

# Why Does Universal Love Have Florida Plates?

A full-length murder mystery farce situated in Palm Beach.

Presented in NYC 1995 at Alice's Fourth Floor-Look-See series.

## Scene 7

THREE HOURS LATER. THE WALLS ARE ALMOST ALL COVERED. PAULINE IS RESTING OUT ON THE PORCH. CHARLIE IS EATING LUNCH, AND JUDE, HONEY'S DRIFTER CHILD COASTS IN. HE LOOKS LIKE A BUM.

JUDE

Yo, are they here?

CHARLIE

Who?

JUDE

The rents?

CHARLIE

Who are you?

JUDE

I'm the yard child.

CHARLIE

What?

JUDE

The child allowed on the yard, but not in the house.

PAULINE

(Calls out) Charlie, they're playing bridge.

JUDE LIGHTS A MATCH, AND BLOWS IT OUT. THEN HE LIGHTS A CIGARETTE. PAULINE COMES IN.

PAULINE

Put the smoke out Jude, Dad hates cigs. It reminds him of his father who died of emphazema.

JUDE

I thought his father was an alcoholic.

PAULINE

Why did you arrive unannounced?

CHARLIE

(interjects) I've got to run an errand, I need some more PAste.

PAULINE

See ya Chuck!

CHARLIE

Later PAul.

JUDE

(Makes himself comfortable on the chaise lounge.) Heard you were the queen of the downtown scene.

PAULINE

Oh yeah, who did ya hear that from? Thought you were in New Orleans!

JUDE

Buddy of mine who joined my band.

PAULINE

I heard you burnt that club down, then hightailed it out of there.

JUDE

I had too. When I wasn't playing, I was washing dishes in the back. I got into a little tete-to tete with the chef. He tried to stick me. It was self-defense.

PAULINE

So, you've been on the run.

JUDE

No babe, I've been on the road. Trying to scare up some gigs in Miami.

PAULINE

Oh, well, where's the band?

JUDE

I don't know, maybe in Key West.

PAULINE

Why are you here, Jude? You look like shit?

JUDE

Thought I'd catch a little shut-eye. It's cold in the tropics at night.

PAULINE

Looks like you haven't bathed in weeks.

JUDE

Correct.(toys with a picture of Franz) You know what I call my band? "The Firebugs."

PAULINE

No offense Jude, but I think you ought to roll on , Dad is not giving any hand-outs, if that's what you're looking for.

JUDE

I'm here to see my mother. I miss her.

PAULINE

I would of thought you hated her, seeing as you burned her place down.

JUDE

(Shows his maniacal side) That's the only way I could communicate with her. Once I did away with her material, I had her full attention. Fire is so absolute.It is the only thing that numbs my PAin. When I see that orange flame, my adrenalin obliterates every demonic thought in my mind.It's the only time I have pure peace.

PAULINE

Speaking of peace, where's your brother?

JUDE

A halfway house, he just got out of a six month rehab.

PAULINE

Look Jude, why don't you write Honey a note, I'll give her the message, and make sure she reads it. A letter can be just as effective.

JUDE

You know, I think you're kind of sexy.

PAULINE

Forget it, I'm not into anything that's related to your mother. I'm married.

JUDE

That never changed the course of romance before. P.S., if you're so happily married, where's hubby?

PAULINE

Hubby is on a yacht with an older woman who collects antiques. He's afraid of the present, and I'm afraid of the PAs, so the arrangment works out perfectly.

JUDE

I like honest woman.

PAULINE

Well, honesty never got me far.

SUDDENLY HONEY RUSHES IN. SHE'S IN A PANIC.

HONEY

PAuline, quick we've got to go to the hospital, your father has had a heart attack. There was a fire at the club. Franz had too much smoke inhalation.

JUDE

(Buts in) Hello Mother!

HONEY

Jude, what a surprise, you're early?

JUDE

I thought I was on time.

HONEY

(very condescending) Please leave, Jude. I don't want you in my house when I'm not here. PAuline, your father had a stroke.

PAULINE

You just said heart attack, which is it? Is he dead?

HONEY

I don't know, GoGo and Walter went to call an ambulance. I need his medical records. He's allergic to something, but for the God of me, I can't remember.

JUDE

Penecillin.

PAULINE

Is that so difficult for your pea-brain? (PAuline gets some things.) Come on.

HONEY

I can't bear to loose him.

PAULINE AND HONEY RUSH OUT.

HONEY

(On her way out) Jude, you can take a bath, but you can't stay.

JUDE MAKES A PHONE CALL.

JUDE

(Waits for them to leave, and then phones the hospital.) Is this the emergency room? Do you have a Franz Richhoff admitted. Yes, well yes, I'm his son, and there was a question of medication. Penecillin can be administered for his burns. Yes, do what you have to do. Keep a close watch, I'll be there shortly.

JUDE GOES TO THE WALLPAPER, AND STARTS TAPPING IT SEARCHING FOR A SAFE.