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THE PORNOZOMBIES

**A Cautionary Tale
(Disguised as a Comedy)**

**by
Matt Casarino**

www.mattcasarino.com

CAST OF CHARACTERS

NARRATOR. Our guide. Bursting with morality. Any age, should be male.

DETECTIVE KARLA. Our hero. A 30ish, no-nonsense detective with a vendetta.

SHERMAN. A decent, clean-cut young American man.

DR. HADFIELD. A scientist with a disturbing side business.

BOB, young, misguided married man.

ALICE, Bob's wife. A good woman with hidden inner strength.

CLERK, a police clerk who likes to watch.

REPORTER #1

VIDEO GUY, the slovenly owner of a video store

CUSTOMER #1

CUSTOMER #2

CUSTOMER #3

DELIVERY MAN, could be Video Guy's cousin

FLASHBACK KARLA. Karla in her younger, innocent days.

HELEN, one of Flashback Karla's hipster "friends."

BRADLEY, one of Flashback Karla's hipster "friends."

JANEANE, one of Flashback Karla's hipster "friends."

ERIC, one of Flashback Karla's hipster "friends."

JUDGE LIBBY, a particularly liberal activist judge

BALIFF

REPORTER #2

REPORTER #3

PAPERBOY

PROSECUTOR

DEFENSE ATTORNEY

POLICE COMMISSIONER

3 VOICES ON TV

GENTLEMAN

MADAM

MAN WITH HAT

PORNOZOMBIE #1

PORNOZOMBIE #2

PORNOZOMBIE #3

PORNOZOMBIE #4

TIME: *The Present.*

PLACE: *A small town in America.*

The PornoZombies is meant to be performed with as few as 11 actors – 6 men and 5 women. A suggested cast would be:

Women:

1. KARLA
2. ALICE, HELEN, BALIFF, PAPERBOY
3. REPORTER #1, FLASHBACK KARLA, DEFENSE ATTORNEY, PORNOZOMBIE #1
4. CUSTOMER #1, REPORTER #3, MADAM, PORNOZOMBIE #3
5. JANEANE, CUSTOMER #3, JUDGE LIBBY, PORNOZOMBIE #4

Men:

1. NARRATOR
2. SHERMAN
3. DR. HADFIELD
4. BOB, BRADLEY, DELIVERY MAN, REPORTER #2
5. CLERK, CUSTOMER #2, PROSECUTOR, COMMISSIONER, GENTLEMAN
6. VIDEO GUY, ERIC, MAN WITH HAT, PORNOZOMBIE #2

The PornoZombies was given a Workshop Production by the First Draft Theatre at the Wilmington Drama League in Wilmington, Delaware on October 14 & 15, 2005. The cast was as follows:

KARLA—Kathy Buterbaugh
NARRATOR—Tina M. Sheing
DR. HADFIELD—Steven Weatherman
SHERMAN—Alex Young
BOB—Brian Turner
ALICE/PAPERBOY—Pamela Zwaskis
CLERK—Eric Merlino
REPORTER #1/DELIVERY GUY/
CUSTOMER, #3/PROSECUTOR/PORNOZOMBIE—
Danielle Finlay Medon
VIDEO GUY/ERIC/MAN WITH HAT/
PORNOZOMBIE—Andrew John Mitchell
CUSTOMER #1/COMMISSIONER/
GENTLEMAN/PORNOZOMBIE—Michael Benjamin
CUSTOMER #2/BRADLEY/REPORTER #3/
PORNOZOMBIE—Tommy Fisher
HELEN/JUDGE LIBBY/MADAM/
PORNOZOMBIE—Ann Bartley
FLASHBACK KARLA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY/
CORPSE/PORNOZOMBIE—Katie Turner
JANEANE/REPORTER #2/PORNOZOMBIE—Allegra
DiNetta

Directed by Nick D'Argenio. Original Music by Joe Testa. Costumes & Makeup by Ann Bartley. The workshop was funded, in part, by a grant from the Delaware Division of the Arts.

The PornoZombies debuted at the RENEGADE THEATRE
EXPERIMENT in San Jose, CA (Sean C. Murphy, Artistic Director)
in July, 2005. The cast was as follows:

NARRATOR—Peter Canavese
KARLA—Evangeline Maynard
SHERMAN—Brian Murphy
DR. HADFIELD—Michael Jerome West
BOB—Jeff Moran
ALICE—Molly Gazay
CLERK/CUSTOMER #2/BAILIFF/
COMMISSIONER/GENTLEMAN—Tim Leaser
HELEN/PROSECUTOR/PORNOZOMBIE—Heidi Schrupp
BRADLEY/DELIVERY GUY/
REPORTER #2/PORNOZOMBIE—Michael McDonald
JUDGE LIBBY/MADAM/CUSTOMER 3/
PORNOZOMBIE—Bea Camua-Julian
FLASHBACK KARLA/DEFENSE ATTORNEY/
REPORTER #1/PORNOZOMBIE—Iris Benson
VIDEO GUY/ERIC/MAN WITH HAT/
PORNOZOMBIE—Manfred Hayes
JANEANE/REPORTER #3/CUSTOMER 1/
PORNOZOMBIE—Mary Kolesnikova
PAPERBOY/PORNOZOMBIE—Flora Bare
CORPSE/PORNOZOMBIE—Christy Duncan-Anderson

Directed by Sean Murphy. Choreography by Christy Duncan
Anderson. Original Music by Derek Batoyon. Costumes by Goldie
Beaver and Jennifer Jigour. Makeup by Jennifer Jigour.

THE PORNOZOMBIES

Act One

(A suburban home. ALICE sits on the couch, looking vaguely apprehensive. BOB bursts in with a videotape.)

BOB: I got it! I got it!

ALICE: Great.

BOB: It wasn't so bad. I just walked right through the curtain into the back room. No one gave me a second glance.

ALICE: You were gone an awful long time, Bob.

BOB: Well, you can't rush these things, honey. I wanted to get a good one. This is important to me, you know.

ALICE: I know. But Dr. Cecil said...

BOB: I know what Dr. Cecil said. But I'm telling you, this is all we need. A movie. A simple movie.

ALICE: I don't know, Bob. You know I don't like these movies.

BOB: Well, you think I do? These movies, they're...they're sick! They're perverted! They debase the very fiber of our morality!

ALICE: Then why did you get it?

BOB: Because I love you, honey. Look, even Dr. Cecil says we have to open our minds, right?

ALICE: I don't want to open my mind.

BOB: Well, neither do I, honey. But we can close them after we're done.

ALICE: I know, but this just seems so...dirty. And Dr. Cecil says we should both be in complete agreement about what...

BOB: Would you forget Dr. Cecil? We don't need him. We don't need his theories and workshops and those ridiculous flashcards. *(Pulls out flashcard.)* "Treat me like someone you still find attractive." *(Throws it away.)* All we need is this. *(indicates the videotape)* All we have to do is relax...sit back...watch the movie...and do whatever comes naturally.

ALICE: Oh, all right. Let's get this over with.

BOB: Did you lock all the windows?

ALICE: Yes.

BOB: Are you wearing that...outfit I like?

ALICE: I...(sighs)...yes.

(ALICE removes her robe to reveal a schoolgirl outfit, complete with open blouse and a red bra underneath.)

BOB: Outstanding. Well. Shall we?

ALICE: I suppose.

BOB: Great! *(He goes to put the movie in the VCR)* You won't regret this, honey. It's going to be great therapy for us. You'll see. I picked a good one, I think. It looks like it has a real plot with human emotions.

ALICE: What's it called?

BOB: "The Lucky Stiff." Isn't that clever?

ALICE: Oh, god.

BOB: Well...here we go!

(BOB runs back to the couch and puts his arm around ALICE.)

ALICE: Bob, do we really...

BOB: Therapy, Alice. Therapy.

ALICE: Fine.

(We hear cheesy porno music. BOB starts bobbing to the beat. After a few seconds, ALICE squints at the screen.)

ALICE (cont.): What's wrong with them?

BOB: *(starting to get turned on)* What do you mean?

ALICE: They look weird.

BOB: Implants.

ALICE: But they don't look right. They look...pale or something. And what's wrong with their eyes?

BOB: Makeup.

ALICE: But...

BOB: Alice. Please. Just watch.

ALICE: Fine. *(A few beats)* Ew! What are they doing?

BOB: Whatever they want to do, baby. (*He fondles ALICE.*)

ALICE: There is no way I'm doing...that.

BOB: Open mind, dear. Remember. Keep your mind wide open.

ALICE: But that's not even possible!

BOB: Well, they're doing it, aren't they?

ALICE: Bob...this is too weird. Something's wrong.

BOB: No, nothing's wrong, baby...everything's so very right...

ALICE: They're not...blinking.

BOB: So...I hear you were a bad little girl in school today...

ALICE: Hey...what...she...

BOB: I think my little girl needs a spanking...

ALICE: That woman...look at that woman...

BOB: (*Nibbling ALICE'S neck*) Oh, I'm looking, baby...

ALICE: Bob! Is that...I think that's...

BOB: (*Still nibbling*) Daddy needs to teach you a lesson...

ALICE: But Bob! That's your Aunt Ethel!!

BOB: ...cause you've been a naughty girl...

ALICE: But it really looks like her!

BOB: Aunt Ethel is dead, honey. Now let Daddy show you his...

ALICE: I know, but...that scar on her cheek...

BOB: (*Annoyed, backing off ALICE*) Darn it, Alice, you said you would keep an open mind. If you're not even going to try...

ALICE: But Bob!! That's Aunt Ethel on the TV!

BOB: Alice, there is no way that Aunt Ethel could possibly...

(*BOB looks at the TV, and stops mid-sentence. He turns his head sideways and stares.*)

BOB (cont.): Auntie Ethel?

(*BOB slowly turns to ALICE and stares at her in horror. BOB screams. ALICE screams.*)

(Lights go down on BOB and ALICE and come up on NARRATOR.)

NARRATOR: A married couple. A suburban home. And a discovery so shocking it jolted the very essence of their beings. What horrors did they see on the TV screen that night? Well, the answer is so unspeakable that, frankly, we can't tell you. Instead, we're going to show you. Tonight we present a tale so appalling, so scandalous, and so downright offensive that you might be tempted to flee the theater. The impulse is understandable and, in fact, commendable. Believe me, we're not going to enjoy acting it out for you. But act we must, for we bring you this performance as a public service. That's right – we're here to educate you about the horrors lurking in our society today. So whenever things get particularly lewd, lascivious, and profoundly disgusting, remember: it's for your own good. Watch – and learn.

(Other actors walk on stage, mostly in bathrobes or costumes.)

NARRATOR (cont.): And now, with the help of my fellow players, stage crew, ushers, techies, ticket takers, and perhaps a few members of the paying audience, I present to you the saga of...

ALL: The PornoZombies!

(Dramatic flourish. The actors leave the stage with a purpose.)

NARRATOR (cont.): Remember Bob and Alice? The misguided couple who thought that viewing an adult movie together would spice up their private life? Well, after their terrifying discovery, they brought the tape to their local police station.

(Lights up on the Police station. The POLICE CLERK sits at the desk, and the tough DETECTIVE KARLA stands by his side, her head down. REPORTER #1 stands in the corner, taking notes.)

CLERK: Okay, now. Tell me the story again. Slowly.

BOB: Well...okay. It all started about eight months ago, when Alice seemed to develop this perpetual headache...

ALICE: Bob, he means tell him what happened tonight!

BOB: Well, I'm trying, but I think a little background would...

ALICE: Bob rented a porno tape.

CLERK: You what!

BOB: I didn't know what it was!

ALICE: Don't lie to the police clerk, Bob! You said you went into the back room!

CLERK: The back room? The one clearly marked “Adult Movies?”

BOB: I thought that meant they would be reflective and thoughtful. Like movies where Robin Williams has a beard.

ALICE: Bob!

CLERK: Tell the truth, dammit!

BOB: Okay! Okay! Yes, I went into the back room and yes, I rented a dirty movie! I...I thought it was the right thing to do! I was misled! Oh god...*(breaks down crying.)*

REPORTER #1: Married couple rents porno. What a scoop. What was that last name again?

BOB: Darby. D as in dagger, A...

ALICE: Shut up, Bob!

CLERK: Can we get back to my report, please? Now. You popped in the “movie.” And you viewed it. Now...what did you see?

BOB: There were people. People doing awful things. To each other. This one lady, she even...

ALICE: But there was something wrong with them. They looked...

KARLA: *(Looking up for the first time)* Pasty? Catatonic? Maybe even a little green?

ALICE: Why, yes!

KARLA: Go on.

BOB: Well...after a few minutes, Alice thought she recognized a woman in the movie. So I looked at her and...oh god...oh god!

CLERK: What? What did you see?

KARLA: Yes, what?

BOB: Auntie Ethel!! It was my Auntie Ethel!! My poor aunt!!

REPORTER #1: So your Aunt is a porno star, eh? What’s her last name?

BOB: Humphrey. H as in hatchet...

ALICE: Bob!

CLERK: Well. I wish I could say your case was unusual. Unfortunately my friends, a lot of people’s aunties are in the porno game

CLERK (cont.): these days. Some uncles, too. And as much as it disgusts me, our laws allow these things to happen. I'm afraid there's nothing I can...

KARLA: When did she die?

BOB: What?

KARLA: Auntie Ethel. When did she die?

ALICE: How did you know she died? I haven't...

KARLA: When, dammit?

BOB: About two years ago. It was a tragic tanning bed accident.

ALICE: Ethel loved to be tan.

KARLA: Let me see that tape. (*CLERK hands her the tape.*) Just as I thought. This is state-of-the-art recording tape. (*holds tape to the light*) And there's the copyright date. Yep. This movie was filmed just a few months ago.

CLERK: But that's impossible, Detective Karla. How can someone who's been dead a couple of years star in a new movie? I never heard of anything like that.

KARLA: I have.

(*Dramatic music flourish.*)

KARLA (cont.): (*To CLERK*) Call the video store. Tell them Detective Karla will be paying them a little visit. (*To BOB and ALICE*) I know it was difficult, but you did the right thing, coming forward. If I'm right, and I am, this tape could lead right to the very heart of the operation itself.

BOB & ALICE: What operation?

REPORTER #1: Yes, what operation?

KARLA: (*To Reporter*) C'mere, you.

(*Reporter #1 approaches, and Detective Karla takes his notepad and rips it in half.*)

REPORTER #1: Hey! I was writing on that!

KARLA: You have to kill this story, Joe. Understand? If this story ever sees the light of day, there will be a public outcry the likes of which you've never seen. Riots in the street. Trashcans set on fire. Manhole covers stolen. They'll steal the manhole covers, Joe.

KARLA (cont.): What's to stop a person from walking right into an open manhole? Nothing, Joe. That is...if you print this story.

REPORTER #1: My name's not Joe. (*KARLA makes a threatening move.*) But all right, all right. I'll kill the story. For now.

KARLA: That's more like it. (*To Bob and Alice*) You two...go home. Get some rest. And if making babies is your goal, well, I suggest you put on some soft music, satin sheets, a mirror on the ceiling. Something classy. And ma'am...that skirt is awfully short for a grown woman. No wonder your husband gets confused.

BOB: I tried to tell her.

ALICE: You son of a –

KARLA: Take a hike.

BOB: Yes, ma'am. (*He and Alice start to leave, but then he turns back to Karla*) Where do I get one of those mirrors?

KARLA: Home Depot. (*BOB and ALICE leave.*) Dead woman having sex on a porno videotape. You know what this means?

REPORTER #1: No.

KARLA: (*To Clerk*) Do you?

CLERK: No. (*Beat*) Do you?

KARLA: I'm afraid I do, boys. I'm afraid I do.

(*Lights down on this scene, and UP at the video store. The VIDEO GUY is reading a paper behind his desk, and a few people browse the imaginary video selections.*)

CUSTOMER #1: Fine store you have here.

VIDEO GUY: Yep.

CUSTOMER #1: Quite the selection.

VIDEO GUY: Sure is.

CUSTOMER #1: Yessir. Action movies...dramas, comedies...you've got it all. A fine store indeed.

VIDEO GUY: We got it all.

(*Beat.*)

CUSTOMER #1: Although...even with all these choices...I can't help but feel...well...I'm looking for something a little...

VIDEO GUY: More sophisticated?

CUSTOMER #1: That's it.

VIDEO GUY: Something that caters to your mature tastes?

CUSTOMER #1: Exactly!

VIDEO GUY: A panoramic wonderland for the consenting adult?

CUSTOMER #1: Precisely!

VIDEO GUY: Dirty movies. In the back.

CUSTOMER #1: *Dirty* movies? Sir, you misunderstand me!

VIDEO GUY: Do tell.

CUSTOMER #1: Why, if I knew you carried such atrocities, I wouldn't have set foot in your establishment!

VIDEO GUY: Don't say.

CUSTOMER #1: Why, the very thought of it. I've never even been in this close proximity to a...a...dirty movie section!

VIDEO GUY: Perhaps you should educate yourself then.

CUSTOMER #1: Educate myself?

VIDEO GUY: That's right. A concerned, upstanding citizen like yourself needs to stay abreast of the atrocities that lurk in the video rental business.

CUSTOMER #1: Why...you have a point, sir! As a concerned patron of the home theatre, I must remain informed of the big picture, no matter how sordid it may be!

VIDEO GUY: I admire your courage.

CUSTOMER #1: Courage? No. Bravery? Perhaps. For does it not take a brave person to expose oneself to the perverse underbelly of our...

VIDEO GUY: Dirty movies. In the back.

CUSTOMER #1: Thanks. (*Heads offstage.*)

(*Customer #2 strides up to the counter. He stands up straight and takes a self-righteous stance.*)

CUSTOMER #2: Sir...

VIDEO GUY: In the back.

CUSTOMER #2: Thanks. *(Runs offstage.)*

(DETECTIVE KARLA enters. She holds an empty burlap sack and strides up to the counter.)

KARLA: This your place?

VIDEO GUY: Maybe.

KARLA: Well, is it?

VIDEO GUY: Who wants to know?

KARLA: I want to know. *(She pulls out her badge.)*

VIDEO GUY: Well, well. If it ain't Detective Karla.

KARLA: The same. Now which way to the dirty movies?

VIDEO GUY: Hold on just a second, Detective. There ain't nothing illegal about my business. The adult movie industry is perfectly legitimate.

KARLA: Oh, don't worry, Mr. Lowe. I won't be touching your precious legitimate videos.

VIDEO GUY: You won't.

KARLA: No. I'll be touching the...illegitimate videos.

VIDEO GUY: Now wait a minute. You're talking sick stuff? Snuff films and such? I don't carry them movies and you know it!

KARLA: I beg to differ, Mr. Lowe. You carry the sickest movies known to mankind. You see...a few years ago I was made aware of a new development in adult cinema...a development so hideous that it rattles the bowels of the most jaded heart.

(The lights begin dimming, and strange, flashback-style music plays.)

VIDEO GUY: Bowels?

KARLA: I'll never forget that black, black day when said development first came to my attention...I was so innocent then, so naïve... but then everything changed...

(The lights return to normal.)

KARLA (cont.): Anyway, I've never been able to obtain an actual copy of one of these tapes. Until tonight, when a fearless, if disgusting, young couple brought me a copy that they rented at this very establishment!

VIDEO GUY: *(Returning to his paper)* Lighten up, lady. It's just pornos.

KARLA: Just pornos? *(She grabs the VIDEO GUY by his collar.)* These are not just pornos, Mr. Lowe, although heaven knows that would be bad enough. We are dealing with a monster, you understand? A monster who stomps on the threads of decency that define our national image. Even a sleaze merchant like yourself would be outraged by the truth behind the videos I'm looking for! That is, if you have an ounce of decency left in your body. *(Threateningly)* Do you have an ounce of decency left in your body?

VIDEO GUY: Sure, sure. I got an ounce of decency.

KARLA: *(Letting him go)* Then stay out of my way.

(DETECTIVE KARLA goes offstage, into the back room. Soon, CUSTOMER #1 and CUSTOMER #2 are flung onstage, presumably by the enraged DETECTIVE KARLA. They make a hasty exit. Soon, the NARRATOR is flung onstage as well. He composes himself.)

NARRATOR: Naturally, we can't show you the Adult room of the video store. Even we have limits, I'm afraid. Besides, no one associated with this production has ever actually seen one. So, you'll just have to use your imagination. Suffice to say, Detective Karla makes a thorough search of the place and confiscates several questionable titles. *(A few beats)* Again, I'm sorry we can't show you what's going on. Frankly, there is only so much lurid material we can put in one play. But don't worry. Soon, we're going to show you events that are so disturbing, obscene, and sensational that the images will burn into your cerebral cortex for the rest of your lives! So hang in there, the good stuff is coming up. *(Beat)* And by good, I of course mean educational. So. You know, Shakespeare once said the quality of mercy is...

(Finally, DETECTIVE KARLA emerges onstage, with a large sack stuffed with videos.)

KARLA: All done.

VIDEO GUY: That was quite a search.

KARLA: One cannot be too careful, Mr. Lowe. Send the police a receipt. And thank you for your eventual cooperation. You're doing your country a huge service.

VIDEO GUY: Whatever, Detective.

KARLA: *(As she leaves, she notices a video.)* Ooh, "Beaches!" *(She takes the video, and exits.)*

VIDEO GUY: Hey!

NARRATOR: What horrid event did Detective Karla see that changed her forever? What dastardly spectacle has turned her into the interesting creature you see today? And what is the deal with the name of this play? What indeed. Let's join our heroine as she analyzes the tapes she confiscated from Mr. Lowe and has an informative flashback.

(Lights up over the Police Station, as DETECTIVE KARLA sits watching a TV set. She gazes for a bit, then shakes her head.)

KARLA: Filth.

(She removes the video, tosses it, and inserts another. She watches it for a beat or two.)

KARLA (cont.): Trash.

(Again, she removes the video and inserts another.)

KARLA (cont.): Oh, my!...Disgusting.

(Again, she removes the video and inserts another. This time, the familiar, eerie 70s porn music sounds. Karla watches, and her jaw drops a bit in recognition.)

KARLA: *(whispering)* Bingo.

(Karla's eyes widen as she watches the screen. We hear the grunting of the man and woman on the tape...but they're oddly strangled and gurgled.)

KARLA: This is it...oh God, no...

(Karla covers her face. As she does, the lights dim on KARLA, and we hear the voices of her flashback.)

BRADLEY (v/o) : Karla!

HELEN (v/o): We have a surprise for you, Karla!

FLASHBACK KARLA: A surprise?

(Lights up Center Stage, where FLASHBACK KARLA sits on a couch. It is seven years ago. She is joined by her friends BRADLEY, HELEN, JANEANE, and ERIC.)

JANEANE: A sweet surprise.

BRADLEY: A hip surprise, girl.

ERIC: A groovy surprise.

FLASHBACK KARLA: What is it?

JANEANE: It's about to be your first time.

HELEN: Yeah! Your first time! Like, awesome!

BRADLEY: Dig it, girl!

ERIC: Groovy!

FLASHBACK KARLA: My first time? Oh, no, I had my first time a few months ago. In fact...it was with you, Bradley!

BRADLEY: Not that kind of first time, girl.

ERIC: We're not going to sex you up.

HELEN: We're going to get you stoned! *(She produces a huge water bong.)*

ALL: Yeah! Stoned! Woohoo! *(etc.)*

FLASHBACK KARLA: But I don't want to get stoned!

BRADLEY: Sure you do, girl! Right Janeane?

JANEANE: Yeah! Getting stoned is all that!

ERIC: And we're all going to get stoned with you. Groovy!

FLASHBACK KARLA: But Eric, won't it warp my brain and lead to heavy drugs and a degenerate lifestyle?

(Her friends stare at each other, then laugh.)

ERIC: Nah, that's just square talk.

BRADLEY: Say, you're not a square, are you girl?

HELEN: Nah, she's no square. Are you, Karla?

FLASHBACK KARLA: Well...no. I'm no square.

(They all cheer.)

JANEANE: Well then we're good to go, yo! *(She grabs a lighter and takes a hit off the bong.)* Word. *(She passes it to Bradley.)*

BRADLEY: *(Taking a hit)* Far out. *(Passes it to Helen)*

HELEN: *(Taking a hit)* Awesome. *(Passes it to Eric)*

ERIC: *(Taking a hit)* Delightful. And groovy. *(Passes it to Narrator, who has snuck into the scene.)*

NARRATOR: *(Taking a hit)* Un-American. *(Passes it to Karla, and leaves.)*

FLASHBACK KARLA: *(Taking bong)* Well...okay! Here goes! *(She takes a hit, and immediately starts coughing.)*

(The group laughs, but Helen quiets them and puts her hand on Karla's shoulder.)

HELEN: Shut up, you guys! She did it! *(To Karla)* You were rad to the max, Karla!

FLASHBACK KARLA: I was?

BRADLEY: Yeah, Helen's right, girl! Now you're just like us, your cool new friends!

FLASHBACK KARLA: Wow, thanks guys! You know, ever since my dad died, you guys have been so nice to me, taking me in and accepting me as one of your own. *(beat)* So now what?

JANEANE: Well, now you just chill out and feel wasted.

FLASHBACK KARLA: Oh. Okay.

(Everyone leans back and relaxes, except Karla, who sits up straight.)

HELEN: Hey! You know what's fun to do when you're stoned?

ALL: What? What?

HELEN: Watch a movie!

ALL: Yeah! Sounds great! *(etc.)*

ERIC: Groovy! Does anyone have a movie?

BRADLEY: I do! My cousin just sent me one. I don't know what it is, but he says it's really wild.

JANEANE: Sweet! Pop it in, G!

(Bradley gets the video, and pops it in. They all sit back and watch the imaginary TV. Soon, we hear the creepy 70s porno music.)

HELEN: Hey! This is a porno!!

BRADLEY: Wow, I didn't know it was a porno!

HELEN: Radical!

JANEANE: Bonus!

FLASHBACK KARLA: I don't know...I've never watched a porno before...

JANEANE: Aw, it's no big whoop, Karla!

BRADLEY: It's just people having sex on camera, girl!

FLASHBACK KARLA: Oh, okay. Well. *(Beat.)* So what are we supposed...

(Suddenly, Bradley and Helen start making out. Just as suddenly, Janeane and Eric start making out.)

FLASHBACK KARLA: Oh. *(She watches for a few beats.)* Hey, do these people look a little green to you guys? *(Beat)* Their skin looks funny. Look at their skin!

HELEN: Shut up, Karla! Don't be bogus!

JANEANE: Chill!

FLASHBACK KARLA: Okay, but...why do they move like that? I think something is wrong...

BRADLEY: Quiet, girl!

ERIC: You're just stoned. Mellow out.

FLASHBACK KARLA: Oh. Okay. Maybe I'm just stoned. *(Beat. Karla tilts her head sideways.)* Gosh, they're so pale and green. I guess that's what happens after you've been in the sex business too long, huh? *(Another beat.)* Whoa! I guess I really am stoned! If I didn't know better, I'd swear that guy was my late father! *(Giggles.)* Of course, Daddy didn't have green, peeling skin. Just a birthmark on his knee in the shape of an ampersand. *(Beat)* Like that one.

(Another beat, as Karla's eyes widen in horror. She lets out a piercing scream!)

(Soon the rest of them join her in screaming.)

(Lights down on the Flashback, and up on DETECTIVE KARLA, who is also screaming. She stops screaming, and speaks the following speech to the TV screen.)

KARLA: My life changed that night. I never knew depravity could reach such depths. That's when I abandoned the dead-end road of sex, drugs, and rock and roll and joined the police academy. Now, here I am, seven years later, a detective. And I did it all just to find you. And now I'm closer than ever before!! *(Looking at the tape, she recoils in terror, and screams.)* I can't watch another second! *(Karla cowers and hides her eyes. Then, slowly, she raises her head, takes a deep breath, and stares at the TV.)* No. That's just what you want me to do. I've been soft. Vulnerable. Weak. But this is no time for weakness. This is a time for action! *(She picks up a glass of milk.)* So long, milk of human kindness! *(She pours out the milk.)* It's time to thicken my blood. The only way to catch the kind of animal who would create such an affront to nature is to descend to your level. And so I shall! *(Suddenly, she kicks the TV, creating a wave of sparks and buzzing sounds. The porno music gets louder and more insane.)* I will find you, do you hear!! Even if it kills me! You hear me, world? I'm taking a stand! I hereby declare war on unnatural zombie sex, and you are either with me or against me! So unsex me here, America!! UNSEX ME HERE!!!

(The music stops abruptly as the Police Clerk pops his head in.)

CLERK: Um, Detective?

KARLA: Yes?

CLERK: Everything all right in here?

KARLA: Oh, yes, I'm fine. Just spilled a little milk.

CLERK: Oh. I'll call the janitor.

KARLA: Would you? Thanks.

(Police Clerk exits. Karla resumes her stance as the music starts up again.)

KARLA: UNSEX ME HEEEEEEEEERE!!!!!!

(Lights down.)

(The lights come up to a man talking on the phone. He sits at a desk, and there's a blackboard behind him, with crazy formulas. He wears a white lab coat and glasses, and seems very mild mannered. It's HADFIELD.)

HADFIELD: That's right. Two more titles have been completed. *(Beat)* Oh, very exciting, yes. We really went all out on these. *(Beat)* No, "corpse." The Joy of Inter-corpse. *(Beat)* Don't worry, they'll get it. I have a very specific clientele. They know what they want. *(Beat)*

HADFIELD (cont.): That's right. The usual time. Goodbye then. (*Hangs up phone.*) Idiot. (*He returns to the blackboard.*) Okay, let's see...if the coefficient is greater than pi over x to the fifth, then...ah, but the amount of embryonic fluid has to be smaller than...yes! Yes, that's it! (*he scribbles on the blackboard.*)

(*A DELIVERY MAN pushes a gurney part of the way onstage. He pops his head in.*)

DELIVERY MAN: Hey doc?

HADFIELD: Yes?

DELIVERY MAN: Got another one for you.

HADFIELD: Another what?

DELIVERY MAN: You know, another... (*he makes a "dead guy" pose*). A stiff.

HADFIELD: A stiff?

DELIVERY MAN: Yeah, you know. Bag of bones. Sack of carrion. A dead chick.

(*HADFIELD turns to DELIVERY MAN.*)

HADFIELD: A dead chick? You bring me the body of what was once a vibrant, caring, glowing human being, and all you can say is "hey doc! Here's a dead chick!"

DELIVERY MAN: Hey, doc, alls I meant was...

HADFIELD: I know what you meant. You figure now once they're dead, they're not worthy of our undying respect and gratitude, right? Well you're wrong, Mister. Here lies the body of a human being cut down in the prime of her life. And as long as you're in my laboratory, you shall treat her with the dignity and respect she deserves! Is that clear!

DELIVERY MAN: Sure, sure, doc. It's clear. So where do you want this...uh...breathing-challenged lady?

HADFIELD: Just leave her anywhere.

DELIVERY MAN: Great. Sign here. (*HADFIELD signs.*) So, listen, if you don't mind me asking, what happens to her now?

HADFIELD: That's none of your concern. She signed a paper donating her post-mortem body to science, and I am science. Now good day to you.

DELIVERY MAN: Yeah. Good day. *(exits.)*

(Hadfield looks at the papers that came with the corpse. He flips through a bit.)

HADFIELD: 32 years old. Gunshot wound. *(Gently, he turns back the sheet over her head, and looks at her with genuine pity.)* My poor child. There is no worse feeling than a white-hot bullet ripping through a young body, searing and destroying all those life-giving organs. You died in a lot of pain, didn't you. Well, everything will be all right now, my friend. There's no more pain for you.

(He reaches into his jacket and pulls out a huge syringe, full of thick, florescent liquid. He looks at it, then back at the corpse. He covers her head with the sheet.)

HADFIELD (cont.): Only pleasure.

(HADFIELD jams the needle into the corpse's side. The corpse responds immediately, jerking up. Strange music starts to play in the background...a diminished chord on a guitar through a wah-wah pedal, very slowly. Under the blanket, the corpse starts thrashing, slowly at first, but then faster, and faster, as the wah-wah pedal gets faster and faster. The corpse moans, louder and louder, until...)

(The corpse sits straight up. She is wearing a "black-band" bikini. Her eyes and mouth are wide open. The music becomes the same strange minor-key 70s porno music we've been hearing.)

(HADFIELD stares, delighted. In the distance, offstage, we hear several low-pitched, zombie-like moans. HADFIELD reaches into another pocket and pulls out a lipstick tube. He walks up to the corpse and starts to apply the makeup.)

HADFIELD (cont.): You're such a lucky girl, my child. You might have found yourself in some classroom, being dissected by amphetamine-abusing biology students. But you...you found me. And now you're one of my children. *(He finishes the makeup. The moaning gets louder and louder)* Well. You look lovely. Time to meet your new friends. Stand up, please.

(She does. The blanket falls to the ground, and we see she's wearing black-band bikini bottoms. Her head turns in the direction of the off-stage moans.)

HADFIELD (cont.): Ladies...gentlemen...come meet your new playmate.

(A barrage of corpse arms suddenly appear onstage, reaching for the new corpse. She looks at HADFIELD, back at the zombies, and starts to do a “sexy zombie walk” toward them. When she is close to the arms, the arms grab her and whisk her offstage, as the music and moans start to get more intense.)

HADFIELD (cont.): How delightful.

(Hadfield takes a video camera from the top of his desk and follows the zombies offstage.)

(Lights down.)

(NARRATOR enters, or pops up from a surprise location – perhaps a spare gurney.)

NARRATOR: There you have it. A mad doctor on a mad mission to inflict his mad plan on the mad, mad world! Makes you mad, doesn't it? As well it should. If it's too much for you, well, we do apologize. It's no bowl of cherries for us either. I mean really...some of us have children. So why do we subject ourselves and you good citizens to such sordid scenes of salacious sin? The answer is simple...all-American decency. For the truest patriot is the one who stays informed, even if the information seems private, or secret, or none of our business. *(Beat)* Speaking of patriots, Detective Karla has been feverishly studying the offending videotapes, searching for clues to their source. We join the good detective as she makes a discovery.

(Lights up on KARLA. She's disheveled, messy, looks like she's been up for a while. She speaks into a small tape recorder.)

KARLA: Twenty-two minutes, 14 seconds. White room, bed. Rolling chair. The...actors...are on the bed. He's on top. *(Beat)* Now she's on top. *(Beat)* Now him again. They're...they're...Jesus, what the hell is that?

(KARLA turns her head sideways and squints.)

KARLA (cont.): That's not even possible! What the...

(KARLA stands and tries to emulate the pose she's seeing on the tape, but no luck.)

(CLERK enters, carrying a cup of coffee. KARLA doesn't notice.)

KARLA (cont.): How much more of this can I endure? How many perverse abominations must I parade before my poor, damaged eyes? Make no mistake, I will track you down. I haven't devoted seven years of my life to finding you only to stop now! But where is my next move? Where? WHERE?

CLERK: You might try going to the video store and asking him who the dealer was who sold him the movie.

KARLA: Don't you think I've thought of that? You fool!!

CLERK: Sorry, Detective.

KARLA: *(Beat. She glances over at the clerk, then rises)* Well, I have to go stretch my legs. Um...can I get you anything while I'm out? Coffee, Twizzler, video? *(Beat.)* I mean, um, vitamin?

CLERK: No, I'm good.

KARLA: Okay. You're good. Okay. Well...bye. *(Starts to exit)*

CLERK: *(Softly)* No wonder it's taken you seven years.

KARLA: What?

CLERK: Nothing.

KARLA: Oh. *(Exits.)*

(Lights down on the precinct, and up on the video store, where CUSTOMER 3 is at the desk, and SHERMAN is browsing the shelves.)

CUSTOMER #3: ...vile, putrid filth! However, for research purposes, I'm afraid I must...

VIDEO GUY: In the back.

CUSTOMER #3: Thanks. I'm writing a play. *(exits)*

(KARLA enters.)

VIDEO GUY: Well, well. If it ain't Eliot Nessie.

KARLA: It's me. Detective Karla.

VIDEO GUY: I know your name. I was making a joke.

KARLA: It isn't funny. Well, maybe it is, but I don't get it. Now you listen to me, you bottom-feeding fecal-matter peddler! *(She shows him a videotape)* Who was the dealer who sold you this videotape?

VIDEO GUY: I don't know. I...

KARLA: Is that so? *(She strolls over to a video display and knocks it over.)* Now tell me who sold you this videotape!

VIDEO GUY: I don't know. But I can...

(KARLA swipes the counter, knocking over displays, videotapes, etc. She grabs the VIDEO GUY by the shirt.)

DETECTIVE KARLA: You tell me who, dammit!! Who sold this to you?

(A few beats pass.)

VIDEO GUY: *(Calmly and evenly)* I still don't know, Detective. Would you like me to check my records and find out for you?

KARLA: *(After a beat)* That would be nice.

VIDEO GUY: Fine. One moment, please.

(He reaches under his desk and pulls out a large binder. Giving Karla a look, he opens it and starts looking through.)

VIDEO GUY (cont.): Let's see. "Little BigPorn"... "Nathaniel Hawthorne-Porn"... "Porn on the 4th of July"... "A Star is Porn"... ah, here it is. Huh.

KARLA: What?

VIDEO GUY: Well, most of these videos come from big companies in the San Fernando Valley. You know, corporate sleaze merchants. But these are all distributed by some guy. Morty Fe-leez-es. And he's local!

KARLA: Local? Let me see that! *(She turns the book around and checks it out.)* This is only a half-mile from here!

VIDEO GUY: Crazy, huh? You been tryin' to get this guy for years, and he's been here in town the whole time!

KARLA: We're clearly dealing with a genius here. A twisted, mad genius. A man so brilliant at subterfuge that he can operate his bizarre little operation in the very hometown of his own arch-nemesis.

VIDEO GUY: Hey look, his address is right on the label.

KARLA: *(after a beat)* So it is. *(After another beat)* Well. I, uh... guess I should, um...go.

VIDEO GUY: So long, detective.

KARLA: Yeah, um...hey, do you have "Beaches?"

VIDEO GUY: No. You stole it yesterday.

KARLA: I am an officer of the law, you flesh panhandler! I do not steal movies from video stores, got it?

VIDEO GUY: Sure, sure, I got it.

KARLA: So, can I keep it for a few more days?

VIDEO GUY: On the house.

KARLA: Thanks. I'll be sure to rewind. Okay, well...I'm gonna... okay. Bye. *(exits.)*

(CUSTOMER #4 comes to the counter. It's SHERMAN, a clean-cut young man. He places a video on the desk.)

SHERMAN: Here you go, sir.

VIDEO GUY: "For the Boys" again, huh?

SHERMAN: Yes, sir.

VIDEO GUY: We have other movies, you know.

SHERMAN: I know, sir. And I keep meaning to rent one. But I find myself drawn to, well...it...

VIDEO GUY: What?

SHERMAN: "For the Boys" makes me cry, sir. It's downhome, wholesome, all-American, and it...it...*(starts to cry)*...Bette Midler is so wonderful!

VIDEO GUY: Hey, hey, none of that. Here's your movie. Have it back tomorrow by 6.

SHERMAN: Thank you, sir. Oh, and sir?

VIDEO GUY: What is it, kid?

SHERMAN: Well, if you know, and don't mind saying...who was the lady who was just in here?

VIDEO GUY: The lady?

SHERMAN: Yes, the lady with the, um, commanding voice and that interesting walk.

VIDEO GUY: That ain't no lady, kid. That's Detective Karla.

SHERMAN: Detective Karla. Wow. She's quite a woman, isn't she?

VIDEO GUY: Quite a woman. Take a hike, Sherman.

SHERMAN: I sure will! You have a nice day, okay?

VIDEO GUY: Sure, sure. Here. *(Tosses the video at him)* Have a nice day.