

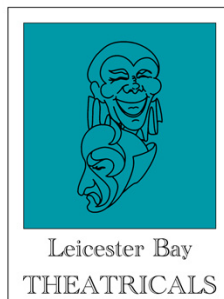
PERUSAL SCRIPT

The
MORQUE,
the Merrier...

A CHAMELEON'S MURDER MYSTERY

By

Jim Christian



Salt Lake City

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Characters (5M 3F)

- Dr. Antoine Toklas** - forensics expert - large, robust bearded man - resembles a lumberjack - big laugh - reformed smoker ... constantly chews toothpicks now - keen analytical mind - loves playing the Devil's Advocate - dedicated fisherman - West Virginian - very low tolerance for the ineptitude of others - noncommittal on hair testing
- Dr. Ned Quinn** - specimen tester (hair, saliva, etc.) - soft-spoken and mild-mannered - has less than a full head of hair - cerebral - less vocal than many of his colleagues - loosens up greatly if given the opportunity to drink - is a sucker for country line dancing - from Delaware - pro hair testing
- Dr. Carolyn Curtis** - gifted organizer and administrator - knows how to get things done enthusiastic and sociable - overdresses for absolutely EVERY occasion - excessive makeup and accessories - vacillates between blonde and redhead - sociable - a bit intolerant - a Southern Californian - pro-hair testing
- Dr. Mickey Ballou** - regulator - watchdog for government policies - one of the "worker bees" - a Jokester (as opposed to a prankster) - wears glasses - loves desk toys - everybody's buddy - fun-loving and gregarious - a Southern boy (South Carolina) - against hair testing
- Dr. Dina Quayle** - specialist in PCP and other narcotics - bubbly and fast-talking - lots of motion with little productivity - very pleasant - the "Little Orphan Annie" of the group - Washington, DC can become volatile when someone pushes the wrong buttons - against hair testing
- Verna Watkins** - everybody's right hand - tireless and even-tempered - a perfectionist and detail freak in her work - a bit of a frump - tends to dress in Southwestern motifs - always smiling and giving pats on the back - wears glasses - lives in New Mexico - noncommittal on hair testing
- Dr. Byron Periwinkle** - senior position and as such tends to call the shots - over-achiever positive nature, but rather high maintenance - "Do this for me" is his most commonly used phrase wears thin - British - wears glasses - eloquent - against hair testing - has an ostrich farm in North Dakota
- Orlando Steele** - guest lecturer for the conference - outrageous, high-profile hair designer specializes in makeovers - opinionated and outspoken - very demanding usually travels with an entourage - maintains a huge professional distance - does whatever is necessary to maintain an extravagant lifestyle

Time: present

Setting: Utah

Occasion: National Conference of The Benevolent Establishment for the Rejuvenation and Education of Forensic Toxicologists (B.E.R.E.F.T.)

THE SECRET CLUE --

the Table Card "COKE is it!" ... referring to 'coke' (cocaine) being at the heart of the mystery

A Slide show (or powerpoint presentation) must be prepared by the PRODUCER that supports Orlando's presentation.

Pictures must also be taken by the PRODUCER (of your cast members) in poses similar to the examples included in the news articles at the end of the script. These will be used in the RAMBLES section of the play. Re-type the news articles to go with the pictures.

THE MORGUE, THE MERRIER... *A CHAMELEON'S MURDER MYSTERY* by Jim Christian **Characters:**
5m 3w Synopsis: National Conference of The Benevolent Establishment for the Rejuvenation and Education of Forensic Toxicologists (B.E.R.E.F.T.) ...and there'll be overtime for those in attendance this year. **(ORDER #3090)**

1 -- Cocktails / Appetizers

(As the various members of The Benevolent Establishment for the Rejuvenation and Education of Forensic Toxicologists (B.E.R.E.F.T.) assemble, there is a general feeling of goodwill and merriment. All characters, with the exception of ORLANDO, are present and exchanging pleasantries. Occasionally the talk turns to work-related topics [death, workshops, techniques, etc.] but for the most part stays in a party atmosphere. Eventually, CAROLYN steps to the podium and quiets the crowd.)

2 -- After Cocktails / Appetizers (Act One)

CAROLYN: *(with great warmth)* Welcome! Welcome everyone to this evening's festivities For all of you first-timers, I am Dr. Carolyn Curtis and, as this year's social chairman, I would like to extend a special greeting to our newcomers: we are ...

(Bowing her head slightly in humility)

... BEREFT ...

(On this cue, VERNA and DINA unfurl the banner of the organization.)

... The Benevolent Establishment for the Rejuvenation and Education of Forensic Toxicologists. Welcome to our proud ranks!

(Applause and cheering)

MICKY: And speaking of "rank"...

(He scampers up to the podium)

... okay ... an old codger is sitting outside the saloon in a wild west town when suddenly a horse gallops up in a cloud of dust. The old geezer looks on as the rider dismounts, takes off his Stetson hat and starts to beat the dust from his clothes. Then, this guy walks to the rear of his horse, lifts its tail and kisses it squarely on the butt. The amazed onlooker asks "What ya doin', cowboy?" "Well..." says the cowboy, "I've got chapped lips." "And does that cure it?" asks the old codger. "Nope," says the cowboy ... but it sure stops me from lickin' 'em."

(He laughs and scampers away.)

CAROLYN: *(with an appreciative laugh)* Oh, Mickey ... what ARE we going to do with you?

MICKY: How about 50 squat thrusts and a double chorus of "The Macarena"?!!!

(He starts a few moves from "The Macarena" as he returns to his seat.)

CAROLYN: *(riding the crest of her laughter)* Oh, that man! One of these days ...

MICKY: *(stopping the dance)* Oooooooh ... Promise?

CAROLYN: *(breathless from laughter)* Stop! Stop! Ned?

(Waving NED up to the podium.)

Ned. Help me!

(CAROLYN steps aside and continues to laugh noiselessly as NED moves to the microphone.)

NED: *(bracing himself)* Oh, dear ... Jet's see--oh geez ... Carolyn -- don't be out of it too long -- you know how

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uncomfortable I am with a crowd ...

ANTOINE: (*strolling by ... passing Ned a rather serious-looking drink*) Well, we know how to fix that ... don't we?

NED: (*looking at the drink*) What? Oh ... thanks, Antoine,
(*He gingerly takes a sip which has an immediate calming effect*)

Ah ... much better. Now, I think most of you know me ... Ned Quinn ... and we ... Carolyn and I ... are very excited by the theme of this year's forensics conference: "Hair: The Wave of the Future".

MICKEY: Would that be a "permanent wave", Ned?
(*CAROLYN goes off again*)

NED: (*coping politely*) No, Mickey.

MICKEY: Well, Ned whatever you say.
(*Referring to NED's less than abundant head of hair.*)

After all, you are OBVIOUSLY the hair authority around here.

NED: (*with patience, smiling through it all*) That's pretty funny, Mickey.

MICKEY: Was the drive-thru at Squire Natural closed again?

CAROLYN: (*through her laughter*) I am absolutely dying!

MICKEY: Dying? Carolyn? Can anyone imagine CAROLYN dyeing her hair?

BYRON: (*breaking pleasantly into the conversation*) You know, Dr. Ballou, it really would expedite things if you saved your comedy routine until the appropriate moment ... say ... when you're shaving yourself in the bathroom mirror each morning ...

MICKEY: (*still on a roll*) No can do, Doc ... the crowd'd keep me there all day!

NED: (*pressing forward after another sip of his drink*) But we do need to discuss a few important matters like the reallocation of budget lines to implement the new hair-testing procedures ...

MICKEY: (*suddenly serious*) Okay ... THAT'S where I draw the line. Our financial resources are stretched to the limit already ...

BYRON: Tut, tut ... Dr. Ballou ... don't get your knickers in a twist. This isn't the scheduled time for that discussion. We have an entire session tomorrow to address fiscal matters.

CAROLYN: (*composing herself and returning to the podium which NED gladly relinquishes*) He's right. We have a million things to get through tonight ... not the least of which is socializing. So to bring us up to speed on the week's remaining activities is BEREFT's bundle of sunshine, Dr. Dina Quayle.

DINA: (*bouncing up to the microphone and speaking rapidly*) Thank you, Carolyn. Hello-ello-ello! Is everybody having a good time?

(*Without waiting for a response*)

Wonderful! It's such a treat to see all of you every year, make new friends and reminisce about the good times ... not to mention becoming updated on the latest advances in forensic toxicology. Did all of you get a chance to look over the commercial exhibits today? Weren't they wonderful? ... and I can never get enough of those wonderful samples and promotional giveaways. Did you get some of those flavored oral swabs with the matching pastel tips? The peach ones make me want to get specimens taken everyday!

MICKEY: Ooooh, Ned ... sounds like a personal invite.

(*NED blushes*)

CAROLYN: (*a gentle reminder*) Dina ... What about tomorrow's social calendar?

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DINA: (*smacking herself on the forehead*) Oops! There I go ... yatata-yatata-yatata ... Yap-yap-yap. Chitty-chatty-bang-bang. Okay ... special events tomorrow include the audiovisual presentation:

(*Slowing for emphasis*)

“Saliva Slides of the Celebrities ... and a lecture that I’m really excited about:

(*Slowly*)

“Better Ways to Organize Your Morgue - OR - How to Keep Your Workplace from Becoming Autopsy-Turvy!”

VERNA: (*caught in the middle of spraying her disheveled hair, she stops and makes a note*) Oh, I need that one ...

DINA: And ... we are have our ongoing “Fish-a-Thon” through the end of the week. How about a progress report, Dr. Toklas?

ANTOINE: Well, I think I’m still out in front with that 33 pound Rainbow I caught this afternoon. Of course, nothing compares to that Black Crappie I pulled out of Lake Ponchartrain down in Mississippi last year ...

MICKEY: (*unable to believe his ears*) Black WHAT?

ANTOINE: Black Crappie ... it’s a sunfish ... normally only gets to be about so big ...

(*Indicates with his hands*)

... but this one must have been a freak! Almost 30 inches and ...

MICKEY: Black Crappie ... hey that reminds me of a joke ...

BYRON: Dr. Ballou. If this is going to trundle us down the garden path into the realms of some kind of toilet humor ...

MICKEY: Well, duh! Where did you think it was going to go?

BYRON: Then I might suggest you refrain from such distasteful exchanges until after we have consumed our dinner.

(*BYRON turns and strolls away as MICKEY follows behind mocking BYRON*)

It’s quite all right for you to engage yourself in such vulgarities when you are alone or in the company of other baboons, but it is far from appropriate in mixed or professional company and if you continue to mimic me behind my back I shall be prompted to smack you briskly in the chops.

(*He turns to face him*)

Dig?

(*MICKEY trundles ape-like back to his chair and plops down good-naturedly.*)

Dr. Toklas? About your fish ...

ANTOINE: Oh, that’s all right. I think we’ve journeyed into the “wild kingdom” enough for the moment.

CAROLYN: (*picking up the thread*) I think you’re right, Antoine. Now before I introduce our special guest speaker this, evening, I want to make certain that there’s nothing I’ve overlooked. Let’s see ... Dr. Quayle? Anything to add?

DINA: (*in one breath*) No, I think I pretty much covered all of the highlights of tomorrow’s activities and it would probably Just confuse everyone if I tried to address the rest of the week’s agenda, chock full as it is with fun, food and festivities.

CAROLYN: Good call. Dr. Quinn?

MICKEY: ... Medicine Woman ...

CAROLYN: Did you want to say anything?

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NED: I'll save it for tomorrow's budget meeting.

CAROLYN: Fine. Dr. Periwinkle ... anything that needs covering?

BYRON: Other than Dr. Ballou's mouth on occasion ... no.

CAROLYN: Dr. Ballou?

(MIKEY stands up and makes a grand display of stuffing his mouth as full of napkins as possible for BYRON's benefit.)

I'll take that as a "no". Oh, Verna -- did you have anything to bring up?

VERNA: Not at this time.

(Suddenly remembering her manners)

Thank you!

CAROLYN: *(with suppressed giddiness)* In that case, it gives me EXTREME pleasure to introduce our very special guest this evening. In keeping with our conference theme, we have gone to great expense to secure the services of one of the most prominent experts in the field of hair ... ladies and gentlemen ... Orlando Steele!

(ORLANDO sweeps into the room with a great flourish, CAROLYN applauds wildly as his entrance is met with VERY moderate, if not confused, response by the other characters. He steps up to the podium, surveying the crowd and posturing as CAROLYN anticipates his first words ... which evidently are not forthcoming.)

CAROLYN: Mr. Steele?

ORLANDO: Yes?

CAROLYN: We're anxious to hear what you have to say?

ORLANDO: Say? SAY? Orlando Steele does not "SAY" ... Orlando Steele ... DOES!

CAROLYN: *(almost humiliated)* Of course what was I thinking?

NED: *(pulling her aside slightly)* Speaking of "what were you thinking?" ... Carolyn

(NED takes a big swig.)

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING? Who is this guy? You were supposed to arrange for [name of someone in the hosting group].

CAROLYN: *(non-plussed)* Now I know we discussed that, but I can assure you that NO ONE understands the chemical and biological properties of human hair better than ... Orlando Steele!

(Orlando tosses his head at the accolade and Carolyn swoons like a groupie.)

ANTOINE: *(who has been surveying Orlando from nearby)* I don't like him.

ORLANDO: Of course you don't! Orlando is not here to seek your approval -- Orlando is here to GIVE.

ANTOINE: Give what?

ORLANDO: A gift ... a very precious and magnificent gift ...

CAROLYN: *(enraptured)* Give ... GIVE!!!

ORLANDO: Orlando brings to you ... a new life!

CAROLYN: *(obviously having a very intense personal experience)* Oh!!!!!!!

BYRON: Excuse me before we have to obtain a mop and clean up after Dr. Curtis, perhaps you could put your little Christmas pantomime on hold and tell us just exactly what it is that you intend to do here ...

ORLANDO: Orlando will be ...

BYRON: *(stopping him)* And if you don't STOP referring to yourself in the third person like Tarzan, "Byron"

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may have to remove “Orlando’s” tongue.

MICKEY: You know ... I think I could have saved the foundation a bundle by just renting a flatbed truck and hauling all of us down to Supercuts.

ORLANDO: (*forcing the word*) “I ... am an artist. And an artist knows his medium. I do not “cut” hair ... I do not “style” hair ... I go deeply into the shaft ... the cuticle and become one with the hair. We merge ... and out of that mystical union emerges SYNTHESIS!

CAROLYN: (*in a burst of passion*) SYNTHESIZE ME, ORLANDO! SYNTHESIZE ME!

(*As the others gaze at her in disbelief, ANTOINE and NED gently, but firmly, lead her to one side and slap her*)

ORLANDO: You see? This is the fire that bums within each of us ... it longs for a doorway ... a means of escape ... an outward manifestation of that inferno ... and Orlando --

(*BYRON whips a steak knife into the air in ORLANDO’s line of vision*)

... I mean ... “I” am that doorway!

MICKEY: I think it needs a good deadbolt.

ORLANDO: Tonight, I shall prove to you that I am ... The Necromancer of Hair!

ANTOINE: (*to the crowd*) All in favor of me punching this guy out?

(*Hands are raised about the room*)

CAROLYN: NOOOOO!

(*Rushing bank to the podium*)

You will NOT harm this man.

ANTOINE: (*good-naturedly*) Sure I will!

CAROLYN: No you won’t ...

(*ORLANDO produces a folded document from his coat and waves it in front of CAROLYN’s face*)

... and I’ll tell you why ... there is a clause in his contract which guarantees him the successful completion of tonight’s engagement.

MICKEY: Aw, just throw the bum out and let’s eat!

ORLANDO: No! You will not throw Orl ... me out! I am a man with a mission. I have a quest! To reveal the inner beauty of ugly people ... and tonight ... you will all witness my transformative powers as one of you experiences ... THE MAKEOVER OF A LIFETIME!

ANTOINE: Hell, no!

BYRON: You’ve got to be kidding!

DINA: I don’t want it. I think I look just fine the way I am.

CAROLYN: Please, everyone ... it’s in his contract.

NED: Then break the contract!

CAROLYN: No!

NED: Why not?

CAROLYN: We just can’t ...

NED: Why - not?

CAROLYN: (*with overwhelming difficulty*) Because if we default on the contract ...

DINA: Carolyn?

CAROLYN: We have to pay him ... \$500,000

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(The hint of a wry smile curls ORLANDO's lips.)

VERNA: WHAT?!

NED: Are you insane?

MICKEY: Half a million dollars?

BYRON: Dr. Curtis ... what in heaven's name possessed you to agree to such an outrageous condition?

CAROLYN: Well, I never thought we'd have to pay it! His manager insisted on it. He said the default clause was standard. Everybody gets that when they do guest speaking.

ANTOINE: *(placing a hand on her shoulder)* No, they don't.

CAROLYN: They don't?

(ANTOINE shakes his head.)

Oh, poop.

NED: *(toughing up to ORLANDO)* Listen, mister ... there is no way in Hades that we are going to cough up that kind of money.

ORLANDO: *(derisively)* Ha-ha-hah! Out of my way, little man. You won't have to cough up "that kind of money" because I, the great Orlando Steele, SHALL complete my contract tonight ... and that includes performing one transformative makeover AS WELL AS all of the mini-makeovers which I see fit.

CAROLYN: *(referring to the Orlando's contract for NED's benefit)* See ... it's right there on page seven.

NED: *(examining the contract)* She's right!

ORLANDO: You see? You are all in my power.

ANTOINE: The hell we are!

ORLANDO: Where there is despair I bring hope. Where there is dreariness ... I bring excitement.

MICKEY: Where there is Orlando ... I bring a shovel.

ORLANDO: *(with a burst of inspiration)* Dr. Curtis?

CAROLYN: Yes, Orlando?

ORLANDO: Prepare to assist me with ... the selection!

CAROLYN: Oh, yes, Orlando!

(CAROLYN rushes to the fishbowl on the podium and lifts it high into the air.)

ORLANDO: I assume that each of you received some sort of ticket stub as you arrived this evening.

(To CAROLYN)

You DID take care of that, didn't you?

CAROLYN: Oh, yes, Orlando!

ORLANDO: Good! Everyone ... find your tickets! Now ...

(Waxing mysterious)

... come with me ... as I beseech all of the powers of beauty throughout the universe to be with me as together we search ... for that soul longing for fulfillment ... aching for Orlando's touch ...

(Byron begins stropping his knife on the sole of his shoe.)

... tonight ... the dream comes true for Number [pre-determined ticket number].

CAROLYN: *(seeing that she has not won)* NO! NO - NO - NO - NO - NO - NO - NO - NO - NO - NO!!!

(CAROLYN begins banging her head against the wall.)

NED: Carolyn -- I think this is a little unhealthy for you.

ORLANDO: REPEAT! Number [pre-determined ticket number].

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(The room is silent.)

VERNA: *(with dawning realization)* Oh ... OH! It's me! IT'S ME!!!! I've got it! I'VE GOT IT!!!!

MICKEY: You need it.

VERNA: *(rushing ORLANDO and flinging her arms around him)* Oh, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you!

(NED has to restrain CAROLYN)

ORLANDO: *(chagrined and attempting to remove himself from her clutches)* Get your hands off of me! Do not abuse this glorious opportunity with such ... vulgarity!

VERNA: I'm sorry! It's just that this whole day has been ... perfect! This is all too much for me. First, the grant -- and now this.

BYRON: What grant?

VERNA: Oh, this afternoon I received notification that I have been awarded one of the Erlanger Grants!

NED: The Erlanger?

VERNA: Yes! That will give me the funding to be able to complete the project I've been working on recently.

(To MICKEY and DINA)

You know the one.

ANTOINE: Which is?

VERNA: Well, for years I've been retaining hair samples from many of the more "notorious" autopsies that we've been asked to perform in anticipation of the day when hair-testing would achieve the sophistication and respectability that it has now reached. This will give me the opportunity to delve more deeply into such cases as ...

(VERNA extracts various Ziploc bags of hair samples from her purse.)

Howie Connors, Senator Bo Duchamps, Melinda Hayes. And I've already come up with some amazing information ...

NED: But all of Those files have been closed for ... months ... even years.

VERNA: But now we have the technology to go beyond our previous conclusions. Our records will become more precise! And when I go before the press with my findings ... it's going to be a whole new me!

(VERNA starts for ORLANDO again.)

ORLANDO: If you touch me again, the deal is off.

(VERNA stops in her tracks.)

Now, I never create on a full stomach so you'll just have to dwell in squalor a little longer.

VERNA: Don't worry. I've got all night.

(VERNA reaches into her purse, produces a bottle of hair spray, and begins applying it liberally as CAROLYN now has to be restrained by NED, ANTOINE and MICKEY.)

ORLANDO: *(snatching the hairspray from her)* And stop crucifying your follicles with this bargain basement poison!

VERNA: But that was specially formulated for me by ...

ORLANDO: From now on, your hair will subsist on an exclusive regimen of Orlando Steele products.

(Displaying one of his items)

"Remember ... if hair could talk, it would whisper ... Orlando." Now -- go to your seat -- and nourish your hair.

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VERNA: *(falling under his spell)* Yes ...

ORLANDO: Carolyn?

(ORLANDO claps his hands and gestures for her to announce dinner.)

CAROLYN: *(at the podium)* Fine. Ladies and gentlemen, I suppose that's all we need to deal with for the time being, so ... dinner.

(For VERNA and ORLANDO's benefit.)

AND I HOPE SOME OF YOU CHOKE ON IT!

3 -- Dinner

(Throughout the meal, discussion should flow freely regarding Verna's announcement. This should include references to:

- 1. Howie Connors [quarterback for the now defunct Paducah Opossums]*
- 2. Senator Bo Duchamps [Republican-Alabama]*
- 3. Melinda Hayes [well-known actress]*

CAROLYN "shoots daggers" at VERNA throughout the meal. Meanwhile, ORLANDO visits each of the characters [except VERNA] and performs some sort of assault on their hair. DINA leaves the room frequently, each time returning with renewed animation.)

4 -- After Dinner (Act Two)

BYRON: *(at the podium)* Dr. Curtis has asked me to take over the hosting hat since something or other has given her a splitting headache.

MICKEY: *(waving at VERNA, then ORLANDO)* Hi, Something! Hi, Other!

BYRON: Before we relinquish the balance of the evening to Mr, Steele, I should like to congratulate Verna Watkins on receiving the Erlanger Grant. Hair-testing is, and may well continue to be, a controversial means of detecting the presence of drugs in forensic cases. I applaud her efforts, although I personally feel that the whole procedure is vastly overrated and inconclusive.

DINA: Hear, hear!

MICKEY: You tell 'em, Winkie!

CAROLYN: How can you say that? Recent developments in the field have changed the entire face of forensic medicine.

NED: *(after a big swig of his drink)* Yeah! Patterns of hair growth have become accepted as the most reliable diary of drug abuse ...

DINA: Only in some circles!

NED: ... available to us today. Dermal layers and body fluids are eliminated at far too frequent a rate...

MICKEY: What about the external contamination issue? No one has disproved the concerns over inaccuracies which have resulted from...

CAROLYN: There have been just as many instances where the findings of the experts using the markers found in human hair were dead on the money.

BYRON: So far, it is an imperfect science, and science which is imperfect isn't science at all.

NED: But if someone doesn't lead us into new territories, there will never be an opportunity to prove ...

VERNA: *(shrieking)* STOP! I - want - my - makeover! And if all of you babies keep arguing, I'm never going to get it!

ANTOINE: You know, I could care less whether you ever get to look like Tammy Faye Baker or not, but for the rest of our sakes, let's let the clown show happen so we can get this creep out of our lives. All in favor?
(All hands go up except for DINA and MICKEY)

Good.

(To ORLANDO)

Now you! Get up there and get this over with.

ORLANDO: No one tells Orlando Steele where to go.

(ANTOINE spits out his toothpick and pushes up his sleeves.)

Now, I'm ready.

(ORLANDO moves briskly to the podium.)

VERNA: Goodie!

ORLANDO: *(stopping her)* But first, I want to give you a little preview of what is about to happen to you ... what your personal transformation will be

(ORLANDO reveals a slide projector or a powerpoint presentation.)

Lights!

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(They go out)

And now ... journey through the mists of illusion with ... Orlando!

(As ORLANDO narrates the following sequence, images of the transformation process are flashed up on the screen. Meanwhile, the other characters pass about the room, especially the back. In the darkness, MUSIC begins, of course with a PP presentation the MUSIC is part of it.)

Woman -- society -- expectation -

(Image #1 - Wrap)

The tragic aftermath.

(Image #2 - Amp headshot)

The death ... of beauty.

(Image #3 - no glasses)

Woman - raw - untouched - she is but clay -

(Image #4 - draping)

She comes - trembling - to Orlando - Begin!

(Image #5 - color)

Let me give you -- the light of the stars

(Image #6 - foil)

Sparkle, my tiny one

(Image #7 - shampoo)

Away! Away with the dross of years

(Image #8 - rinse/dryer)

I nourish you

(Image #9 - cutting)

I prune your tender branches

(Image #10 - texturizing)

To lift -- to expand - to explode

(Image #11 - blow dryer)

Come winds -- crack your cheeks rage -- blow!

(Image #12 - rollers)

I mold you, my sweet child

(Image #13 - under dryer)

And we wait ... and wait ... and wait ... and wait

(Image #14 - rollers out)

Be free!

(Image #15 - hair up)

But not too soon

(Image #16 - makeup base)

A new canvas

(Image #17 - eye shadow)

Look, mommy ... a rainbow!

(Image #18 - powder)

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- The Morgue, The Merrier ... by Jim Christian

Shhhhhh ...

(Image #19 - tweezing)

The sharp, incomparable beauty ... of pain!

(Image #20 - brows)

Are you here?

(Image #21 - liner/mascara)

Or here?

(Image #22 - cheeks)

Or here? I cannot tell

(Image #23 - lips)

A kiss? Nay.

(Image #24 - wardrobe)

How does one array a goddess?

(Image #25 - back of head)

May a mortal gaze upon thee ... and not "die?"

(Image #26 - voila)

Yes ... but only one.

(Image #27 - w/Orlando)

Orlando

(LIGHTS come up on applause to reveal VERNA ... slumped in a chair and strangled with her own necklace tightened about her throat.)

MICKEY: Well, Big Shot ... it looks like you've got your work cut out for you.

ORLANDO: Ahhhhh!

(ORLANDO faints. ALL shift naturally into forensic mode, amazingly clinical and nonplussed.)

3 more pages in this section

5 -- Rambles

6 - Resolution (Act Three)

3 pages in this section

7 -- Curtain Call

8 -- Announcement of the MasterDetective

Name

Sleuthing Sheet -- The Morgue, The Merrier ...

1. Who killed Verna Watkins?
2. Why?
3. Who was responsible for the death of Howie Connors?
4. Who was involved in disputes with Senator Bo DuChamps?
5. How did Melinda Hayes die?
6. Which suspects have been involved in secret criminal activity together?
7. How much will Orlando Steele receive if B.E.R.E.F.T. defaults on his contract?
8. Who created Verna's customized hairspray?
9. How many doctors are there among tonight's suspects?
10. What was tonight's secret clue?

(There are 7-8 more pages of production helps in the script)