

## CULVER CITY FEVER

### CHARACTERS:

GERALDINE ST PATRICK, middle-aged, well-known actress from television, now in search of a role

JANE FARRELL, middle-aged, former actress and Geraldine's friend and roommate in their young, single days.

YOUNG GERRY, early 20s

YOUNG JANE, early 20s

JACKIE, any age, ebullient, chatty

JESSIE, young, inclined to spontaneous tears

GPS VOICE

PUBLICIST

REPORTER

### \*CASTING NOTES ON FLEXIBLE CASTING:

- THE SAME PERFORMER CAN PLAY YOUNG GERRY, JACKIE AND PUBLICIST.
- THE SAME PERFORMER CAN PLAY YOUNG JANE, JESSIE, GPS VOICE AND INTERVIEWER
- VARIATIONS ON THE ABOVE ARE POSSIBLE; GERALDINE AND JANE SHOULD NOT PLAY OTHER ROLES, HOWEVER.

THE ROLES OF JACKIE, JESSIE, GPS VOICE, PUBLICIST AND INTERVIEWER ARE GENDER-NEUTRAL.

- I.       *(Spotlight up on JANE, her face only. Her cell phone rings. She checks the caller. Checks it again to make sure. Debates whether to let it go to voice mail. Finally decides to pick up.)*

JANE

Well, hello there.

*(Spotlight up on GERRY. Face only.)*

GERRY

Don't hang up.

JANE

I'm not hanging up.

GERRY

Just...please don't hang up.

JANE

I answered the phone. I saw who was calling before I answered it. If I didn't want to answer it, I would have let it drop into voice mail.

GERRY

Oh. Well. Cool... How are you?

JANE

Bored enough to want to answer this call.

GERRY

Why are you bored?

JANE

Why are you calling?

GERRY

Wait... can you hang on? I gotta pee.

*(She disappears from light and speaks these lines in darkness:)* I should have done that before I called, I know, of course--

JANE

What?

GERRY'S VOICE

Just hold on...

JANE

Listen do not--- don't pee while you're talking to me. Put the phone down. Hang up. Go to the bathroom. Wash your hands. Then call me back. Do you hear me?

*(She looks to see if GERRY has hung up, but she clearly has not).*

Gerry!

GERRY'S VOICE

Did you say something?

JANE

Are you – are you peeing right now?

*(Pause)*

GERRY'S VOICE

Nope. All finished.

*(Sound of toilet flushing).*

JANE

Classy.

*(GERRY re-enters the spotlight)*

GERRY

So, uh, how are you?

JANE

Five years older. You?

GERRY

Five years younger if my surgeon's any good (Laughs).

JANE

Just don't let them give you one of those clown mouths.

GERRY

What?

JANE

You know, when they use too those implants or cut too deep and you wind up looking like the Joker.

GERRY

Cesar Romero Joker or Heath Ledger Joker?

JANE

Oh, God. Cesar Romero. If you look like Heath Ledger's Joker it means they forgot to sew you up!

GERRY

That's disgusting. Although I hear it did happen to someone on my show. Only it wasn't her mouth, if you know what I mean....

JANE

You win. More disgusting.

GERRY

What about Nicholson?

JANE

Huh?

GERRY

You left out Jack Nicholson's Joker.

(Pause)

JANE

Hi, Gerry. What's on your mind?

(Pause)

GERRY

I want to apologize for all the things I've done wrong.

JANE

Gosh. I'm not sure I have enough bars on my phone for that.

GERRY

I—Okay, that was funny.

JANE

Was it?

GERRY

No.

JANE

So--?

GERRY

Really. I have a lot to apologize for.

JANE

Wait – did you join AA or something?

GERRY

No. Why?

JANE

One of the twelve steps. Apologizing for stuff you did when you were drunk.... Are you Narcotics Anonymous?

GERRY

No.

JANE

OA?

GERRY

What's OA?

JANE

Overeaters anonymous.

GERRY

That's a thing? Really?

JANE

Yes.

GERRY

Huh. (*Considering it*) Cool.

JANE

So, you're apologizing---

GERRY

Yes. For everything.

JANE

Hmm. Everything. If it's all the same to you, I'd like some specifics.

GERRY

Okay. Last Christmas you sent those beautiful earrings and I sent you that crappy Harry and David tower of nuts.

JANE

Yeah. Bad call. I get diverticulitis now. Not a great idea to send nuts, much less a whole tower.

GERRY

I hope you gave it to your daughter.

JANE

I couldn't. Her youngest has developed a nut allergy.

GERRY

God! Everybody has nut allergies now!

JANE

I know. But this is bad. If somebody even leaves a peanut on the school bus they have to Epi-pen him.

GERRY

Why weren't we allergic to everything like they are today?

JANE

Maybe we were. For instance, I couldn't wear wool. Remember? Anything wool and I would break out in that rash.

GERRY

Oh, right. (*Realizes*). Oh, shit. That scarf I sent you two Christmases ago.

JANE

100% wool.

GERRY

I'm just so--- I'm really sorry.

JANE

Okay.

GERRY

Okay, let's not rake over the past.

JANE

Oh, let's.

GERRY

It's just been a really rough time for me.

JANE

Okay.

GERRY

Well, it has.

JANE

Okay.

GERRY

Oh. Wait. Sounds like it's been rough for you, too. Did somebody die?

JANE

Yes.

GERRY

Um, recently?

JANE

Not really.

GERRY

Well. Wait – your ex-husband?

JANE

No, sadly.

GERRY

Oh...oh, dear God in heaven... tell me it's not your daughter – or, oh, God, not one of your grandkids.

JANE

No, but I think I heard a tiny trace of real emotion in your voice that time.

GERRY

Your Mom.

JANE

And---?

GERRY

Your Dad.

JANE

Yes.

GERRY

Oh, Janie. Oh. Your mother was so sweet to me.

JANE

To me too. Being her daughter and all...

GERRY

Oh, I really am sorry. Dear Flossy. Gone. Oh. (*Pause.*) I was never that keen on your Dad.

JANE

He was aware of that.

GERRY

Well, I think he thought I was a bad influence on you.

JANE

Was he right?

GERRY

We had some fun, though.

JANE

My curiosity is beginning to fade a little, Gerry. Unless you have some deaths to catch *me* up on, what's the real reason for the call?

GERRY

Well, first, I did want to tell you how sorry I am for not being in touch. Now that I've apologized for everything--

JANE

You've apologized for sending me nuts and a rash for Christmas. And for not knowing my parents are dead. Think...Anything else come to mind?

*(Pause)*

GERRY

Oh. That. I tried... I did. Really.

JANE

So. Here's what happens when you least expect it. You go to the supermarket and you run into people. People who used to be in the business. While you're picking over the produce, someone comes up to you.

**II.** *(Lights up to reveal JANE as if she is entering a supermarket, looking over produce. JACKIE approaches JANE tentatively, then gets up the nerve to talk to her.)*

JACKIE

I just want to say, you would have been so much better than Gracie Ann Gibbons in that part.

JANE

Excuse me?

JACKIE

I'm just saying – When I heard what happened, I was shocked. I thought Geraldine St. Patrick was your friend.

JANE

Sorry, I don't follow.

JACKIE

Oh. Hi. I'm Jackie. I used to work at Samsky and Francis. You know, the casting agency. I was just the Administrative Assistant there. I never got to be even a junior casting director. But I got to hear plenty of dirt just bringing coffee, believe me. For instance, I was there the day they got

the call from “Miss” St. Patrick. Doug Samsky himself took the call. It was on speaker. Doug’s old school. No Bluetooth. He loved to multitask. You know, read scripts, drink coffee, and yell into the phone all at the same time. He just put everyone on speaker. Except Meryl. Meryl he would pick up the phone. Anyway, I heard every word that day: “Hi, Doug. It’s Gerry.” “Gerry! My favorite star! ““Look, Doug, just between us, “she says. “Just between us?” She was on speaker, for God’s sake! You can’t tell you’re on speaker? Anyway, she says “look, Doug, there’s this industry friend who wants to be put up for that one-shot. Her name is Jane Farrell.” Doug says he doesn’t know her. “She” says, “it’s been awhile, if you know what I mean.” Anyway, can you just tell her it’s been cast? I don’t want to be the bad guy here.” Doug takes a pad and says, “What’s the name?” “Jane Farrell.” “Okay,” he says. And that was that. You know, I’m kind of a trivia nut. I remember you. You’re kinda like one of those people on IMDB, you know?

JANE

IMDB?

JACKIE

Internet Movie Database. We trivia people, we see someone in a movie or a TV show, even if they’re just on for one scene. If they make an impression, we go right to IMDB and look them up. It has everything you’ve ever done.

JANE

That can’t be much.

JACKIE

No, but it starts with *Roman Fever*, and includes, well, everything! That little bit where you were the crying lady on the subway? It’s there. That vigilante movie. What’s it called?

JANE

*Meet Your Maker.*

JACKIE

Oooh. That’s right. Ugh. Anyway, you were born to play that role on *The Glass Ceiling*... Geraldine St. Patrick. What a bitch. Well, what goes around....what’s she done since that trashy show ended?

JANE

I—I don’t keep in touch.

JACKIE

I’ll bet you don’t. Good for you. Hey, if you want a really good time, I go to this drag show every month. The emcee comes dressed as Miss St. Patrick’s character on *The Glass Ceiling*.