

TWISTING MY MELON

by

DAN FORRESTER

ACT I **SCENE 1**

INT. Meeting Room, Community Library

ANNE, ISABELLE, RACHEL and TOM are sitting waiting.

RACHEL: Good evening, everyone. Shall we make a start?

ISABELLE: Barry's not here yet, Rachel.

RACHEL: Does anyone know where Barry is?

ANNE: He's not here.

ISABELLE: We know that, Anne, that's why she's asking where he is.

ANNE: Who?

ISABELLE: Barry.

ANNE: Why, where is he?

RACHEL: Perhaps we can make a start and Barry can join us when he arrives. We're already late.

TOM: He was here last time.

RACHEL: I'm sure he'll turn up, Tom.

ISABELLE: What are we going to talk about?

RACHEL: Does anyone have a particular subject on their mind? Otherwise I have something I'd like to--

TOM: He was going on about the buses.

RACHEL: Thank you, Tom, I'm sure he'll be here soon. We should make a start in the meantime though, or the cleaners will be locking us in.

ISABELLE: What about the buses? Do you know I once went through a phase where I couldn't get a bus unless it was an even number? Two years I had to watch the 83 go past.

Enter BARRY

BARRY: Bloody 'ell!

RACHEL: Ah, Barry, welcome.

BARRY: Would you Adam & Eve it?

RACHEL: Take a seat, we were waiting for you.

BARRY: (*Sits*) Well, would you?

ISABELLE: Would we what?

BARRY: Adam & Eve it.

TOM: What is it, Barry?

RACHEL: Perhaps we could--

BARRY: You'd never guess what.

ISABELLE: What? What is it?

BARRY: That a new shirt, Tom?

TOM: No. I washed it. I say washed; it rained.

ISABELLE: Barry!

BARRY: Oh, hello, Isabelle. I volunteered to take part in an identity parade. Six of us there were, as well as the flasher.

ANNE: A flasher? Oh, how frightening.

BARRY: Not really, Anne. You just have to show them you're not afraid, they can smell fear. At least I think that's what it was. Anyway, I was supposed to get fifty quid for a quick half-hour.

TOM: Some people have all the luck.

BARRY: Luck? The witness picked me out. I've spent the last three hours being grilled down at the bloody station.

ANNE: Aren't they wonderful, the police? So quick at catching the culprit.

BARRY: I wasn't the culprit! They're prejudiced against minorities.

ISABELLE: And what minority would that be, Mr White Western Straight Male?

RACHEL: We mustn't assume another person's sexuality, Isabelle.

BARRY: Being white and straight doesn't stop me being a victim of racism and homophobia.

ANNE: (*To Isabelle*) What's he a victim of?

ISABELLE: Paranoid delusions.

TOM: What's the point of flashing, anyway? I mean, what do you get out of it, Barry?

BARRY: It wasn't me!

ISABELLE: Did you have to get the old chap out for the Photofit?

BARRY: Nah, you'd never get my dad out of the house this time of year.

RACHEL: How did it make you feel? Persecuted? Afraid?

BARRY: Oh, you're not therapising me on that, no siree.

RACHEL: That *is* why we're here...

BARRY: Not by ambush, it's not. There's rules to this, we agreed.

RACHEL: Fine, good. I'd be more than happy to--

BARRY: Can't just go therapising us willy-nilly.

ANNE: There he goes again with the smut. *(To Isabelle)* Do you think he has a 'Freudian' complex?

BARRY: You're not pinning fraud on me as well. I was completely cleared of that, I've told you before.

TOM: So how did you get off?

ISABELLE: *Did* you get off?

BARRY: Of course I bloody got off. I had an alibi, didn't I?

ANNE: Oh, an alibi. How exciting!

RACHEL: *(Looks at watch)* Well, time presses, and I did have rather an interesting subject for discussion.

TOM: *(Stretches and yawns)* What was that, then?

RACHEL: I'm so glad you asked, Tom. It's not like you to show such interest in the topic.

TOM: You're right it's not. I was talking to Barry. *(To Barry)* What was your alibi?

BARRY: I told them I was here, with you lot. That's four witnesses plus Smiler on the front desk. Cast iron.

TOM: Just one more thing...

BARRY: *(Sighs)* Yes, Columbo?

TOM: When did the incident take place?

BARRY: Last Thursday.

TOM: Ha! We didn't have a group last Thursday. The library was closed

because of the security alert.

ISABELLE: Oh yes, that's right. That French clown went to the toilet in the performance space.

RACHEL: That's not quite--

ISABELLE: Pepé le Clown.

TOM: Pee Pee le Clown.

ANNE: Those poor children.

RACHEL: In actual fact the children were the security alert, Anne. I understand Pepe threw a bucket of pretend water over the audience.

TOM: So?

RACHEL: Some of the children didn't find it funny, so they went and filled up a bucket of their own. Only it wasn't water, and it wasn't pretend.

ANNE: Oh, the poor clown.

BARRY: (*Harumphs*) I bet he was the bloody flasher.

TOM: Don't be daft, you wouldn't get confused with a clown in a line-up, would you?

ISABELLE: Depends if he had his wig on.

TOM: Who, Barry or the clown?

RACHEL: Enough of the flasher, please! We're here to talk through our issues.

BARRY: I never even got my fifty quid. I call that an issue.

RACHEL: I wanted to talk about belonging.

ANNE: (*Leans into Isabelle*) What's she want to talk about?

ISABELLE: Belonging.

ANNE: Longing? (*Wraps her cardigan around herself and looks pointedly at Barry*) Longing for what?

TOM: Eight o'clock so Smiler can kick us out.

RACHEL: What does belonging mean to you? Your family, friends, a club?

ISABELLE: Barry's going to belong to HMP Manchester when they find out his cast-iron alibi isn't worth scrap, aren't you Barry?

ANNE: I don't like the idea of belonging to anyone other than my Terry. He

gets awfully jealous.

TOM: Jealous? Of what?

ANNE: He thinks I'm going to elope.

TOM: At your age? Who are you going to elope with, Saga?

ANNE: Terry says I'm very desirable.

TOM: Well don't look at me, I'm not going anywhere till I've got my new hip.

RACHEL: Anne raises an interesting point. Does belonging--

ANNE: Thank you, Rachel.

RACHEL: Right. Does belonging--

BARRY: When are you getting a new hip?

TOM: As soon as Amazon dispatches it. Prime, my arse.

RACHEL: *(Raised voice)* Does belonging...*(Pauses to check for interruption)* reflect an inherent desire for structure and hierarchy that's been essential for humans to co-exist for millennia, or is that an outmoded view of what is in fact a form of possession in the manner of a master/slave relationship?

(Beat)

(ANNE, BARRY, ISABELLE and TOM look at each other confused)

TOM: *(Stands)* That it till next week, then? I'm off to twist my melon.

BARRY: Squeeze a lemon.

TOM: *(Exits)* You speak for yourself.

CURTAIN