"DEATH BY CORNBREAD"

written by:

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(Gina Mae York)

for mom

WGAE - I301822 fancyfreeman@icloud.com EXT. NEW YORK CITY APT. - A FEW MINUTES BEFORE DAWN

SUPERTITLE: "New York City 2017" projected on what appears to be a 12'x 12' scrim. The white translucent material is partially draped over one side of the apartment.

A tie-back reveals garbage and scattered debris that usurps a small porch. Ripped and torn window screens, colorful sheets for curtains, broken and missing blinds, and peeling layers of paint, reveal decades of subsidized housing.

INT. APT. - DARK HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Sunrise casts THREE BLURRED SHADOWS on the scrim: GRAND MÁS, the group's elder, a self-deprecating trickster woman, TARDIS, 73, and JABBERWOCKY, 30.

FANCY FREEMAN (NARRATOR) ("Fancy" by Reba McEntire) "I remember it all very well lookin' back it was the summer I turned eighteen. We lived in a one-room rundown shack.... "

EXT. CARNIVAL - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A lawyer and a judge fight on The Flying Dutchman. The lawyer brandishes a pen -- the judge wields a golden gavel. Both stagger back and forth with their weapons of choice as the Dutchman whooshes and rocks full tilt. Bloodied and torn tickets swirl shapelessly about in the wind.

INT. APT. - DARK HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS (PRESENT DAY)

GRAND MÁS is wearing Steampunk goggles. She stands, removes her goggles, yawns, and begins rapping:

GRAND MÁS I get up early in the morning, but I can't get out of bed.

Jabberwocky bites his nails, looks at the floor, and paces.

JABBERWOCKY Where's D-D-D-DORCAS? Isn't he bringin' D-D-D-Dunkin' Donuts? DORCAS, 21, enters the hallway in manic mode. He's a vivacious good-looking male of Irish descent, complete with freckles, blue eyes, a ginger mop, and a skip in his step that bounces his curlies in unison.

DORCAS Sorry I'm late, G. Top o' the mornin' to ya, y'all!

TARDIS Drop that fake Irish / Southern drawl and --

DORCAS Haters be hatin' --

GRAND MÁS Dorcas, where's the Drunkin' Donuts?

DORCAS

There wasn't enough crumbs left to
feed an egg sac.
 (getting it)
Hardy Har, Tom Hardy, har!
 (long pause)
Sorry, I was daydreaming... What's
the ETA on the X-MAN bomber?

GRAND MÁS The DOOMSDAY DOUCHEBAG will arrive with all the pride, pomp, and circumstance of a glorious war in approximately thirty minutes.

X-Man / Double "D" derogatory variations are selfsame.

JABBERWOCKY That's..., that's not enough time! ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW -- She's...

TARDIS What about Widow?

JABBERWOCKY

What?

TARDIS What about Widow?

JABBERWOCKY Uh, er... nothing.

# DORCAS

(to Grand Más) What if we're here when he gets here? We could still --

### GRAND MÁS

The landlord sent ESTER a letter demanding her removal and possession of the premises by reentry.

### DORCAS

Say w-what?

# GRAND MÁS

(sternly) The Donkey Dingleberry is on his way. Our fates are inextricably intertwined with Ester's. The road ahead is fraught with perils for the unwary -- but we shall travel nonetheless!

DORCAS But -- but Ester, she can't --

TARDIS Oh my fucking God! You hard headed Irish fool!

Grand Más shakes a letter at DORCAS.

GRAND MÁS The letter said: "GET OUT"!

JABBERWOCKY The X-Man is an assassin, Dorcas! He's paid to kill us! What do you think will happen if we stay?

TARDIS (to Grand Más) And, SEARCHER? Where's Searcher?

TARDIS (CONT'D)

where all the bodies are

buried -- And more

there.

You need to care -- He knows

JABBEROWCKY

That sneaky cucaracha?! Who cares.

### DORCAS

Oh yeah, Jibber Jabber, I dare you to call him that to his face. Yer afraid of yer importantly - how they got own shadow since --

GRAND MÁS En cualquier momento! Any moment! Searcher will be here any moment. By the way, where is Widow?

DORCAS

She's still in the head -- uh, right -- she's putting that box of rags of many colors that someone gave us to good use, but every piece is small so ...

INT. APT. - BATHROOM - SAME TIME

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW, 29, ethnically ambiguous. A tousled mane and legs that go on forever sustain her youth and fierce independence. She brushes her hair with grave concern. A cooking TIMER sits nearby, CLICKING....

> ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW (exacerbated) Here I go again -- those fuckin' Freeman genes! All I did was look at a man and...

INT. APT. - HALLWAY - DAY

DORCAS

Y'all want Searcher? Where's something I'm not supposed to touch. Bettcha he'll show up then.

GRAND MÁS Now you're just being factitious, my little whipper snapper.

DORCAS Oh yeah? I'm going to slooooowly walk over to that unmolested blueberry pie cooling on the windowsill, and then I'm gonna touch -- a -- blueberry -- right -out... in the open!

DORCAS walks towards the window, extends pointer finger.

DORCAS (CONT'D) (sotto) Tooouuuch -- SEARCHER, 40, a soldier, dressed in all black, presses his ear against the front door.

INT. APT. - DARK HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

#### GRAND MÁS

They'll be no molesting of no innocent blueberries while I'm in charge.

DORCAS (to Jabberwocky) What's that smell?

### JABBERWOCKY

Smell?

TARDIS (to Jabberwocky) Why are you so shiny and purdy?

JABBERWOCKY Citronella oil and tea tree oil -you know, for the mosquitoes -when we go outside.

EXT. APT. - FRONT DOOR - SAME TIME

SEARCHER Knock Knock!? Anyone home!?

INT. APT. - DARK HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

SEARCHER stomps in and makes a door slamming sound.

#### SEARCHER

(snarky sarcasm) I hate those blood suckers. Get the fuck outta' here ya bunch of enigmatic wankers! How ya eva gonna survive without me!?

GRAND MÁS Guten, Searcher!

SEARCHER How you doin' Chief? What's that RAP you were rat-a-tat-tatting to? (rapping) (MORE) SEARCHER (CONT'D) Gotta put my shoes on first, so I can crush some losers' heads. (to Dorcas) Fred got iced, when the freezer do' closed. (to Jabberwocky) Jimmy was pushed down the drain, and into a hole, but it don't matter to me, if those bastards felt any pain!

SEARCHER walks to Grand Más -- they gangsta' hug.

GRAND MÁS Glad to see you Searcher! Should I summon the ten thousand? What's your report?

SEARCHER You're not gonna like it Chief. I only found three viable domicilios.

GRAND MÁS Let's have it then.

SEARCHER (to Dorcas) Did I miss the donuts? Where's my apple fritter?

DORCAS shakes his head "no".

SEARCHER (CONT'D) FUCK! Seriously? Alrighty then... Option #1: We move south to the great state of Georgia, y'all! A house with a family of four. (beat) Option #2: A farm, big family, some chickens, hogs, horses and whatnot... in Colorado. (beat) But..., the closest is a Rhinebeck mansion / Airbnb that recently sold for 17 mil --

DORCAS That's it! Two options? What-thefuck is a B.B. King!? What are we gonna do -- just sit around here and wait on the X-Man -- or worse -- get it from CORNBREAD!? TARDIS

(to Dorcas) There's no "Cornbread" dummy. Searcher is fucking with you. Hey Dorcas -- Pull my finger!

SEARCHER (to Dorcas) Or, is Tardis fucking with you --

DORCAS Implied moooooving middle fingers to ya both!

SEARCHER sits down. EVERYONE else follows. TARDIS farts.

# SEARCHER

Oi!

DORCAS (to Tardis) Ha Ha! Hoisted by yer own petard!

SEARCHER What we're going to do, Dorcas, is listen to what I have to say, while taking in that delicate aroma Tardis so generously gifted us.

EVERYONE (except GRAND MÁS) holds their nose and waves hands in the air.

SEARCHER (CONT'D) Were you listening or living in that illusion of reality called your head?

DORCAS Better than living in your head --How do you sleep at night? Ya never really explained what happened to Jimmy.

SEARCHER Jimmy is resting in peace, which is where you'll --

TARDIS Didn't "Cornbread" take him out?

SEARCHER Oh yeah. Cornbread just had some cracklin' -- and Jimmy was hanging out too close to the microwave. DORCAS

What? What? What happened!?

#### SEARCHER

(deadpan) Well, as everyone knows..., Cornbread with cracklins inside is naturally high in fat and cholesterol, which makes it very unstable. It just went off when the microwave started. (beat) POW! POW! POW! (beat) Poor Jimmy didn't know what hit him. Cracked his skull wide open! Fifty shades of grey matter!!!!

EVERYONE (except GRAND MÁS) laughs at Dorcas.

# DORCAS

(scoffs) That's nice Wisenheimer! There's actually four options. We can always stay here -- What's our chances with the family of three?

JABBERWOCKY nervously begins shuffle-ball-change dance step.

### JABBERWOCKY

(relieved)
Yeah! That's right! We can't
leave yet! I'm supposed to meet
with my doctor tomorrow about
reconstructive surgery. He says it
will do a lot for the ladies if I
can just lift my brows a few --

SEARCHER Fist world problems dude. First world problems.

GRAND MÁS Please continue, Searcher. Time is not on our side this glorious day.

SEARCHER Thank you Chief. (beat) At Location #1, there's two toddlers. But, y'all know, toddlers are always throwing shit and spitting shit out. (MORE) SEARCHER (CONT'D) The vile creatures are also known to eat everything -- even their own poop. (upbeat) On the plus side, the family comes from the land of gentry in Carroll County, so they've got plenty of dough-to-thro' --

SEARCHER notices JABBERWOCKY's anxiety. JABBERWOCKY responds:

JABBERWOCKY

Tap, tap, tap. Maintain your space. Maintain your line. Find the dough, Hit the flo'. As you're memorized by My funkadelic rhyme!

### DORCAS

It's like breakfast at Tiffany's, a passage of rite, but does anyone know... if they clean the dishes at night!?

SEARCHER Depends on if they smoke.

JABBERWOCKY

What does?

# SEARCHER

Whether they clean their dishes at night. ... If they smoke, usually that's what they do after eating -you know, instead of cleaning up.

#### JABBERWOCKY

I've never been around toddlers. Are we talking literal shit or theoretical shit? And... do they really eat ...everything?!

#### SEARCHER

(smiles sheepishly at Jabberwocky) Like what?

#### JABBERWOCKY

Uh, um, er... you know...

SEARCHER Shit? Or, something else? We're talking literal shit slingin' here, Southpaw. Hey - bet you can't say "shit slingin' Southpaw" ten times!

DORCAS Come on guys. That's enough!

# SEARCHER

(to Dorcas)
Oh, I forgot -- he doesn't have the
right side of his face! It must
have not liked him either.
 (to Jabberwocky)
How's that working out for ya with
the ladies?

#### JABBERWOCKY

SEARCHER

Ooooh, like I haven't heard What about it? that one before. Soooo... what about p-peanut butter?

JABBERWOCKY Do they h-h-have any?

## SEARCHER Creamy or with nuts?

JABBERWOCKY

Uh... cre --

SEARCHER

Are you fuckin' kiddin' me!? We're facing a potential assassin here and you want to know about fuckin' peanut butter? Yeah... NO!

GRAND MÁS Boys. Let it be. Capisce?

# DORCAS

Actually..., I'm waiting to see if I get cast on that MTV show about catfish. I want to meet my online rival and..., well there's this new Drag show I want to catch -- This new Queen..., <u>RAGAMUFFIN</u>, he is absolutely F-A-B-U-L-O-U-S!

SEARCHER

I knew it! I always knew it! Go ahead and OWN it pretty boy!!!

DORCAS (scoffs) That's really a very masculine art form, don't ya know. (MORE) DORCAS (CONT'D) Jabberwocky could learn a few contouring tricks if he --

GRAND MÁS (glares at Searcher) Right. Searcher, what's the downside of the HOA house?

TARDIS

Can I pack my gorilla suit?

SEARCHER Why would you need a gorilla suit?

TARDIS You never know when you'll need a gorilla suit.

# SEARCHER I can't think of any reason why you'd need your gorilla suit.

TARDIS Can you think of any reason why I wouldn't?

### SEARCHER

No.

TARDIS

Then I'm taking my gorilla suit!

# JABBERWOCKY

That reminds me. I need to check my Facebook page. There's a really cute meme going around about a cat with like seven hundred thousand likes and --

# SEARCHER

What is WRONG with you people!? "The world is a car and you're all the crash test dummies!"

# JABBERWOCKY

(to Searcher) And, "The D-Devil Makes Three".

### GRAND MÁS

Boys, "if we don't stay on track, we'll ALL get our picture with the four horseman for a nominal sum." Now, Searcher, about the HOA --

# SEARCHER

Well boss, a HOA means upkeep is regulated, and, it is in Haralson County, Georgia. (looks around)

You yoots remember how those Haralson County folks are?

### JABBERWOCKY

(worried chuckle) Haralson County folks?

### SEARCHER

You know..., the kind that asks: "Who's yer pa'?" when you're caught doin' nefarious activities.

#### TARDIS

I'm not afraid of jail, hell, or certified mail. Is there a lake --I'm as dry as the crust on a pharaoh's underwear. What about a picnic area -- Those are good hunting grounds. (sighs) Widow used to love to go on picnics.

### JABBERWOCKY

I - I don't like it. Remember what happened on our last move?

### SEARCHER

Yes Jibber Jabber. You were trapped. That's why you talk out of only one side of your mouth and are afraid of your own shadow -but you still talk out of both sides of your asshole.

#### JABBERWOCKY

Don't be throwing shade my way. I'm not talking about me -- I'm talking about Sara. I'm still here. Well..., the majority of me is anyway...

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

FANCY FREEMAN (NARRATOR) It was a dark and stormy night...

Disturbed's cover of "The Sound of Silence" plays.

JABBERWOCKY staggers, carries a small suitcase, holds a BLIND COCK ("BLINDY") under other arm.

City dwellers walking, running, rain, hail, winds -umbrellas swirling about with sharpened ferrules. Shoes, boots, POINTY-TOED BOOTS, spike heels, NBA-type sneakers with dirty wet untied laces whipping back and forth.

BLINDY mistakenly proclaims sunrise: "Cock a doodle doo!"

JABBERWOCKY Don't worry Blindy! I'll save you! (Blindy whimpers)

JABBERWOCKY turns and sees something bearing down at him. He's afraid -- recites comfort to himself:

> JABBERWOCKY (CONT'D) "On a sultry Saturday in September, the Saints saved seventeen souls. On a sultry Saturday in September, the Saints saved..." On a sultry --

INT. APT. - DARK HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS (PRESENT DAY)

GRAND MÁS We are all Sara.

SEARCHER (to Tardis) Yes, there is a lake and a park for your precious picnics.

DORCAS What location do you like Searcher?

SEARCHER I like the farm. I'm no spring chicken anymore. (to Tardis) But, I'm not as old as --

TARDIS (regards Searcher's dig) Bite me.

SEARCHER (pinky finger to mouth) Maaaaybe. Or, I could always pencil you in for a wet willie? Will that do ya? GRAND MÁS Boys. BOYS! The question before us is to be, or not to be.

SEARCHER I need to breathe clean air again. I'm tired. I want to settle down or you'll have to bury me under Giants Stadium with Jimmy. (to Grand Más) What's the ETA on the Dildo Dimwit, Boss?

GRAND MÁS The Dumbass Ding-Dong will be here in twenty.

JABBERWOCKY WAIT! Do they wear those pointytoed cowboy boots on the farm?

SEARCHER Indubitably. Yes, they do.

SEARCHER pretends he's wearing cowboy boots.

SEARCHER (CONT'D) (stomping around) Daisy in the dell, daisy in the dell, I don't -- pick -- you --

DORCAS Yeeeeee-Haaaaaaw!

JABBERWOCKY (chuckles) Let's all stay on pointe here!

Crickets. JABBERWOCKY is confused. Nobody got his dance double entendre?

DORCAS (southern drawl) Well bless their hearts -- but not their feet!

TARDIS (rapid pace) Searcher, what do they grow on the farm -- What about carrots -- I need Vitamin A for my eyes -- I have nyctalopia and my eyes need Vitamin A -- Are they certified organic? (MORE)

### TARDIS (CONT'D)

What about sprouts -- Do they grow any sprouts -- Is there a Sprouts nearby?

# DORCAS

Ya planning on shopping at Sprouts are ya? Everybody's got something. Tardis wants carrots and a Sprouts and Grand Más is supposed to be a Vegan -- but you'll still catch her mulling around a lake looking for fish heads.

# GRAND MÁS

Jabberwocky, you haven't said which location you prefer.

# JABBERWOCKY

I say let be and stay here. Que Sera Sera.

# SEARCHER

The Chief is Vegan light.

### JABBERWOCKY

Searcher jumping to G's defense! That's a first! It doesn't matter anyway - we'll go wherever he says.

# DORCAS

(piling on) I don't know why we're even going to take a vote. I vote for Grimes/Dixon. Well, really I'm team Daryl --

#### SEARCHER

Everyone knows which team you play for, Dorcas.

#### TARDIS

Hey, what about Widow? How long has she been in the head?

### DORCAS

A minute for sure. She's probably in there with Cheeba. (fading off) We're gonna need a lot of pincers soon...

### SEARCHER

She better get out before Ester needs to go -- or it won't be a pleasant situation -- Ester's really got a big ol' butt and --

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW saunters in.

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW Who's got a big ol' butt? Sorry I'm late, I mean, sorry I was busy, Triple Og.

GRAND MÁS Glad you could join us. Did you hear about our options so far?

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW Yeah. I was listening while I was ... waiting... I was doing... a lice treatment in my hair. How I despise those vile creatures.

JABBERWOCKY/DORCAS

Toddlers?!

GRAND MÁS (scratching her head) So, what say you Widow?

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW I say this ain't a democracy and Rick and Daryl are busy killing walkers.

(winks at Dorcas) The X-Man will be here soon. Do I need to remind everyone that he wants to kill all of us?

## DORCAS

You don't need to remind me, Widow. I've been trying to keep them on track all morning. I put my big boy panties on today.

WIDOW smiles at Dorcas.

# GRAND MÁS

Let's stop the bickering, make a decision, or a decision will be made for us -- and we'll all end up hitchhiking or stowaways, or worse!

## DORCAS

I don't want to live in a car! There's already a whole lotta people lookin' down their noses at me --

JABBERWOCKY Yeah! And those doors are terrorists!

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW Ain't nobody gonna look down on you if the windows are tinted and they don't know you're inside.

### TARDIS

Hey Searcher! I don't need no stinkin' food. I eat Fallout 4, shit Call of Duty, and breathe Minecraft! What does that make me?

#### SEARCHER

It makes you a turd, Tardis. A turd. Irony can be quite ironic.

TARDIS

Ooooo...! 360 No Scope! Tell us again how Fred got it? Where is *he* buried?

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW/DORCAS Tardis! Searcher! Shut it!

SEARCHER (to Dorcas and Widow) In a minute *ladies*!

# SEARCHER (CONT'D)

(to Tardis)

Cornbread didn't agree with Fred. He simply couldn't handle the heat from the jalapenos. He's buried with Jimmy and all your ex-wives in a 55-gallon drum beneath Yucca Mtn.

## TARDIS

Hmm... You said he had a cornmeal allergy -- Then, he was lactose intolerant. Was it the buttermilk or the cornmeal that did him in?

# SEARCHER

Actually, Cornbread started sweating because it was left out too long -- Fred was trapped inside with Jimmy. They tried to maneuver past the jalapeno rings and got stuck in the Crisco. Then..., the jalapeno rings started rolling.

### GRAND MÁS

The quintessential slippery slope for interlopers and elopers.

JABBERWOCKY

Elopers?

GRAND MÁS Fred and Jimmy. They were lovers.

SEARCHER Jimmy cried out to the Teamsters -but they were on strike.

EVERYONE stares at Searcher in disbelief.

SEARCHER (CONT'D) All of the sudden -- a shiny meat cleaver appeared resting in the middle! (beat) Fred and Jimmy tried to slide their way out! (beat) Unfortunately..., they slid down the wrong side, and, well -- let's just say -- all that was left was a greenish-brown granular mess!

GRAND MÁS Parting was such sweet sorrow.

WIDOW Yeah, they finally got their wish and became one!

DORCAS That's disgusting!!

# SEARCHER

(to Dorcas) We buried them in some ocean front property in Arizona, along with all your ex-wives' girlfriends. Well done Searcher. Another fine Cornbread story, but as you know --

EXT. APT. STOOP / FRONT DOOR - SAME TIME (DAY)

HILLARY, a middle-aged female appearing uncomfortable in her own skin, walks up the stoop towards the front door. Her life as she knows it is over.

> HILLARY (walking / to herself) God I hate my life. Did I pack a lunch today? Oh, yeah. Beef stew and cornbread. That should be good. At least I don't live here.

HILLARY (CONT'D) (rings doorbell) Hello. I'm Hillary --

INT. APT. - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

JABBERWOCKY What's, who's that? Is somebody here? Is it the X-Man? Cornbread?

GRAND MÁS (removes goggles) Hold on a tick. Searcher and I will take a look-see.

GRAND MÁS, SEARCHER, and JABBERWOCKY walk down the dark hallway towards the living room.

DORCAS Where are you going Jibber Jabber?

JABBERWOCKY G-Gonna get a b-better view t-too.

DORCAS When did you grow a pair?

JABBERWOCKY After I slept with your boyfriend. He was Dy-No-Mite!

DORCAS He probably didn't see them either -- but Ester will! GRAND MÁS Oh, he'll be fine. Why do you think we've been able to stay here as long as we have --

SEARCHER Yeah, Mr. Magoo had better eyes than that ol' hag!

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW (laughing) Yeah, she couldn't even read the eviction letter!

DORCAS (to Jabberwocky) Okay -- Go! Everyone knows you have a thing for her anyway -- hey -- don't do anything I wouldn't do!

GRAND MÁS and SEARCHER stand in the shadows. JABBERWOCKY continues down the hallway to...

INT. APT. - HALLWAY - NEAR LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DORCAS (O.S.) (whispering) Well? Who is it?

GRAND MÁS It's not him. I think it's... it's a... woman!?

JABBERWOCKY Nobody move! Make like a mannequin and freeze!

DORCAS (0.S.) I say we make like a bread truck and haul buns!

GRAND MÁS (notices mumbling) I think she's talking to herself --

SEARCHER (whispering to Grand Más) Bluetooth or crazy? Want me to wack her boss? EXT. NEW YORK CITY NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - SAME TIME (DAY)

Grand Más and Searcher regard two Jehovah Witnesses approaching an apartment across the street.

INT. APT. - HALLWAY, NEAR LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

GRAND MÁS (shit eating grin) Looks like she's seen enough trouble my friend. (pointing towards window) However, please feel free to properly welcome those Jehovah Witnesses over at Fred's ol' place.

EXT. APT. - FRONT DOOR - SAME TIME

HILLARY Hello. Is anyone home?

INT. APT. - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ESTER, a frail Jewish lady, sits on her couch. She drinks COFFEE and smokes a CIGARETTE. All the furniture is covered with PLASTIC slipcovers. She is SWEATING. A dingy FAN oscillates DUST BUNNIES and cigarette smoke around the room.

JABBERWOCKY plops down on the plastic covered couch next to Ester.

INT. APT. - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ESTER Hello? Hello! Who's there!?

ESTER puts her coffee down on a side table. She uses her other arm to push up. JABBERWOCKY SNEEZES.

ESTER (CONT'D) (looks around) What? Who? God bless you!

ESTER twists and turns. She looks for the source of the sneeze. She SPILLS hot coffee all over the couch.

JABBERWOCKY makes a run for it -- but he slips and falls. The MOSQUITO REPELLENT OILS attracted DUST BUNNIES. ESTER and JABBERWOCKY slip and slide in a foaming mixture of sweat, coffee, dust bunnies, and mosquito repellent oils.

ESTER drops her cigarette on Jabberwocky, which IGNITES the DUST BUNNIES and OILS in a short burst of fire!

ESTER (CONT'D) Miz-day-en! FUCK! What's that?

EXT. APT. - FRONT DOOR - SAME TIME

HILLARY (rings bell, knocks continuously) Hello? HELLO!

INT. APT. - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ESTER catches her balance and walks to the door. She opens the door with the security chain holding back the world and forces her face through a small crack.

ESTER Hello? Are you the X-Man?

EXT. APT. - FRONT DOOR / INT. APT. - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

HILLARY regards Jabberwocky through the crack as he limps back down the hallway, dripping coffee and oils -- smoke still rising from his body -- dust bunnies follow in the wind.

INTERCUT Ester / Hillary as required.

HILLARY No. I'm Hillary -- a final expense professional with Your Life, Inc.

ESTER You are -- who -- who are you?

HILLARY Thank you for taking the time to talk with me on this beautiful day. I'm Hillary a final --

ESTER

Who?

HILLARY I spoke with your husband Mihály last night about --

ESTER You spoke to Mihály?

HILLARY

Yes ma'am. I'd like to discuss a few things about his final expense plan. Is Mihály home?

ESTER I said I'm not interested -- I'm really busy today. I'm expecting someone any moment now.

HILLARY I understand ma'am -- Yes ma'am.

May I please speak to Mihály --

ESTER If you don't leave I'll report you under the Door to Door Sales Act. My sister is a lawyer.

ESTER closes the door.

EXT. APT. - FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

HILLARY

(through door) Thank you. Please ask Mihály to contact us if he has any questions.

HILLARY (CONT'D) (to herself) Shit, fire and save the matches! (turns and walks away)

INT. APT. - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

GRAND MÁS and SEARCHER return from the end of the hallway. JABBERWOCKY follows, still slipping and sliding - covered in dust bunnies - all jacked up on caffeine ingested during the melee.

> GRAND MÁS ¡Oy vey! Everybody settle down! All the excitement is over.

# SEARCHER

(to Jabberwocky) Man you were all up in that lady's bizzzness! What did it look like all up in there!!

JABBERWOCKY gets angry.

### DORCAS

Guess yer repellent oils didn't work after all! Dude -- that was one big mosquito -- Wait! WAIT! Is... is that a bite??!!

JABBERWOCKY (shaking off dust bunnies/ reapplying oils) That old fart let the gnats in! That's great -- Just great. Now we have to compete with gnats! Once we get outside you'll all wish you had some on --

SEARCHER As long as Ester isn't on me, I don't care!

# JABBERWOCKY

(snarky)
Well..., look what I scored -couch food!!!
 (opens hands revealing old
 macaroni noodle and
 cracker crumb)

EVERYONE (except GRAND MÁS) laughs / points to noodle.

DORCAS Ha Ha! When yer "noodle" mixes with yer oils - it's going to go limp just like yer face!

SEARCHER (to Dorcas) Yeah, you'd know about limp noodles, wouldn't ya?

JABBERWOCKY I risked my life, again..., and this is how you repay me?

GRAND MÁS Come on children. Let's try to stay focused on the task at hand.

## DORCAS

Searcher, what about that ocean front property in Arizona ya talked about once? Would we be safe near the ocean? Do those bark scorpions live near the water?

### SEARCHER

Fuggedaboutit.

# DORCAS

(to Searcher) What did you say? That's not a damned lie --

# GRAND MÁS

Moving on to whether we will be moving on. Tell us more about the mansion, then later we'll discuss making Dorcas get a hearing aid so we don't have to kill him.

#### SEARCHER

I'd rather just kill him now - (beat)
 (off Grand Más' glare)
No? Okay. So, the mansion is
sterile --

# JABBERWOCKY

That's what it was! Why he doesn't want the mansion! Remember when we stayed in that hospital? Searcher is still salty about staph!

EVERYONE looks at Jabberwocky confused.

### SEARCHER

As I was sayin'... The mansion is sterile 'cept when it's rented out to moooovie people -- but when they leave, the crafty that's left behind is enough to feed the whole ten thousand!

## DORCAS

Yeah, hospitals don't have anything but ol' people food -- if we're lucky enough to get that. JABBERWOCKY What about boots. Are there any of those pointy-toe boots there?

TARDIS The mansion or the hospital?

JABBERWOCKY (CONT'D) The, uh-uh, e-e-either.

### SEARCHER

There's no honky tonkin' or pointytoe boots around thar, fo' sho'!

TARDIS I'm down with that.

DORCAS You're what with who? Are you trying to be cool?

TARDIS Oh for God's sake. Get a friggin' hearing aid already!

DORCAS I'll get a hearing aid when you get a new set of eyes. Then you'll really see Widow, not just look through her. She's, she doesn't have lice -- That much even I know.

WIDOW scowls at Dorcas.

TARDIS Never mind. What about the lake?

### SEARCHER

Don't worry *Turdis*. If there were a dry spell, we could always go down to River Road. There's lots of exotic food there --

### TARDIS

My body requires copious amounts of water, not food, a-hole.

JABBERWOCKY

What about Cornbread? Is he still alive? Where does he live?

## TARDIS

Searcher is fucking with you. Before he died, Jimmy took him out in a "cornbread" avalanche.

## DORCAS

(laughing hysterically) Yep. They went skiing together once. Jimmy was a stowaway --

# SEARCHER

No Dorcas. See, what happened was, they were trying to beat the Guinness World Record for the biggest cast iron skillet of cornbread. An earthquake knocked a a yuuuuqe skillet that was precariously perched on a display table clean off... spilling its innards everywhere. (beat) Poor Jimmy was caught under the avalanche with kernels so dense they just started rolling, rolling (beat) BAM! BAM! BAM! (beat)

... Like a stone on the water -the elements decided his fate.

# GRAND MÁS

That sounds like a Killer's song?

#### SEARCHER

It is. Confessions of a... well the rat bastard confesses to something -- that's all I remember.

# GRAND MÁS

(removes goggles) A smooth stone is a sign of a meandering traveler, but if it got the shit beat out of it in a dense kernel or jalapeno avalanche, I ask you... would it have taken the journey anyway?

(puts goggles back on)

### SEARCHER

Brilliant!

DORCAS Aye. He would. I would.

TARDIS All-encompassingly.

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW Indeed.

JABBERWOCKY I still say we s-s-stay --

### ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW

(stern parental voice) We're not going to stay here and take it Jibber Jabber. I don't play anymore. And, I've eaten enough chicken in my lifetime to start laying eggs, actual chicken eggs -- so I'm not going to a farm either.

## DORCAS

Remember the last farm we lived on? I had a pet chicken named "Blindy" that went missing -- and I rode a cow when the horse I was feeding my leftover biscuits to didn't want to be my best friend?

#### SEARCHER

Blindy wasn't a chicken, he was a cock. And, he didn't go missing, we had to eat him. The horse was wild so you never should have tried to ride him anyway -- you just went hungry for no reason.

### DORCAS

You ate poor Blindy!!??

### GRAND MÁS

We had to, Dorcas. He was fucking all the poor chickens to death, killing **our** food supply.

#### SEARCHER

(laughing hysterically)
Yeah, then when he was done with
our girls, we found him playing
dead in the field waiting for the
buzzards to land... he was one sick
muter fucker. Gotta respect the
hell outa the poor bastard though
 (pounding chest for love)
But -- it was either him or us...
 (chomps teeth)
... yummy!

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW (laughing) Yeah, we had some good times growing up in the country didn't we!

(MORE)

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW (CONT'D) I remember Knocker would throw rocks at that hornet's nest when we'd get off the school bus -- just to make us race home.

# SEARCHER

(to Widow) We don't have to go to the farm --I just said I preferred the farm. What would make you happy?

#### TARDIS

Why were you in the chinook so long, girlfriend?

## GRAND MÁS

What's your pleasure, Widow? Would you like to collect a new address -- Everyone knows you collect DNA and last names.

# ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW I do enjoy a good picnic. Back in

the day before Tardis stopped caring about his body I loved watching him come out of the lake -- all plumped up and youthful again.

(beat)

But, if we moved to the mansion, what would I wear? Should I wear the purple dress or my purple dress? Or, I could always wear my, purple dress.... is it boujee enough? (beat) If I came out when they were

filming, could I be an extra? (beat)

How much time do we have, G?

## GRAND MÁS

Wear the purple dress. You'll be a bad-ass boujee hot Mesopotamian mess --

## ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW

(sighs)

God, I miss home.

# GRAND MÁS

But, even with 60 fps cameras and HD, I don't think you'd be anything more than a background blur, Widow.

# SEARCHER

(snickers) I told my friend I was going to start working in the movie business. He thought I was going to be a porn star.

TARDIS Every man's dream.

JABBERWOCKY What did you tell him?

SEARCHER I told him I was going to be a "stunt cock".

EVERYONE (except GRAND MÁS) laughs. Then, awkward silence.

JABBERWOCKY What's the ETA for X-Man?

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW The X-Man, G?

GRAND MÁS The Deplorable Dumbbell will be here in less than ten.

DORCAS But we can't. Widow, how are you feeling?

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW I'm fine. We better get rollin' on the river.

TARDIS What is he talking about -- Is there something I should know?

#### DORCAS

1. She was in the head for more than a minute. 2. She has a cheeky look about her. 3. She has been tired, really tired lately.... and everyone says **I'm** the stupid one!

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW (changing the subject) What time did he say he'd be here?

# GRAND MÁS

He never really gave an exact time, just a window, Widow.

# DORCAS

Whatever decision we make, remember "Fortune is like glass-the brighter the glitter, the more easily broken." Publilius Syrus 85 BC.

### TARDIS

(mocking Dorcas' accent) Well, "I was poor white trash, no glitter, no glamour, but I'm not ashamed of anything." Eminem

## GRAND MÁS

(to Dorcas) Don't pay any mind to Tardis. Tardis is Tardis. You should be so lucky. It's hard enough to live when you're as old as dirt.

### DORCAS

("Po' Folks" by Bill Anderson) Well, "my daddy was a farmer, but all he ever raised was us. He dug a forty foot well, struck thirty-six gallons of dust."

### GRAND MÁS

Yes, Dorcas, we all know about your pa'. J.C. was our pa' too. (beat) Let's break it down. Shall we? (beat) We have Location #1: A family of 4 with toddlers -- potentially poop eatin' poop slingin' toddlers, who may, or may not, eat everything. (beat) We have Location #2: A farm with horses, chickens and pointy-toed boots that go thump in the night, oh my -- but -- it has, good -clean -- air! (smiles at Searcher) And, finally, we have Location #3: A Rhinebeck mansion occasionally rented out to the film industry

with good crafty -- subsistence primarily with cheese balls and

animal crackers.

### JABBERWOCKY

Don't forget, Dorcas said the fourth option is stay here and hunker down!

CRICKETS.

GRAND MÁS

(regards Jabberwocky) Okay, Dorcas. Give it to me --

### DORCAS

(auctioneer's intonation) -- G is at #1 n I wan #2, #2, bid on #2, I'm at #1 would you go #2, #2. Who wants to do a #2? Will ya please give me a #2? (to Jabberwocky) Jibber Jabber is at stay where we are. Who's gonna give me a #3? (to Widow) Anyone for following the great

crafty? Going once, going twice --

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW I don't care much for those big houses that show no love. I vote for the HOA with the park. If not, I am my own power couple -- I can make it on my own.

### DORCAS

Yeah Widow, we know you can. You deserve the "Woman who's seen the most amount of shit & still gets up every day to kick ass award". (to Grand Más) How much time we got now?

GRAND MÁS

The Douchebag Darling will be here in five.

## DORCAS

Are we gonna roll or what? (rapping) Put 5,000 in the front. Put 5,000 in the back. that's the whole 10,000, packed in Grand Más' Cadillac.

SEARCHER Chief, are we gonna take a vote or

(MORE)

not?

### SEARCHER (CONT'D)

It's almost table, I mean, supper time. I'm as ravenous as a rabbit -- and I don't eat carrots..., unless they're in a cake.

GRAND MÁS All in favor of Location #1 --

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW (to Searcher) You mean dinner, not supper. Dinner is the noon meal when you don't have lunch.

DORCAS Then what's breakfast?

#### GRAND MÁS

Ain't nobody gonna have no supper, or dinner, or breakfast if we don't get the hell outta Dodge, or hunker down, before the Despicable Daisy gets here.

# SEARCHER

Copy that. If he catches us out in the open we are all going to be breakfast for those bacteria that ain't got no business on this rock. Talk about some ugly môfos.

GRAND MÁS looks around one last time.

GRAND MÁS Let's do it!

JABBERWOCKY WAIT! Where's, I mean, who is Cornbread? Is he out there waiting on us?

SEARCHER locks eyes with everyone. GRAND MÁS gives him a nod of approval.

### SEARCHER

We were at a carnival, well, er, what we thought was a carnival. It was actually a movie set.

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW What were they filming?

SEARCHER It was a carnival. DORCAS No, what she means is, what was the moooovie about?

SEARCHER Does it matter? Some kind of American horror --

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW It may to me -- reality is a nice place to visit, but I don't wanna live there.

SEARCHER Okay Widow -- It was some kind of gladiator thing where lawyers and judges fight to the death on carnival rides -- pretty sick even for my taste.

EXT. CARNIVAL - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

BEGIN SERIES OF FLASHBACKS ALTERNATING WITH PRESENT DAY

A different LAWYER and JUDGE fight on a MERRY-GO-ROUND. They jump and run from horse to horse.

WIDE SHOT reveals this is in fact, a moooovie set complete with a video village, jibs, booms, lighting balloons, scrims, and better crafty.

> SEARCHER (V.0) They try and inflict the most damage on each other, and control the damage to themselves... with ride tickets.

JABBERWOCKY (V.O.) Ride tickets?

SEARCHER (V.O.) Civilians! The tickets are like money, or power, you know...

INT. APT. - HALLWAY - DAY (PRESENT DAY)

SEARCHER Anyway..., Cornbread was a carny. So we were all there --(regards Grand Más) -- back when Chief was just a lowercase "g". (MORE) SEARCHER (CONT'D) (beat) Cornbread was doing construction on a platform for the Strongman ---Jimmy was a day player -- nonunion...

EXT. CARNIVAL - CONTINUOUS

Partially constructed platform with STRONGMAN tools.

INSERT - SIGN

"Come See the Irishman! The Strongest Man Alive!" THE IRISHMAN rocks his iconic "Martin Scorsese" glasses and sashays on catwalk.

All the rides are going 360<sup>0</sup> of hypnotic flashing lights, people move in all directions, from rides to the Midway and back again. POPCORN and COTTON CANDY stands.

SERIES OF SHOTS similar to NY City Street focusing on FEET and FOOTWEAR, but now there's ANIMAL FEET: dogs, elephants, white millipeds, a rooster, a POODLE DOG rides a TURTLE --CHIMPS sling shit at TODDLERS -- toddlers sling it back.

INT. APT. - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

JABBERWOCKY WAIT! If he was non-union, why did you say he called out to the Teamsters?

SEARCHER Can I finish please? Do you want to know the *real* story or not?

EXT. CARNIVAL - CONTINUOUS

CRAFTY TABLE with assortment of GROUND PEPPERS and seasoned salts, condiments, elaborate COFFEE station set up -- CHEESE BALLS and ANIMAL CRACKERS. Tablecloth whipping, swooshing, back and forth.

SEARCHER (V.O.) The crafty table was nearby and there was some fine ground black pepper -- you know, that you can't really see or smell. A great big gust of wind came up just when -- INT. APT. - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

# DORCAS

Oh, I remember! The wind blew the pepper everywhere. Cornbread was about to start the skill saw --

# SEARCHER No Dorcas.... Jimmy had just returned with Cornbread's Venti Mocha Frappuccino® roast coffee.

JABBERWOCKY looks uncomfortable. SLAM CUT to Ester spilling coffee on him.

# DORCAS

(naively)
Where "the milk and ice all come
together for a mocha flavor that'll
leave you wanting more?"

### SEARCHER

Wrong again Dorcas! The kind that comes in a tray of other assorted pick-me-ups.

# EXT. CARNIVAL - CONTINUOUS

CARDBOARD TRAY with assorted pick-me-ups. WIND blows the TRAY over and pom, and chi and "green" and a disgusting concoction of POPCORN and COTTON CANDY begin to swirl. A vortex forms -- sucks anything in its path upward.

### SEARCHER (V.O.)

Anyway, as I was saying, a strong gust of wind came up, and some of us were stuck to the cotton candy, and sucked into the darkness -- and never seen again.

INT. APT. - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

## SEARCHER

Widow was about to give birth to the latest genetically modified brood of... actually, she kinda looked like the way she looks --

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW Shut it Tonto!

GRAND MÁS Please continue Searcher.

SEARCHER Where was I? Oh, there was shit flying everywhere, and not just the literal kind, Jibber Jabber --

EXT. CARNIVAL - CONTINUOUS

SWIRLING continues. POWER LINES nearby.

SEARCHER (V.O.) Something must have caught a power line because all of a sudden, the lights just went out, and everything stopped. No sound -- No movement -- Nothing but nut.

# END SERIES OF FLASHBACKS

INT. APT. - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS (DAY)

TARDIS pulls light switch. The hallway goes pitch black.

ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW Tardis! Turn the lights back on!

TARDIS turns lights back on.

JABBERWOCKY What? What happened next? Where's Jimmy buried?

SEARCHER I don't know. The first A-C started to check the gate.

DORCAS Check the gauge?

GRAND MÁS (to Dorcas) Oh for God's sake, Dorcas!! Checking the **gate**. Checking the gate! Never mind.

SEARCHER Jimmy's crew was about to break for lunch... When..., (beat) the Director said: "That's a wrap!" (MORE) Long pause.

DORCAS Socoo... where's he buried?

SEARCHER (shit eating grin) Why would we bury him -- he survived.

JABBERWOCKY Then where the fuck is he?

SEARCHER I don't know. He sued the bastards.

JABBERWOCKY The lawyers and judges?

SEARCHER

Who else?

DORCAS What happened next?

SEARCHER

There was a feeding frenzy. There wasn't enough left of him to feed an egg sac.

TARDIS Widow! COME HERE!

### DORCAS

I know. Why don't we just stay here, "patch the cracks, and set the table with love?"

GRAND MÁS Because that's what **people** do when **they're** "Po' Folks". (beat) Who, er what, do you think we are?

EVERYONE looking around at each other.

GRAND MÁS (CONT'D) Let's vote then -- INT. APT. - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME (DAY)

ESTER is on the phone with <u>KELLY FAIRCLOTH</u>, who works for JEZEBEL, X-Man's employer.

ESTER

Well, how will I know it's him Ms. Faircloth? What does he look like?

KELLY FAIRCLOTH (V.O.) "He looks like an ambitious corn dog that escaped from a concession stand at a rural Alabama fairground, stole an unattended wig, hopped a freight train to Atlantic City... and never looked back."

ESTER I guess that's okay as long as he keeps kosher. Does he keep kosher? Oh, hold on. I think he's here.

EXT. APT. - FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

The X-MAN, 70, regards a yuuuuge FUMIGATION TENT that engulfs the building. He knocks on the door, straightens his TOUPÉE and thrift shop tie.

X-MAN Hello. I'm Donald Drumpf, the Xterminator, but my friends call me "Poodle Dog". Rest easy, my friends. I'm here to bomb your house for roaches.

INT. APT. - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

GRAND MÁS

Let's do it...

EVERYONE walks from the hallway towards the front door. We reveal their physical forms (cockroaches).

The "RAPPIN' ROACHES" begin rappin' to a parody of "I'll Whip Ya Head Boy" by 50 Cent.

GRAND MÁS / SEARCHER / DORCAS / TARDIS / JABBERWOCKY / ROCK-N-ROLL WIDOW (CONT'D) I GET UP EARLY IN THE MORNING, BUT I CAN'T GET OUT OF BED. GOTTA PUT MY SHOES ON FIRST, SO I CAN CRUSH SOME ROACHES' HEADS. I'M A GANSTA' ON THE MOVE. WAIT TILL THEY SEE ME TAP.

I'LL CRUSH THEIR HEADS BOY. YOU KNOW I WILL. I'LL CRUSH SOME HEADS BOY. I CAN'T STAND STILL.

TAP, TAP, TAP. MAINTAIN YOUR SPACE. MAINTAIN YOUR LINE. FIND THE DOUGH. HIT THE FLO'. AS YOU'RE MEMORIZED BY MY FUNKADELIC RHYME.

I'LL CRUSH THEIR HEADS BOY. YOU KNOW I WILL. I'LL CRUSH SOME HEADS BOY. I CAN'T STAND STILL.

IT'S LIKE BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S. A BUFFET / SMORGASBORD. A VARIETY OF PASTRY. A PASSAGE OF RITE. BUT DOES ANYONE KNOW... IF THEY DO THEIR DISHES AT NIGHT?

I'LL CRUSH THEIR HEADS BOY. YOU KNOW I WILL. I'LL CRUSH SOME HEADS BOY. I CAN'T STAND STILL.

JIMMY GOT ICED, WHEN THE FREEZER DO' CLOSED. FRED WAS PUSHED DOWN THE DRAIN AND INTO A HOLE. BUT IT DON'T MATTER TO ME, IF THOSE BASTARDS FELT ANY PAIN.

I'LL CRUSH THEIR HEADS BOY. YOU KNOW I WILL. I'LL CRUSH SOME HEADS BOY. I CAN'T STAND STILL.

5,000 ROACHES IN THE FRONT, (MORE)

GRAND MÁS / SEARCHER / DORCAS / TARDIS 5,000 ROACHES IN THE BACK. THAT'S THE WHOLE 10,000 PACKED IN GRAND MÁS' CADILLAC.

I'LL CRUSH THEIR HEADS BOY. YOU KNOW I WILL. I'LL CRUSH SOME HEADS BOY. I CAN'T STAND STILL.

And, that..., is a wRAP, y'all!

FADE OUT.