

KINGSBURY CASTLE

A COMEDY IN TWO ACTS

By Geff Moyer

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PUBLISHED BY

HEUER PUBLISHING LLC

P.O. BOX 248 • CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA 52406

TOLL FREE (800) 950-7529 • FAX (319) 368-8011

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By Geff Moyer

SYNOPSIS: Kingsbury Castle has its secrets. When Bonnelia Kingsbury, a young lawyer from Kansas, travels to England to handle the sale of her grandfather's inheritance - - Kingsbury Castle - - she intends to complete her duties as quickly as possible and return to her busy life. Impatient and loaded down with cases, Bonnelia soon discovers that she will be forced to stay a few days while the sale goes through. She settles in for a boring week at her family's ancestral estate, but the ghosts of her ancestors that are still living in the castle and a devious plot to raze the castle soon conspire to interrupt her peace and quiet. The ghosts' zany antics and Bonnelia's scramble to have the castle declared a historical landmark won't fail to entertain, as she and the audience learn a laughing, lasting lesson about the importance of family and tradition.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(6 MEN, 4 WOMEN)

PADERRY (m)..... A fastidious and slightly effeminate contemporary British man in his mid-to-late twenties.

EMRO KINGSBURY (m) A mid-fifties British gentleman of the Edwardian age and a ghost.

PENELOPE KINGSBURY (f)..... A thirty-something, robust, bawdy, British woman of the eighteenth century and a ghost.

SIR RODNEY RAVINS (m)..... A contemporary British country gentleman, fifties, complete with tweed sport coat.

MRS. BERNICE THATCHER (f) . A contemporary British businesswoman in her fifties.

BONNELIA KINGSBURY (f) A contemporary American lawyer in her late-twenties or early thirties.

ANDREW KINGSBURY (m)..... Eleven-to-thirteen year old British lad of the sixteenth century and a ghost.

AUDRA KINGSBURY (f)..... Eleven-to-thirteen year old British lass of the sixteenth century and a ghost.

DRAWDUST (m)..... A contemporary, low-life, sardonic villain with a strong cockney accent.

DENNY (m) A contemporary, low-life, dim-witted villain with a strong cockney accent.

SETTING

A castle in England

TIME: Present

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Act One, Scene One: Wednesday afternoon

Act One, Scene Two: A short time later

Act One, Scene Three: Wednesday evening

Act Two, Scene One: Late Friday afternoon

Act Two, Scene Two: Saturday morning

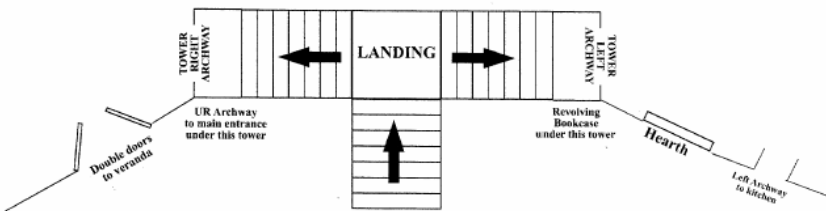
SET

The main room of a sixteenth century castle about one-hundred miles west of London. It is not Camelot, nor Buckingham Palace; just a fine, old assemblage of stone, heavy wood, and mortar. Up until the early twentieth century, it had always housed a descendant of the Kingsbury family. From that time until just a few years ago, the castle had been leased to various tenants by the last surviving British Kingsbury.

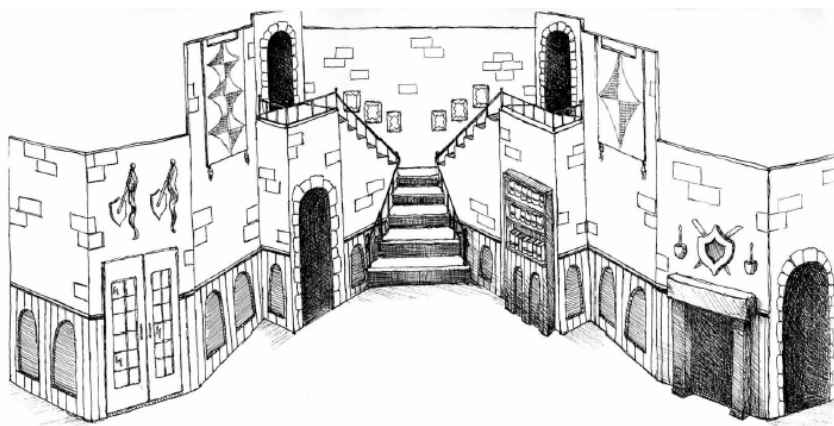
KINGSBURY CASTLE

UR is an archway that leads to the main entry hall and entrance, drawbridge and moat. UC is a staircase leading up to a landing. At the landing, the staircase splits to two more staircases leading UR and UL, both culminating at two archways, which lead off to the bedrooms. Along the wall of the landing are various portraits of past Kingsburys, dating from the sixteenth century to the Victorian age. UL is a large hearth with a mantle. Over the hearth are two candelabras on each side of the Kingsbury coat-of-arms. Next to the hearth is a large, well-stocked bookcase (which must revolve). SL is an archway leading to the kitchen area. SR are double French doors leading to the veranda. Furniture on stage should be Victorian period and consist of a settee, a high-backed chair, one or two smaller chairs, three small tables (one of which must be positioned against a wall for a later special effect), and an old phonograph player. Positioned on one of the tables is a vase. Placed on one of the chairs is a long length of old rope. Placed in another chair is a half-devoured loaf of bread.

See below for visuals:



Set diagram for Kingsbury Castle



PROPERTIES

- ☐ Manila file and papers
- ☐ Pruning shears
- ☐ Briefcase
- ☐ Tea serving and tray
- ☐ Small sandwiches
- ☐ Brandy and snifter
- ☐ Broadsword
- ☐ Battleaxe
- ☐ Old tin coffee pot and cups
- ☐ Portable CD player and earphones
- ☐ Mace (weapon)
- ☐ Turkey leg
- ☐ Daisy
- ☐ Three roses
- ☐ Wine bottle and glasses
- ☐ Men's underwear
- ☐ Fake mace spray
- ☐ Contract papers
- ☐ Bag of groceries
- ☐ Bowl of chili
- ☐ Pitcher of water
- ☐ Crossbow and arrows
- ☐ Bowl of fruit

KINGSBURY CASTLE

ACT ONE, SCENE 1

AT RISE:

In the darkness, "The Blue Danube" plays and continues as lights come up. PADERRY enters from the double doors carrying a red rose. He is in his twenties and slightly effeminate in his actions. He wears blue jeans, a western-style shirt and cowboy boots plus a well-placed, colorful kerchief tied neatly around his neck. He glares at the phonograph, glances about the room, then crosses and turns off the music. Humming "Don't Fence Me In," he crosses to the table with the vase and slips the rose into it, admiring its beauty and his perfect placement. He sees the bread on the chair, disgustingly scoops it up and exits SL archway to kitchen.

EMRO KINGSBURY enters from UR archway carrying an old, dusty bottle of wine. He is a classic Victorian English gentleman in his early fifties, still rather dashing, and wears a handsome smoking jacket with a daisy in its lapel. Upon spotting the rose, EMRO crosses to it and exchanges his daisy for the rose. He crosses to the bookcase, removes a book and starts up the staircase. As he is ascending, he waves his hand slightly and "The Blue Danube" begins playing again. He exits the archway at the top of the UL stairs.

After a moment, PADERRY peeks out of the SL archway. He glances about the room, then haughtily crosses to the phonograph and purposefully drags the needle across the record and smiles. The music stops.

PADERRY: Take that, Strauss! (He notices his rose is now a daisy.) What!? What!? (With a gunfighter's quickness, he extracts a pair of pruning shears from his pocket, twirls them, and abruptly exits through the double doors.). Fine!

As he is exiting through one double door, PENELOPE KINGSBURY enters through the other. PADERRY stops for a moment, baffled as to why the other door also opened, shrugs and exits.

PENELOPE KINGSBURY is a robust woman in her thirties. She wears a skirt and top typical of the late eighteenth century. She is gnawing on a turkey drumstick. PENELOPE crosses to the bookcase and turns it around. Hanging on the back of the bookcase are various pairs of men's undergarments dating from the eighteenth century through modern day. She pulls a pair of colored Jockey shorts from her blouse and places them among her collection, then turns the bookcase back to its normal position. As she starts to exit SL archway, she notices the daisy in the vase, crosses to it and sticks in her cleavage . . . leaving the drumstick in the vase. She exits SL archway to kitchen as PADERRY enters double doors with a freshly cut rose. He crosses to the vase and discovers the drumstick.

PADERRY: Ooooooh!

He replaces the drumstick with the rose. SIR RODNEY RAVINS enters from UR archway. RAVINS is a wealthy, English, country Squire, complete with tweed jacket, etc. He is in his fifties and carries a handful of documents.

RAVINS: PaDerry, I seem to be missing. . .

PADERRY: A drumstick!?

RAVINS: I beg your pardon.

PADERRY: Or was it some bread?

RAVINS: What?

PADERRY: Perhaps the wine bottle in the bidet.

RAVINS: Have you been drinking the cleaning fluid again?

PADERRY: And that god awful Strauss! Mozart, fine! Chopin, fine! Even Slim Whitman! But not Strauss! I was not hired to be harassed like . . .

RAVINS: You were not "hired" at all! Or have you forgotten the court order?

PADERRY: That magistrate did not say I had to be the brunt of your silly pranks.

RAVINS: I have no idea what you're talking about.

PADERRY: Of course not!

RAVINS: (*Sorting papers.*) I seem to be missing a very important document. It was in here . . . (*PADERRY pulls a paper from his pocket and extends it to RAVINS.*) Once again your hands have been some place they shouldn't have been. Didn't you learn anything from your venture with the stereo in my auto?

PADERRY: If you'll recall, when you discovered my "venture," the stereo was no longer in your auto.

RAVINS: That's why I had the magistrate turn those very adept hands of yours over to me. But I do not like them used to pilfer my pockets.

PADERRY: Actually, I found it lying on the kitchen floor, next to a half-eaten ear of corn.

RAVINS: Of course you did. And so you read it.

PADERRY: How else was I to find out to whom it belonged?

RAVINS: Since we are only two people in this castle, I take it the process of elimination never entered your mind.

PADERRY: Oh, indeed! While I was cleaning up the corn.

RAVINS: And?

PADERRY: Well, I just briefly glanced at it!

RAVINS: I'm sure.

PADERRY: China clay. Which, according to the Britannica - - stellar reference source - - is used in the making of fine porcelains and rather expensive types of paper.

RAVINS: Curiosity kills, my good man.

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PADERRY: Consider me bound, blind and gagged.

RAVINS: Lovely thought.

RAVINS starts to exit SL archway.

PADERRY: After all, when an employer benefits, so do the employees. Not to the magnitude of the former, of course, but a little something usually trickles down.

RAVINS: This is England. We don't trickle. And just in case today's events do not proceed as expected, ring up Drawdust and Denny and place them on alert.

PADERRY: Ooh! Must we?

RAVINS: Insurance, my boy. Insurance.

PADERRY: They give me the willies.

RAVINS: Yes, they've been known to do that.

PADERRY: Drawdust with that one, long, hideous eyebrow right across his head. And he talks to it. He calls it "Herbert."

RAVINS: We all have our quirks. *(With a mocking Texas drawl.)* Right, Pardner?

PADERRY: But it moves by itself. One minute it's here, then here, then here . . . I don't think it's an eyebrow at all. I think it's some kind of horrid pet.

RAVINS: Ring them up!

PADERRY: And Denny!? He has the I.Q. of a stump. After that last incident when they shaved the head of that ninety-year-old nanny just to get you that silly rocking chair, I said enough . . .

RAVINS: That "silly old rocking chair" was a 1793 Hepplewhite. And that old biddy was actually rocking in it. Plopping her ninety-year-old buttocks into a 1793 Hepplewhite.

PADERRY: Which you sold a week later for two thousand pounds.

RAVINS: To a museum which will never again allow it to be defaced by an unworthy buttock. Business, PaDerry! Such as this piece of paper, which represents a multi-million pound business venture. Can your spongy brain visualize that many zeroes? Work on it! And while you're at it, ring up Drawdust and Denny. *(Starts toward SL archway and sees rope on chair.)* I told you to repair the front bell. You will cease the ridiculous rope tricks and do it!

PADERRY: They are not tricks! I am a lassoose!

RAVINS: Then go "lassoose" up some tea. Thatcher and the American woman will be arriving soon. Oh, and when they do . . . no cowboy talk!!!

PADERRY: Oh, now . . .

RAVINS: *(Exiting.)* Every time we meet an American, you go on about Wild Bill Earp and Buffalo James and . . .

PADERRY: *(Following RAVINS out SL archway.)* I'll have you know that legends were born in the great American West! Three-Fingered Dave, Six-Toed Pete, One-Eyed Hank, No Nose Nellie, Flat Head Frank . . .

They exit. We hear MRS. THATCHER's voice offstage right.

THATCHER: I do apologize for the front bell. Sir Rodney was supposed to have it repaired. All right now, cover your eyes!

BONNELIA: *(From offstage right.)* Mrs. Thatcher, this really isn't necessary.

THATCHER: Now, you promised! Cover your eyes. *(She peeks in through UR archway.)* Must get the full effect, you know.

BONNELIA: *(Sighs.)* All right!

MRS. THATCHER enters. She is an English woman in her fifties. Her outfit is modern but modest.

THATCHER: Are they covered?

BONNELIA: *(Still offstage right.)* Yes.

THATCHER: All right, come on then. That's it. Just follow your nose. Don't peek now! Straight . . . oh, watch out for . . . *(A crash is heard offstage right.)*

BONNELIA: Oh, no . . .

MRS. THATCHER goes and grabs BONNELIA and leads her onto the stage with her hand covering BONNELIA'S eyes.

THATCHER: Now, now, it was only a vase. There're at least two more like it in the world.

BONNELIA: What!?

THATCHER: Just kidding. A little real estate humor. *(Stops BONNELIA in center of room.)* Are you ready?

BONNELIA: On the edge of my seat.

She removes her hand from BONNELIA'S eyes.

THATCHER: TA-DAH! Well? Isn't it just the essence of everything British?

BONNELIA looks around the room. She is in her early thirties, American, dressed in a conservative business suit.

BONNELIA: I think I saw it in an Errol Flynn movie.

THATCHER: He was Australian. It was built in the sixteenth century, during the Tudor reign. You have heard of Henry the Eighth?

BONNELIA: Made divorce a household word, right?

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THATCHER: Which does keep you barristers in BMWs. It was renovated in the 1890s - - hot and cold running water, flushing privies. Electricity was added by Major Robert Kingsbury, the last Kingsbury to live here. The poor man was stabbed by his Chinese mistress . . . during the Boxer Rebellion. Not here! China, of course.

BONNELIA: Of course.

THATCHER: The castle then went to his niece - - Catherine - - who was married to some French artist and lived in one of those disgusting Paris attics those people always seem to find. She rented it to anyone who had the funds - - never paid any taxes since she lived in France. Thus the one hundred and ten-thousand pounds owed. With her death a few years ago, well, you know the rest. That's why you're here.

BONNELIA: And I notice Mr. Ravins isn't.

THATCHER: Uh, there is a portrait of Major Robert. I believe it's . . .

BONNELIA: Mrs. Thatcher, as I said several times on our two hour drive up here, my grandfather is the Kingsbury heir-apparent. He asked me to fly over here and handle this Rodney Ravin's offer to buy the place. There really isn't any need for a sales pitch or tour.

THATCHER: I just thought that since this is your heritage, the home of your ancestors, you might . . .

BONNELIA: My ancestors run a hardware store in Wichita, Kansas. This sooner we conclude this transaction, the sooner I can get back to my firm in Chicago.

THATCHER: But this is where everything began. Where those ancestors in Kansas came from. The very point of conception. Your point of conception.

BONNELIA: Funny, Mom told me it was on the ping-pong table.

THATCHER: We British take great pride in our bloodlines.

BONNELIA: As agent on this property, my selling it gets you a mighty meaty commission. The sooner we do it, the sooner you'll get it. Surely that gets your bloodline pumping.

THATCHER: Well, I've never been one to sneer at a "meaty commission." Especially when it will keep this castle in British hands.

BONNELIA's cell phone chimes.

BONNELIA: Excuse me!

THATCHER: Certainly!

THATCHER exits through the stage left archway.

BONNELIA: *(To phone.)* Bonnelia Kingsbury. *(Pause.)* Charles!? How'd you get this cell number? *(Pause.)* Remind me to fire her. *(Pause. She roams over to double French doors.)* What!? You're where? London? *(PENELOPE comes through revolving bookcase.)* I thought we had an agreement, Charles. You promised me a week or two to myself. *(PENELOPE sees rose and exchanges it for her daisy. BONNELIA turns and sees PENELOPE.)* Oh, please, Charles, if you miss hearing my voice so much, go in my office and play my answering machine. *(She watches PENELOPE exit through double doors.)* Then go play it again.

BONNELIA hangs up cell phone and puzzled, looks out double doors. MRS. THATCHER enters from stage left archway, followed by RAVINS.

THATCHER: Look who I found in the kitchen, of all places.

RAVINS: Miss Kingsbury, I presume.

BONNELIA: Mr. Ravins.

RAVINS: Please, no formalities. Sir Rodney will suffice. My apologies for not greeting you at the door. The front bell rope is the one item my man has yet to repair. Your drive up here was enjoyable, I trust?

BONNELIA: Mrs. Thatcher entertained me.

RAVINS: Ah, yes! She was quite the showgirl in her day, 'ey, Thatch?

THATCHER: "My day" was the time I portrayed an asparagus in our grammar school science play. He still finds that amusing. 'Ey, Roddy?

BONNELIA: Do you have reenactments here?

RAVINS: Reenactments?

THATCHER: Of what, dear?

BONNELIA: Well, I . . . oh, it doesn't matter. *(She crosses to a small table and opens her briefcase.)* In your letter, Mr. Ravins, you stated an interest in purchasing my grandfather's inheritance.

RAVINS: Uh, perhaps you'd like to shake off the drive up here with some tea and . . .

BONNELIA: I'm expected back in Chicago very shortly and have a critical brief to finalize while I'm here. The sooner we settle this, the better.

RAVINS: I say! You Americans! Go, go, go!

BONNELIA: Yes, yes, yes! I took the liberty of drawing up some preliminary papers - - simply a guideline for your attorneys - - barristers - - without a final figure, of course.

RAVINS: Of course.

BONNELIA: Here are my grandfather's papers for citizenship waiver signed and notarized. This is the initial agreement stating that upon signing, you will become the sole owner of the Kingsbury Castle estate. Now, since I am the proxy, all we have to do is settle on the amount.

A pause.

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RAVINS: My ball, I take it.

PADERRY enters from stage left archway carrying a tray complete with tea, cups, and several small sandwiches.

PADERRY: Teatime.

RAVINS: My man, PaDerry.

PADERRY: I took the liberty of rustling up some of my famous cucumber sandwiches. I hope you ladies will like them.

THATCHER: Oh, I say, they look scrumptious.

PADERRY: Be my guest.

THATCHER: *(Taking several.)* I did miss lunch. Must stay regular, you know.

PADERRY: Miss Kingsbury?

BONNELIA: I could use some caffeine.

PADERRY: I take it that is a “yep?”

BONNELIA: Yep.

RAVINS: How does two hundred thousand strike you, Miss Kingsbury? Pounds, of course.

THATCHER chokes on sandwich, then pulls a calculator from her pocket and frantically begins punching numbers.

BONNELIA: Ever heard of Burlingame Castle?

RAVINS: Burlingame?

THATCHER: In Whippleton County?

BONNELIA: Built around the same time as this castle. It sold for two hundred and twenty four thousand with no furnishings. Pounds, of course.

RAVINS: And no back taxes, if my memory recalls . . . which must be paid in order to accept the inheritance. Else, the property goes to the state auction block.

BONNELIA: *(Pulls a slip of paper from briefcase.)* A check for one hundred and ten thousand pounds. To cover the back taxes. We are prepared to accept the inheritance and place the property on the open market. I'm sure we would recoup our investment. And then some.

RAVINS: Amazing. Who would imagine that a hardware store owner from Kansas would have such an impressive bank account. I have done my homework, my dear. Perhaps I should explain why I want Kingsbury Castle.

BONNELIA: Because you own all the land around it? I do homework, too.

RAVINS: We English take our lineage very seriously. Unlike you, I can trace my ancestors back only two hundred years. But for every day of every one of those years, my people have lived, worked and died on our land. You see, it has come to my attention that a certain Mohab Abdulle Shareek is trying to obtain Kingsbury Castle.

BONNELIA: Who's that?

RAVINS: Not "who." What! An Arab, Miss Kingsbury. A very wealthy Arab.

BONNELIA: So?

THATCHER: Well, my dear, you see . . . having one of "them" living in one of our castles would be . . . well . . . it just isn't British.

RAVINS: We are a country with a great and proud heritage, Miss Kingsbury. One which we must retain . . . simply because it is one of the few things this once-powerful island has left. We no longer rule three-quarters of the world. Our voice is not as loud. Our arm not as long. We have accomplished the embarrassing feat of losing the status of world power. But! We are the cradle of the civilized world. Our culture, our religion, morality, pride, our traditions . . . they exist in every great nation on earth.

THATCHER: Well said, Roddy.

RAVINS: Someday, perhaps, the world may wish to return to the cradle . . . and when it does, it must be there . . . ready, willing, with open arms. The traditions must survive.

BONNELIA: At any price?

RAVINS: Absolutely! (*Pause. Realizing.*) Very good, my dear. Very good.

There is a long pause as RAVINS pours himself a glass of brandy and sips.

PADERRY: (*Aside to THATCHER.*) Oh, the tension. You could cut the air with a bowie knife. Reminds me of the night John Wesley Hardin came face to face with his dreaded enemy, Luke Short. They slowly circled the . . .

RAVINS: Three hundred thousand pounds and you pay the back taxes.

BONNELIA: Two hundred and fifty and you pay the back taxes.

RAVINS: (*Pause.*) I shall take your preliminary papers to my barristers and have a finalized contract by Friday.

BONNELIA: Friday!? No sooner?

RAVINS: We're as efficient as the States, my dear. Just not as . . . rash, shall we say.

BONNELIA: Well, I did promise my grandfather I'd try to spend some time here. Looks like I have no choice.

RAVINS: Well . . . then, since our business is mutually satisfied, perhaps both of you would honor me by dining at my estate this evening. PaDerry is quite the culinary.

PADERRY: I make a wicked Texas chili.

BONNELIA: Uh, thank you, but I have a lot of work to do. Maybe I can just find something here.

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RAVINS: I'm afraid there isn't much. We had no idea how long you'd be staying.

PADERRY: Couldn't stock the chuck wagon without knowing how long the drive. Willie Parker made that mistake.

BONNELIA: Who?

PADERRY: Willie Parker. The cook for the Broken Horseshoe Ranch. They took two thousand head from Lubbock to Abilene. Spring of 1874.

RAVINS: PaDerry . . .

PADERRY: Ran out of food in Oklahoma; had to start eating their inventory. Course, that's better than the Donner Party. They had to eat . . .

RAVINS: PaDerry!!!!

BONNELIA: I take it you like our westerns.

PADERRY: I can proudly say that I have committed to memory the entire Time/Life series. I am also a lassoose.

BONNELIA: "Lassoose?"

PADERRY: A student of the lasso.

BONNELIA: Lasso.

PADERRY: It's a rope.

BONNELIA: I know that. It's just that . . .

PADERRY: *(Starting towards rope on chair.)* Allow me to demonstrate.

RAVINS: Paderry, go down to the village and lasso up some groceries for Miss Kingsbury.

PADERRY: Anything in particular, me lady?

BONNELIA: Oh, whatever. As long as its low fat, low carbs and low cholesterol.

PADERRY: Of course.

BONNELIA: And no red meat.

PADERRY: Of course.

BONNELIA: And plenty of coffee.

PADERRY: Yes, me lady.

BONNELIA: No decaf!

PADERRY: Of course not.

RAVINS: Take the Rolls. *(Tosses him the keys.)* I'll catch a lift with Thatch. You don't mind, do you, old girl?

THATCHER: Not at all.

RAVINS: And, PaDerry! When you return, "rustle up" a meal for our guest. Have you money?

PADERRY: Yes . . . but if it isn't enough, I'll sell the stereo.

PADERRY exits stage right archway.

RAVINS: Miss Kingsbury, seeing that you'll be with us a few days, if you'd care to see your ancestral countryside, my stables are at your service.

THATCHER: Sir Rodney has the finest Arabian stallions in the county, my dear.

BONNELIA: And they're allowed to live on his land?

RAVINS extends his hand to shake hers.

RAVINS: I'll be looking forward to seeing you Friday. You're quite certain you'll be all right? You are all alone, you know. It's a very large castle.

BONNELIA: I'll enjoy the quiet.

RAVINS: PaDerry made up the east wing guest room. Should you need anything, here is my card. I'm right next door, as you Americans say. Happy, Thatch?

THATCHER: Exuberant! And very relieved to know that Kingsbury Castle will remain in British hands.

RAVINS: I'll get my files and meet you at the auto. Miss Kingsbury, until Friday.

RAVINS exits stage left archway.

THATCHER: I'm very happy for you, my dear. Two hundred and fifty thousand pounds. That's over five hundred thousand dollars. My goodness, you're half a millionaire.

BONNELIA: "It ain't over 'til the fat lady sings."

THATCHER: What fat lady?

BONNELIA takes check from briefcase and tears it up.

BONNELIA: Better get rid of this. Grandpa Kingsbury's never written a check with over three zeroes his entire life. He'd have a coronary.

THATCHER: Not many people can bluff Sir Rodney. Don't fret. Your secret's safe with me. (*BONNELIA'S cell phone chimes.*) If you need anything - - anything at all - - you'll give me a ring?

BONNELIA: Absolutely.

THATCHER: Promise?

BONNELIA: Cross my heart.

THATCHER: Please try to enjoy your stay. You have the whole place to yourself. Get to know it. It's a grand old castle, my dear. A very special one. Very special. And it is your heritage. Good day.

MRS. THATCHER exits stage right archway.

BONNELIA: Good day. *(After a moment of assuring herself she's alone, her knees get a little weak.)* Oh, my god! *(Sits.)* Oh, my god! Five hundred thousand dollars. Grandpa's gonna crap his breeches! *(Her cell chimes again. She takes a few deep breaths, looks at caller ID and irritated, answers the cell.)* What now, Charles? *(Pause.)* No, I'm stuck in this hellhole until Friday. *(PENELOPE enters through the double doors, and as she is crossing to her bookcase, she notices BONNELIA'S briefcase. She begins going through the papers.)* You will not come here, Charles! We agreed! *(She sees PENELOPE rifling through her papers. To PENELOPE.)* Hey!? Stop that! *(To phone.)* No, not you, Charles. *(To PENELOPE.)* That's private property, Miss! *(To phone.)* Stop calling me, Charles. *(Hangs up cell and again addresses PENELOPE.)* Hey, hey, you! Leave that stuff alone!

PENELOPE: *(Stunned.)* You . . . you be talkin' to me?

BONNELIA: Who do you think you are, going through my stuff like that?

PENELOPE: You . . . you can bloody see me!?

BONNELIA: Who are you?

PENELOPE: EMRO!!! EMRO!!!

BONNELIA: I said, who are you?

PENELOPE: EMRO!!! GIT YER ARSE DOWN 'ERE, EMRO!

BONNELIA: Is there someone up there?

PENELOPE: EMRO!!!!!!!

EMRO steps out of upper archway.

EMRO: Auntie, what the bloody hell are you yelling about?

BONNELIA: Who's he?

EMRO: Oh, my.

He starts down the stairs.

BONNELIA: Who are you two?

PENELOPE: She can see you, too, Emro!

EMRO: Oh, my.

BONNELIA: Are you Mr. Ravin's people?

PENELOPE: This ain't right, Emro! Somethun's batty 'ere!

BONNELIA grabs her purse and begins digging in it.

BONNELIA: I would like some answers, please!

EMRO: This is most unusual.

EMRO circles BONNELIA, studying her. PENELOPE soon joins the studying.

BONNELIA: Uh, I was told I was alone . . . what are you doing?

EMRO: Most unusual . . .

PENELOPE: Scrawny thing, ain't she? No meat!

PENELOPE pokes at BONNELIA.

BONNELIA: Keep your hands off me . . .

PENELOPE: All skin 'n bones . . .

BONNELIA holds up a can of mace she has taken from her purse.

BONNELIA: You stay away from me . . .

PENELOPE: Cooo, banty little titmouse, ain't she!

EMRO steps towards BONNELIA

EMRO: Tell me, young lady, are you . . . ?

BONNELIA sprays the mace directly into EMRO'S face. All action stops momentarily. Emro is not fazed, just wet and sticky.

PENELOPE: Wot'd she do, Emro?

EMRO: I haven't the foggiest.

PENELOPE: Wot's that gook on yer face? *(Touches his face.)* It's sticky. *(She tastes it.)* Blah!

BONNELIA: All right! All right! I . . . I must warn you that I know Tae Kwon Do.

EMRO: Who?

BONNELIA begins making karate poses and moves, along with the appropriate noises.

PENELOPE: Wot's she doin', Emro?

EMRO: Perhaps she's . . . dancing.

PENELOPE: Cooo, me loves dancin'! *(She begins to imitate BONNELIA'S moves and noises.)* 'Ey, this is kinda fun. Could use some music though.

EMRO: *(Joins in.)* I say . . . this is quite . . . invigorating, isn't it?

BONNELIA: *(Stops movements.)* All right! Enough!

EMRO: Is it over?

PENELOPE: 'Ow's can ya tell, wit no music?

BONNELIA: *(Takes out her cell.)* I'm calling the police. *(EMRO waves his hand. BONNELIA begins tapping furiously at her cell.)* Damn it! Damn it! Damn you, Sprint!

PENELOPE: Why's she cursin' at that little box?

KINGSBURY CASTLE

EMRO: What is your name, Madam?

BONNELIA: Bonnelia Kingsbury. Catch that? Kingsbury? As in owner of this place.

PENELOPE: Owner!? Why you got some nerve, you pasty little . . .

EMRO: Auntie! You're a lady! She's a Kingsbury. You know what that means.

PENELOPE: You means . . . she be related to us? That's why . . . !

EMRO: Yes. My dear, Madam Kingsbury . . . perhaps you had better sit down.

BONNELIA: Why?

PENELOPE: 'Cos you're in for a bit of a shock.

BONNELIA: I'll stand, thank you!

PENELOPE: Don't say I didn't warn ya.

BONNELIA: What the hell is this about?

EMRO: Mrs. Kingsbury, are . . .

BONNELIA: Ms.

EMRO: Beg your pardon.

BONNELIA: It's MS. Kingsbury. I'm single.

EMRO: MS. Kingsbury. Are you related to Harold Kingsbury?

BONNELIA: I don't know any Harold Kingsbury. Why?

PENELOPE: Don't know!? Ya don't know yer own kin!?

EMRO: Then how about Winston Kingsbury?

BONNELIA: That was my great-grandfather's name.

EMRO: Ah ha! Winston was Harold's son.

PENELOPE: Yer great-great-grandfather, 'case you ain't put it together yet. Coo, I can
tells you some stories about ol' Harold.

EMRO: Auntie . . . !

PENELOPE crosses to the bookcase.

PENELOPE: 'Owlin' 'Arry, I calls him. (*Spins bookcase around.*) Gots 'is in here
somewheres . . .

EMRO: Auntie, this is not the time . . .

BONNELIA: What is that?

PENELOPE: Wild ride, 'e was! Could hear 'Arry 'owlin' all through the castle.

EMRO: Tell me, my dear, did he marry a savage?

BONNELIA: What?

EMRO: He had this urge to tame an American savage. Harold always preferred
women with rather . . . hot-blooded dispositions, if you know what I mean. That's
why he traveled to the Colonies. When was that?

PENELOPE: August 25, 1873. (*Sighs.*) Place has been too bloody quiet ever since.
Where are those? Cutest little kicksies . . .

EMRO: There's a portrait of him up there, next to mine, as a matter of fact.

BONNELIA: Yours!?

EMRO: (*Crossing to landing.*) Yes. Here.

BONNELIA: *(At base of stairs.)* That . . . that looks like you.

BONNELIA *goes up on landing.*

EMRO: I hope so. I paid for it to.

BONNELIA: *(Reading.)* "Emro Kingsbury, 1843 to . . 1898!?!?" But . . . but . . .

Suddenly ANDREW bursts in from the top left archway. He is about thirteen and dressed in sixteenth-century attire. He also has a large broadsword sticking through him. Bursting out of the same archway behind ANDREW is AUDRA, also thirteen, also dressed in sixteenth-century attire. They are fraternal twins. ANDREW is screaming as he runs down the staircases, pursued by AUDRA, who is brandishing a battleaxe.

AUDRA: DEATH TO ALL PROTESTANTS!!! DEATH TO ALL PROTESTANTS!! DIE, HERETIC!!!

PENELOPE *proudly holds up a pair of men's undergarments.*

PENELOPE: 'Ere they are!

BONNELIA *faints.*

BLACKOUT.

ACT ONE, SCENE 2

SETTING:
A short time later.

AT RISE:
As lights come up, we find BONNELIA passed out on the settee and the room empty. We hear PADERRY humming/singing a lively western tune from stage right archway. He enters with two bags of groceries, and as he is crossing to stage left archway, he spots BONNELIA on the settee and approaches her cautiously.

PADERRY: Me lady? *(He clears his throat.)* Me lady? *(Louder.)* Me lady?

BONNELIA *opens her eyes and sits up quickly. They startle each other.*

BONNELIA: Oh, it's you. Uh, uh . . . *(Quickly rising.)* . . . where are they?

PADERRY: Who?

BONNELIA scans the room.

BONNELIA: Where'd they go?

PADERRY: Who?

BONNELIA: The boy . . . the guy . . . the girl . . . with the sword . . .

PADERRY: Me lady, I don't know what . . .

BONNELIA: . . . sticking right through him! Right through here! They were, they were . . . from up there . . . blood all over his . . . he was running . . . and . . . and the girl!

PADERRY: The girl?

BONNELIA: She was chasing him with an axe.

PADERRY: An axe!?

BONNELIA: Yes!!!

PADERRY: With a sword . . .

BONNELIA: THAT'S WHAT I SAID, DAMMIT! A SWORD! And those other two . . . that . . . that Emro guy . . . and . . . they said they lived here! Does anyone live here?

PADERRY: No, me lady. You were asleep on the settee. You must have had a nightmare . . .

BONNELIA: I fainted, dammit! Right up there! There . . . there . . . that portrait . . . that guy said it was him . . . and it looks like him! Here! Right here!

PADERRY: Me lady, these old castles, well, they can cause fits with one's imagination and . . .

BONNELIA: I do not have fits of imagination. I'm a lawyer.

PADERRY: There is no one else in this castle. I assure you. I've cased . . . been through every inch of it. It must have been a dream.

BONNELIA: No, no, too real, PaDerry! Too damn real!

PADERRY: Jet lag! You fell asleep and . . .

BONNELIA: Jet lag!?

PADERRY: Yes! Combined with your long drive up here, seeing this place, getting all that money . . . you have experienced a lot in a very short time.

BONNELIA: Jet lag?

PADERRY: Had to be, me lady.

BONNELIA: But it was so real.

PADERRY: And I'd wager you haven't eaten for awhile.

BONNELIA: Jet lag! (*Chuckles.*) It was a long flight.

PADERRY: Yes.

BONNELIA: And you're right, I haven't eaten.

PADERRY: You see?

BONNELIA: I'm embarrassed.

PADERRY: Don't be! Like I said, these old castles can do strange things. (*Starts for stage left archway.*) Plus not eating, getting that measly two hundred and fifty thousand . . .

BONNELIA: "Measly!?"

PADERRY: Beg your pardon, me lady?

BONNELIA: You said "measly."

PADERRY: Did I? Just a slip of the tongue.

PADERRY starts to exit but BONNELIA cuts him off.

BONNELIA: Hold it! What haven't I been told? What'd you know, PaDerry?

PADERRY: I haven't the foggiest, me lady.

BONNELIA: Cut the crap! You know something!

PADERRY: Through a malfunction of justice, I am an unwilling indentured servant of rather common background and meager earnings.

BONNELIA: Get to the point!

PADERRY: If I should happen to accidentally inform a certain party of what another certain party really intends to do with this estate, it may not change the former's mind at all . . . but if it does . . . and the former should elect to pursue other avenues, so to speak . . . then I simply ask to be remembered . . . monetarily perhaps.

BONNELIA: What is it! Oil? Gold? What? (*Pause.*) All right, PaDerry, but only if your information changes my mind about the deal.

PADERRY: China clay.

BONNELIA: What?

PADERRY: China clay! Under this castle is one of the richest deposits of china clay to be found in this century . . . worth millions of pounds.

BONNELIA: So Ravins is going to tear down the old place and mine the clay.

PADERRY: Precisely.

BONNELIA: And all that "tradition" stuff was just . . . just . . .

PADERRY: Bullshit!

BONNELIA: (*She smiles.*) He's good. Should've been a lawyer.

She crosses to her briefcase and begins sorting through her papers.

PADERRY: Uh, me lady, perhaps you didn't grasp the magnitude of my statement: MILLIONS of pounds!

BONNELIA: Probably billions.

PADERRY: Well, doesn't that spark visions of dollar signs dancing in your - -

BONNELIA: I'm a lawyer, not a miner.

PADERRY: But . . .

KINGSBURY CASTLE

BONNELIA: Do you realize what it would cost to tear this place down and establish a quarry?

PADERRY: You'd make a hundred times your money back!

BONNELIA: Ravins can have this pile of rocks. Too big of a risk for me.

PADERRY: What if your pioneer forefathers, when they reached the Mississippi, had said, "Oh, too big of a risk! Can't go any further!" Or when they saw the Rockies . . . "Ooh, too big of a risk, can't climb those" . . . or . . .

BONNELIA: Didn't your boss say something about you cooking?

Her cell phone chimes.

PADERRY: I should've bought chicken.

He stomps out through stage left archway.

BONNELIA: *(Looks at caller ID and considers ignoring it but doesn't.)* This is getting real old real fast, Charles. *(Pause.)* No, I don't think a three-year engagement is excessive. I think these phone calls are excessive. You constantly wanting an answer is excessive. *(PENELOPE enters from the upper right archway, unseen by BONNELIA. She points her finger at the hearth and grits her teeth. Soon, the two candelabras begin to slowly turn.)* You haven't met my folks because they live in Wichita and our firm is in Chicago. *(BONNELIA sees the candelabras turning.)* What the . . . !? Now that is weird!

PENELOPE: Pretty good trick, 'ey!?

BONNELIA: YOU!!! *(Closes cell phone.)*

PENELOPE: Only took me ninety-seven years to learn it.

BONNELIA: You!!!

PENELOPE: I'm still workin' on makin' the fire light.

BONNELIA: You're real.

PENELOPE: Well, kinda!

BONNELIA: You're not a dream.

PENELOPE: Far from it.

BONNELIA: What are you doing here?

PENELOPE: I lives 'ere! Wotcha think, ya silly tart? *(Winking.)* Who's Charles?

BONNELIA: None of your business. And what do you mean, you live here?

PENELOPE: I means this be my home, for over two hundred years now.

BONNELIA: PaDerry!? PaDerry, that woman is here again.

PENELOPE: That be the little fop in the kitchen?

EMRO: *(Appearing on landing.)* Ah, you're awake.

BONNELIA: PaDerry, the guy's back too.

PENELOPE: *(To EMRO.)* 'At's the little mollycoddle who's been snoopin' 'round the place the past week.

EMRO: Now, Auntie, don't be so quick to label people.

PENELOPE: Ain't hearsay! I slipped into his room the other night; couldn't even git a twitch outta him.

BONNELIA: I'm waiting for an explanation.

EMRO: (To BONNELIA.) Please forgive Auntie's lasciviousness.

PENELOPE: Emro, I warned ya 'bout thumpin' them big words at me!

EMRO: She sometimes forgets what cost her her life.

PENELOPE: 'Tweren't me who tipped over that bleedin' lantern.

EMRO: During a "rendezvous" with two of the stable boys, someone managed to dislodge a lantern and burn down the stable. Pity. My great-great-uncle lost a champion steed in that fire. April 12, 1792. Monday.

PENELOPE: Ain't been able to do it on a Monday since. Get this heat rash.

BONNELIA: What is this, prank the yank? Do I look like some stupid tourist or something?

PENELOPE: She's gonna take some convincin', Emro.

EMRO: Perhaps this will help.

He points his finger at a small table against the wall and it begins to rise.

PENELOPE: Wish I could learn that one.

BONNELIA: I saw David Copperfield raise an elephant in Vegas.

EMRO: Who?

BONNELIA: A parlor trick. What'd you take me for?

PENELOPE: She be a stubborn one, Emro.

EMRO: I see more drastic measures are required. (Calls toward upper right archway.) Andrew!? Andrew!?

BONNELIA: There're more up there?

EMRO: ANDREW!?

ANDREW appears within upper right archway.

ANDREW: Thou beckoned, Uncle?

EMRO: (To BONNELIA.) He calls me uncle. Actually I'm his great-great-great-great-nephew on his mother's side. (To ANDREW.) Remove your head for our guest.

ANDREW: Aye, Uncle!

A hand extends from the archway holding a head.

EMRO: Thank you.

BONNELIA: Pa . . . Pa . . . Pa . . .

EMRO: Beg your pardon.

KINGSBURY CASTLE

BONNELIA: Pa . . . Pa . . . Pa . . .

PENELOPE: Wot's she saying?

BONNELIA: PADERRY!? PADERRY!?

PADERRY runs in from stage left archway.

PADERRY: What is it, me lady? What's wrong?

BONNELIA: THEM! It's them!

PADERRY: Who, me lady?

BONNELIA: My dream! Them! They're here!

PADERRY: I don't understand . . .

BONNELIA: THEM!!!

PADERRY: Are you sleepwalking?

BONNELIA: What!?

PADERRY: Did you fall back asleep?

BONNELIA: I'M STANDING HERE TALKING TO YOU!!!!

PADERRY: No, me lady, you're yelling at me.

BONNELIA: PaDerry, I am talking about them.

PADERRY: The people in your dream?

BONNELIA: Yes.

EMRO: He cannot see or hear us, my dear. He's not a Kingsbury.

PENELOPE: Thank goodness fer that.

BONNELIA: PaDerry, is there . . . is there anyone else in this room?

PADERRY: Besides me?

BONNELIA: YES!

PADERRY: You're frightening me, me lady. Perhaps we should ring up a physician
and . . .

BONNELIA: Do you see another man and woman in this room?

PADERRY: No, me lady.

EMRO: Do you want him to see us?

BONNELIA: Yes.

PADERRY: Yes, what?

BONNELIA: Yes, I want you to see them.

EMRO: If we do, then we must remain visible to all until the next full moon . . .

PADERRY starts towards phone on table.

PADERRY: The physician is down in the village. It'll only take . . .

EMRO: That's . . . my gracious . . . eight days.

BONNELIA: Hang up that phone!

PADERRY: Yes, me lady.

BONNELIA: (To EMRO.) Do it!

PADERRY: I did, me lady!

EMRO: Very well. Must accommodate family.

PADERRY crosses to brandy on small table. Pours glass.

PADERRY: Brandy! A nice, stiff shot of brandy. That's what you need, me lady.
(*EMRO waves his hand.*) This will get you back to sorts. I guarantee it.

PADERRY turns, sees PENELOPE and EMRO and faints. PENELOPE snags the glass of brandy as PADERRY falls.

PENELOPE: Don't mind if I do.

BLACKOUT.

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