

-M O O N L I G H T I N G-

"TAKE A LEFT AT THE ALTER"

by

~~Ma~~Karen Hall

REVISED DRAFT

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

A BASKET OF ROSE PETALS

1

...as a tiny hand REACHES in and PICKS UP a handful of flowers, and then DROPS them back into the basket...and then we SEE...

THE FLOWER GIRL

2

...a cute, blonde six-year-old...BITING her bottom lip and WAITING nervously for her walk down the aisle...and over this we HEAR a lilting soprano VOICE accompanied by a piano...

SOLOIST

...For a man shall leave his mother...  
 ...And a woman leave her home...  
 ...And they shall travel on to where...  
 ...The two shall be as one...  
 etc.

...and then we SEE...

THE SOPRANO

3

...a middle-aged woman dressed in pastel frills...and we SEE...

A MINISTER

4\*

...STANDING at the simple altar of modest CHAPEL...he OPENS \* his book to the right place and READIES himself...as the soloist continues to sing...and...

THOSE GATHERED

5

...a few well-dressed friends and relatives...they SQUIRM in their seats and LOOK at the back of the room...anxiously awaiting any sign that the wedding is ready to start...and...

THE MINISTER

6\*

...CHECKS his watch...LOOKS UP and gives a reassuring SMILE to the people who are waiting...and glances over at... \*

BRYANT WILBOURNE

6A

...an average-looking man, late thirties, in a tuxedo, who \* stands off to the side...and taking his cue, he steps OUT A \* DOOR into... \*

A HALL

6B

...and opens a door into...

## AN ANTEROOM

7

...where a woman in a simple white lace dress and a small headpiece is PACING the floor nervously...she's a little too old to be a blushing bride...perhaps in her early thirties...but very attractive, in a fragile sort of way... she currently is extremely upset...and she WHIRLS as he enters...but is immediately disappointed to see him...and then... \*  
\*

JACKIE

I thought you might be Craig...

BRYANT

(shakes his head)

No.

(and then)

Did you try calling again?

JACKIE

(knows he won't  
like this)

No...

BRYANT

Don't you think you should?

(after getting  
no answer)

Jackie? Why don't you go  
call him again?

JACKIE

(quiet;  
he's going  
to like this  
even less)

I never called him the first  
time.

BRYANT

(surprised;  
annoyed)

What?

JACKIE

(nervously)

I'm sure he's just running  
late...he loses track of  
time...or maybe he had car  
trouble...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

7\*

BRYANT

He doesn't know how to call  
a cab?

JACKIE

I don't want him to think I  
don't trust him.

BRYANT

Jackie, the guy's wedding  
was supposed to start twenty  
minutes ago and he hasn't  
even called, much less put  
in an appearance! I think  
it's safe to have a qualm  
or two by now...

...Jackie doesn't say anything for A MOMENT...her bottom lip  
QUIVERS...finally...

JACKIE

(in a quiet,  
childlike voice;  
the truth)  
I'm afraid to call him.

ON BRYANT

8

...TOUCHED...he understands her fear in a very real way...

SHOCK CUT TO:

A PHONE

8A

...as Bryant lifts the receiver to his face...he's back in \*  
THE HALL as he CHECKS a slip of paper in his hand and DIALS \*  
a number...and we can hear the pianist still playing \*  
wedding music as we HEAR a couple of RINGS...then... \*

A METALLIC VOICE

*We're sorry...the number you  
have reached has been  
disconnected...there is no  
new number...*

...Bryant REACTS, surprised...he CHECKS the slip of paper  
again...the number is right...he LOOKS back at the door  
to the anteroom, wondering what he'll tell Jackie...

OMIT 9-9A\*

OMIT 9-9A\*

SHOCK CUT TO:

INT. CHAPEL VESTIBULE - DAY

9AA

...as the last of the disappointed wedding guest are  
FILTERING OUT past a solemn Bryant...

BRYANT

(quietly;  
not really sure  
what to say)

...I'm really sorry...thank you  
for coming...I'm sorry for the  
inconvenience...

...and he watches the last guest leave...the chapel eerily  
quiet as he stands there...and then...

SHOCK CUT TO:

A PRESCRIPTION BOTTLE

9AB

...of medicine on a nightstand...beside a half empty  
GLASS OF WATER...and we PULL BACK TO REVEAL...

INT. JACKIE'S BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

9B\*

...the room is dark except for a STREAK OF FADING LIGHT  
coming in through the drawn curtains...somewhere in the room\*  
a CLOCK TICKS...Bryant is SITTING in a chair, WATCHING as  
she sleeps fitfully...and Bryant LEANS OVER her, CHECKING  
to make sure she's asleep...satisfied that she is, he then  
GLANCES around the room, then GOES OVER to the dresser...  
quietly OPENS a couple of drawers...doesn't find what he's  
looking for...he LOOKS around the room...FIXES HIS GAZE on  
a rolltop desk...he GOES OVER to it...SLOWLY ROLLS back  
the top, careful not to wake Jackie...he STARTS to SEARCH  
the desk, PULLING letters out of cubbyholes, PUSHING them  
back as he SEES they're not right...he OPENS a drawer and  
PAUSES...he REACHES IN and TAKES OUT...

A PILE OF LETTERS

9C

...tied together with a thin satin ribbon...

BRYANT

9D

...notices a FRAMED PHOTO of a man...the man...and he PICKS  
UP the photo...LOOKS at it, studying it...then he PICKS UP  
the top letter and reads the return address...and we...

SHOCK CUT TO:

## EXT. BEACH HOUSE - SUNSET

10

...as Bryant PULLS UP in front of a remote, nice-sized beach house...he PARKS his expensive rented car in the empty driveway...GETS OUT of the car...he's still in his tuxedo...he GOES straight to the door, noticing the name "C. Mullins" on the mailbox...and then he KNOCKS on the door...WAITS...KNOCKS again...then tries the doorknob...and, to his surprise, the DOOR OPENS into...

## A ROOM

10A

...as he steps in...

BRYANT

Mullins? It's Bryant Wil --

...and he stops in his tracks as he sees...

OMIT 11-13

OMIT 11-13

## AN EMPTY ROOM

13A

...there are some crumpled newspapers scattered about... a couple of boxes...one lone chair...the overall appearance of a place that has been vacated in a hurry...and...

BRYANT

14

...begins to SAG as the implications of all this descend on him like a heavy weight...he just keeps STARING at the empty room...and we...

OMIT 15

OMIT 15

SHOCK CUT TO:

## DIPESTO'S WORK STATION

15A

...in the office...except we see no Dipesto...and we hear a very faint but distant SNORE...and then the PHONE RINGS...and Dipesto's head RAISES UP from the desk...and a deep sleep... as she answers the phone...

DIPESTO

(tiredly)

Blue Moon Detective Agency...  
 Is your spouse a night crawler,  
 when you go to sleep?  
 Is he out counting skirts  
 while you're counting sheep?  
 Your rest's more important  
 than that lousy rat-fink,  
 So let us stay awake while  
 you catch forty winks,  
 But right now I'm napping,  
 I'm still in a daze,  
 Call me back later unless  
 you're Miss Hayes...  
 (and then)  
 You're not? Good-bye.

...and she abruptly hangs up...her head SINKING FROM VIEW again...and then...

## THE DOOR OPENS

15B

...and DAVID enters, heading straight for her desk...

DAVID

Agnes, front 'n center,  
 up periscope...  
 (KNOCKS  
 on desk)  
 Lights're on, pretend  
 you're home...

...and Agnes' head POPS BACK UP...

DIPESTO

(still drowsy)  
 Ohh, Mr. Addison...good...  
 (looks at watch)  
 ...morning...

DAVID

(all business)  
 Did she call?

DIPESTO

Miss Hayes...?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

15B

DIPESTO (cont'd)  
(and then;  
apologetic)  
No, sir...she didn't...

...and David's jaw clenches...a hint of anger...and then...

DAVID  
(interrogating)  
What time you get here?

DIPESTO  
Five a.m....seven a.m. Chicago  
time...  
(YAWNS)  
...just like you asked...

DAVID  
And you've been at this desk  
all morning.

...and she NODS...

DAVID  
Didn't go downstairs for coffee  
and Danish...

...and she HOLDS UP a lunch pail and thermos...

DAVID  
Never went down the hall to  
the ladies room...

...and she HOLDS UP a stainless steel hospital duck...and he  
stands there a moment, stewing...until...

DIPESTO  
(trying to help)  
It's still early...  
(and then)  
Did she give you any idea  
when she might be calling...?

DAVID  
(looking off;  
an ironic smile)  
Agnes...if I knew that, you  
think I'd send out for the  
same crummy Chinese food every  
night because they deliver?  
You think my stereo'd be  
collecting dust 'cause I'm  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

15B

DAVID (cont'd)  
 afraid I'll miss a ring? You  
 think I'd actually hang up on  
 an obscene phone call so I don't  
 tie up the line?

(and then;  
 lowering his voice)  
 No...I don't know when she'll  
 call.

(turning away)  
 Don't forget to put in for the  
 overtime.

...and David marches off to his office, SLAMMING the door  
 behind him...and...

DIPESTO

15C

...just sits there...tiredly...and then...

THE DOOR

15D

...opens again and VIOLA enters with a plastic bag, approaching  
 the counter...

VIOLA  
 (announcing  
 proudly)

Beepers.

DIPESTO  
 What...?

VIOLA  
 I got the beepers.

DIPESTO  
 (and then)  
 There's some kao-pectate in  
 Mr..Addison's bathroom.

...and Viola looks at her unsurely...then, "getting it"...

VIOLA  
 (laughs)  
 Agnes...you jokester...!  
 (and then;  
 off her  
 blank look;  
 realizing)  
 No...Agnes...phone beepers...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

15D

VIOLA (cont'd)  
for Mr. Addison...his own  
state-of-the-art telephone  
pager...so he doesn't have to  
worry about missing another  
call...

DIPESTO  
Ohhhh...

VIOLA  
I, uh...took the initiative of  
getting these on the way to  
work, so that...

(leans in;  
SOTTO)  
...you'll never have to leave  
a warm bed at four in the  
morning again. And the two  
of us can..."sleep in"...

DIPESTO  
Ohhhh...sleep...sleep is good...

VIOLA  
Actually I was referring to  
that thing that precedes a  
good, sound sleep...

DIPESTO  
Warm milk?

...and just then there's a TAP on Viola's shoulder...and he  
TURNS AROUND to see MACGILICUDDY standing there...his clothes  
ruffled...hair uncombed...bags under his eyes...and a CIGARETTE  
at the ready...and then...

MACGILICUDDY  
(hoarsely)  
Got a light?

VIOLA  
(patting his  
clothes)  
Yeah...sure...

...and finding a book, he LIGHTS A MATCH, holding it up as  
MacGilicuddy PUFFS on a cigarette...then, before Viola can  
put out the match MacGilicuddy PULLS OUT AND LIGHTS ANOTHER  
off of it...and then PULLS OUT AND LIGHTS A THIRD...and  
Viola DROPS the match, burning himself...and MacGilicuddy

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

15D

just stands there, puffing unhappily on three cigarettes...  
and then...

VIOLA  
(uncomfortable;  
making a joke)  
Know what they say...three on  
a match, bad luck...

MACGILICUDDY  
(looks right  
at him;  
then)  
Let's hope so.

...and he walks away, the picture of gloom...and as...

VIOLA AND DIPESTO

15E

...stare at him...

VIOLA  
What's with Pollyanna?

DIPESTO  
(SOTTO;  
explaining)  
His wife left him yesterday...

VIOLA  
(turns;  
surprised)  
Nooo...

DIPESTO  
Yes...  
(and then)  
I think he's trying to kill  
himself, except he's afraid  
of sharp objects or guns...

VIOLA  
(shakes head)  
Just up 'n left him, huh?  
(off her nod)  
Geeze...everywhere you look  
seems like someone's leaving  
someone else...  
(and then)  
Hope you weren't counting on  
a luggage rack for your  
birthday.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

15E

DIPESTO  
(smiles)  
Of course not...

...and Burt smiles at her, reassured...

DIPESTO  
I already have one.

...and Burt reacts, looking at her, alarmed...then, off her tired look...

VIOLA  
Yes, well...Mr. Addison in his office?

...and she nods...and we...

OMIT 16-16C

OMIT 16-16C

SHOCK CUT TO:

DAVID

16D

...PLOPPED down at his desk...his cheerful act is gone...  
he SIGHS wearily...STARES at the phone on his desk until he  
is interrupted by a KNOCK on the door...

DAVID  
(forgetting  
to be  
cheerful)

Come in.

...the door OPENS and Viola ENTERS...

VIOLA  
Sir? I've brought beepers.

DAVID  
Beepers?...The circus clown? \*

VIOLA  
No, sir...telephone beepers. \*  
Thought one might come in  
handy.

...and Viola spreads the inventory out for David's inspection... \*

DAVID  
(LOOKING at  
all the  
beepers)

What happened, they wouldn't  
let you split up the family?

VIOLA  
I brought a few samples on  
approval, so you can see  
which one you like...

DAVID  
(uninterested)  
I don't care. Pick one  
and leave me the receipt.

VIOLA  
(overcome by  
the responsibility)  
Well...sir...I wouldn't  
feel right...a man's  
beeper is a rather personal  
thing...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

16D

DAVID  
(wanting this  
to be over)  
All right, I'll take this  
one...

VIOLA  
(clearly  
displeased)  
That one, sir?

DAVID  
What's wrong with it?

VIOLA  
Nothing. Nothing at all.  
(and then)  
It's just not the most  
aesthetically pleasing  
in the bunch, tonally  
speaking...makes this  
irritating nasal sound,  
like..."n-yeep, n-yeep,  
n-yeep"...and while you  
don't want some wimpy  
"peep-peep-peep", you  
need a solid, fully  
committed "beep...beep...  
beep...".

DAVID  
(looks at Viola  
a moment;  
and then)  
Fine...I'll take this one.

VIOLA  
Not a bad little unit...  
long as you're not worried  
about ruining the line of  
your suit...you'll notice  
it's not as compact as  
your more streamline  
models...

DAVID  
(growing  
impatient)  
Thanks, now if you'll excuse --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

16D

VIOLA

Such as...

(PICKING UP  
another one)...the Microsonic  
220X, featuring a sleek,  
sturdy design and a digital  
readout.

...David reaches for it, but VIOLA withdraws it, offering  
another instead as he continues...

VIOLA (cont'd)

But...if I were you, I wouldn't  
want to overlook the C-2000,  
with a separate tone for  
emergency calls and an optional  
extended service policy.

DAVID

(insistent)

Sold.

VIOLA

Or there's...

DAVID

(really annoyed)

Put a bow on it! I'll take it!

VIOLA

(HANDING David  
the beeper)

Excellent choice, sir.

...and Viola just hangs there, beaming proudly...and David  
looks up at him, and then...

DAVID

Burt...if you don't mind,  
my new beeper and I would  
like a few minutes together...  
alone...

VIOLA

(GATHERING beepers)

Yes, sir...by all means...

...Viola TAKES the box and HEADS for the door...then  
STOPS...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

16D

VIOLA

Mr. Addison, as long as I'm here, there is one more thing...

DAVID

Make it a fast thing, Burt...

VIOLA

It's just that...I know you may be feeling a little overwhelmed...with Miss Hayes gone...

(off his look;  
nervously)

...from a business point of view, I mean...

DAVID

What're you talking about?... The secretaries are wearing shorter skirts, liquor cabinet's full. Since she flew the coop, this place has never run smoother.

VIOLA

(glumly)

Yessir.

...and then he TURNS and HEADS toward the door, and then TURNS BACK suddenly...

VIOLA (cont'd)

Sir...when a leg's amputated, the patient often believes he can feel sensation in the missing limb. And sometimes even tries to walk because he's forgotten he only has one leg.

DAVID

The odd socks in the dryer oughta jar his memory.

VIOLA

Unless that patient's extremely careful, he's headed for a nasty tumble down a flight of stairs.

(and then)

What I mean is...sir, if you ever need to lean on me... I'm here.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

16D

DAVID

I'll call you at the first  
sign of gangrene.

VIOLA

I'm just worried about your  
personal life...It's no  
secret that you and Miss  
Hay --

DAVID

(firmly)

Burt...the reason it's called  
a personal life is because  
it's personal...private...  
one's own...none of your  
business.

VIOLA

I just want to do everything  
I can to make this time  
easier for you.

DAVID

Good. Here's how you can  
start. Take this beeper,  
get in your car and head  
east...

...David is EDGING Viola towards the door...

DAVID (cont'd)

We're going to see how far  
you can go before you're  
out of beeper range...

VIOLA

That would be at least a  
hundred and fifty miles...

DAVID

(REACHING  
for his  
wallet)

Then I guess you're gonna  
need some money for gas...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

16D

VIOLA

But Mr. Addison...

DAVID

Don't worry, I'll pay myself  
back out of petty cash. You  
just get on the road and  
wait for me to call.

...they have REACHED the door...David OPENS it for Viola,  
but there stands...

OMIT 17-30

OMIT 17-30

DIPESTO

31

...poised, ready to knock...

DIPESTO

Oh, Mr. Addison. There's  
a man here to see you.  
Shall I send him in?

DAVID

(sighs;  
and then)

What the hell.

...Dipesto DISAPPEARS to get the man...as DAVID turns  
and walks back to his desk, Viola crosses to a chair  
and plants himself in it...and then...seeing him there,  
David looks at him pointedly, and Viola meets his  
gaze...and then...

DAVID

The man is here to see me.  
You've got a telephone  
beeper and your choice  
of freeways.

VIOLA

I don't think I should leave.

DAVID

I don't think you have much  
choice.

VIOLA

(getting to  
his feet)

Mr. Addison --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

31

DAVID

Amscray --

VIOLA

Hear me out sir. Suppose you take this case. And suppose that beeper starts beeping. And just suppose it's Miss Hayes. Who's come to her senses...and wants nothing more in life than to feel your heart pounding against hers.

DAVID

You know how to paint a picture, Burt.

VIOLA

(pacing now)

She wants you to drop everything and come to Chicago. But you can't. Because you're up to your eyeballs in the case that's about to walk in that door.

(and then;  
turning  
to David)

You need someone to back-stop you, sir.

ON VIOLA

31A

...standing there waiting for David's verdict...and then a VOICE...

VOICE (O.C.)

Excuse me...am I interrupting?...

...and VIOLA looks over at...

A MAN

31B.

...BRYANT WILBOURNE...standing in the doorway  
...a wealthy air about him...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

31B

DAVID

No...

(extending  
his hand)

David Addison.

BRYANT

Bryant Wilbourne.

...and Bryant looks over at Viola who hangs there, uncertain...  
and then...

DAVID

(begrudgingly)

My associate, Herbert Viola.

...and Viola lights up like a Christmas tree and PUMPS  
Bryant's hand a little too enthusiastically...

VIOLA

A pleasure...a real pleasure.

DAVID

How can we help you?

BRYANT

I'm visiting from New York.  
Saw your ad in the Yellow  
Pages...Do you handle missing  
persons?

VIOLA

Absolutely. We'll need  
a recent photo, the person's  
name and any aliases under  
which he or she has been  
operating, last known  
whereabouts...

...and then he falls silent off David's look...

DAVID

(to Bryant)

Who is it you're missing?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

31B

BRYANT

I'm afraid it's a  
bit complicated...a  
family matter, actually.  
My family consists of  
myself and my sister,  
Jaqueline...Jackie...  
our parents were  
killed in an automobile  
accident over twenty  
years ago...She was still  
a young child at the time...  
and I raised her...which,  
believe me, has been no  
small task...

(he looks out  
the window  
for A MOMENT;  
then)

...Jackie has never been  
a very happy person...  
even as a baby...it was  
like she was born in a  
funk she never got out  
of...My parents' death  
only made it worse.

(and then)

Don't misunderstand me...  
I love my sister very  
much, or I wouldn't be  
here...

VIOLA

You want us to find her?

BRYANT

No...not Jackie...

(and then)

My sister is an extremely  
fragile person. A few years  
ago...she had a breakdown.  
After she got out of the  
hospital, she moved out  
here...she thought the  
change of scenery would  
be healthy...Anyway, I  
paid her rent, she took  
art classes...wrote me  
letters that sounded...  
well...like Jackie...and

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

31B

BRYANT (cont'd)

then, a few months ago, the letters changed. She started to write about the beautiful weather and the garden she was planting and the neighbors she'd met and...a man. After awhile, the letters spoke a lot less of the garden and the neighbors and a lot more of the man...

(and then;  
SIGHS)

I flew into town for their wedding, which was supposed to have been yesterday...only the groom didn't show up...He's a pilot, so I clung to the hope that his plane had been delayed. Finally I drove out to his house...

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(he SIGHS)

...there was nothing...no furniture, no clothes...he disappeared.

(and then)

Needless to say, my sister is a wreck...needless to say, it's worth a great deal to me to find this man.

(handing him  
A PICTURE)

His name's Craig Mullins.

DAVID

(regards  
the picture;  
then)

I can understand your position. But I don't feel right about finding this guy just so you can mop the floor with him.

BRYANT

Oh, no. It's not like that at all. I think I could make it worth his while to reconsider... I'd like you to find him and tell him about the dowry I'm willing to propose.

DAVID

Dowry?

(CONTINUED)

