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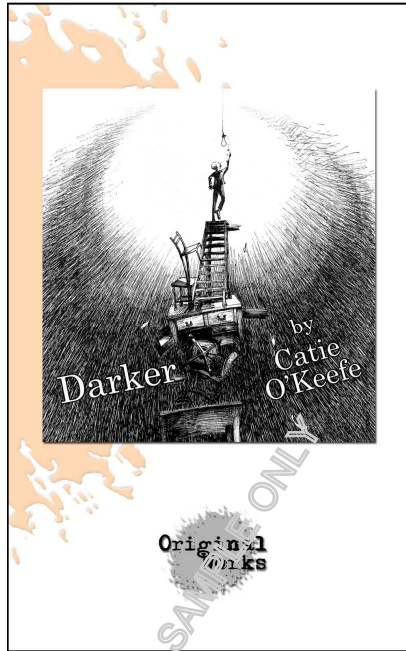
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107

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DARKER by Catie O'Keefe

Synopsis: In search of a job, Max finds himself the new kid at the Industri-Light Bulb Factory. But his surroundings are all too familiar... and he's certain he has seen his boss somewhere before. Is he losing his mind, or is this the start of a very sick- and ultimately deadly-game? Max must uncover the truth, or accept a fate that will keep his life in a mind-numbing limbo.

Cast Size: 2 Males, 1 Female

107

By Len Cuthbert

SAMPLE ONLY

CHARACTERS

(Written for female but flexible)

MORGAN—18 years old. (Scene 1), 19 years old.
(Scene 2-4).

LENNOX—18 years old. (Scene 1), 19 years old.
(Scene 2-4).

AGENT MILES SMITH—An FBI agent.

PROP LIST

Scene 1—Diary in bag, Stick, Cellphone

Scene 2—Table with 2 chairs, books, briefcase,
notepad and pen, play script, photo of inside of
space shuttle, box of belongings

Scene 3—3 flashlights, shovel

Scene 4—Diary in bag, cellphone, play script and
pencil

107 was first performed at the Palace Theatre in London, Ontario, Canada, Sept. 29—Oct. 2, 2021. The production was directed by the playwright and the cast was as follows:

LENNOX—Eden Reshef
MORGAN—Haley Kriz
AGENT SMITH—Tammy Vink

107 was performed during the Toronto Fringe Festival at the Al Green Theatre, Toronto, July 6-17, 2022. The production was directed by the playwright and the cast was as follows:

LENNOX—Eden Reshef
MORGAN—Haley Kriz
AGENT SMITH—Fynn Cuthbert

SCENE 1

(MORGAN and LENNOX are walking through the woods, hiking. LENNOX has a long stick found on the ground. A worn clear plastic bag with a coil bound book inside is nearby. MORGAN is slightly ahead of LENNOX, impatiently waiting for her to catch up.)

LENNOX: Kind of smells out here.

MORGAN: Yeh, well so do you, so pick up the pace, will ya?

LENNOX: No, really. It smells weird.

MORGAN: It's probably just bear crap.

LENNOX: What?!

MORGAN: Relax. No one ever died from bear crap.

LENNOX: I'm not concerned about the crap.

MORGAN: Me neither. So, let's keep moving.

LENNOX: What about the bear?

MORGAN: What bear?

LENNOX: Oh. You were just kidding about the crap. It's not a bear's, right?

MORGAN: Well, it's not mine. Was it yours?

LENNOX: No.

MORGAN: Well, then you do the math.

LENNOX: What's math got to do with this. This isn't exactly how I wanted to spend my Saturday.

MORGAN: How else did you expect us to get samples of plants for our science project? Order them on Amazon?

LENNOX: Same day shipping.

MORGAN: You're an idiot you know that? I don't even know why you asked to work with me.

LENNOX: I didn't ask to work with you. Mrs. Blackwell asked if I would be willing to let you be my partner.

MORGAN: Yeh, no. Blackwell asked me if I would be willing to let you be my partner, not the other way around.

LENNOX: False. Mrs. Blackwell specifically said, Morgan doesn't have a partner. Would you be willing –

MORGAN: Exactly. Morgan doesn't have a partner. Not, Morgan wants to work with Lennox. You know why? I'll tell you why. Because Morgan doesn't want to work with Lennox. You want to know why? Because Morgan and Lennox have nothing in common. You want to know why? Because -

LENNOX: Yes, we do. We're cousins.

MORGAN: No.

LENNOX: My dad is your dad's brother. That makes us cousins.

MORGAN: Your dad left your mom and my mom left my dad. So, now we're unrelated.

LENNOX: Technically, we're still cousins because –

MORGAN: Technically, everyone's a cousin, if you go back far enough.

LENNOX: What? That barely makes any sense.

MORGAN: What are you, a germatologist?

LENNOX: A doctor of plant sprouts? That's not even a word. Did you mean, genealogist?

MORGAN: I didn't mean anything.

LENNOX: No need to state the obvious. Try not to exert yourself over words too big for your vocabulary. Can we just get this camping trip over with?

MORGAN: This ain't camping. It's hiking. You should try it. Maybe in your own backyard.

LENNOX: We don't have a backyard. We don't even have a yard. Or a back. Our apartment is above an abandoned store next door to the Rusty Axe. Except for Mrs. Appleton's little

juniper shrub, it's all grey space made up of asphalt and concrete, and not even good quality asphalt and concrete. The only grass available is sold by the gram beside the dumpster behind the Rusty Axe. The only sign of nature is Freddie relieving himself on Mrs. Appleton's juniper shrub.

MORGAN: Holy crap. I didn't want a play-by-play on how you walk out your front door.

LENNOX: The Rusty Axe is an axe throwing facility. You don't just walk out the front door or you could get an axe in the head and there'd be blood everywhere.

MORGAN: You'd never know what hit you.

LENNOX: Yes, I would. An axe.

MORGAN: And that's why I avoided you for all of high school. Where'd you get that stick?

LENNOX: Found it back there.

MORGAN: So the smell of nature is gross but you'll pick that off the ground with who knows what's on it.

(Lennox drops the stick.)

LENNOX: Are you kidding me? There's something on it?

MORGAN: Yeh. Dirt. But you'll be okay.

(Lennox stoops to pick up the stick and sees a plastic bag.)

LENNOX: Holy crap. What's that?

MORGAN: A shredded plastic bag. It's just trash. Let's keep moving.

LENNOX: I know it's a bag, but there's something in it.

(Lennox pokes the bag with a stick.)

LENNOX: It looks kind of heavy.

(Morgan leans over to pick up the bag)

MORGAN: If you have to know, then just pick it up and look.

(Lennox grabs Morgan and pulls her back.)

LENNOX: Are you psychotic?

MORGAN: Are we related?

LENNOX: You don't just go touching something foreign on the ground. Especially in a bag. How do you know there's not a needle in there, or chemicals? Or someone's fingers?

MORGAN: Someone's fingers?

LENNOX: I know gangs that use it to intimidate.

MORGAN: They use a rusty axe? Just leave it.

LENNOX: No way. We have to figure out what it is.

MORGAN: How are we gonna do that if we can't touch it?

LENNOX: What do you think I have this stick for?

MORGAN: I'm still wondering.

LENNOX: We can check it out from a distance without getting too close.

MORGAN: Oh. Kay.

(Lennox leans over with Morgan behind her and tries to touch the bag with the end of the stick but it's just out of reach.)

LENNOX: Ugh. It's just a bit too far.

(Morgan pushes Lennox towards the bag.)

MORGAN: Try moving closer.

LENNOX: Hey! Easy for you to say, standing behind me.

MORGAN: Just take a small step towards it, then you'll be able to flip it over.

(Lennox pokes the bag with the stick.)

LENNOX: AHHH!

MORGAN: What! What?!

LENNOX: I touched it.

MORGAN: Isn't that what you were going for?

LENNOX: Yeh, but it's like weird and gross.

MORGAN: Flip it over and see if you can see what it is.

(Lennox shuffles a bit closer and flips the bag over.)

MORGAN: What do you see?

LENNOX: I don't know. I don't have my glasses on.

MORGAN: What? Why not?

LENNOX: Because I wear them for reading and closer up. Not for distance. It's called hyperopia.

MORGAN: What?

LENNOX: Far sightedness. Where things close up are blurry but things far away are clear.

MORGAN: Why didn't you just say that instead of –

LENNOX: Hyperopia.

MORGAN: Yeh. I heard you the first time.

LENNOX: It's the opposite of Myopia which is the –

MORGAN: Who cares?! Just put your stupid glasses on.

LENNOX: They're not stupid.

MORGAN: No. But I think you are. Put them on.

LENNOX: I didn't bring them.

MORGAN: What? Why not?!

LENNOX: Because we're outdoors and I can see everything fine without them.

MORGAN: Not this bag.

LENNOX: Well, I wasn't planning on stopping and examining a toxic bag of who knows what.

MORGAN: How do you know it's toxic if it's "who knows what"?

LENNOX: What? Who knows what, what?

MORGAN: What? Oh, forget it. You're killing me, you know that?

LENNOX: Why don't you look at it? Here. Stand in front of me.

MORGAN: You want me to stand in front of you.

LENNOX: Yeh. So you can see and read what it is.

MORGAN: Because I don't need glasses?

LENNOX: Are you myopic?

MORGAN: What?

LENNOX: Myopic. Where you can see things close but not far away.

MORGAN: I'm not anything. I can see fine. I'm not stupid you know.

LENNOX: That's discriminatory you know. Just because I don't have perfect vision doesn't mean I'm stupid.

MORGAN: I didn't say it had anything to do with your vision. Okay, put the stick under my arm and lean against my back and I'll see if I can see what's inside the bag.

LENNOX: We should coordinate our legs so that they step at the same time.

(They do. It looks ridiculous.)

LENNOX: Slowly. I'm trying to reach. A bit closer. A bit more.

MORGAN: Okay, I'm going to start leaning over a bit.

LENNOX: Okay. Lean in. Lean in. Lean in. Lean in. Lean in. Lean ...

MORGAN: Will you shut it.

LENNOX: Sorry.

MORGAN: Just a bit more. I think I can see numbers *(reading)* One. *(pause)* One. Zero. *(pause)* One. Zero.

LENNOX: One, One, Zero, One, Zero ... that's like computer code or something.

MORGAN: No, you idiot. I'm just trying to read it and I repeated the numbers. There's only one one and one zero and one other number.

LENNOX: Oh. Maybe it's a phone number.

MORGAN: Maybe it's your I.Q. Seven. I think. Or is it a one?

LENNOX: One, zero, one?

MORGAN: No, I think it's a seven.

LENNOX: Seven, zero, seven.

MORGAN: No ... will you just shut your mouth for five seconds so that –

(They stumble and fall, Lennox landing on the bag. Lennox jumps up and starts running in circles rubbing her eyes.)

LENNOX: Ahhh! I think it touched me. Holy crap. I've been contaminated. I need an eyewash bin. Get me water. Get me disinfectant. Get me help.

MORGAN: No one could ever help you. Like ever.

(Morgan, still sitting, picks up the bag and holds it up close to her face to see the contents.)

LENNOX: You'll die doing that you know. You'll die.

MORGAN: We're all going to die eventually. And right now, you're killing me, so what difference does it make. Here, why not just lick this bag and put yourself out of my misery. Holy crap. You know what I think this is?

LENNOX: Somebody's fingers?

MORGAN: No. Some kind of book.

LENNOX: That could be covered with perfluorinated compounds.

MORGAN: What?

LENNOX: PFC's. Chemicals that make surfaces repel water and oil. PFC's have been linked to reproductive and developmental problems.

MORGAN: And you're giving proof.

(Morgan holds the bag up to Lennox's face.)

MORGAN: See what that says?

LENNOX: Hey, hey, hey. Not so close. Just cause you're stupid enough to –

(Lennox pulls on the edge of her eye with her finger to read.)

LENNOX: S-T-S, one, oh, seven. What's that supposed to mean?

MORGAN: What did you do with your eye?

LENNOX: Oh. If I pull on the edge, it temporarily changes the shape of my eye and improves my vision.

MORGAN: You should try it on your brain.

(Morgan opens the bag and pulls out the book.)

LENNOX: Whoa, whoa, hold on. You're just going to touch that?

MORGAN: Too late. Look at this thing.

LENNOX: I see it. It looks really old.

(Morgan reads the cover)

MORGAN: Look. The letters IR. Wonder what that is.

LENNOX: Is it short form for Iran? Or infrared? What about iridectomy?

MORGAN: Iridotomy?

(Lennox spreads her eye wide open and moves in close to Morgan, who leans back in disgust.)

LENNOX: The surgical removal of part of the iris of your eyeball.

MORGAN: Whoa. Personal space. And that's really gross. You mind?

LENNOX: It's done all the time. The best way is with a laser instead of a scalpel knife.

MORGAN: Okay. That's disgusting. Maybe it's just someone's initials. I'm gonna look up STS-107 on the internet when I get home.

LENNOX: I can do that right now.

(Lennox pulls out her cellphone.)

MORGAN: You forget your glasses but you remember your phone, which you can't see without your glasses.

LENNOX: Not an issue. I can make the font huge on here.

MORGAN: This is exactly why you don't get outside. Okay, then. Google it.

LENNOX: It says, "Sheboygan Transit System." It's in Wisconsin. Maybe it's a bus drivers' log book.

MORGAN: What did you "Google?"

LENNOX: "What does STS stand for?"

MORGAN: You see the problem with that? That could be anything. Search STS-107 like I said the first time.

LENNOX: Okay, but it will just be bus route number 107 on the Sheboygan Wisconsin Transit System.

MORGAN: No, it won't.

LENNOX: I'll bet it will.

MORGAN: It won't. Just type.

LENNOX: I'll bet it will.

MORGAN: Just type it in anyways.

LENNOX: I am but I bet it will just be –

MORGAN: SHUT UP AND JUST TYPE IT IN!

LENNOX: Okay, okay. You're going to give me
a detached retina.

MORGAN: It won't be the only thing.

LENNOX: Ok. Here it is. Do you want the top
search result?

MORGAN: No. Why don't you just skip through
a few pages and give me some random result.

LENNOX: Okay, but I don't think that would be
very helpful.

MORGAN: So much like you're being right now!
Give me that thing.

(Morgan grabs the phone from Lennox.)

LENNOX: Hey, hey, hey. Careful with that.

MORGAN: *(Reads.) STS-107 was the final flight
of Space Shuttle Columbia, (Looks up.) Holy
crap – (Reads.) The mission launched from
Kennedy Space Center in Florida and on
February 1, 2003, disintegrated as it re-entered
the atmosphere, killing all seven crew members.*

(Looks up.) Holy crap. (Reads.) Debris was found strewn across Louisiana, Arkansas and Texas, particularly in Nacogdoches.

MORGAN / LENNOX: Holy Crap.

(Morgan hands the phone back to Lennox.)

LENNOX: That's right here.

MORGAN: Holy.

LENNOX: Crap.

MORGAN: This thing was on a space shuttle. That burned up on entry. And crashed. And the person that wrote in this is ...

LENNOX: Don't leave me hanging here.

MORGAN: Dead, you moron. It didn't need saying.

LENNOX: Then why did you say it?

MORGAN: Because you're a moron.

LENNOX: Morgan. I touched a book that survived extreme fire and heat from a space shuttle mission crash.

MORGAN: Pretty awesome, ain't it?

LENNOX: I'm going to die!!

MORGAN: You're not gonna die. You've survived an hour outdoors; you can survive anything.

LENNOX: Okay. Open it. Open it. Open it.
C'mon. Open it!

MORGAN: I heard you the first three times. Hang
on.

(Morgan opens the diary in the middle)

MORGAN: Wow. This is weird. The writing is
some kind of pyroglifics.

LENNOX: You mean hieroglyphs? Let me see.
That's Hebrew.

MORGAN: Yeh, right. Like you can tell. And my
mother is Jewish.

LENNOX: No, but mine is and I learned Hebrew.

*(Lennox holds the book out, squints and reads,
interpreting.)*

LENNOX: *January 31, 2003. I've said nothing to
the crew about these encounters with Petr Ginz.
It may give them the idea that I've seen an alien
and that could be a problem. I can sense Petr
behind me, watching me, reciting every word
that I write in my diary.*

MORGAN: The astronaut saw an alien?

LENNOX: Who is Petr Ginz?

MORGAN: Check the internet. Never mind. Give
me the phone.

(Morgan Googles the name and then reads.)

MORGAN: *Petr Ginz was a 16-year-old Czechoslovak boy who died during the Holocaust when he was gassed at the Auschwitz concentration camp in 1944.*

LENNOX: How can this Petr guy be on the Space Shuttle if he was already dead?

MORGAN: *(Reads) Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon carried a copy of a drawing by Petr Ginz on the shuttle. The shuttle broke apart on re-entry on what would have been Petr's 75th birthday.*

MORGAN / LENNOX: Holy crap!

LENNOX: Now what are you doing?

MORGAN: Looking up, "Ilan Ramon." *(Reads) Among the recovered contents of the Columbia space shuttle that crashed were thirty-seven pages of Ramon's diary.*

(Morgan looks up at Lennox and down again)

MORGAN: *(Reads) Inscribed in black ink and pencil, it covered the first six days of the sixteen-day mission.*

(Lennox flips through pages of the diary)

LENNOX: Black ink. And, pencil. And the front pages are missing. Just like it said.

MORGAN: Lennox. I think you and I ... ARE GONNA BE RICH! This thing is worth millions of dollars.

LENNOX: We can't just keep it.

MORGAN: We won't. We'll unload it on eBay.

LENNOX: Are you crazy? You want everyone to know where we live?

MORGAN: Okay, then. Maybe if we turn it in to the police, we'll get a reward.

LENNOX: What. So, they can claim it? We should probably contact NASA.

MORGAN: If NASA sees this, they'll think he really did see aliens. You know what they do with alien stuff?

LENNOX: I have no idea.

MORGAN: They send it to Area 51. You know what happens in Area 51?

LENNOX: I have no idea.

MORGAN: Me neither. But all UFO's, aliens and extraterrestrial things are hidden there. But no one knows anything about any of it.

LENNOX: Well, then how do you know?

MORGAN: Wikipedia, idiot. Geez you can be really stupid. And here's the biggest problem.

LENNOX: It gets worse?

MORGAN: Yeh, it gets worse. If we just hand this over to NASA, then they're gonna know we read this diary and that we know what's in it. Then, they're going to have to kill us.

LENNOX: They wouldn't do that.

MORGAN: Google "Area 51." Never mind, give me your phone. By the time you get to it, they'll have detected us searching and have the military all over us like flies on bear crap.

(Morgan takes the phone and searches. Lennox watches on.)

MORGAN: Okay, see that photo of the sign? Read what it says at the end.

LENNOX: I can't see that. It's too small. You'll have to blow it up.

MORGAN: Gahhh! Don't say "blow it up" out loud. I'll read it. *(Reads) Use of deadly force is authorized.*

LENNOX: Holy – ca-rap. They're going to kill us. I think we should just leave it here.

MORGAN: No way. Someone finds it and checks for fingerprints, they'll hunt us down and kill us.

LENNOX: They're not going to waste money and time on fingerprinting.

MORGAN: This is a Space Shuttle artifact. It survived an explosion and heat and a crash. There's no limit to what they'll do. Let's bury it. Here, give me your stick. I'll bury it.

LENNOX: Right. Okay. That's probably a good idea. But that stick will take forever to dig a hole.

MORGAN: I'm not burying a body. You stand guard while I bury it.

LENNOX: There's nobody around.

MORGAN: You don't know that. Watch guard. Out that way.

LENNOX: Fine. I'll watch. Just hurry up and bury it. Wait until everyone at school find out what we found.

(Morgan starts digging a hole with the stick.)

MORGAN: What? No way. No one can ever know. This is top secret. Our lives are at stake.

(Morgan looks up to make sure Lennox is facing away and slips the diary into her coat and then fills the hole in again.)

MORGAN: Okay. Done.

LENNOX: Good. Now let's go to my place. We have some iodine we can use.

MORGAN: What for?

LENNOX: That diary is probably radioactive. Potassium iodide is a good remedy.

MORGAN: What? It might be radioactive?

LENNOX: Yeh. It's probably why they didn't want people picking up stuff from the wreck.

MORGAN: Holy crap. So, you were right. We *could* die from touching that diary.

LENNOX: Don't worry. It's just on our hands. At least we didn't put it next to our body. Let's go.

(Lennox leaves while Morgan stands. She looks in her coat.)

MORGAN: Holy. Crap.

END SCENE 1

END OF SAMPLE

SAMPLE ONLY