose a rat mask, Letitia? Do you think it was arbitrary? A horrifying animal of the night?

No... I chose the rat mask because it represents myself...

It represents a puppet in a larger scheme. Each rat performs its specific job...

Elanor

Uh—

Mary

All in servitude of a queen... RAISED FROM LARVAE to defend...

Elanor

Ants.

Mary

What?

Elanor

That's ants. You're thinking of ants.

Mary

O- Oh. Well, no matter! It's the third act anyways!

Elanor

And that's— That's another thing, dude, Alice in Wonderland was over like— 30 minutes ago. There's no play anymore.

Mary

Oh, Letitia! That's where you're wrong! Don't you get it, don't you get any of it? Look at THEM!

(Mary gestures towards the audience.)

Look at that audience! Watching this all unfold! Ever wonder why none of them helped you?
Ever wonder why only one R.A. Agent arrived at the scene? Because it's all an act!

Elanor

N- No! That's impossible!

Mary

Very. Possible. Letitia. I was like you, once... Numb. Brainwashed. Performing in these stupid, terrible plays, not knowing any better! And then...

(Mary removes the mask, fully, revealing her identity.)

Elanor and Ajax

Mary CROSS FROM THE BORKOSHAVSKI ACADEMY 1999 DRAMA CLUB SHOWCASE
FINAL ACT!?!?!

Mary

YES! It's true... The only poison I was fed was the knowledge of truth! That even this, here, is an act! That in show business, NOTHING ever goes wrong! And as I realized this truth, as I realized we are all puppets on a stage, Letitia, I realized who these puppeteers were. Directors. Stagehands. All the people who work tirelessly... day in and day out... to give us a production, to put on a show for them! THEY'RE THE REAL MONSTERS!

But as I took out our director... We weren't free. I suppose, as you always said... The show must go on...

And I realized what we REALLY need. I'm going to do exactly what needs to be done.

(Mary makes her way over to a large object covered by a sheet.)

Elanor

Please, Mary! You're my friend! You can't do this!

Mary

I'm doing this BECAUSE you're my friend... You see, before all of this, before we were trapped within this show, I was once a strapping young actor... passionate and full of life... And I've retained that, you see! And for this monumental occasion, I've prepared something special...

SONG - SHOWSTOPPIN' NUMBER

Mary (Sung)

It's a showstoppin' number.

A real showstopper.

A show stoppin' number, come on.

Something to shock 'em,

To bring them a-crawlin'.

A big time box office draw.

With the press and the glamour,
We'll kill the reviews.
Spotlight on Mr. Ingenue.
So fill up your tumbler...
Got a show stopping number for you!

A showstoppin' number
Is something you die for.
A real catchy ear-wormy tune.

An award-winning score
That seeps in and out of your pores.
A ditty to make the chorus girls swoon!
It'll unify humanity
In a thundering chorus!
No exits in this Broadway venue.
So splash those shiny cymbals...
Got a show stopping hymnal for you!

(Spoken)

This song's pretty good, huh? Bet you didn't know I was also a composer! In fact, between my many grizzly murders, I've also been writing my own play! Do you mind if I give you the pitch?

Elanor

We really don't have time for—

Ajax

Frickin' go for it, dude!

Mary

It's called "The Rat Monologues," and it's based off of a true story of an old buddy of mine. It is the story of a broken and shattered man, tormented by plagues of rats within a psychiatric ward... But the rats are metaphors, you see!

Ajax

For what?

Mary

His mother's suffocating love! A pet hamster he accidentally put in the microwave! And perhaps, worst of all... A pet hamster he accidentally put in the microwave! I bailed an ol' pal of mine out of maximum security to perform it...

(Joey enters and performs the monologue. Does some riffing with Elanor, before Mary comes back in, guns ablazing.

Mary (sung)
A showstoppin' number!
A real showstopper!
An aria to rule them all!
They'll throw us their money
At full price admission.
The world will come crumbling down.
Phantom of the Opera!
Your new competition's in town!

Elanor
You're sick! You can't do this!

Mary
Watch me! By the way, there was also poison in your drinks. Bye bye.

(Mary leaves)

Ajax
Well, if this is the end, I just want to tell you that it has been an honor working alongside you.

Elanor
Ditto. Also, I have to make a confession. You know those certificates?

Ajax
They're all fake, aren't they? I knew it!

Elanor
No, they're all real! I just stole money from you to pay for them.

Ajax
That's why I'm in so much debt! If we get out of this, I swear-

(Elanor and Ajax succumb to the poison. A couple of beats pass. Elanor springs back to life.)

Elanor
I knew drinking a tiny bit of poison every day for seven years would pay off someday! Just like in *The Princess Bride*! Come on, Ajax!

(Ajax doesn't move)

Elanor
Ajax?

(Nothing.)

Elanor
You're such a prankster, you! And I was definitely kidding about the whole money thing too.

(Elanor tries to move, but struggles)

Elanor
I guess she's napping. Oh well! There's gotta be some way I can get out of here.

(Sleat enters)

Sleat
What is up, original gangsters!

Elanor
Help!

Sleat
Oh no! You're all tied up!

Elanor
Yeah, can you help me!

Sleat
Sure, just give me a second.

Elanor
We don't have much time!

Sleat
Okay, fine.

Elanor
Hurry!

Sleat
So what's your name?

Elanor
Elanor.

Sleat

What an interesting name! Do you have any hobbies?

Elanor

So many, but I don't have time to get into them now.

Sleat

I've been getting really into painting lately. We should have a painting night some time!

Elanor

Sure, we can definitely do that.

(Sleat finishes untying Elanor.)

Sleat

Well, there ya go!

Elanor

Thank you! What's your name?

Sleat

I... am Sleat! So are we like best friends now or something?

Elanor

Yeah, yeah. Sure. Where is Mary?

Sleat

Oh she's upstairs getting ready for work. Do you want to hang out? We could watch a movie! Have you ever heard of *Whiplash*?

Elanor

Later, Sleat. I just need to talk to Mary.

Sleat

Alright, well I'll be right here!

(Elanor exits. Sleat stares out at the audience. Blackout.)

SCENE 7

(Mary is preparing for her next job. Elanor enters.)

Elanor

Freeze! You are under arrest!

Mary

You can't arrest me! You're not a real detective!

Elanor

That's what you think! I'm certified!

(Points at where Ajax normally would be)

Elanor

Oh, that's right. Well anyway, you're going away for a long time.

Mary

You'll have to catch me first!

(Scooby-Doo style chase sequence. Daphne reappears and accidentally knocks Mary out.)

Daphne

Which way was the exit again?

Elanor (pointing to the exit)

That way!

Daphne

Thank you!

[Mary trips onto the ground, stumbling, asking for her glasses. Elanor remembers that she has an Maryinator.]

(Daphne exits. Agent Simon enters)

Simon

Well, I'll be. You did it.

Elanor

Yup! I did it! I solved the case and took her down! Cuff her, boys!

Simon

It's just me, but okay!

(Simon takes Mary offstage. Mary comes to and yells something at Elanor)

Elanor

Well, another case solved!

(Sleat enters holding Ajax's detective costume.)

Sleat

Hey, can we play detectives?

Elanor

Well, I guess I do need a new assistant now. How about we be detectives for real?

(Elanor ceremoniously puts the detective hat on Sleat)

Sleat

It's like a dream come true!

Elanor

Yeah. Is it me? Or do I feel a song coming on?

(Dance party ending. Everyone dances. At the end, Ajax enters, looking angry. The music stops.)

Elanor

Ajax! You're alive! It's a miracle!

Ajax

You've already replaced me?

Elanor

It's not what it looks like.

Sleat

Hi, I'm Sleat! I'm Elanor's best friend!

Ajax

I can't believe you'd do this! I can never forgive you!

Sleat

What's her problem?

Elanor

Don't worry about it, Sleat.

(Beat)

Look, you can both be my assistants. We'll have to get a new detective costume, but that's an easy fix. What do you say, Ajax? Take me back?

Ajax

I don't know.

Elanor

I'll buy us all Raising Cane's for dinner?

Ajax

Oh, I can't stay mad at you! We just had an existential crisis together!

Elanor

Yes! And we're not gonna think about that tonight! Winner winner chicken dinner!

(Awkward freeze frame. Everyone else is able to move, but Elanor is frozen. They all ad-lib as the lights dim.)

END OF PLAY