

1. “Even Butterflies Aren’t Perfect”

LOUISA: Cora, I want to know. How are you doing, really?

CORA: Like, how many sausages and pancakes did I pile on from the all-you can eat breakfast buffet?

LOUISA: Well, why not? It’s your special day!

CORA: The Riptide. I asked you for one small thing - to help me write my wedding vows – yet here I am, trying on over-priced shaming suits.

LOUISA: Not just a wedding, but a gigantic swim party. Like you said, if you don’t go in that outdated and moldy-looking pool, no one else will.

CORA: Online, it was blue, blue, blue. In person, it looks more like an acid bath for zombies.

LOUISA: Of all the places for a wedding –
(CORA emerges)

CORA: (Brandishing her cell phone.) Check it out: The Drowned Mermaid and The Shipwrecked. They were nice, too, but this one was the cheapest.

LOUISA: I offered to contribute. With more time, I could have found you something charming by the sea. This one’s in a parking lot –

CORA: Then it would be what you wanted. At least, when I make a bad choice, I own it. Not like some people –

LOUISA: What about this one? It’s a classic. Almost like something I would wear.

(CORA disappears behind the curtain.)

CORA: Oh please. It reminds one of those tiny napkins underneath a bite-sized hors d’oeuvres at one of your corporate events. The ones you never invite me to.

LOUISA: That’s it. No more! At least you can say you were standing on solid ground.

CORA: And that no one drowned. Yeah. I know it’s sounds stupid, but I really, really wanted a swim-wedding. I guess I messed it all up, again.

2. “Mojave Lift”

BOYCE: I always knew you were going to be... exceptional.

DIXON: You paused.

BOYCE: I needed to find the right word.

DIXON: There another word you were gonna use?

BOYCE: You tell me. (Pause.) God-fucking-dammit, Dixon. You never escaped the inland empire? You were the golden-boy, I was the hanger on. You were supposed to be walking the steps of the capital in 10-thousand dollar shoes. What kind of shoes you wearing, Dixon?

DIXON: I don’t care, as long as they don’t leave footprints.

BOYCE: I know. ‘Cause I tried to find you. (Beat.) A lot of people have been trying to find you.

DIXON: But you did. (Beat.) Good for you, Boyce. I mean that. Good for you.

BOYCE: I’ve really missed you, brother.

DIXON: Yeah.

BOYCE: Dixon. (Pause.) I really looked up to you in high school.

DIXON: Yeah. I won’t forget that.

BOYCE: You have the right to remain silent.

DIXON: I know the speech.

BOYCE: I still gotta say it, brother. (*Silence.*)
You know, let’s just finish this round first.

3. “Chances of Winning”

DANNY: Where you been?

LILY: I got you some beers...and dinner.

Danny sniffs the air.

DANNY: Chicken again?

LILY: You love Señor Pollo.

DANNY: Sides?

LILY: Uh huh. And churros.

DANNY: Refried?

LILY: Black beans and rice.

DANNY: Goddamnit! I like refried.

LILY: I'm sorry, Danny.

DANNY: Whatever. What took you so long?

LILY: I made a stop on the way.

DANNY: What kind of stop?

LILY: Just a stop.

DANNY: A stop.

LILY: Yeah, Danny. A. Stop.

DANNY: Uh huh. That what you wore to work today?

LILY: Yeah...

DANNY: Like that?

LILY: Like what?

DANNY: Like that! With your tits all hanging out on display.

LILY: Oh! (*Lily hurriedly buttons-up*).

DANNY: Oh, now you button up?

LILY: I'm sorry, Danny. I didn't know I...Do you want me to...?

DANNY: I don't care what you do.

LILY: Just won't stay buttoned, that's all.

DANNY: Maybe lay off the churros and all that other crap you eat. You weigh yourself lately?

LILY: I poured you a shot, babe. You want a beer?

DANNY: I'll bet all the doc's patients like taking a good long look at your rack, huh?

LILY: Oh, Danny, they don't...

DANNY: They're guys, right? Right?!

4. “Hilltop”

ABBY: You mean reincarnation?

MARGOT: Yeah.

ABBY: A tree. A sky-touching cedar. It provides shade, food, shelter, oxygen. It's life itself.

MARGOT: Hmmmm. Nice.

ABBY: And you?

MARGOT I'd come back as a cockroach.

ABBY: A what?

MARGOT: Well, cockroaches will be the only thing left when we humans destroy this earth.

ABBY: That's a bit dark. Even darker than putting “Stage 4” on your dating profile.

MARGOT: Hey, I thought it might attract the guys who aren't looking for a long-term commitment.

ABBY: A pileated woodpecker! I love their little red hats. Woody Woodpecker! Such a distinctive call.

MARGOT: And rata-tat-tat as they pound holes in your house. ... Abby, thanks for never giving me crazy treatment advice or saying I'm a warrior and all that crap. And mostly, thanks for just listening — and making me laugh.

ABBY: You're welcome. ... Why are you saying this now?

MARGOT: I got my scan results.... On the bright side, I won't have to buy a Christmas present this year for my obnoxious brother-in-law.

5. "Buffaloed"

THOMAS: I have to get going. I have tasks at home.
(*They continue to sit*) Maybe you should open the barn, sir. If of a sudden he makes his mind up to take his escape he can git – with no trouble.

VIRGIL CARL: No. If he trampled Cora's kitchen garden there would be no living with her. He got in that barn, he can figure his own way out.

OAK BENTLY: Think about it, Virgil Carl. If that big ol' boy stays he might be there a year. My missus' ma stayed with us a month once. Worst month of my long lifetime. But truth to tell, I'd rather have her naggin', gnarly self then have that buffalo in my barn.

VIRGIL CARL: Really.

OAK BENTLY: No, of course not. I was trying to make a point.

(*CORA appears*)

CORA: Are you going to stay, Thomas? It's no extra trouble. I have sweet corn with butter, sweet potato pone, and the turtle soup. We can eat a late supper if we're all still alive.

THOMAS: No, thank you Cora. And Thank you, Oak, for lending me the horse. But I should get going. I have tasks at home. (*THOMAS exits with hesitation, truly tempted by the turtle soup*)

OAK BENTLY: I will return tomorrow. I wish you both well, and I hope that buffalo mends his itinerant ways.

CORA: Goodnight, Oak. (*OAK exits.*) You shouldn't be mean to that boy, Virgil Carl.

VIRGIL CARL: That was just funnin'. Not mean.

CORA: Oak was about to get mean.

VIRGIL CARL: Somewhere else. Not here.

CORA: I suppose. (*Beat*) You don't have any idea what you're going to do, do you?

VIRGIL CARL: No, ma'am, I don't. Not the foggiest, feeblest notion.

6. "First Time Carmen"

MIKEL: (*approaches ANGIE, clears throat*). 'scuse me. (*beat, louder now*) Excuse me?

ANGIE: (*removes ear buds, slowly*) Hi.

MIKEL: Oh, "hi". Um, you're a little early, aren't you? The show doesn't start for another (*looks at watch*) hour and a half, did you –

ANGIE: I wanted to get here early – needed to really. The "atmosphere" and all that. Soaking it in.

MIKEL: "Soaking it in"?

ANGIE: The full experience. The seats, the stage, the velvet red carpet, the chandeliers....(*looking up*)

MIKEL: (*looks up now*) You came for the chandeliers?

ANGIE: Just...everything –

MIKEL: (*looks around, nervously*) Well, I mean –

ANGIE: I know, I know, it's all so... so.... Well, it's even more than I expected. I've watched opera on-line and on TV, and always wondered what it would be like. The audience always looks so excited, so elegant, like they're at a coronation and –

MIKEL: A coronation?? (*beat*) Look, I like opera too, but you really shouldn't be here at this hour. Did you go through security, or – (*looks around for help*)

ANGIE: Snuck in.

MIKEL: (*beat*) You snuck into the Metropolitan Opera House?!?

ANGIE: (*offended*) I have a ticket you know! My auntie bought it for me. A good ticket, too, because this is my favorite opera - Carmen. (*beat*) *La mia opera preferita*. It's ...

MIKEL: Um, Carmen is in French, you know that, right?

8. “Time for a Chat”

CHAT GTP: A bone? Wait...oh yes I see... an antiquated idiom used to express a desire for retribution.

9. "Space or Time"

WOMAN: Welcome to the afterlife.

MAN: The... afterlife? (beat) You mean, I'm ...

WOMAN: That is correct. You are dead. You probably have a lot of questions about how you got here...

MAN: I do! I do! How did I die? Is this heaven? Is this hell? Why am I wearing this jumpsuit?

WOMAN: ...None of which will be answered.

MAN: There must be some mistake. This has to be some elaborate prank.

WOMAN: This is not a prank. You have died. You may submit a request for further information about your particular death upon completion of your questionnaire.

MAN: Questionnaire? What questionnaire? What is happening?

WOMAN: Kindly make your selection in order to move on to the next phase.

MAN: Next phase? No! No! I don't want to move on to the next phase. I want to live.

WOMAN: I'm sorry. Living is no longer an option.

WOMAN: Please answer the questionnaire provided. You may take as long as you like. It's an important decision and there is no rush.

MAN: Well it feels like you're rushing me. What's so important?

WOMAN: You must choose from option one or option two on the form in front of you.

MAN: In front of... (picks up the paper, reads out loud).

MAN: Option one: Travel through space; Option two: Travel through time (beat) That's it? What does this even mean? What am I choosing?

WOMAN: You are choosing how you'd like to spend eternity.

10. "Barking Mad and the Exit"

ALEX: And to make matters worse, my wife brought home a dog. A puppy. A little black lab. Kind of like our first kid before we have kids sort of thing.

THERAPIST: Okay. And...

ALEX: And it hates me! Hides from me. I never see it. It's always hiding under a bed or in a closet or... Who knows where?

THERAPIST: It's afraid of you?

ALEX: Yeah, probably. I don't know. Might have the same dream my wife has.

THERAPIST: What dream is that?

ALEX: That I'm a hitman.

THERAPIST: Your wife dreams that you're a hitman?

ALEX: Uh-huh. And I kill her.

THERAPIST: When did this start?

ALEX: After we got our dog. Couple weeks ago.

THERAPIST: Hmmm.

ALEX: It's awful. If I had more than ten minutes, I'd go into it.

THERAPIST: Summarize it for me.

ALEX: She's mentioned divorce.

THERAPIST: Divorce?

ALEX: She's mentioned it. Says she can't be with someone who kills people.

THERAPIST: But it's only a dream.

ALEX: She says it's VEEERRY realistic.

THERAPIST: Tell me about the dream.

ALEX: We're at Disneyland. We're talking. Having fun. We go on a ride. She buys a balloon. BUT it's a trap! I'm a hitman and I kill her. Then I pop the balloon...