

*Truth  
And  
Consequences*

**By**

**Daris Howard**

## **Truth And Consequences**

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by Daris Howard

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# Cast:

## Men

**Frank** - Hero. Young and handsome. Always tells the truth.

**Charlie** - Older, Onery, cowboy hand around restaurant. Older friend of Frank and Adeline. Good but not intellectual.

**Beaker** - Friend of Frank and Adeline. The smart, nerdy genius type.

**Hobart** - The villain. Older and conniving.

## Women

**Adeline** - Heroine. Pretty, young, and innocent.

**Bertha Barton** - Villainess. Aunt to Adeline. Tough and bossy.

**Josie Barton** - Adeline's nerdy cousin and Bertha's daughter.  
Kind of a nerdy type. Scared of her mother.

**Judy** - Judge. Tough lady.

**Others:** There can be extra guests at the debate. It would especially be useful to have at least a couple of other ladies to fill the parts of **Guest1** and **Guest2** though they can be covered possibly by Judy and Bertha.

# Act I Scene 1

*{The scene opens to a restaurant. There are tables and chairs and bar with bar stools. There are ugly paintings on the walls. All the main people are coming in.}*

**Judy:** If everyone will hurry up and take your seats, we will get started. I'd like to get this will read.

**Charlie:** I don't trust no woman Judge.

**Judy:** You better mind yourself, Charlie, or I will find you in contempt of court.

**Charlie:** If you are the court, then I'm in contempt, cause you're a contemptuous old wind bag.

**Judy:** I feel like locking you up and throwing away the key.

**Charlie:** Be my guest. I could use a good nap and three square meals a day.

**Judy:** All right, take this then, you old coot. One more word out of you and I'll assign you 100 hours of community service.

**Charlie:** You wouldn't dare!

**Judy:** Picking up garbage. *{Charley sits down.}* Now, shall we get on with reading the will? *{Reading from the will}* "I, John Farnum, being of sound mind, even though the body is going, or is it sound body though the mind is going..."

**Charlie:** Should be the mind is gone.

**Judy:** *{Pointing the gavel at Charley}* Charley, you just keep the words "picking up garbage" in your mind and hold your tongue. *{Going back to the will}* "Do hereby bequeath to my dear sister the diamond broach she gave me, the only present she ever gave me. Bertha, you told me it was the biggest diamond west of the Mississippi River. I now give it back to you. The cardboard box I put it in probably doubled its true value, if the word glass has any meaning to you. It's fakeness always reminded me of you."

**Bertha:** *{Indignant}* I have never had such an insult.

**Judy:** *{Continuing to read}* "It's time you got such an insult."

*{Everyone stares at the Judy. She just points at the will.}*

**Charlie:** It doesn't say that in there.

**Judy:** It does.

**Charlie:** Aw, you're as full of wind as old Farnum.

**Judy:** I can hear the clinking of garbage cans, Charley. *{Continuing to read}* "To Frank, my young friend and assistant who has helped me keep my restaurant running as I've gotten older, I leave my time piece. Maybe he can figure out what time it is."

**Frank:** Now, what did he mean by that? I'm always on time.

**Beaker:** What time does it say?

**Frank:** Four-thirty-seven.

**Judy:** “To Frank, Beaker, and Charlie, whom I affectionately call Brawn, Brain, and Brick Head...”

**Charlie:** He ain’t never called us that before. *{Acting tough}* But it’s obvious which one is brawn. I wonder which one is brick head.

**Judy:** *{Continuing to read}* “You may not know I called you that, Charlie, and you are not Brawn, Brick Head.”

**Charlie:** Now confound it. That’s not in there.

*{The Judy holds it up and everyone looks then they look at Charlie and nod.}*

**Judy:** *{Continuing to read}* To you three I leave my old Model T.

**Charlie:** To all three of us. What in tarnation are three of us going to do with one car?

**Judy:** *{Continuing to read}* “Seeing what the three of you do with one car will be the fun of it.”

**Charlie:** What! *{Everyone looks at him.}* Yeah! I know! I know! It’s in the will.

**Judy:** “To Hobart, if I am gone when you are still chairman of the city council, I reluctantly leave you to be acting mayor, though I suggest the town get a new one as soon as possible.

**Hobart:** I’m sure he means that as an honor.

**Judy:** *{Continuing to read}* “To my dear sweet daughter Adeline, I leave everything else that I have not allotted in another way. The house, the restaurant, and my fortune, though you must always remember to watch what you are doing to get it.”

**Hobart:** *{Aside to audience}* Did you hear that? He left his daughter his fortune. I always thought that old man was hiding something. I must figure a way to get my hands on it.

**Bertha:** *{Aside to audience}* Did you hear that? He left his daughter his fortune. I always thought my brother was hiding something. I must figure a way to get my hands on it.

**Judy:** That’s it, folks. *{Turning to Adeline}* Adeline, are you going to be all right? I know how much you loved your father.

**Adeline:** *{Melodramatically wiping her eyes}* Yes. I just don’t know how I can keep things going.

**Frank:** You know, Miss Adeline, I will always be here to help you.

**Adeline:** Thank you, Frank. *{Dramatically fighting tears}* I think I’ll go change now before the noon rush comes in.

**Hobart:** *{Aside to audience}* Now where would old Farnum have hidden his fortune? I must find it.

**Bertha:** *{Aside to audience}* Now where would my brother have hidden his fortune? I must

find it.

**Hobart:** *{Aside to audience}* Does there seem to be an echo in here?

*{Hobart and Bertha start carefully looking around the restaurant, always acting innocent if anyone comes around or looks at them. They eventually wander off.}*

**Charlie:** *{To Beaker and Frank}* So, what are we going to do with that old Model T?

**Beaker:** I suppose we each own one third of it. I was just calculating and I think, according to weight, that if one person took the engine, one person took the fenders, top and interior, the other person could have the frame and we would all be quite close to even.

**Charlie:** Are you nuts? Take apart an old car like that? I'd hospitalize you first!

**Frank:** I suppose we could sell it and divide the money three ways.

**Charlie:** It isn't in good enough shape. We'd hardly get any money for her.

**Frank:** What do you suggest?

**Charlie:** I think we ought to have some contest for it and whoever wins it gets her full, free and clear.

**Beaker:** I've got just the thing. We could have one of those mail-order places send us a test and whoever gets the highest score gets it. Something like Pythagorean's Theorem or Quantum Physics.

**Charlie:** Do I look like the type that is going to sit around and take some sort of test, especially when it belongs to somebody with a weird name like Pyth... Pyth, when it was made by a foreigner?

**Frank:** So what did you have in mind?

**Charlie:** Well, *{pausing as he speaks}* we could do like we did back when we ran the critters out on the range. We'd exchange whoppers. The biggest whopper wins the car.

**Beaker:** Whopper?

**Charlie:** Confound it, boy, don't you speak plain English? Lies. The biggest lie wins the car.

**Frank:** I think that's terrible. Telling lies is a great sin. Why, I've never told a lie in my life.

**Charlie:** *{After a short pause and staring at Frank}* All right, Beaker. Give him the keys. I can't think of one to top that. Confound it, Frank, you need to give the rest of us a chance before you pop off with one like that.

**Frank:** But I haven't ever told a lie.

**Charlie:** *{Laughing}* Sure. And my mother's a high society debate.

**Beaker:** The word is debutante.

**Charlie:** Don't you go pulling your unabridged dictionary words on me. If I said debate. I

meant debate. *{Turning back to Frank}* I can tell you ain't no one not told a lie.

**Frank:** *{Looking stunned}* I haven't.

**Charlie:** Yeah right. Ok, so maybe that wasn't a good contest.

**Beaker:** How would the two of you like to buy out my portion and then you can figure it out among yourselves?

**Charlie:** We might could do that, but we would need to settle on a price. How much do you two figure it's worth?

**Frank:** I'd estimate about one thousand dollars.

**Beaker:** *{Calculating}* That would mean my share would be three-hundred and thirty-three dollars and thirty three point three, thee, three etc. cents. Half of that for each of you would be one hundred sixty-six dollars and sixty-six point six, six, six etc. cents.

**Charlie:** Forget the pointy cetra stuff. We'll just round it to seventy-five cents. *{Reaching in his pocket or wallet}* All right, here is one-hundred, sixty seven dollars. And I want a quarter back.

**Beaker:** Why don't you join a football team?

**Charlie:** *{Staring at Beaker}* A quarterback? Was that a joke? *{Beaker nods.}* I can't believe it. I lived long enough to hear Beaker tell a joke! Did you hear that, Frank?

**Frank:** I heard it.

**Charlie:** I want a quarter back so join the football team. *{Laughs}* You didn't get that out of a book or nothin'? *{Beaker shakes his head pleased but embarrassed.}* Well, I'll be. That was funny. Almost as funny as your parents naming you Beaker.

**Beaker:** But my parents didn't name me Beaker. My name is William. William J. Duck.

**Charlie:** So people call you Beaker because you work with all those chemistry things?

**Beaker:** No. They first started calling me Beak because we had a teacher at school that read our names backwards and I went by Bill instead of William.

**Charlie:** Duck Bill. Beak. Beaker. Oh, I get it. *{Laughs}*

**Frank:** And I thought I was slow. You know, Charlie, that's not as strange as what your real name is. I mean anyone that would name...

**Charlie:** We ain't going to go there.

**Beaker:** Wait a minute. Charlie isn't your real name?

**Frank:** It's Charlemagne.

**Beaker:** Charlemagne. *{He laughs}* Like the king.

**Charlie:** Yeah, like the king. And if you tell anyone I'm going to crown you.

**Frank:** Hey, Beak, I'll need to get ya that money from over at my house.

**Charlie:** By the way, Beak, what do you want the money for?

**Beaker:** I am working on a new compound and I need a few things to finish it.

**Frank:** What is it?

**Beaker:** *{Signaling them to come closer}* It's a *{looking around to make sure no one is listening as do Charlie and Frank following his lead}* truth potion.

**Charlie:** A truth potion!

**Beaker:** Shhh. Even more than that. If I get it to work the way I think it will than a person won't be able to resist answering whatever question they are asked.

**Charlie:** Why, that's the biggest pack of horse biscuits I ever did hear. There is no way to make a truth potion.

**Beaker:** Sure there is. You just need something that works on the nervous system so that the inhibitions in the brain...

**Charlie:** Hold on just a minute here. In this country we speak English. We think English. And we expect English. What you're speaking ain't English.

**Beaker:** I tell you, it can be done.

**Charlie:** When you think you've got it you let me know.

**Frank:** Let's go take a look at the car.

*{All three of them exit. Hobart and Bertha each come wandering in from different directions looking around, still searching, and end up backing into each other. Each eyes the other with suspicion. Each is holding something they were searching under, like a picture, etc. Each puts it down and acts innocent.}*

**Hobart:** Oh, excuse me. Weren't you just leaving?

**Bertha:** After you.

**Hobart:** Ladies first.

*{Bertha leads the way off stage. As they are going off stage, Adeline comes back on. As they pass her, Hobart turns and starts to follow Adeline to center stage.}*

**Hobart:** *{Aside to audience}* This might be a great opportunity to not only get my hands on that fortune, but to pick myself a sweet little Daisy.

*{Adeline starts cleaning tables. Hobart clears his throat to let her know he is there.}*

**Adeline:** *{A bit nervous}* May I help you, Mr. Hobart?

**Hobart:** I just wanted to offer my condolences to you on this tragic, tragic day. You're father was a good man and a good friend.

**Adeline:** But Father always said were the lowest yellow bellied scum of a...

**Hobart:** *{With a bit of an uncomfortable laugh}* Oh yes, but that was only in public. In

private we were actually very close friends. But I am not here to talk about my friendship with your father, but with a new relationship with you.

**Adeline:** With me?

**Hobart:** Why, yes. Why should you work your fingers to the bone here in this restaurant when you can have so much more?

**Adeline:** Like what?

**Hobart:** *{Shocked as if it isn't obvious}* Me!

**Adeline:** You?

**Hobart:** Of course. You could be my wife. What more could a woman ask for?

**Adeline:** But you're so old.

**Hobart:** But every year I have just gotten better and more handsome.

**Adeline:** Wow! You must have been one ugly baby. I mean, you must have been really, really, really...

**Hobart:** *{Reaching out and covering her mouth}* That's another thing I like about you. You're sense of humor.

**Adeline:** I don't have enough of a sense of humor to marry you.

**Hobart:** Even if you don't want to marry me, why don't you let me help you invest your father's fortune for you?

**Adeline:** What fortune?

**Hobart:** The fortune your father left you in his will.

**Adeline:** But I don't have a fortune.

**Hobart:** You surely can't tell me your father left you with no fortune.

**Adeline:** I can't tell you of one. *{Aside to audience}* Even if I knew of one I wouldn't tell him.

**Hobart:** *{Aside to audience}* I think she's lying. *{To Adeline}* Perhaps he left it somewhere hidden where I can help you find it.

**Adeline:** I would rather not.

**Hobart:** *{Getting up real close to her, almost threatening}* But I insist.

*{He is interrupted by Frank and Charlie coming in.}*

**Charlie:** Adeline, is this skunk bothering you?

**Adeline:** He was just trying...

**Hobart:** I was not bothering her. I only asked her to marry me.

**Charlie:** Oh. So you were insulting her, huh?

**Hobart:** Do you call an offer of marriage an insult?

**Charlie:** If it comes from you, I do.

**Hobart:** *{Getting hostile}* You would dare insult me that way?

**Charlie:** Sure. I've got a weasel hunting license and you're a weasel.

**Hobart:** You don't want to go pushing me around. If you remember, I am now the acting mayor.

**Frank:** What does that have to do with anything?

**Hobart:** Wait and see. I'm not going to show my hand. I mean, do I look stupid to you? *{The others all turn to look at him and then at each other kind of nodding.}* Oh. Oh yeah. Well, we will see who wins. Hobart never makes a mistake.

*{He turns and falls over a chair, gets up, clears his throat and exits.}*

**Frank:** *{To Adeline}* What did he want?

**Adeline:** Oh, Frank. I was so scared. He asked me to marry him.

**Frank:** Him?

**Adeline:** Yes. And when I refused he tried to get me to tell him where my father's fortune is.

**Frank:** Did your father have one?

**Adeline:** I don't know. Before he died he told me he was going to make sure I was going to be taken care of so I could paint my future the way I wanted.

**Charlie:** Old Farnum was always a bit strange. A good man, but strange. *{Pointing to the paintings on the walls}* I mean, look at these paintings. I drew paintings like these when I was in first grade. Whoever painted these had a weird mind. I think you ought to take them off the walls and burn them.

**Adeline:** I would like to keep things the way my father wanted them.

**Frank:** Charlie, you shouldn't even talk of such things. Especially so soon after she has lost her father.

**Charlie:** I'm sorry. I didn't mean to be mean.

**Adeline:** I know, Charlie. The thought of having to run the restaurant without my father is a bit overwhelming.

**Frank:** *{To Adeline}* I promised your father I would do what I needed to help you run this place, so don't worry.

**Adeline:** Frank, I don't know what I would do without you.

**Frank:** *{Gallantly}* I know.

**Charlie:** We better keep an eye on Hobart. He's a slippery one.

**Frank:** Why don't you be the one to watch him? I need to help Adeline.

*{Josie comes in.}*

**Josie:** *{Stammering}* Frank, Adeline, Charlie, I was wondering if, you, well, maybe, know where ...

**Adeline:** Who, Josie?

**Josie:** Uh. Uh. *{And then as if she can't get herself to say it}* Would you like to buy some Girl Scout cookies?

**Adeline:** Sure, Josie. But weren't you asking about someone?

**Josie:** *{Embarrassed}* Who, me? Nope. Just selling Girl Scout cookies.

**Frank:** But you just sold us some last night, yesterday morning, and the night before.

**Josie:** I did?

**Charlie:** Aren't you a bit old to be selling Girl Scout cookies?

**Josie:** Well, uh, I just like the Girl Scouts?

**Frank:** I know someone that might like some cookies. Beaker. And he just sold us his portion of the Model T, so I know he has money. And, *{looking at his new time piece}* since it's only four-thirty-seven, I'm sure he's working all alone out in the garage.

**Josie:** He is!? I mean, do you think he would buy some?

**Frank:** I would bet on it.

**Josie:** Really?

**Frank:** Really.

**Josie:** Than maybe I ought to go sell him some cookies. *{She starts to go off then comes back.}* Do you think he would really buy some cookies?

**Frank:** Really.

**Josie:** Really?

**Charlie:** Really!

**Josie:** Really?

**Adeline, Frank and Charlie together:** Really!

*{Josie starts to go and Adeline waves her on. Josie waves and goes off.}*

**Frank:** She and Beaker are just a pair. He likes her and she likes him, but neither can bring themselves to say it.

**Adeline:** That's because they are afraid of Aunt Bertha. She told Josie that if she catches her with Beaker she will disinherit her, if not worse.

**Frank:** I would do it anyway.

**Adeline:** They're both afraid of her.

**Frank:** But if they really love...

*{Frank is interrupted by Bertha booming in.}*

**Bertha:** Josie!? Josie! My heavens, where is that girl? Adeline, have you seen Josie?

**Adeline:** Aunt Bertha, she was...

**Frank:** She's not here.

**Bertha:** And since when did you become Adeline? I thought you had gone back to work.

*{She taps on the table and looks at him.}*

**Frank:** Not yet.

**Bertha:** Well, get back to work! It won't do to have you lollygagging around just because my brother died. I need a few words with my niece alone.

**Frank:** I guess I should get back to work.

*{Frank goes off.}*

**Bertha:** You too, Charlie. *{Charlie makes a face at her imitating her walk and wagging his head as he goes off.}* Now that we're alone, my dear, there are a few things I wanted to talk to you about. With your father gone I feel you need me to help you take care of his fortune. Just tell me where it is and I will take care of it for you.

**Adeline:** I don't know what fortune you are talking about.

**Bertha:** Of course you do, dear. He left it to you in the will.

**Adeline:** But I really don't.

**Bertha:** *{Aside to audience}* I think she's lying. *{To Adeline}* Do you think I know how to manage money?

**Adeline:** Of course, Auntie. Everyone knows you're the richest woman in town.

**Bertha:** *{Aside to audience}* Little does she know that I just live that way. All the money I have is what I was able to finagle out of my brother. But with him gone I need to have his fortune. *{To Adeline}* You see, my dear, my only concern is for your welfare. Why, with the death of your father, I am afraid someone will try and take advantage of you. Perhaps someone like Frank.

**Adeline:** Frank would never take advantage of me.

**Bertha:** Don't be too sure. It is those you are closest to you can trust the least. Just give me the fortune and I will be on my way.

**Adeline:** But I don't know of any fortune.

**Bertha:** If that's the way you want to be then so be it, but you haven't seen the last of me!

*{Bertha stomps out as lights fade}*

## Act I Scene 2

*{Charlie and Frank are sitting in the restaurant trying to figure out what to do with the car.}*

**Frank:** How about this idea. I get the car every other day and you get it the others.

**Charlie:** Hold it! That would mean you would get it more than me.

**Frank:** All right. How about you get the car every other day and I get it the others.

**Charlie:** That sounds more reasonable. But what if I want on the other days and you have it?

**Frank:** Then I guess we could work a trade...

**Beaker:** *{Running in all excited followed by Josie}* I think I got it! I think I got it!

**Charlie:** You got what?

**Beaker:** I've got the truth potion!

**Charlie:** And how did you test it?

**Beaker:** I drank some and then I asked myself a question.

**Charlie:** You asked yourself a question? That is about the stupidest thing I have ever heard. Do you go around asking yourself questions often?

**Beaker:** No, but after I drank it I couldn't seem to not answer.

**Frank:** Why did you put it in a whiskey bottle?

**Beaker:** That is what I needed money to buy. It's mostly whiskey since whiskey is one of the best things to make a person lose their inhibitions.

**Charlie:** You wouldn't happen to have any, you know, stuff that didn't work out?

**Beaker:** Gallons of it.

**Charlie:** I'll tell you what. I will gladly take it off of your hands.

**Beaker:** I was sure you would.

**Frank:** *{Looking at potion}* How are we going to test this stuff?

**Beaker:** I was kind of hoping that one of you would be willing to test it.

**Charlie:** What, so you can go asking questions and finding out things you don't have a right to know?

**Frank:** I thought you said a truth potion couldn't work.

**Charlie:** Why take chances?

**Beaker:** How will we know if it works if no one tests it?

**Frank:** I will test it. I mean, who's afraid of the truth.

*{Charlie mimes as if mocking “Who’s afraid of the truth.” Beaker goes and gets a glass. Frank pours a glass full and turns it around.}*

**Frank:** Interesting stuff.

**Charlie:** Drink it already!

*{Frank drinks it while the other three look at him for a short instant.}*

**Beaker:** How do you feel?

**Frank:** Interesting. Kind of relaxed.

**Charlie:** Ok. My turn. What was the biggest lie you have ever told?

**Beaker:** You’re not going to start that again.

**Charlie:** Of course I am. Ain’t no one that hasn’t told a lie.

**Frank:** I’ve never told a lie.

**Charlie:** See. I told you. The stuff doesn’t work. Ain’t no one never told a lie.

**Frank:** I haven’t.

**Charlie:** Right. *{Taking the bottle}* Well, since this one didn’t work I’ll just go ahead and help dispose of it for you.

*{Charlie just takes the bottle and takes a big swig. Beaker takes it back.}*

**Beaker:** But I was so sure this time. I can’t figure out what went wrong.

**Josie:** I’m sure you’ll get it, Beaker. I’ve got faith in you.

**Frank:** Yea, Beaker, don’t worry. You’ll get it. Hey! I know. Why don’t you go for a ride with us in the car? That’ll cheer you up. Charlie and I were just going to take it for a spin. It will help you feel better.

**Beaker:** Sure. I might as well.

**Charlie:** *{Reaching for the bottle}* I’ll just take that...

**Frank:** Oh no you don’t. You want to get us arrested? We can’t have any alcohol in a vehicle.

**Beaker:** *{Pulling a sticky note out of his pocket and writing on it}* We’ll just put your name on it, Charlie.

*{Charlie takes one more swig, puts it on the table, then heads out the door. They could come down in front of the stage or somewhere that will distinguish the two scenes. Both scenes will need to be on at the same time since Bertha is going to get the bottle.}*

**Charlie:** I still don’t know why we couldn’t bring it with us.

**Frank:** You know Judge Judy would lock us up and throw away the key.

**Charlie:** *{In a dreamy tone}* It would be worth it just to see her beautiful eyes again. *{Frank and Beaker both stop and stare at Charlie as Charlie acts shocked as he realizes what he*

*said.*) I mean, I mean she is the most gorgeous woman.

**Frank:** Charlie, are you in love with Judy?

**Charlie:** *{Looking confused}* Yes.

**Frank:** Then why do you always pretend you don't like her?

**Charlie:** Because I don't want anyone to know it.

**Frank:** How long have you loved her?

**Charlie:** Ever since we were in first grade together and she told me I was cute. *{Starting to get mad}* Confound it. Why am I telling you these things? *{Answering his own question}* Because it's the truth. *{Really upset now}* Now I'm answering my own questions.

**Beaker:** It's the truth potion.

**Charlie:** The what?

**Beaker:** The truth potion. It makes it so you have to tell the truth.

**Charlie:** Then why didn't Frank tell the truth?

**Frank:** I did.

**Charlie:** But no one has never told a lie.

**Frank:** I haven't.

**Charlie:** All right. Let me try something else. Frank, have you ever done something you weren't proud of?

**Frank:** Yes.

**Charlie:** *{Slyly}* What?

**Frank:** There was this time when I was sharing candy with my brother and there was one extra piece and I took it.

**Charlie:** You took one extra piece of candy. *{Frank nods}* That's it. That's the full extent of it! *{Frank nods}* You need to get a life.

**Frank:** My turn. Charlie, when Judy and you were in first grade...

**Charlie:** Hold it. The next person that asks me a question is going to find himself in a cast.

**Beaker:** It works! It works! I knew it!

*{He starts dancing around and hugging Josie, Frank, and is about to hug Charlie.}*

**Charlie:** Hug me and you'll need to increase you're life insurance policy.

**Frank:** What do you plan to do with it?

**Beaker:** What do you mean?

**Frank:** I mean, what did you create it for?

**Beaker:** To bring truth to the world. To sell it and make enough money that I can ask Josie to marry me.

**Josie:** Oh, Beaker. Is that why?

**Beaker:** Than your mother couldn't say I was a poor nobody.

**Frank:** But, Beaker, who is going to buy it? What if they are like Charlie and don't want to be telling the truth?

**Beaker:** I never thought about that.

**Charlie:** I'd buy it.

**Beaker:** You would?

**Charlie:** Sure. To give to my friends. Or *{slyly}* my enemies.

**Frank:** I'm just concerned what would happen if it fell into the wrong hands.

*{They all look at each other for an instant and then yell ad libbed.}*

**All Four:** The bottle!

*{They all run back around to come back on stage. Meanwhile, Bertha, who has been looking around the restaurant again for the fortune has come up to the table where the bottle is, and, looking around to see if anyone is looking, she takes a big drink. The others come in just in time to see her with the bottle and stop. They all look at each other and carefully back out without Bertha seeing them.}*

**Charlie:** Bertha has it.

**Frank:** We've got to get it from her. Especially before the dinner rush comes and some of our customers come in. *{Looking at his time piece}* It's four-thirty-seven in the afternoon. The rush will start in around ten minutes.

**Beaker:** What are we going to do?

**Charlie:** We'll send Josie in to get it. Bertha is her mother.

**Josie:** No way. She'd yell at me.

**Charlie:** Than you will have to do it, Beaker, since you made it.

**Beaker:** There is no way.

**Frank:** As I see it, there is only one person she would believe is coming in to get whiskey and that is you. Besides, it had your name on it.

**Charlie:** But I drank some of it. What if she asks me a question?

**Frank:** Tell her the truth.

**Beaker:** As if he'd have a choice.

**Frank:** When you tell the truth it may shock her so she wouldn't believe it anyway.

**Charlie:** There is no way I'm going to go in and face Old Barracuda Barton.

**Beaker:** You've got to. What if she realizes what it is and starts giving it to people?

*{Charlie starts to go in and then comes back as if scared.}*

**Frank:** Go on. You're not scared of her are you?

**Charlie:** Frankly, yes.

**Frank:** You need to do it.

**Charlie:** Why?

**Frank:** For the good of the town.

**Beaker:** For the good of the state.

**Josie:** For the good of the country.

**Beaker:** For the good of the world.

**Josie:** For the good...

**Charlie:** Getting a bit carried away here, aren't we?

*{Charlie enters and carefully walks up behind Bertha, who is taking a few more swigs of the bottle, very unlady like and clears his throat. She doesn't hear him she is so engrossed in drinking.}*

**Charlie:** I say *{makes sound like clearing his throat}*

*{Bertha quickly turns in surprise and hides the bottle behind herself.}*

**Bertha:** Oh, Mr. Dunham. I didn't hear you come in.

**Charlie:** Obviously. I see you have my bottle there.

**Bertha:** *{Bringing it out}* Oh this. *{Laughing coyly}* I was just taking a few swigs of it. *{Stammering in surprise at what she said was not what she meant to say.}* I mean, um, I was just guzzling it. I mean...

*{Charlie grabs it away and starts to head for the door.}*

**Bertha:** Charlie Dunham. You stop right there. *{Charlie stops, as if too afraid to move.}* What is that stuff?

**Charlie:** *{Not wanting to answer, but unable to stop himself}* Truth potion.

**Bertha:** *{Breaking into laughter}* Truth potion! Why that is the stupidest thing I ever... *{Suddenly she stops and realizes what has happened and runs to block the door in front of Charlie. Suddenly very threatening}* Truth potion huh? Give it to me.

**Charlie:** Never!

*{She takes off after him. She chases him around a table a couple of times. Then they are each on one side of the table facing each other.}*

**Bertha:** You are the biggest liar I know and you told me what it was. You drank some of it too didn't you?

**Charlie:** Yes.

**Bertha:** Then I am going to ask you some question.

**Charlie:** No.

*{He tries to make a break for the door but she blocks it.}*

**Bertha:** Where did you get it?

**Charlie:** From Beaker.

**Bertha:** *{Moving toward Charlie as he backs away. The other three look in and start coming in the door so they hear this part, but Bertha has her back to them.}* Where did Beaker get it?

**Charlie:** He made it.

**Bertha:** Why did he make it?

**Charlie:** So he could sell it and make enough money to impress you so he could marry Josie.

**Bertha:** *{Coming to a stop as the other three have now come in the back as Bertha sees them.}* Is that so?

**Beaker:** Yes.

**Charlie:** The questions go both ways, Bertha. Why do you want the potion?

**Bertha:** *{Starts backing up as Charlie, acting tough, advances toward her.}* I, I, wanted to give some to Adeline so she would have to tell me the truth as to where the fortune her father left her is.

**Frank:** *{As all are moving toward her}* And what do you plan to do with that fortune if you get it?

**Bertha:** *{Looking at all of them}* Take it for myself.

*{As the others all look at each other, Bertha grabs the bottle from Charlie and dashes for the door.}*

**Charlie:** She's got the potion!

*{She dashes out the door with the others all after her. She comes down around in front of the stage running with the others behind.}*

*[Directors Note: This would be a fun place to put in a slow motion sequence. As the others go after her they could knock each other down, giving her a good lead. They could bumble around finally getting up. A bit of music like "Chariots of Fire" or some other such running or chase music could add fun to the slow motion.]*

*{Bertha rushes back onto stage looking for a place to hide the truth potion. She sees a bush that is on the stage and hides it there then rushes off stage. As she rushes off stage Hobart*

*comes waltzing in, just as the others come in so he quickly hides behind the bush. He sees the potion and pulls it out as he is behind the bush and takes a drink as the others talk. He shows great interest in the conversation.*

**Frank:** We've got to stop her. We can't let her get hold of Adeline's fortune.

**Charlie:** *{Panting}* I can't go any further.

**Frank:** *{Motioning to the other two}* Come on.

*{Frank, Beaker, and Josie run off stage after Bertha as Charlie drops into a chair. Hobart puts the bottle back and comes out.}*

**Hobart:** What is this I hear about Adeline's fortune?

**Charlie:** Bertha is after it and we're trying to stop her.

**Hobart:** How do you know she's after it?

**Charlie:** She told us.

**Hobart:** She told you? *{Laughing}* That is ridiculous. Why would she have told you?

**Charlie:** Because she drank some truth potion.

**Hobart:** *{Laughing}* Truth potion! That is the most ridiculous thing I have ever heard of.

*{Bertha comes sneaking in and starts trying to sneak her way to the bush as the talking continues.}*

**Charlie:** Well, it's none of your business. What are you doing here anyway?

**Hobart:** Why I'm just here to try and figure out where the fortune is. *{Charlie turns with a start as Hobart does a double take himself at what he just said.}* I mean, I mean, I'm here to try and get my hands on that fortune.

*{Hobart throws his hand over his mouth and looks stunned.}*

**Charlie:** Did you just drink something?

**Hobart:** *{Reluctantly}* Yes.

**Charlie:** Where is it?

**Hobart:** *{pointing at the bush}* There.

*{Suddenly they see Bertha and all three rush for the bush. Charlie gets it first and tries to make a break for the door but they corner him.}*

**Bertha:** You will give that to me if you know what's good for you.

**Hobart:** No, you will give it to me.

**Charlie:** I'm not giving it to either of you.

**Hobart:** *{To Bertha}* We both want the same thing so let's work together.

**Bertha:** Can I trust you?

**Hobart:** No. *{They look at each other.}* Can I trust you?

**Bertha:** No.

**Hobart:** Will you double cross me the first chance you get?

**Bertha:** Yes. Will you double cross me the first chance you get?

**Hobart:** Yes.

**Charlie:** Boy, this is an enlightening conversation.

**Hobart:** Give it to me!

*{Charlie starts to back away and as he does, Bertha hits grabs another bottle and hits him. As Charlie falls to the floor the other two grab for the bottle and both hold on. Each one is trying to pull it from the other.}*

**Bertha:** This is getting us nowhere.

**Hobart:** I've got an idea. Why don't I hold the bottle and you go get Adeline and we'll pour her a drink.

**Bertha:** I've got a better idea. Why don't I hold the bottle and you go get her?

**Hobart:** I said first.

**Bertha:** I could break every bone in your body.

**Hobart:** Good point. How about we set it down on the table and both go.

**Bertha:** All right.

*{They both walk it to the table and they both set it down then they carefully each lift one finger at a time until the bottle is on the table, but they eye each other suspiciously.}*

**Hobart:** *{Pointing at Charlie}* What do we do with him?

**Bertha:** Help me and we'll set him up in the chair.

*{They try a few times and he keeps falling out. Finally they get him set there in a very awkward position with his head flopped on the table.}*

*[Director's Note: This could be a real fun place to have some melodrama fun as they work opposite each other to get Charlie in the chair. Even some comical music might help.]*

**Hobart:** He doesn't look natural.

**Bertha:** *{Runs to the counter and gets a whiskey bottle. She takes it back and puts Charlie's hand around it.}* There. Now he looks natural.

*{Suddenly they both look at the bottle and run back to it and grab on again, each trying to pull it from the other.}*

**Hobart:** This is getting us nowhere again. Why don't you go call Adeline?

**Bertha:** *{Drags Hobart to the side of the stage holding on to the bottle as he is trying to pull*

*back, but to no avail, then she yells loudly for her niece.} Adeline! Oh, Adeline! Will you come out here?*

*{Adeline walks out and looks at them strangely, because everywhere they go they both are holding onto the bottle.}*

**Hobart:** We just wanted you to come out here and have a drink with us.

**Bertha:** *{Leading her to a chair with one hand and dragging Hobart by holding the bottle with the other.}* Now, you just sit down there and make yourself comfortable.

**Adeline:** *{Eying Charlie}* What happened to Charlie?

**Hobart:** He just got *{he mumbles “hit over the head with a bottle” as Bertha covers his mouth. He turns to Bertha.}* Thanks.

**Bertha:** Sure thing.

**Hobart:** Now, Bertha, why don't you get us a cup so Adeline can have a drink?

*{Bertha drags Hobart to the counter, grabs a cup, and comes back. She sets it down and they pour it full, while both of them are still holding on to the bottle. Adeline keeps eyeing them.}*

**Adeline:** Are you two stuck to the bottle?

**Bertha:** No.

**Hobart:** No.

**Adeline:** Then why do...

**Bertha:** *{Covering Adeline's mouth}* Now don't keep asking questions, dear. Drink up.

**Adeline:** But I thought you always said drinking was disgusting. Do you drink?

**Bertha:** All the time when people aren't looking. *{She looks embarrassed but continues on.}* Go ahead. Drink up.

**Adeline:** But what...

**Bertha:** *{Very motherly like}* No, no, no. Drink up. It will make you forget your problems. *{Adeline drinks. Suddenly Bertha's whole demeanor changes.}* All right you. Where is that fortune your father left you?

**Adeline:** *{A bit scared}* I don't know.

**Hobart:** You don't know?

**Adeline:** No.

**Bertha:** You mean your father didn't tell you where he put it?

**Adeline:** No.

**Hobart:** But you know there is one?

**Adeline:** Yes. He said he would leave me one.

**Bertha:** Did he say anything else?

**Adeline:** He said I'd have to keep my eyes open to find it because making a fortune is an art.

**Hobart:** Old Farnum was a tricky one.

*{Frank, Beaker, and Josie come in.}*

**Frank:** What are you doing?

**Hobart:** Making Adeline tell us where the fortune is.

**Beaker:** Did you give her some truth potion?

**Villan:** Yes.

**Adeline:** Truth potion?

**Frank:** Yes. It's something that Beaker made. What did they ask you?

**Adeline:** Where the fortune is?

**Frank:** What did you tell them?

**Adeline:** I don't know where it is. That's the truth. Father only said I'd have to keep my eyes open to find it because making a fortune is an art.

**Frank:** *{Suddenly noticing Charlie}* What happened to Charlie?

**Hobart:** Bertha hit him with a bottle.

**Frank:** *{Shaking Charlie}* Charlie! Charlie! Are you ok?

**Charlie:** *{Groggily coming around}* You can't have it.

**Frank:** Charlie. It's me. Frank.

**Charlie:** Frank. They got it. Hobart and Bertha got the truth potion.

**Frank:** *{To Hobart}* Give me the truth potion.

**Hobart:** *{Handing it over}* No problem ol' boy. It's empty anyway.

**Charlie:** Why, you sneaky, son of a horse backside, I'm...

**Frank:** Now calm down Charlie.

**Charlie:** Calm down! Calm down! Ask them why they are here.

**Bertha:** I don't think...

**Charlie:** Go ahead. Ask them. They drank truth potion. They will have to tell you.

**Hobart:** I think I must be going...

**Frank:** So why are you here?

**Hobart:** To try to finagle out of Adeline where the fortune is.

**Beaker:** So why do you need it, Mrs. Barton? You're one of the richest women in the town.

**Bertha:** All my money came from what I could get my brother to give me. Now that he's gone I want his fortune.

**Charlie:** That's a fine bucket of pig slop if I ever heard one. I think we should string them up.

**Frank:** Be careful, Charlie. We don't want to go breaking the law.

**Hobart:** And you forget, as acting mayor I am the law.

**Adeline:** You may be, but this is my place and I want you out. And don't ever set foot in here again.

**Hobart:** We shall see. Now that I know you don't know where the fortune is, I plan to look for it myself. I have already started the process of having this place condemned for city use. The city needs a new park. I've decided it should be built right here so we can demolish this place.

**Charlie:** You can't do that.

**Hobart:** And who's going to stop me?

**Charlie:** We'll, we'll...

**Beaker:** We'll elect a new mayor.

**Hobart:** *{With an evil laugh}* And who's going to run against me. You, Beaker, the timid door mouse of the town? *{Beaker shakes his head.}* Oh, maybe you, Charlie, the town drunk.

**Frank:** I will.

**Hobart:** You?

**Frank:** To help Adeline I will.

**Hobart:** *{With a laugh}* That would be good. No one even knows you.

**Charlie:** That might be just the ticket we need. Everyone does know you.

**Hobart:** *{Going up to Frank}* I'll bury you.

**Charlie:** If you don't get out of here, I might bury you.

**Hobart:** *{Stomping out}* You haven't seen the last of me yet.

**Bertha:** I'm right with you. *{Turning back}* Josie, come along.

**Josie:** But Mother, I...

**Bertha:** Now!

**Josie:** Yes, Mother.

*{She looks at Beaker and then reluctantly exits as he acts like he wants to stand up to Bertha}*

*but doesn't have the nerve.}*

**Adeline:** Oh, Frank, you are so brave.

**Frank:** *{Embarrassed}* It weren't nothin'.

**Charlie:** I still think we should've popped 'em one. I owe 'em one for the headache.

**Beaker:** We got a bigger problem now. How do we get Frank elected mayor? Hobart and Bertha are the two most influential people in town.

**Charlie:** Not to mention the two biggest crooks.

**Frank:** Perhaps the best thing to do is to let the truth speak for itself.

*{ Blackout}*

## **Intermission If Desired**

**To Read The Rest,  
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