

TEN MINUTES OF THE CHEESY ACTION SHOW

TEN MINUTE PLAY

By Michael Paslawski

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SYNOPSIS: There's only ten minutes left in this week's episode of TV's cheesiest show. Does hunky hero Monterey Jack have enough time to save his partner, thwart his new nemesis, and still make it for a rendezvous at The Cheesecake Warehouse?

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 male, 5 female, 1 either)

ANNOUNCER (m/f) A powerful, charismatic voice. *(4 lines)*
MONTEREY JACK (m)..... The show's hunky hero, complete with confidence, charm and always ready with a wise crack. *(51 lines)*
ROMANO (f)..... An impeccably dressed Italian henchwoman who defines the phrase "all muscle, no brains." *(8 lines)*
MASCARPONE (f) A small, impeccably dressed Italian henchwoman with a high-pitched voice who is constantly vying for the attention of her boss. *(10 lines)*
KARLA LIMBURGER (f) A flamboyant German mastermind of a worldwide criminal organization – with a penchant for capes. *(46 lines)*
BRIE (f) A young, rich, beautiful, know-it-all who imposes herself as the hero's sidekick. *(19 lines)*
SAKURA (f)..... A perpetually late, Japanese female sumo-wrestler turned henchwoman. *(1 line)*

DURATION: 10 minutes

SETTING: An open outdoor countryside setting.

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TIME: The last 10 minutes of a typical 1970's or 1980's action television show.

PROPS

- ☐ A blindfold

SOUNDS

- ☐ Dramatic super-hero origin story music.
- ☐ 1970's / 1980's action show music.
- ☐ Faux ending music.

Note: *If desired, contact the playwright for a copy of the original music used during the original production in MP3 format.*

ANNOUNCER: (*Offstage.*) We now return to *The Cheesy Action Show* – with no further commercial interruptions.

The lights come up as MONTEREY JACK enters blindfolded being pushed ahead by ROMANO and MASCARPONE.

MONTEREY: (*Trudging along.*) Quit your pushing! I'm going. I'm going. Where are you taking me anyway? Why is it so quiet? Why is no one talking to me? I know you're there because you keep pushing me. (*Pause.*) Come on! I hate secrets! (*Pause.*) Don't make me hurt you.

ROMANO: Quiet.

ROMANO pulls the blindfold off MONTEREY, who adjusts to the light and examines his surroundings.

MONTEREY: That's better. Now I see why it's so quiet. We're in the middle of nowhere. Ah...but how nice to see familiar faces! Romano! Mascarpone! It's been too long.

ROMANO grunts.

MASCARPONE: No funny business now, Monterey Jack.

MONTEREY: (*Dusting himself off.*) I wouldn't dream of it. So where is your boss? We need to get this moving. We're running low on time this week. Come on out Limburger. I know you're around here somewhere. I know your stench anywhere. (*Aside.*) He smells like feet. Stinky, stinky feet.

KARLA LIMBURGER enters with a dramatic wave of her cape and pulls along the captive BRIE, who is totally annoyed to be in KARLA's presence and constantly looking for an opportunity to escape. ROMANO and MASCARPONE's will be semi-watchful to prevent escape attempts.

KARLA: That is enough!

MONTEREY: Who are you? You aren't my arch nemesis, Karl Limburger... but you certainly smell like him.

KARLA: No, Monterey Jack. I am not Karl. I... am... your...

MONTEREY: Father. You're my father. I knew this day would come. It was just a matter of time before my family history was brought to the forefront in a shocking twist.

KARLA: What? No! I'm not your father. I am clearly a woman.

MONTEREY: Oh. True. You're my... mother then?

KARLA: No!

MONTEREY: Okay, well... my long lost sister?

KARLA: Don't be ridiculous.

BRIE: His grandmother?

KARLA: How old do you think I am?

ROMANO: His aunt?

MASCARPONE: His cousin?

KARLA: Who asked either of you to chime in?

BRIE: Are you his neighbor?

KARLA: *(About to have a tantrum.)* No, no, no, no, no! I... am your arch nemesis Karl's twin sister, Karla Limburger!

MONTEREY: Karla Limburger? Seriously? Your parents had twins and named one Karl and the other Karla? No wonder you both turned evil. Well that and your horrendous foot-inspired stench, of course.

KARLA: That will be enough jokes about my odor, Monterey Jack. I smell just fine. Plus I spray myself with a truly yummy perfume every morning.

MONTEREY: Mmm... stinky feet. Yummy.

KARLA: Romano, Mascarpone. I don't smell bad, do I? Come both of you... smell me. Now!

ROMANO: *(Obviously pained.)* No boss. Of course not. You smell... just fine.

MASCARPONE: *(Trying to ignore the stench.)* Yeah, yeah boss. You don't smell like stinky feet at all. You just smell like feet.

KARLA: What was that?

MASCARPONE: I... uh.... said you smell like a wonderful, yummy treat.

KARLA: That's what I thought you said. And now that I have you, Monterey Jack, and your faithful sidekick, the one and only, (*Caressing BRIE.*) the delectable Brie, no one is left to stop us.

BRIE: Ew...don't touch me. I don't want your odor to rub off on me. Unlike you, people appreciate me.

ROMANO: You want me to roughs her up boss?

MASCARPONE: Yeah, yeah boss, do you want us to roughs her up? I'm real good at roughsing boss.

KARLA: In time minions. In time.

ROMANO: You wants us to travel through time to roughs her up?

MASCARPONE: Great idea boss! I think I'm pretty good with time travel. I don't get sick or nothin'.

KARLA: Just stand over there you two. Finding truly *good* hired help can be so difficult. (*Looking at BRIE.*) Don't you agree, Monterey Jack?

BRIE: Hey!

KARLA: Finally, after secretly building a cohesive team in the last several episodes, I can now reveal myself as its leader and enact the final phase of my plan for domination.

MONTEREY: I'm sorry, did you just say something about building a team? If you hadn't said that, I honestly wouldn't have connected the plot points in the story arc this season to you.

KARLA: No?

MONTEREY: No. Each week has seemed like a completely random action adventure that I embark on to stop completely random crimes in order to receive completely random thanks from completely random people who look up to me as their completely awesome hero.

KARLA: Are you joking? Each plot was carefully planned by me to lead to this point.

MONTEREY: I just don't see it.

KARLA: We are clearly a team. Anyone can see that. You, Brie. You can tell we're a team, right?

BRIE: Well... not really. I mean, yes... but no. That is... kinda, sorta... meh.

KARLA puts an arm around ROMANO and MASCARPONE and smiles sweetly. ROMANO and MASCARPONE are clearly in agony from the odor but try to be unaffected.

KARLA: Seriously? Nothing?

BRIE: Since you're all together right now holding us captive and everything, sure, you're all like totally intimidating, but these last few weeks have felt rather bland, unimaginative, flavorless...

KARLA: I cannot believe this! After all the work I've done to build up my evil dream team. The daily training and exercise programs, the employee birthday parties, and of course, casual Fridays – featuring funny t-shirt contests. My favorite was last week when Feta wore the shirt that said, "Who cut the cheese?" *(Laughing.)* Oh that wacky, Greek, assassin. How I love his sense of humor.

ROMANO: Yeah boss. He's funny.

MASCARPONE: Yeah funny. Remember the one I wore boss? It said "Who farted?" That was funny too, right boss?

KARLA: *(Sighs.)* Oh Mascarpone. Subtlety is lost on you.

MASCARPONE: I don't get it.

KARLA: Exactly.

MONTEREY: I'm sorry, Limburger, but your nonstop cape-waving is so distracting. Can you just stop? Please?

KARLA moves to MONTEREY and waves the cape directly in front of him leaving him covered.

KARLA: Do not call me Limburger! My name is Karla.

MONTEREY: *(Blowing the cape off his face.)* Right. You see, the reason no one else but you understands that you're working as a team is you don't resemble a team in any way.

KARLA: Of course we do.

MONTEREY: No, you don't.

KARLA: Yes we do.

MONTEREY: No...you don't. Just look at yourselves. The way you're all dressed. It doesn't say team anywhere. You have your Italian sidekicks here, with their expensive... (*Casually checking out HENCHWOMEN'S clothing.*) looking suits, (*Acknowledging ROMANO.*) their tough, (*Acknowledging MASCARPONE.*) yet soft body language, and do you know what I see?

KARLA: (*With glee.*) I think I do.

MONTEREY: They look like they are part of the most evil profession in the world.

KARLA: Mobsters?

MONTEREY: No. No. Politicians.

KARLA: (*Highly insulted.*) Now see here...

MONTEREY: And you. You look like... you know, I don't even know what you look like. We've got the German mastermind with the two Italian helpers. I suppose you have a Japanese sidekick named Sakura right around the corner too?

KARLA: (*Looking around.*) Er...well actually she appears to be running a little late it seems.

MONTEREY: What, are we replaying World War 2 or something?

KARLA: Well, in my organization we do try to stay diverse and...

MONTEREY: And what's with the cape? Seriously, who wears a cape?

KARLA: Well the cape is just sort of a fashion statement really. I've always liked...

MONTEREY: I thought this was an action show. Are we making the move to superheroes or something? Did I miss a memo about that?

Sudden, dramatic music plays. Everyone except MONTEREY looks around, confused.

Don't look so surprised. Every superhero has his origin story.

ANNOUNCER: Monterey Jack came to Earth many years ago. He was raised in a monastery in California by Franciscan Friars where he learned self-defense, self-preservation, and self-confidence.

KARLA: Enough! (*Music stops.*) We are not playing superheroes. This is not Halloween.

MONTEREY: You could have fooled me. All we need is a guy with a mouse brain stuck to his head and we'll be all set.

BRIE: I think that's a different show.

KARLA: None of this matters. I have you and I win. I have avenged my brother and gotten the upper hand.

MONTEREY: I'm not too worried. After all, I'm the hero. I always win. I've overcome more dire situations.

BRIE: Like that time they tried to lower us into that vat of boiling oil and deep fry us... (*With distaste.*) curd-style.

MONTEREY: Or your brother's attempts to dehydrate us into a fine powder and then ship us off to his macaroni factory.

KARLA: Oh yes, I heard about that. That was a close one.

MONTEREY: Indeed.

BRIE: Or the time we first met when we escaped the giant laser melting device.

MONTEREY: Yes, I remember that episode well. My original companion The Mozzarella Kid didn't survive the giant grater.

KARLA: Well you know... everyone loves shredded mozzarella.

MONTEREY: Hmm...your brother used the same line... It wasn't funny then either.

ROMANO: Or that time a few weeks ago when you jumped your sports car right over that pool of sharks at the aquarium. That was amazing.

MONTEREY: Yes, we certainly jumped the sharks that day... Was it a metaphor or clever plot device? We'll let the audience be the judge.

EVERYONE turns briefly to the audience.

KARLA: That is quite enough.

MASCARPONE: Good call boss.

KARLA: Quiet you.

MONTEREY: So what is your plan this week, Limburger? What are you going to do that your brother hasn't already tried and failed?

KARLA: It's quite ingenious actually. You see my brother failed because his plans were overly elaborate and well-thought out.

MONTEREY: So...

KARLA: So I'm going to do the opposite. I have put no time into thinking up a plan. There is no plan.

MONTEREY: So you brought me here for nothing? What are we supposed to do? Admire the view? Have a picnic? Become friends?

KARLA: Don't be silly. We're just going to beat you to oblivion out here.

MONTEREY: Well you've left me no choice. You're all under arrest. Throw down your weapons!

KARLA, ROMANO, and MASCARPONE all look at each other.

ROMANO: We ain't carrying no weapons.

MASCARPONE: Yeah, we don't got no weapons.

MONTEREY: No?

KARLA: No. We only have our hands today.

MONTEREY: Well... er... throw down your hands then.

KARLA: Ugh... enough talk. It's time to mix it up.

MONTEREY: Good thinking. We're short on time.

MONTEREY turns and takes a powerful swing at ROMANO and hurts his hand. ROMANO just chuckles, unfazed.

Dear Lord. What are you made of?

KARLA: Why do heroes always go after the tough one first? Don't you know anything? Romano is solid.

ROMANO grabs MONTEREY. MASCARPONE assists. KARLA starts to remove her cape.

MONTEREY: I'll have to remember that.

KARLA: You would have been better off going after Mascarpone here. She's the soft one.

MONTEREY: It feels like it's about time for a commercial...

ANNOUNCER: We have no further commercial interruptions.

MONTEREY: You know, since we are short on time, perhaps we should just pick this up next week? Care to hang me over a cliff until then?

KARLA: No. Prepare to get creamed.

BRIE starts to move towards MONTEREY.

BRIE: I think you're going to need my help.

MONTEREY: Just stand back. I don't want anything to happen to you, Brie. I still have a few tricks up my sleeve.

KARLA: You can hold my cape Brie while I take care of Monterey Jack.

KARLA turns and tosses the cape to a horrified BRIE. KARLA starts making practice swings like a prize fighter.

BRIE: Are you sure you don't want my help?

MONTEREY: Positive. Besides you're just a woman.

BRIE: Excuse me? Just a woman?

MONTEREY: Well, er... I mean I wouldn't want you to get hurt or anything. A fight is no place for a lady.

BRIE: May I remind you that you're about to fight three woman right now?

MONTEREY: Uh... well... yeah, but... uh... you know... they started it.

BRIE sulks to a corner. KARLA moves to take a swing. Fight music starts to play. MONTEREY breaks free and everyone freezes.

ANNOUNCER: Suddenly, Monterey Jack enters curdle time...

A slow-motion fight sequence takes place. BRIE stands at the side reacting in real-time to the moves. Eventually KARLA, ROMANO, and MASCARPONE get the upper hand and punch MONTEREY around like a pinball.

BRIE: I've had enough. (*Approaches front of stage and addresses audience.*) Remember kids, violence is never the answer.

BRIE enters the fight and is the only one able to move in real-time. BRIE shoves MONTEREY and KARLA aside. BRIE repeatedly dodges slow-motion punches from ROMANO and MASCARPONE with ease. Eventually, ROMANO and MASCARPONE punch at the same time and knock each other out while BRIE dodges. KARLA approaches in slow-motion like a charging bull. BRIE grabs the cape and holds it like a matador, covering KARLA who falls to the ground. Real-time resumes. Fight music stops.

MONTEREY: (*Rising.*) Cheese wiz. That was amazing!

BRIE: And that is how you do that.

MONTEREY: About what I said before.

BRIE: Yes?

MONTEREY: Well...

Faux ending music starts to play.

MONTEREY: Looks like we're out of time. Until next week then?

BRIE: Very convenient.

Faux ending music stops.

MONTEREY: Okay fine. I'm sorry. You are every bit as capable as I am if not more so. Happy now?

BRIE: It's a start.

MONTEREY: Ugh... want to go grab a bite to eat?

BRIE: Maybe... where?

MONTEREY: There's only one place to go after an episode like this...

BRIE and MONTEREY look at each other and smile.

BRIE / MONTEREY: The Cheesecake Warehouse!

BRIE grabs MONTEREY by the arm and starts to drag him away.

MONTEREY: Do you ever get the feeling that we will never truly win if we don't take the villains to jail?

SAKURA thunders onto the stage and closely examines her fallen comrades and boss.

SAKURA: Did I miss everything again?

BLACKOUT.

THE END

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