

[Podcast intro music plays.]

Jessica Dahlgren: Thank you and welcome to *20 Sided Stories*.

[Music fades out.]

Game Rules

[Jaunty music. Radio switches on.]

Jessica: *VICTORIA 1890*. Season 1, Episode 1.

[Radio switches off. Music continues.]

Narrator: Hello there! Welcome to *VICTORIA 1890*. If you have yet to hear the world introduction, make it your utmost priority to indulge in that first and then return. It's only four minutes.

We went a lot more free-form in this campaign. Meaning, rather than a tested "system" per se, each character selected slight modifiers towards the attributes they prefer, as determined by a class survey.

To pass an obstacle, the character rolls a single d10. If they land a 10 or higher, the player may record a point towards their Intuition. 3 points and they may cash it in to get an additional clue from the GM.

But, of course, *20 Sided Stories* is not about the numbers nor the sides, but rather the improvised story.

Cast Introduction

Sage G.C.: *Hi, my name is Sage G.C. and I will be playing* [vague French accent] Achilles Gastard. He is from France and he is a con-artist. And he has a pretty good composure and awareness. He is a sneaky, peaky type.

Garrett Reasoner: *I am Garret Reasoner and I'll be playing* [Richard's accent] Doctor Richard Chamberlin. But you can call me Dicky. I'm thirty-two years old, from a noble family, and took after my father in science. Let's just say I have quite the knack for smearing the parrot.

Kate Pursley: *Hi, I'm Kate Pursley and I will be playing* [Matilda's accent] Matilda Buchanan. I got a plucky personality, I was raised on the streets of New York, goddammit. And I got a

fire in my belly and a pistol to kill anybody who gets in my way, goddammit. Also! I'm a famous adventurer, goddammit.

Greg Reasoner: *Hi, my name is Greg Reasoner, and I will be the GM, aka the Game Master, for this series. And I will be making up all the different characters and situations that they interact with, and keep a wonderful environment for their imaginations to run wild in.*

[Music picks up.]

Narrator: So there you have it folks. Eight full-length episodes of obnoxious accents, looming mysteries, a little dash of action here and there, some romance on the side, and a full serving of sorta accurate Victorian shenanigans.

[Music fades.]

Episode 1 - Urn

[Episode Intro music plays.]

Narrator: We join our adventurers now at the estate of Count Alexander, where each of them have been summoned for reasons regarding a very peculiar Egyptian urn.

[Music fades.]

[Thunder rolls and rain patters against the roof.]

Greg: *Miss Buchanan.*

Kate: *Mmm?*

Greg: *You've had a correspondence with a certain Count Alexander Sabatini of Spain. And he has requested your presence along with your friend...professor or doctor?*

Garrett: *Doctor.*

Greg: *Doctor Richard Chamberlin.*

Matilda: [excited] Dicky!

Greg: *To authenticate a recent artifact that he has acquiesced.*

Matilda: Mmm, I do love a Count.

Greg: *So we cut to you guys in the grand doorway of his large estate in London.*

[Footsteps tap on the stone walkway as the two approach the door.]

Richard: [impressed] Ooo.

Matilda: Hey, say!

Richard: What a lovely place.

Matilda: Don't I know it, Dick.

Richard: Please... I've told you this a thousand times. It's *Dicky*.

Matilda: Mmm. Anyways. Look at this doorway! It looks like it's made of pure gold!

Richard: That's ridiculous. There's no way that he has *that* much money, where he can make it out of pure gold.

Matilda: Let's find out! Knock on that door, *Dick*.

[Richard knocks on the thick door. A moment later, the door squeaks open.]

Greg: *The door opens slowly, and in you see a droopy-faced butler.*

Butler: Hello. Ms. Buchanan. Doctor Chamberlin.

Richard: Yes. But please, call me Dicky.

Butler: Please, step inside.

Richard: Oh, thank you.

Matilda: Mmm. Thanks.

[Footsteps transition to a wood floor and the door squeaks shut behind them. The thunder and rain become muffled.]

Butler: Let me take your coats.

Matilda: Oh, well, alright.

[Clothes rustle as she removes her coat.]

I'll take off my peacock feather coat.

Butler: And yours, sir?

[Buttons unfasten and clothes rustle.]

Richard: Ah, thank you. Wow, it is quite marvelous in here. How large.

Matilda: I say.

Richard: How grand.

Butler: If you wouldn't mind, the count is waiting for you in the study.

Matilda: Oh.

Greg: *And he gestures over to the right.*

[Thunder rolls.]

Matilda: Well let's go, *Dick*.

Greg: *As you walk in, you see a huge fireplace. And standing in front of the fireplace is a Frenchman?*

Sage: *Mm-hmm.*

Greg: *[chuckles] Who is wearing...*

Sage: *Clothes.*

Greg: *Cool. Alright, clothes.*

Matilda: [quiet] Oh.

Sage: *[amused] French clothes. Warm, French clothes.*

[Rain patters on the window. Fire crackles in the large fireplace.]

Greg: *And a man you presume to be the count, who looks like he's in a distinguished forties with silver streaks on the sides of his head, with black hair that is slicked back. And a long, red coat. And he's holding in his hand an Egyptian urn with a cat's head on top of it. A shaped cat's head. Not an actual cat's head. One made of clay. You would assume.*

Alexander: [vague Spanish accent] Ah, yes! Please! Come in, come in.

Matilda: Ooo.

Richard: Ooo, how marvelous. How exciting! Is that from...Egypt?

Alexander: Indeed it is. My friends, this is Gastard. The man who is selling me this piece. Uh, Gastard, this is the famous Matilda Buchanan.

Achilles: [uninterested] Mmm.

Matilda: Well, [pronounces badly] bonjour.

Achilles: [amused scoff] Yes. This is what we say in [stifles laughter] ze French land.

Alexander: And, uh, our friend here is Dr. Richard Chamberlin.

Richard: Yes, pleasure to meet you.

Achilles: [amused] Zat's not what we say, but hello to you as well.

Richard: Please, call me Dicky.

Achilles: Dicky?

Richard: Yes.

Achilles: Dicky Chamberlin.

Richard: Mmm. Now, where did you find this urn?

Achilles: Well, uh, you see I, uh...I was, uh, told to, uh...

Alexander: He's a third party. And what I had, uh, him do was bring it from a friend, who recently had a trip down to Egypt. You see, I'm trying to study Ramesses III.

Matilda: [quiet gasp] Oh. I say, that's interesting. I do love a good mummy story.

Richard: Mmm.

Alexander: This one goes beyond mummies.

[**Matilda** gasps quietly.]

And I shall tell you more after I tell you why I've had you come here. Gastard, I apologize for the surprise, but this fine woman over here is actually a master of, uh, the studies of Egyptian artifacts?

Matilda: [smug] You bet your boots, I am.

Alexander: And I am going to have her authenticate this.

Matilda: [smug] Mm-hmm.

Richard: And I am, of course, here to check the chemical compounds to make sure that it's not a fake.

Matilda: Dicky's kinda weird. [**Kate stifles laughter**]

Achilles: Zis is, uh...[nervous chuckle] Okay...uh...[nervous chuckle]

Sage: *And I pull him to the side [stifles laughter].*

[Greg chuckles.]

Achilles: [quiet] Uh, what?

Alexander: [quiet] Amigo. It's all- it's all good. If this is the genuine article, then I will be purchasing it from you. You will have a grand sum of money.

[Thunder rumbles. Fire crackles.]

Achilles: [quiet] I see, I see. [nervous] And if it is not, uh, genuine...zen, uh...

Alexander: Is there something I should be worried about?

Achilles: [fast] Uh, just- just, uh, trying to- trying to find out if zey- if- *if* zere what *if*?

[Beat.]

Alexander: Uh...I guess that I will not purchase it?

Achilles: Mmm, shit. [nervous chuckle] Okay.

[Greg and Sage stifle laughter.]

Sage: *We turn back.*

Garrett: *While they've been talking, I pull out my briefcase and start undoing all of my laboratory- my mobile laboratory. Which has lots of beakers and chemicals, and little stands, a little Bunsen burner. And, of course, very large glasses for me to look through.*

[Items clatter as Richard sets up.]

Matilda: Mmm, I love to watch *Dick* work.

Alexander: Ms. Buchanan, if you don't mind, I was wondering if you could take a look at this.

Matilda: Oh, righto!

Alexander: Thank you. So what I've been told about this piece is that it is from the, uh, the room of the sarcophagus of Ramesses III.

Matilda: Mmm.

Alexander: And that he was the pharaoh who had to deal with...the sea people.

Matilda: [gasps] Sea people?

[**Richard** gasps quietly.]

Alexander: Have you heard this legend?

Matilda: I have *not*. And I say, I've heard a *lot* of legends.

Richard: [gasps] Ooo, how exciting, this is actually from his chambers! Please! Bring it here, bring it here! I'm so excited to look at this!

Kate: *I pull Dicky aside.*

Matilda: Dick.

Richard: Mildie.

Matilda: The weight of this is *way* off. It's usually a *lot* heavier.

Richard: Really? Let me hold it.

Matilda: Okay.

[Fire crackles as **Richard** looks over the jar.]

Greg: *Why don't you roll Intelligence on that, Kate.*

Kate: Okay.

[Dice roll on table.]

Greg: *What'd you get?*

Kate: [disappointed] 3. I got 3.

Greg: *With your modifier?*

Kate: Oh, wait. 4.

Greg: Okay. Yeah, you're [chuckles] you're BSing on that one, then.

Richard: [quietly excited] I've never held an artifact like this, so I actually have no idea.

[The jar thuds and scrapes as he sets it on the table.]

Garrett: *And I place it down and start doing chemical things to it.*

[Containers in the mobile lab clatter lightly as he works.]

Greg: Okay. *Why don't you roll Intelligence.*

[Dice roll on table.]

[Fire flares as **Richard** lights the Bunsen burner.]

Garrett: *I got an 8, plus my modifier, 3. So...*

Greg: *So you are, uh, you realize that the paint on the side of it, all the hieroglyphs, it looks like, judging by your little test, you can tell that this was all recently painted.*

[**Richard** gasps quietly.]

Garrett: *I pull Mildie to the side.*

Richard: [quiet] Mildie.

Matilda: [quiet] Oh god, we're even *more* to the side now. [whispers] What's up?

Richard: [quiet] Look at these chemical compounds. The way that this reads is that I suspect that...this paint here is not ancient.

[Matilda gasps quietly.]

It's not made of beetle, nor is it made out of any kind of clay. This is *new* paint.

Sage: *Can Achilles hear this?*

[Suspenseful music.]

Greg: *Uh, why don't you roll Discretion?*

Sage: 6.

Greg: *Yeah, you hear it.*

Sage: *Okay. There is one drip of sweat going down Achilles' forehead. You guys don't know this.*

Alexander: Oh, Achilles! You look like you're, uh, overheating. Please, uh, let my manservant get you a drink.

Achilles: [frantic] Oh, it's just, uh, it's just, ze- ze fireplace is warm and I, uh...so I get warm.

[Sage stifles laughter.]

Greg: *The count guides you over to the couch and has you sit down.*

Achilles: Zank you, zank you. Zank you very much.

Alexander: I shall be right back. I shall get you a, uh, a glass of something cold.

Kate: *I pull Dicky even further to the side.*

Matilda: [quiet] Dicky.

Richard: [quiet] Yes?

Matilda: [quiet] What if this is a *fake*? What if we're being bamboozled?

Richard: Mildie, I believe that our friend here, the count...in fact *is* being bamboozled.

Matilda: [gasps] Oh god!

Richard: [quiet, chipper] I know! How exciting.

Matilda: [chipper] I know! [chuckles] What a mystery!

Richard: [quiet] I know. Well it's not *quite* a mystery. We know that it's a fake.

Matilda: I know. Well, we *solved* the mystery. Now, what do we do?

Richard: [hesitant] Uh, I believe that we tell him that it's a fake, and then he doesn't buy it from the odd Frenchman over there.

Butler: Here you are, sir. A cold beverage.

Achilles: Zank you.

Butler: Glass of water with ice.

Achilles: Mmm.

Greg: *He bows and walks away.*

Achilles: Oh, uh, mmm.

Butler: Yes? Is there something else I can get you?

Achilles: Uh, it- I was going to say, uh, maybe, uh, *no* ice, but, uh, it's fine. You do- you do good job. Uh, just leave. Please leave room.

Butler: Very well. Excuse me, Ms. Buchanan, uh, Doctor. Is there anything I can get you? Refreshments?

Richard: Oh! I would love a gin and tonic.

Matilda: Mmm, I would love some nice Scotch.

Butler: Very well.

Greg: *And the manservant turns around and heads over to the bar, which is at the other side of the room.*

Alexander: Ah, there you are! Here is a glass of water with ice.

Achilles: Oh, I thought, uh, [stammers] What? Wait...what? I...okay.

Alexander: Oh, you already have one?

Achilles: Yes.

Alexander: Oh, my manservant. [chuckles] He was in here the whole time, he heard it. I feel so silly. Uh, this one it has, uh, whatever.

[Sage stifles laughter.]

Greg: *And he throws the glass in the fireplace.*

[The fire hisses as the water hits it.]

Richard: Now...uh—

Alexander: Yes, Doctor, have you come up with anything?

Richard: Yes. W-we have.

Matilda: Mmm.

Richard: And after looking at its chemical bases, we believe that...your friend here has...

Matilda: [loud] Bamboozled you!

Richard: [loud] He's brought you something that is completely under— And it's- it's not real!

Sage: *Can I roll to have already escaped by the time they turn around?*

Greg: *[stifles laughter] Uh, roll me either Discretion or Agility.*

[Dice roll on table.]

Sage: 11!

[Rapid footsteps fade from the entrance hall.]

Alexander: *[startled] Que pasa, amigo? [gasps]*

[Misadventure music.]

Kate: *I run after him! I pull out my pistol! [stifles laughter]*

Greg: *[amused] Geez! Okay. Roll Agility.*

Kate: *[amused] It's a 4. Goddammit!*

Greg: *[chuckles] You get a good start, and you head out the front door.*

[Rapid footsteps pound across the floor. The door creaks open.]

But you're not sure which way he went.

Matilda: Damn!

Garrett: *I wanna start running after them too, but I still haven't taken off any of my glasses and stuff.*

Greg: *Okay. Uh, it's Agility.*

Garrett: 4.

Greg: *Right, cool. You come out the door, and you bump right into Matilda from behind.*

[Heavy footsteps pound across the wood floor. THUD!]

Matilda: Christ!

Richard: Ow! Ugh. Mildie, what are you doing?

Matilda: *[loud]* Dicky, what are *you* doing?

Richard: *[loud]* I'm trying to catch the imposter!

Matilda: *[loud]* So am I, goddammit!

Richard: *[calm]* Oh, well then why didn't you just say so?

Matilda: *[calm]* Oh, I'm sorry, Dicky.

Richard: Oh, that's fine. You go catch him, I'll go into the—

Alexander: Where did he go?

Matilda: Oh. *[chuckles]* We don't know.

Richard: No. Sorry. Not really my type of thing.

Matilda: Mmm.

Richard: I'm more of just the- the chemist.

Alexander: Well- *[stammers]*

Richard: We told you what you hired us for.

Alexander: I'm going to roll my Intelligence to see if I can figure out which way he went. *[Greg stifles laughter]*

Matilda: Oh, good idea.

Alexander: Yes! He went to the right!

[Footsteps charge off.]

Kate: *I run after him with my pistol still drawn!*

Garrett: *I walk back over to my cocktail.*

Greg: Okay, roll agility.

Kate: 6!

Greg: Okay and then, Sage, roll Discretion.

[Sage sighs.]

See if you can avoid...

Sage: 6.

Greg: Hmm. I'll say that, Matilda, you catch a scent *[chuckles]*.

[Matilda sniffs the air.]

And you chase him. And, uh—

Sage: *Smells like baguettes and...and—*

Garrett: *Funny accents.*

Sage: *—art house movies.*

Greg: *You hear footsteps running over stones, uh, that are embedded into the street-cobblestone streets, and you take a turn, following the sound, and you see him. And he comes to a dead end, and there's a fence behind him that's not too high. He could—he could get over this fence.*

Kate: *I shoot in the air! Pow, pow!*

[Two gunshots ring out.]

Matilda: The games up! I gotcha where I wantcha, ya frickin' thief!

Achilles: Hold on! Uh...alright, uh, just, uh...*[sinister]* come closer.

Matilda: ...What? *[Kate stifles laughter]*

Achilles: *[sinister]* I swear, I'll explain everything.

Matilda: Alright.

Kate: *[stifling laughter]* I hold the gun on him and I slowly approach.

[Footsteps tap slowly on cobblestone.]

Achilles: Okay...

Greg: *Roll Composure to keep your cool. Both of you.*

[Kate cries comically away from the microphone. Sage stifles laughter.]

Sage: *I got a 10, she got a 1 [chuckles].*

Kate: *I got a 3.*

Greg: *Okay, so you're super—*

Kate: *[dismayed] Oh no.*

Greg: *You're super cool right now, Gastard.*

Sage: *[smug] Heck yeah.*

[Thunder rumbles, rain pours down. Matilda takes a few more slow steps forward.]

Greg: *Whereas, Matilda, you are... You've got the gun, but you- as you walk over, you feel super cool. You let it sort of drop down by your hip, and you're no longer actually pointing it at him. Now it's sort of pointing away, but in your mind you think you're pointing it at him.*

Sage: *And I'm going to take that advantage, grab her wrist, and flip her around so that my mouth is right by her ear.*

[A scuffle as Achilles grabs Matilda.]

Achilles/Simon: *[English accent] My real name is Simon Sinclair.*

[Thunder rumbles. Rain patters on the cobblestones.]

Kate: *[quiet, amused] What? [stifles laughter]*

Simon: *I'm a con-artist. You have probably met me at some point in your life. Traveled all across Europe with various identities, alright? Achilles is not a real man. Jig is up.*

Kate: *[stifling laughter] Try to kick him in the groin.*

Greg: *Okay. Roll your Agility.*

Kate: *It was an 11.*

Greg: *Alright.*

Sage: *[accepting] Ow.*

[THUD! Simon grunts, reels back, and doubles over.]

Greg: *You are doubled over—*

Garrett: *[amused] You kick him so hard.*

[Kate chuckles.]

Greg: *—and your eyes are closed, and the only thing comin' out o' those sockets are tears.*

[**Simon** groans.]

Matilda: Yeah, try havin' children after *that*, you bastard! [**Kate** stifles laughter]

Simon: Matilda, you need to understand me! [pained groan] Jesus Christ! [hushed] Look... There's a man [sighs] named Herve Malet. Or Mallet—I don't know. It's just written down in my thing here. I don't know if the T is silent or not—he hired me to make this urn, alright? It's a replica. This is all I know, alright?

[Thunder rumbles. **Matilda** sniffs as she squints at him.]

Matilda: Okay.

[**Sage** stifles laughter.]

Greg: *And, as this is happening, then the doctor and the count come around the corner.*

Alexander: Ah! You have captured him!

[Footsteps tap on cobblestone as **Alexander** walks over.]

Simon: ["French" accent] Ah, yes! She has captured me. I am a...fool! It is a fake. But it is, uh, not my fault. You see, I bought it from someone else!

Greg: *He walks over to you and he grabs you from under your armpit and picks you up. He's actually pretty strong.*

[Thud. Clothes rustle. **Simon** grunts in pain.]

Alexander: Matilda, help me bring him over back to the house.

Matilda: You got it!

Alexander: [surprised] What happened to him?

Matilda: Oh, I kicked him hard in the groin. He can't have children.

Alexander: [chuckles] Oh, Matilda.

Matilda: [chuckles] Oh ho, Count.

Alexander: Ah, please, call me Alexander.

Matilda: Ho! Crap!

[**Greg** stifles laughter.]

Greg: *They carry you back and they put you back on the couch.*

[Staggered footsteps.]

Sage: *Mm-hmm.*

Alexander: Ah, if only I had an extra glass of water. You probably would really like that.

Simon: I am fine. I did not finish ze other one zat is right here, so I will just drink zis one!

[**Simon** takes a sip and hums in satisfaction.]

Alexander: [unamused] Fantastic.

Simon: Mmm. Refreshing.

Alexander: Now, what to do with you.

[Beat.]

Simon: [hopeful] Let go?

Alexander: Hmm. I could call the constable. I am sure that you are a wanted man. If you are to accomplish something like this... Were you not fooled by this piece?

Matilda: Oh, I was fooled, alright. He had me bamboozled up and down, but you know what? I believe his story.

Alexander: If it wasn't for the doctor, we would not know that this was a counterfeit.

Garrett: *Meanwhile in the background, the doctor's been doing more experiments on the urn, and has downed his cocktail completely. And you look at it—it closes up on it—and the urn's just completely melted.*

Greg: [amused] Oh geez.

Garrett: Just completely gone.

Greg: The, uh, the- the butler hands you your drink [stifles laughter].

Matilda: [excited] Mmm, thanks!

Butler: Here you are.

Matilda: [satisfied] Mmm!

Alexander: Mm. You are a very clever man. I think instead of...sending you to jail—

[Simon gasps (anticipating bad).]

—I shall hire you.

[Simon gasps (happy surprise).]

Matilda: [distant, drunken] I believe that this pot has been made out of false clay!

Simon: And, uh, what is ze job? Zat you have, uh, in mind?

Alexander: Well, the reason why I wanted this specific urn, because Ramesses III was the pharaoh who drove off the last of the sea people. This was the last they were heard of. I have it on good authority, that the sea people were actually the armies of Atlantis.

[Suspenseful piano music.]

Matilda: [gasps] Atlantis? That's one place I've never been.

Alexander: Yes. Many people have called me mad in the past, but the way that the tides have been moving this decade, it has finally gotten low enough that the island off the coast of Crete is going to be available for people to actually walk on. And I believe that there are secrets about Atlantis on this island. My theory is that Crete was actually once Atlantis, and a great storm destroyed everything on top of it. And new civilizations were built over it. That's why no one can find the island.

[Simon hums in interest.]

It never sunk!

Richard: Excuse me, Mildie. Do you still want this?

Garrett: *I hand him back the melted pot.*

Alexander: Uh... Hand that to my manservant.

Richard: Manservant!

Butler: Thank you.

Richard: Mmm, you're welcome.

Sage: *Can I knock the count out? [stifles laughter]*

Greg: *Uh, sure, yeah.*

[Sage and Kate chuckle.]

Greg: *Roll Agility. He's gonna roll Constitution.*

[Dice roll on table.]

Sage: *[worried] 3.*

Greg: *Yup. Uh, not- yeah. [stifles laughter]*

[Sage chuckles.]

You- you swing a punch and he- he just puts a hand up and blocks it.

[Swish, thud.]

Simon: Darn! *[Sage stifles laughter]*

Alexander: [confused] Aye, dios. Why? Why?

Richard: [shocked] Oh, geez! Calm yourself, man.

Simon: I- I, uh, I do not wish to work for you. I have family back home in France.

[A beat passes while the fire crackles and thunder rumbles.]

Alexander: I don't believe you're *actually* French.

[Matilda gasps in feigned surprise.]

Sage: *[stifling laughter] Oh, shit.*

Greg: *[amused] He's going to roll Intelligence. He got a 5. Okay.*

Sage: *But I have—*

Greg: *So he's not sure. He's not sure.*

Sage: *I have good discretion, though.*

Greg: *It's true. You rolled that Discretion.*

Sage: *You want me to roll it?*

Greg: *Yeah, roll it.*

Sage: Okay. *[stifles laughter]* There's not—

Greg: *[amused]* We both suck.

Sage: 4, yeah.

[Sage and Greg chuckle.]

Richard: I have an idea! Hold the Frenchman.

Matilda: Okay!

Greg: Roll for Muscles... Yeah you get him. You hold him.

[Scuffle.]

Kate: I got an 8.

Sage: *[French accent]* Achilles is, uh, winking very hard at Matilda!

Kate: I hold him loosely *[stifles laughter]*.

[Sage chuckles.]

Garrett: I grab some chemical compounds from my briefcase.

[Items rustle.]

Richard: This should tell if he's actually French or not!

Garrett: *[amused]* And I throw it on his arm.

Kate: I pull him to the side so it doesn't hit him!

Greg: *[amused]* Wh-what?

Garrett: Yeah.

Greg: You throw a chemical on him that- that tells if he's French or not?

Richard: If it turns blue, he's French!

Sage: *[stifling laughter]* That's- so- you- that's— *[dissolves into chuckles]*

Greg: *[amused]* Okay. Roll- roll Intelligence to make that compound.

[Dice roll on table.]

Garrett: 9.

Greg: Okay, yeah. You make that compound. Okay. Um.

Sage: *[incredulous, amused]* What? *[stifles laughter]*

Greg: *[stifles laughter]* It- it breaks— Or it, uh, it splashes on you and it, uh, oh—

Sage: This is some kind of homeopathic—

[Garrett and Greg chuckle.]

—looking like bullshit— Like it could- always turns blue, right? Like—

[Garrett laughs. Greg and Sage chuckle.]

Alexander: This is all very confusing. I w-would like to hire *all* of you.

Matilda: What?

Richard: [pleased] Oh.

Alexander: If you would be willing.

Simon: Oh! Zis is, uh, zis is much different.

Alexander: To come with me on an expedition.

Simon: You see, I was thinking about, uh, slavery! I did not want to be a butler like zat ozer chap in ze ozer room.

[Beat.]

Alexander: I pay him very well.

[Beat.]

Simon: Yes, but, uh—

Alexander: I only stay here one month a year, and the other eleven months he lives here.

Simon: [shocked, English accent] Oh. That's pretty good.

Matilda: I say we take the job!

Richard: I love adventures, how exciting!

Matilda: Whoo, Dick!

Richard: Sorry about the chemical thing.

Matilda: Yeah.

Simon: ["French"] Is fine.

Richard: It was a prototype, I haven't really gotten it worked out quite yet.

Alexander: And you will be paid.

Simon: Oh, uh, alright. Uh, I apologize for my, uh, temper earlier. I, uh, I will take job!

Alexander: It is fine. I enjoyed the excitement. And anybody who can fool Ms. Buchanan must be very clever.

Matilda: Thanks, Alexander.

Kate: *Wink.*

Alexander: Hoo.

[Sage chuckles.]

Simon: Zank you Matilda.

Sage: *Wink!*

Kate: *[amused] I wink back [stifles laughter].*

[Sage stifles laughter.]

Matilda: Thanks, Dick.

Kate: *Wink.*

Richard: [oblivious] Oh, you're welcome. You're welcome, Mildie.

Matilda: Anyways!

Alexander: Now what is your actual name?

Garrett: *Wink.*

Simon: [*Sage stifles laughter*] It is Achilles Gastard.

[A beat passes while thunder rumbles and the fire crackles.]

Alexander: Very well. That is what I shall call you if that is what you wish to be called.

[Beat.]

[**Simon** sighs, trying not to confess.]

Richard: You can call me Dicky.

Simon: Well, perhaps, uh, perhaps, uh—

[**Simon** clears his throat and does an accent mixing both his French and English ones as he struggles with whether or not to confess.]

You should, uh, tell- [deep breath. "French"] tell us, uh, more about yourself. Why should we, uh, work for you?

Matilda: I love Alexander, but do tell! I love a good backstory.

Alexander: Well, my name is Count Alexander Rafael Dumas Sabatinie.

Matilda: Mmm.

Richard: Can I call you Raffy?

Alexander: I would prefer Count Alexander.

[Beat.]

Richard: [disappointed] Sure.

Alexander: I come from Madrid. A very reputable family. I will say that we're not too bad off, as you can see from my lovely estate that I only stay one month in. And I, well, I fancy myself a bit of an adventurer. However, I will be honest. I have not been on any *actual* adventures.

[**Matilda** gasps in surprise.]

This will be my first.

Richard: [happy gasp] Ooo.

Matilda: Oh, you're coming with!

Richard: How interesting.

Alexander: Indeed. I must. I would like to oversee my investment. However, I will put you in charge.

Matilda: Yay!

Simon: [uncertain] Mmm.

Matilda: I accept. Mmm.

Simon: [questioning] Mmm.

Matilda: [challenging] Mmm.

Simon: ["this is a mistake"] Mmm.

Matilda: [threatening] Mmm.

Alexander: I will retire for now and I will *[Greg stifles laughter]* let you sort out the details among yourselves.

Simon: Uh, hold on! Uh, Countess- or [stammers] Mr. Count—

Alexander: It is Count.

Simon: Sire- Count- Ugh. Uh, Alexander.

[Beat.]

Alexander: Yes?

Simon: Ah, so, uh, do you know a, uh, Herve [pronounces badly] Malet?

Alexander: Ah, [pronounces properly] Harvey Malet?

Simon: Yes.

Alexander: Si. Yes. He recently went on an expedition to Egypt, and I sent him a message saying if he comes across any artifacts having to do with Ramesses III, I would purchase them for a large sum.

[Simon clicks his tongue.]

He told me that you would be delivering for him.

Simon: Yes. This is hhhhhow it, uh, works out. *[Sage stifles laughter]*

Alexander: So, I um...

Simon: We will, uh, I will s- I will talk to my, uh, fellow adventurers first and, uh, we will get back to you.

Alexander: Very well. Good night. I will, uh, see you guys in the morning. There are bedrooms upstairs you may stay in. We will have breakfast tomorrow.

Matilda: [pleased] Mmm.

Simon: [not pleased] Mmm.

Richard: Ooo, how wonderful.

Matilda: I love a good breakfast!

Richard: [agreeing] Mmm.

Alexander: Adios, amigos.

[Footsteps fade.]

Richard: Good night.

Matilda: Nighty night.

[Door closes quietly.]

Richard: Uh, what was your name again?

Matilda: [whispers] He's not French, Dicky.

Sage: *I pull my knife out as soon as he says that and point it at Dicky. We're not too close though, alright?*

[Clothes rustle. Blade scrapes against its sheath.]

Simon: [quiet, English accent] My real name is Simon Sinclair.

Richard: [shocked] Ooo! [gasps]

Simon: [quiet] I'm a con-artist. You have probably met me at some point in your life, perhaps I was manning a market. Maybe I just took your coin purse when you weren't paying attention. I travel all across Europe, and I have various tricks of trades. Alright? This job interests me...and I want to follow suit.

Richard: [slightly disappointed] You're so willing to just give up the sham.

Matilda: [irked] Oh my—

Simon: [defensive] I'm not giving up the sham.

Richard: I—

Matilda: —*god!*

Richard: You just told- completely told me who you were.

Simon: Well, because if we're going to work together— Well, alright, most importantly... Matilda already figured this out earlier.

Matilda: I remember you. You stole my [loud] goddam pistol! That one with the nice ivory thing!

Simon: [amused] Ah.

Matilda: [irked] Oh, god.

Simon: Yes, that was m- uh, that was, uh- that- that was Sir Regi Nald.

Matilda: Ugh. Disgusting.

Simon: It's one of my- it's one of my other, uh, camouflages.

Garrett: *I want to casually grab his knife as if I was just- just like..*

Richard: [obliviously interested] Ooo, let me see this.

[**Simon** shoves him away.]

Simon: [fast] No, no, no, no, no. [normal] No knife for you. Alright? Slide it back into my boot here.

[Clothes rustle.]

Butler: Excuse me, Simon.

[**Simon** clears his throat loudly in surprise.]

Is there a beverage I can get you?

[**Kate** snorts back laughter. **Sage** stifles laughter.]

Matilda: The butler's been here this whole time!

Richard: Ooo, can I have another cocktail, please?

Matilda: Oh, yes!

Butler: Yes, indeed. The same?

Richard: Yes, please.

Matilda: Mmm, yeah!

Butler: Very well. And you?

[Beat.]

Simon: [quiet] Uh.

[Beat.]

[quiet] Sure.

[Beat.]

Matilda: He says yes!

Butler: More water or may I interest you in something else?

Simon: [quiet] Uh...uh...uh.

Greg: *He has a face of total indifference on him.*

[**Sage** chuckles.]

Richard: Simon, just answer the poor bloke.

Simon: Uh...[fast, still in shock] Surprise me.

Butler: Very well.

Greg: *The bartender- or the manservant turns around and he goes back to the bar and he starts shaking things up.*

Simon: [quiet] What in God's name is this— [normal] Already three times in one day three people have found my identit— I can't even comprehend the amount of- uh—

Kate: *I slap Simon!*

[Slap! **Simon** cries out.]

Richard: Well you just told me.

Garrett: *And I slap him.*

[Slap!]

Simon: Ow!

[**Sage** stifles laughter.]

Alright! I'm together now.

Richard: We're *all* together now.

Simon: [quiet] All together now.

Matilda: Yeah, all together!

Simon: That's right.

Matilda: Let's hold hands! Dicky!

Richard: Ooo!

Simon: You just- you must know—

Richard: [expectant] Simon.

[**Simon** sighs.]

[urging] Simon.

Matilda: Come on!

Sage: *[begrudging, Simon's accent] I take his hand.*

Simon: Listen to me—

Richard: [fascinated] Mmm, calloused.

Matilda: [interested] Mm-hmm hmm!

[**Sage** stifles laughter.]

Simon: Listen to me. This identity [slow] *must* remain a secret. Alright?

Matilda: Oh!

Richard: Oh. Well then you better stop telling people who you are.

Matilda: [agreeing] Mmm.

Simon: Well, you- you and the but- the butler is the last one to know, alright?

Matilda: [humoring] Mmm. Mm-hmm.

Simon: When we leave, I will take various identities. Alright?

Matilda: Oh.

Simon: I'll try my best to warn you beforehand, before I switch into them.

Richard: Ooo, ooo! Maybe, Mildie, maybe we can have some of our own!

Matilda: [gasps] Oh a fake disguise! I love a good mustache.

Simon: [exasperated] Yes, I—

Butler: Here are your drinks.

Richard: Oh, thank you!

Greg: *He passes everybody their drinks. And he passes you a martini [stifles laughter].*

Butler: No tips are needed, sir.

Simon: I- oh- I... Okay. Uh...

Butler: Is there anything else I may attend to you for? Or shall I retire?

Matilda: Mmm, you can retire.

Simon: Retire.

Butler: Very well. Good night.

Richard: Good night.

Matilda: [excited scoff] Oh, this is so exciting!

Simon: So—

Matilda: An adventure, disguises... Gah!

Simon: Atlantis.

Richard: Atlantis!

Simon: Atlantis.

Matilda: Atlantis!

Simon: Alright. Matilda and Dick.

Richard: Ee. Please.

Simon: Dicky. Alright.

Richard: Call me Dicky.

Simon: And you're a doctor.

Richard: Yes.

Simon: Alright.

Richard: I'm a scientist.

Simon: A scientist? Or a doctor? Do you go by doctor?

Richard: I have a doctorate, yes.

Simon: So do you go by doctor?

Richard: No, I go by Dicky.

Simon: Or professor?

Richard: No- I'm not a professor, I don't *teach*.

Simon: But you're a scientist.

Richard: Yes.

Simon: And you don't go by doctor.

[Beat.]

Richard: No.

[Beat.]

But I am a doctor.

[Beat.]

Simon: So then, Doctor Dicky?

Richard: I prefer just Dicky.

Simon: Alright, we're gonna stick with just Dicky. So the three of us are being hired, yes?

Richard: Yes. Yes, we've— Well...how soon are we supposed to leave on this adventure?

Matilda: I believe tomorrow morning after breakfast.

Richard: [gasps] Really? So soon.

Matilda: Oh, yes! Oh! I can't wait for an omelette!

Simon: A couple of contacts I'm going to have to cancel on. [deep breath] But, uh, this seems like something it's worth leaving for.

Matilda: Where're you *from*?

Simon: [fast] London.

[Beat.]

Richard: [disbelieving] Hmm.

Matilda: [humoring] Mmm.

Simon: No, no, I mean it. What- you don't have to squint at me. I'm really from London.

Richard: I mean you *are* a con-artist. You did tell me this yourself.

Simon: No, but I- I was raised—

Matilda: No, I'm squinting at you because o' *that*.

Simon: —in the streets of London, alright?

Matilda: [humoring] Okay.

Simon: I was an orphan and then I had to raise myself often and—

Richard: Were you an orphan?

Simon: Yes, I was in a couple of gangs and stuff.

Richard: [gasps] Oh, I'm so sorry.

Matilda: [gasps] No way! Me too!

[*Kate stifles laughter.*]

Richard: [gasps] You never told me that, Mildie.

Matilda: I told you my dad was an awful person and he abandoned me on the streets of New York.

Richard: Oh, yes, that's right. Sorry. That was just a *lovely* evening of plenty of drinks.

Matilda: Mmm. Oh yeah.

Richard: I did not remember that.

Simon: You're from America?

Matilda: You bet your sweet boots I am!

Simon: I do not wish to. But I've never been to America. What's it like there?

Matilda: Mmm, it's kinda filthy and grimy, and there's rich people, and then there's poor people, and you get to stab a couple o' people, and get drunk and have fun!

Richard: It's completely dreadful and wonderful at the same time.

Simon: Sounds- sounds the same as here, really. Really, I wouldn't even... That's exactly how I would describe London. If somebody told me to describe London, I'd- I'd say it's—

Matilda: Well...

Simon: Filthy and dirty and there's rich people and you get to stab them and...

Richard: It's not- it's not *that* bad.

Matilda: Neat. Oh.

Richard: Well, then again I guess I've never really been around *your* part of the area.

Matilda: Yeah. You're spitting on your country.

Simon: Oh, so you haven't stabbed anybody?

Richard: [shocked] No. Of course not.

Simon: [stifles laughter] Oh. Oh, that's, uh, that's a shame. It's a good game.

Matilda: Dicky, I'm surprised.

Simon: It's a good game.

Richard: Well, I've never *stabbed* someone. I mean, I've cut people open with a...

Matilda: Mmm, but *after* they were dead. ...Right?

Richard: ...Yes?

[Beat.]

Yes.

Matilda: Alright!

Simon: So we have a pact, right?

Matilda: [amused] Oh, that's what we were doing. Oh! [stifles laughter]

Richard: [amused] Oh! Of course we have a pact. [normal] But I don't know about you, sir.

Matilda: I thought- [giggles] I thought that we were just sharing stories 'cause we're all drunk!

Simon: Well, it looks like the three of us are gonna be doing this together, and I wanna make sure we have all of our cards on the table, and that nobody's hiding anything anymore. Alright? [fast] If I've already given you my secret identity and you already know enough about me, then that's all you need to know, and then make sure that I know everything about you and that we're all on the same page. Is that understand? [takes a deep breath]

Matilda: Well, Christ! If we're sharing, I mean... [stifles laughter] One time back in Africa, I had a fling with a couple o' guys—

[Garrett giggles. Kate stifles laughter.]

—and let me tell you we got *crazy*!

Simon: [uncomfortable] Alright. Uh, great. So—

Richard: Yes. Once, when I was a child—

Simon: Okay [stammers]. This isn't like a group therapy thing.

Matilda: Oh let it out, Dicky!

[Richard sighs heavily.]

Richard: Thank you.

Simon: Look! Just I need to- I need to make sure that the count does not know about Simon. Alright? The count cannot know this—

Richard: Did you just refer yourself in the third person?

Simon: Yes. I have many identities, alright?

Richard: Didn't- what?

Matilda: Wait. But isn't the *butler* gonna tell 'im?

Simon: No, the butler's true to his word. He's a good but—

Richard: [skeptical] How do you know that?

Simon: You—

Richard: You just met him today.

Simon: I winked at him and...uh it- it—

Matilda: Is that, like, a...

Simon: What?

Matilda: Is there a butler confidentiality code I didn't know about? [gasps]

Richard: Oh. I would never have thought about that.

Matilda: That makes so much sense.

Richard: [gasps] Oh my gosh. *My* butler probably knows so much about me.

[**Matilda** chuckles.]

Thank god for those- those contracts.

Matilda: Whoo, don't I know it. He knows somethin' about me too!

[**Richard** chuckles comically. **Matilda** joins him.]

Richard: Sure.

Matilda: I agree!

Garrett: *Shake his hand.*

Kate: *Shake his hand!*

Butler: Pardon my interruption.

Richard: [startled] Oh! Hello.

Butler: Your rooms have been made up.

Simon: Ss—

Richard: Oh. Splendid.

Matilda: Oh, thank *goodness*! I need to get some sleep.

[*Victoria* theme song plays.]

Butler: As you come into the hallway there is the staircase right over here. Up it and then down the hall. Last three rooms on the left.

Matilda: Well, let's go to our rooms.

Richard: Yes, it sounds like we're going to have quite the morning.

Sage: *And we go to our rooms.*

[Music crescendos.]



[Music fades.]

Greg: *In the morning, there's a knock on the door of Dr. Richard Chamberlin.*

[Knock, knock, knock.]

Richard: [yawns, groans] Yes?

[Rooster crows.]

Come in.

[Door squeaks open.]

Butler: Mr. Richard Chamberlin.

[Floor creaks as the butler walks in.]

Doctor. Sorry.

Richard: [groggy] Yes, what is it?

[Floor creaks as the butler comes near the bed.]

Butler: Post for you, sir.

Richard: Mail?

Greg: *And he hands you the envelope.*

[Paper rustles.]

Richard: I just usually rip this open.

[Paper rips.]

Dear Doctor,

We the staff are having a very hard time with the situation which, when written, will not seem reasonable. Therefore, we please request your attendance back at your mansion, so that we may talk to you about something that needs to be talked about.

-Miss Alice Whittler

Richard: Huh.

Sage: So...

Greg: *Which you know as your maid.*

Richard: How odd. My maid has never written me a letter like this ever before. Ah, but don't they know that I'm off on work? Mmm.

[Jaunty piano music plays throughout.]

Kate: *I splash some cold water on my face, I brush my teeth, hide my pistol in my boot, and I get ready to go.*

Sage: *Simon has a morning ritual, which he always does, where he goes to each one of his current disguises that are in his briefcase—*

[Greg chuckles.]

—and he goes through his quick change for each of them. But each combo. So he goes from Simon to Achilles and from Achilles to Santiago and so forth. Uh, it's a

very, very long algorithm, but it gets him in shape and assures a quick, hasty, confident disguise change when he needs it.

Greg: *Fantastic. As you guys leave your rooms and you come down the stairs, and at the bottom of the stairs is the manservant.*

Butler: If you'll follow me, I shall take you to breakfast.

Matilda: Oh, thank goodness! I'm *starved*.

Greg: And he leads you to a beautiful dining room with a long wooden table.

Matilda: [excited] Oooo. [quiet] Is this *mahogany*?

Garrett: *Dicky's just sitting there quiet and concerned.*

Alexander: Ah, welcome, welcome! Dicky, please, uh, you can get off of that bench and come sit at the table with us.

Richard: Oh, yes thank you.

[Sage stifles laughter.]

I'm sorry.

Alexander: We shall have food as soon as you guys are ready.

Matilda: Ooo, I'm ready right now, Alexander.

Simon: ["French"] I am ready as well.

Greg: *You see a couple of servants just waiting in the halls with silver platters. So as soon as you sit down, they place it in front of you and they remove the tops and you have a beautiful breakfast in front of you.*

Kate: *I start digging in!*

[Dishes and utensils clatter lightly.]

Sage: *Well what is the breakfast?*

Greg: *Oh, it is eggs, it is bacon. Also there is a little salad, and some little fish.*

Matilda: [gasps] I love little fish. [fast] Num, num, num, num!

Alexander: Please, please. Do eat.

Matilda: [mouth full] Oh, I'm already eating!

[Sage stifles laughter. Greg chuckles.]

Garrett: *I'm meticulously cutting up my food and still being a little bit quiet.*

Alexander: Right, so, uh, Gastard, I would like to apologize for the way you were treated last night. I, uh, I feel sorry for the way that you have been handled, and I- I promise that we will not further hurt you. Unless necessary.

[Utensils clatter against plates.]

Sage: *Simon has this look of compassion, and it comes out and he drops the game.*

Simon: [English] Alright. Count? I'm comin' clean.

[**Alexander** gasps.]

Alexander: What happened...to your accent?

[**Richard** sighs in exasperation.]

Richard: *Again?*

Sage: *He takes off the.. baguette. No- the— [chuckles]*

[*Everyone laughs.*]

What's the hat called?

Garrett: [*away from microphone*] *Beret.*

Matilda: Oh shalo!

Sage: *Beret! Beret, yes, the beret. Um...*

Simon: My real name is Simon Sinclair. I'm a con-artist.

Richard: You see, it's—

Simon: You may have met me at some point in your life. Perhaps I was standing by a marketplace, or perhaps I was stealing your coin purse when you weren't looking.

Matilda: S'uh—

Simon: I travel all across Europe and I have various identities that I— What are you guys- what are you both looking at?

Matilda: Son of a bitch, you said that to *me*!

Richard: Yeah, you said that to *me*!

Simon: This is just my spiel, alright?

Richard: This is the sid- type of thing that we were talking about last night. If you want to stay anonymous, then you can't be just revealing yourself to people. [gasps lightly] You've gotten *really* bad at this.

Simon: No—

Matilda: Yeah.

Simon: This is just a- I- uh- Don't- don't judge. Alright? This is just how I do things.

Matilda: Oh, I'm judging.

Simon: Why?

[A beat passes while birds chirp outside.]

Richard: Because you're sketchy.

[Beat.]

[**Kate** stifles laughter.]

Matilda: Because you said the same thing to three different people. That's kind of awkward.

Simon: Alright, well you migh—

Richard: I feel—

Simon: Well you're my *team* now!

Richard: I feel used.

Simon: You're not my team?

Matilda: Uck. Fine. We're your team.

Simon: That's right.

Matilda: Don't say *repetitive* stuff to all of us.

Simon: If we're going to make the discovery of the century—Oh! Of next century—am I there?

Alexander: Oh, I am hoping we will find it before the turn.

Simon: Well [amused scoff] I just mean that it will be so big, that next century, there won't be anything bigger.

Matilda: Oh god!

Simon: Nothing could possibly happen that would be as important as this.

Alexander: No! We would be discovering possibly the greatest civilization to ever exist.

Simon: Exactly.

Matilda: Well, let's get to it, buckos!

Simon: I apologize—

Alexander: We leave in a week.

Matilda: [disappointed] Oh *crap*.

Simon: [disappointed] Ah, what? Ah. Tss.

Alexander: We could leave sooner, I guess.

Simon: I mean, I just- I thought...thought you said that we were gonna leave in the *morning*, so I thought that was what we're gonna do, but...

Alexander: Well, we *were*, but then the doctor here got some post and...well I...

Richard: Oh, wha— [surprised sigh]

Matilda: Dicky?

Alexander: I assume it's something pressing?

Matilda: [betrayed] You didn't tell me? You tell me everything!

Simon: Alright. I thought we—

Richard: [defensive] It just happened last night.

Simon: Yeah, we were do—

[**Matilda** scoffs in offense.]

We were doing a trust pact thing, though, right? You were—

Richard: Listen, if we were doing a trust pact, you're the last person I'm going to trust here.

Matilda: [loud] Now you listen here! He's *my* best friend!

Simon: But we already *made* the pact *last night* and you already said that you were going to do that, and so now you- now you're taking it back?

Richard: Yes, we made the pact that we wouldn't—

Simon: Do we need to do a *blood* pact? I've done those before.

Matilda: Oh! I *love* it!

Kate: *I pull out my knife!*

[Blade rings against its sheath.]

[*Everyone chuckles.*]

Greg: *The count pulls out a knife.*

[Another blade rings out.]

Garrett: *I pull out a scalpel.*

[Tiny blade scrapes against its case.]

[**Kate** stifles laughter.]

Sage: [*amused*] *I pull out my boot knife.*

Matilda: Let's do it!

Simon: Blood pact?

Matilda: All of us cut our hands!

Simon: Alright.

Kate: *I cut my hand!*

Richard: Wait. Wait!

Matilda: Wait, *Dicky!*

Simon: Wait, what?

[Beat.]

Richard: I just would...really like to take the butler in on this one too.

Matilda: Oh yeah!

Simon: It's true, he does know about it.

Greg: *The butler rolls his eyes—*

[*Everyone chuckles.*]

—and steps forward, and pulls a knife from his coat pocket.

[Blade rings out.]

Matilda: I love it! Alright.

Richard: Alright. One.

Matilda: One!

Richard, Matilda: Two, three.

[Flesh slices open and blood drips.]

Matilda: Ahh! Yeah.

Simon: So I'm—

Alexander: Fantastic! So I don't need to pay anyone. *[Greg stifles laughter]*

[Sage stifles laughter.]

[The trio speak over each other in disagreement.]

Richard: Oh! Oh, no, no, no! That- No. No, no, no. No. No.

Matilda: Oh, no. I *love* money!

Simon: Uh, no, no, no, no, no. That's not- that's not what this means. This just means that we have to be honest about stuff.

Matilda: Yeah.

Alexander: Oh.

Matilda: That means we're truthful to the end! Of the mission, that is.

Alexander: Very well.

Simon: I- I- I expect a thorough payment.

Matilda: Yeah, I want *money*.

Simon: Yeah.

Alexander: [quiet] Very well. [normal] Excuse me, would you please get us some bandages for our hands?

Butler: Very well, sir.

Matilda: Oh, I'll *[Kate stifles laughter]* lick mine off. I don't care for bandages.

Simon: ["you're weird"] Mmm.

Matilda: Nature's *my* bandaid.

Simon: Matilda. Strong woman.

Matilda: You bet your sweet boots.

[Sage and Kate stifle laughter.]

Richard: You be careful, there.

Simon: ...What?

Richard: ...Nothing.

Matilda: Dicky! I love you!

Richard: I love *you*, Mildie.

Matilda: Best friends!

Richard: This is true.

Alexander: Simon.

Simon: Yes?

Alexander: You have right under your plate the payment due to Herve. I will hope that that would inspire him to deliver to me the *real* article, if he has it. Unless he too was so doing, we are blood pact honest.

Simon: I have a feeling Herve...does not have any access, alright? Herve hired me to make a replica.

Alexander: [quiet] What?

Simon: Achilles is one of my many identities. Achilles specializes in counterfeit art, and that urn... I might say, I did a pretty good job, you know. The urn was, uh, the first time I ever tried pottery, and you guys- had you pretty fooled until we had a—

Alexander: Indeed, indeed.

Simon: —a doctor here. But, uh, you know, that's aside. [inhales] It's a fake, and, uh, if there's a real one, I don't know where it is.

Alexander: [sighs] It is *crucial* to the mission for us to have this before we leave.

Simon: Then we must find Herve. And see—

Alexander: Very well.

Matilda: Ooo! Mini mission in between the real mission!

Simon: Uh, side quest? Uh, pre-mission? Uh, preparations. Eh.

Matilda: Call it whatever you want. Spades a spade, hun.

Alexander: Very well. I will, uh, give you the week to figure this out.

Matilda: [quiet, pleased] Sick.

Simon: Oh that's- alright. So we got to find Herve, then. And then get the real thing, and, uh, let's see. Uh...[puffs air between his lips] You've got- you've got some stuff, right?

Garrett: *I pull Mildie to the side.*

Richard: [quiet] Mildie.

Simon: Alright. You're gonna talk about that amongst yourselves—

Matilda: [quiet] Oh. Yes, Dicky?

Simon: —and I'm not gonna be part of it. That's great.

[Greg stifles laughter.]

Just...finish my breakfast.

[Beat.]

Matilda: Oh thank *God* he stopped talking.

[Richard groans in agreement.]

Richard: *[quiet]* This is the letter that I got last night. This morning, actually.

Matilda: Oh. What is your *maid* writing you for? That's very vague.

Richard: I know. It's so odd and...*[tsks]* It almost feels like it's...

Matilda: *[quiet]* A trap?

Richard: *[quiet]* Oh, I did not think about that.

[Matilda gasps.]

But I did think it was odd that she didn't talk about what happened in the letter. If she was mailing it *to* me, she would know it would go straight— I'd be the only one who read it.

Matilda: Yeah.

Richard: Why wouldn't she...tell me?

Matilda: Yeah, I feel like your maids are very honest with you.

Richard: It's true. We made a blood pact.

Matilda: Oh, doesn't everybody?

Richard: It's just so odd. I— *[sighs in confusion]*

Matilda: Dicky?

Richard: I don't think it's right.

Matilda: Do you want me to come with you when you go home? I have a pistol and a knife.

Richard: Oh, I'm contemplating whether if I even *want* to go home.

Matilda: Ooo. Yeah, let them sort it out for themselves. Have them ravage it out like dogs!

Richard: *[shocked]* Well, I don't mean to do *that* to them.

Matilda: Oh *[chuckles guiltily]*.

Richard: I didn't want it to *actually* be something— If it's something actually awful...

Matilda: Oh, you're right.

Richard: I would then go back.

Simon: These... These are good eggs.

Alexander: ...Oh, thank you. ...We have, uh, chickens in the backyard.

[Chickens cluck in the distance.]

...They laid them. ...Would you like...

Simon: No, it's fine.

Alexander: [hesitant] To see the chickens?

Simon: No- *[Sage stifles laughter]* It's fine. It's not- it's not a side quest I really feel like goin' on right now.

Alexander: ...Okay.

[Sage stifles laughter.]

...They're my favorite chickens.

Simon: I just wanted to drop you a compliment while they finish up their banter over there.

Alexander: [helpful] I could bring the chickens in.

Simon: Oh, no, no, no. There's no- there's no need for cocks in here. It's just- it's just we've got the eggs and that's all we need.

Alexander: Very well. Um...

Greg: *And then he looks over at his manservant and he- he waves his hand like "no" and then the- [stifles laughter] the manservant in the hallway—*

[Chicken clucks.]

[Sage stifles laughter.]

—[amused] Like, in the doorway, with the chicken—

Sage: *[amused] He has it.*

Greg: *—in hand turns around and walks away.*

Richard: I don't know. Maybe we should talk about this with the rest of the boys.

Simon: Uh, we have a blood pact, so you must.

Matilda: Jesus Christ! I mean—

Richard: Have you been listening this entire time?!

Matilda: Rude!

Simon: [fast] No, no, no. [normal] I just heard the last part. I swear.

Matilda: Oh my *goodness*.

Simon: So what's the plan?

Richard: Well...we have to find this Herve person, but something's come up at my home, and I wonder if I could write back to them maybe in time. Before we leave.

Matilda: Oh, yes.

Alexander: I shall have some stationary brought to you right away.

Greg: *He claps his hands.*

[Clap, clap!]

Alexander: Ow! Uh, excuse me. Could you please bring a quill and some parchment for the good doctor over here? Also, where are those bandages?

Richard: Oh, yes. Sorry, I've—

Butler: Right away, sir.

Richard: Bled- I seem to have bled all over your tablecloth. I am so, so sorry.

Alexander: It is alright. We will throw it out.

Matilda: Mmm.

Richard: [quiet gasp] But it's so beautiful.

[Beat.]

Alexander: These, um... Yes. It's uh, stripes.

Simon: Alright look I would love to talk about tablecloths all morning as much as the next guy. But we have a whole mission to go on, so I think we should both do that.

Matilda: Oh, I agree. We need to find this what's-his-face.

Simon: I—

Richard: Yes. What'd you say his name was, again?

Simon: Herve Malet.

Richard: Herve Malet.

Matilda: Whoo, it rhymes! I love the sound of that!

Richard: Oh, it is kind of catchy. I like that, yes.

Simon: My names are better.

[Beat.]



Greg: *We cut to later on in the study. Everybody's got tea.*

[**Matilda** and **Richard** slurp loudly. A fire crackles in the fireplace.]

And everybody's sitting in chairs. Unless you wanna be cool and not be sitting in a chair. Um...

Sage: *No, no. Simon is not sitting [stifles laughter].*

Greg: [chuckles] Nice.

Garrett: *I'm just sitting with my legs crossed very elegantly.*

Kate: *Me too [giggles].*

Alexander: So I shall, um. We shall all meet back here in a week, and then we will depart. Is that enough time?

Matilda: That's plenty o' time!

Richard: And what kind of lead do we have on this Herve Malet character?

Simon: Well, I haven't seen him in a week or two. So it's gonna take a bit to track him down, but I know a lot of contacts. I could prob'ly make sure we only get to him about two degrees of separation. Alright?

Richard: Mmm.

Simon: He's not- he probably hasn't gotten far.

Matilda: I can smell him out when we get close.

[Greg stifles laughter.]

Simon: Is that so?

Richard: Yes. Just give her a pi— She's got such a good nose.

Matilda: I'm like a greyhound.

Richard: Give her a piece of his shirt or something that you have, and she'll sniff it right out.

Simon: Why would-

[Greg chuckles.]

Why would- *why* would I have a piece of his shirt?

Matilda: I have a piece of clothes from everybody I ever meet!

Simon: Is that so?

Matilda: Yeah!

Simon: So how do you do this? You just cut it off and then you put it in your pocket? Or how does it...?

Matilda: [mysteriously] I have my ways.

Richard: No, actually, that shirt is mine.

[Matilda chuckles.]

Greg: *Wait, Kate, roll Discretion to see if you have a piece of Simon's clothes already.*

[Sage chuckles.]

Garrett: *[amused] Yeah.*

Kate: *[laughs] I have his shoe. Okay.*

[Dice roll on table.]

[Kate and Sage chuckle.]

Greg: Oh—

Kate: *Oh, I'll get it.*

[Everyone laughs.]

Greg: *That was a 2.*

Kate: *I got a 2, but I'll get it.*

[Misadventure music.]

Alexander: So, um...

Richard: Yes, let's go and find this gentleman.

Simon: Yes, I would like to go sooner than later, as a matter of fact. Tea party right now is, uh, I- I know it's, like, a thing. You know? You have breakfast and then you have second breakfast and you have tea time, and then you have brunch, and then you have lunch, then you have tea time again, and then you have pre dinner, and then— But, like—

Richard: Well of course you know this. You're British.

Simon: Yes, but *I* was raised on the streets where we were lucky to have a meal a day. Alright? So let's just get on with it.

Richard: Oh. But I'm not finished with my tea.

Simon: *[annoyed]* Alright. I will meet you outside.

Matilda: I was raised on the streets too! Oh my god! That's the only thing I focused on. Are we leaving?

Richard: *[sighs]* I guess.

[Richard and Matilda slurp down the rest of their tea.]

Matilda: Let's go!

Alexander: Very well. I shall see you all Monday.

Matilda: Bye, Alexander.

Kate: *I give him a kiss on the cheek. Mwah.*

Alexander: *[flattered]* Oh, my goodness.

Richard: Bye, Alexander.

Garrett: *I give him a kiss on the cheek.*

Alexander: *[annoyed]* Oh my goodness.

Matilda: *[whispers]* I got a piece of his clothes.

[Footsteps tap across wood floor. The door creaks open.]

Alexander: *[distant]* Adios, amigos!

Richard: *[quiet]* I got a piece of his DNA.

[Matilda chuckles.]

Alexander: [distant] Godspeed!

Matilda: I love you, Dicky [giggles].

Simon: ["French"] Thank you very much! Wink, wink!

[Front door creaks shut. Birds chirp in the trees. The sounds of the city streets fade in. People chatter over each other indistinctly.]

Greg: *So as you guys exit the house and you come out into the streets, you hear a newspaper boy shouting out loud.*

Newsboy: Extra, extra! Read all about it! The Ripper is come back! He's already struck once!

Matilda: Oh, *damn* that Ripper. I'm gonna rip him a new one by *killing* him!

Newsboy: 'Scuse me, 'scuse me. Could I get any of you guys to buy a paper?

Matilda: Oh.

Richard: Oh, absolutely.

[Paper rustles.]

Garrett: *I take it and I look at the picture.*

Richard: Oh, how nice looking.

Greg: *Yeah. You see a picture of somebody who's been torn open savagely. And underneath, on the picture, it says that the body is identified as "Herve Malet".*

[**Matilda** and **Richard** gasp.]

Simon: [English] Ah, *shit*.

Matilda: Oh, Christ!

Simon: I mean, uh, ["French"] Ah! Darn it [makes a throat rasping noise].

Richard: You should really get that checked out.

Matilda: Yeah. You seem like you got a little throat problem there.

Simon: [quiet, English] But it's— That's like, the French thing, right? It's what the French do.

Richard: [quiet] No. No, not at all.

Matilda: [quiet] Uh, no. No.

Simon: [quiet] It's- but when I went to France it's what- it's what it kinda sounded like?

Matilda: [amused] How long were you there? A second?

Simon: [quiet] Couple days. Like a day.

Matilda: [amused] Oh, really?

Richard: Really? [amused] A couple days?

[**Matilda** and **Richard** laugh.]

Simon: [quiet] Like a- like liter- like two days. Like I was literally- literally- it was literally two days.

Richard: What part of France *were* you in?

Simon: [quiet] You know—

Richard: Germany?

Simon: The—

[**Matilda** and **Richard** giggle.]

[quiet] Uh, no. That's- 's not... 's not how that works. But... [clears throat, "French"] Ah, thank you, uh, little boy.

Newsboy: No problem.

[The boy walks away, his voice fading.]

Extra, extra! Read all about it! The Ripper's back!

Matilda: Oh, what a cute little kid! *Love* kids. Such a cutie!

Richard: Well, I guess we found out where our man is.

Matilda: Yup! Wait. Should we go...find out where he lives or something?

Richard: I'd love to go and just see his corpse.

Matilda: Yeah!

Richard: But that's just me.

Matilda: Oh ho. I mean. I think that we should find out from the police where his place of residence was. Use power of Persuasion, if you know what I mean, and then go raid it!

Richard: Oh, just steal?

Matilda: Well, yeah! We need to find that doodlie-did somehow.

[Thunder rumbles in the distance. Wheels clatter on the street and people bustle about.]

Simon: [English] So we're going to Herve's house?

Matilda: You bet your sweet boots we are.

Richard: [whines] I want to go to the morgue. [sulks] Oh, fine.

Matilda: Oh, Dicky, we'll go another time. We always go on Tuesdays anyways.

Simon: I'm gonna say we'll go to his house first, and then we'll go to the morgue.

[**Matilda** gasps happily.]

Alright?

Matilda: Yay!

Richard: [excited gasp] Oh we still get to go to the morgue! That's wonderful.

Matilda: Both of us are happy!

Simon: As my other alter ego would say... Por que no los dos?

[Beat.]

[Greg scoffs in amusement.]

We're off?

Matilda: Uh... Okay.

Richard: Yes.

[Shoes tap across the cobblestone.]

[Music crescendos and fades.]

Credits

Narrator: Thank you for tuning in! We hope you enjoyed this 20 Sided Story. Without your support and patronage, this show would not be possible.

Matilda Buchanan was played by Kate Pursley

Dr. Richard Chamberlin played by Garrett Reasoner

Simon Sinclair was played by Sage G.C.

Our Game Master was Gregory Reasoner

And all Editing and Music was done by Sage G.C.

See you next time on, *VICTORIA 1890*.

[Radio crackles off. Music crescendos and fades out.]