

C01

THE CHINESE THEATER

A play in 1 act

By Danton Spina

© 2014 by Danton Spina  
3013 W. Girard Ave  
Philadelphia, PA 19130  
315-350-0958  
dantonspina@gmail.com

CHARACTERS

LINDA	Determined tourist on a mission.
FRANKLIN	Laid back traveler, going with the flow.
JOJO	A street music salesman specialist.
SPLEEF	Free spirit, occasional street artist.

SETTING

On Sunset Blvd, in front of the Chinese Theater.

TIME

Midday. Some time in the late 1980s.

SCENES

ACT I

Scene 1	On the street	Around noon on a Saturday
Scene 2A	Café	Only minutes later, and occasionally simultaneous with 2B
Scene 2B	In the alley outside café	At moments, simultaneous with Scene 2A
Scene 3	On the street	A different day much later

ACT I

SCENE 1

(Sunset Blvd, midday. Linda and Franklin enter.  
Linda has a large camera around her neck.)

LINDA

We absolutely must get to Pink's before the line gets too long?

FRANKLIN

(Sarcastic)

Let's not forget the tar pits and standing in famous peoples foot prints.

LINDA

(Oblivious)

Of course! I can't believe---

(Linda drifts off as the couple turns a corner and Linda  
sees something in the distance.)

FRANKLIN

(Under his breath)

We're still in a relationship?

LINDA

(A person brushes by Linda and disappears in a crowd on  
the street.)

Wha was that?

(A scream is heard from Linda.)

FRANKLIN

What? What's wrong?

LINDA

Ohhhh my god! I think that was Jaike Lumbertints!

FRANKLIN

Who?

LINDA

Stop messing with me. You know who he is.

FRANKLIN

The “musician?”

LINDA

Gag me with a spoon. I’m not gonna wash my shoulder for a month. That was definitely him! I can’t believe it! He’s such a Clydesdale!

FRANKLIN

Clydesdale? Yea, right. That guy’s a major tool.

LINDA

(The couple is surrounded by distractions and Linda is completely unaware of Franklin.)

I swear that was him. Maybe there’s a movie premier going on or something. I would so love to ...(pause) meet (shorter pause) him.

FRANKLIN

I’m sure you would.

(He looks around for a way out of that moment when suddenly he bumps into Jojo on the street. Jojo is very much in their faces and an intense personality.)

JOJO

Eh-yo! Yo? Ya got the time for me to blow ya mind?

LINDA

(Under her breath)

Honey. Just keep walking.

JOJO

Eh-yo! Yo? Where yous guys from?

FRANKLIN

Philly!

JOJO

(Stopped in his tracks, stunned face)

NO SHIT!

(Jojo lifts up his right sleeve on his shirt and shows a huge PHILLY tattoo on his right arm.)

I'm from Philly, my brotha!

LINDA

(Unenthusiastic and snarky)

Wow... what are the odds?

JOJO

Yo, you guys gotta support ya brotha Jojo with a little brotha-ly love. Buy my new album!

FRANKLIN

(At the same time as Linda)

What d'ya sound like?

LINDA

(At the same time as Franklin)

We're not interested!

(Linda and franklin catch eachother's glares for a brief moment.)

JOJO

(Apparently only hearing Franklin)

Listen to this shit!

(Jojo slams Linda and Franklin against eachother and they react strangely, as though they have never been this close before. Jojo takes his giant headphones and puts them over the couple, each of them has only one side to listen to so they can share the headphones. The headphones smell and

feel like they have been worn by a thousand wary travelers.)

Feel it!

(The audience is treated to the sounds emanating from the headphones as the music starts abruptly. It sounds like animal mating noises without regard to species mixed with some sort of slam poetry about foods overlaid with food sounds and sounds of people eating. The cacophony is occasionally broken by a beautiful voice singing only the following: splEEEEEEEEEE-eeee-eee-EEEE-eee-EEEEEEef.)

LINDA

What was that?

JOJO

It's da newest music genre and I'm at da forefront! 'scalled Libido-Frustrato. And I'm at da forefront!

FRANKLIN

Sounds pretty strange, except for that angelic voice at the end of the nois—song.

JOJO

Well, man... my man Jaike Lumbertints said I be takin' over da airwaves in no time so I dun't care if ya'll think it's strange, but this shit'll sell—

LINDA

You know JAIKE LUMBERTINTS!?

JOJO

Uh.. Yea...girl. He mah Niblin'!

FRANKLIN

Nibling?

JOJO

He mah—



LINDA

(cutting off Jojo)

Ohh. Wow! Does he live in LA? I knew I bumped into him just now.

JOJO

Hell yea— he live in norf hollywood. Wanna meet ‘em?

LINDA

Of course I do!

(JOJO walks the gang down the street and out of the crowd ahead saunters the one the only...)

(expand into meet-cute scenario)

LINDA

JAIKE LUMBERTINTS!!!! I loved your album PastChastity/HateSilence! It was Earth-shattering for me. I totally relate to all of your love and angst and stuff. And, I really had a super deep connection to you song, “Funk and Grind,” ya know, cause I totally lost my virginity to that crazy beat. But not like I’m a skank or anything, unless you liked that. I mean it wasn’t even that good, but that was the guy. The guy was horrible, but I was amazing.

SPLEEF

Whoa! Whoa! Take a chill pill beautiful! Let’s just enjoy now.

LINDA

Oh! Jaike, of course. I’m a very zen person. I’m totally about the now, ya know. I like to clear my mind... and relax... and I did yoga...once!

SPLEEF

I dig it babe! Why don’t go grab some lunch and chill out for a minute—

JOJO

Uh! A café man is not the...

(notices Franklin looking at him strangely, though Linda’s gaze has not left Spleef since arriving)

...uh yeah! Nah... nah, I be good.

FRANKLIN

I saw a delicious bakery place—

JOJO

Emm!

(Stops when he notices everyone staring at him)

FRANKLIN

(continues)

It was around the corner. Unless of course that's too low brow for you?

SPLEEF

No. Of course not. I'm a man of the people. I think I've even been there before. Its called Aroma.

JOJO

(finally bursting out orgasmically)

Ohhh! Uhhh. Yes~! I f\*\*ked the shit outta their sweet Babka., in the...in a pasty eating contest there. I'm hafta keep a low profile ya kna, so I dun't make no one jellus?

LINDA

Right. Okay. Calm down brother-man.

FRANKLIN

Yeah, Let's get your nibbling to the café.

(Linda glances at her phone)

SPLEEF

You told them about that? It happened once. It isn't anything special!

JOJO

Uh... yeah. I told them you was my, my...

LINDA

(Reading from her phone)

Nephew?

A nibling is the plural or gender neutral term for nieces or nephew, like sibling is for brothers and sisters.

Wow, I never knew that.

FRANKLIN

Learn something new every day.

SPLEEF

Ah-ha, yep, we go way back. You know, to when I was born.

FRANKLIN

Alright then. Lets get some grub.

(The scene ends with lights out and/or they transition into the next scene at the café.)

ACT I

SCENE 2A

(Inside Aroma Café, midday. The gang enters the restaurant and Jojo has his head under his shirt and is awkwardly crouching and trying to avoid being seen during the entire time he is at the table. Spleef and Franklin are having a staring contest as soon as they sit down)

LINDA

So who would you say is your ideal woman?

(Spleef and Franklin break their gaze)

SPLEEF

You have to order up at the counter and they'll bring it out.

LINDA

Okay, franklin can you order me a Mocha Shadazzle and a slice of cherry pie!

(She winks at Spleef)

FRANKLIN

Why do I have to go?

LINDA

Please hun, you're being rude to our guests.

FRANKLIN

Aren't we the guests in their city?

SPLEEF

Yes. You are. I'll grab the food.

JOJO

FOOD!

SPLEEF

What do you all want? Franklin?

FRANKLIN

A gin martini.

SPLEEF

That's it?

FRANKLIN.

Yes. With just a splash of the truth.

SPLEEF

The truth?

FRANKLIN.

Vermouth... why's the truth on your mind. Something to tell us?

LINDA

No, I think you actually said the truth hun. And why are you drinking a martini at a coffeehouse during lunch?

(Franklin goes to explain but—)

SPLEEF

And jojo?

JOJO

Uh. Man. I'll...

SPLEEF

You know what, I got it. I know what you want. I'll be right back.

LINDA

Are sure you don't need a hand?

(hand gesture)

SPLEEF

No I'm fine. Thanks.

(Spleef exits for a moment)

FRANKLIN

Jojo, as soon as we walked in here you stopped talking? What's up? I thought we were going to be tortur— treated to your wonderful new sound?

LINDA

If jojo doesn't want to show us—

JOJO

I gots beets, but I just wanna eat em up ya kno? Candied, raw, whatever. So I gotta keep that shit under control. No pressure, ya know. I just wanna focus on the food, and den maybe we can talk.

FRANKLIN

Lettuce give you some space then. Speaking of food darling, gee you know we never did get over to Pinks for lunch, hun. Guess this place will just have to do.

LINDA

(clearly annoyed that this moment is once again with Franklin and not Jaike)

Yeah. Who gives a crap about Pinks?

FRANKLIN

I thought you did.

(Spleef returns with food and drinks)

LINDA

All I care about is eating out with my new friend, here.

FRANKLIN

Ya know Jaike, this might be strange but would you mind singing one of your songs for us, just a quick acapella version?

LINDA

Oh my god, Franklin. That's so inappropriate, unless of course you wanted to Jaike.

SPLEEF

Ya know, I don't mind, but I should probably sing something new. I've been working on this tune for a while now.

(Spleef sings a brief little ditty. Linda melts. Franklin melts. Jojo is going crazy over is tuna melt.)

LINDA

That was—

JOJO

Truly scrumptous.

LINDA

I was gonna say it was beautiful but I don't mind a good chitty chitty BANG BANG reference either? How 'bout you, Jaike?

FRANKLIN

Dammit Linda. Jaike and I need to step outside for a minute.

SPLEEF

Wha?

LINDA

Don't be an such a-

FRANKLIN

I'll be nothing but a perfect gentleman, I just want to ask a talk in private. Would you oblige me?

SPLEEF

Uh sure.

ACT I

SCENE 2B

(While this scene is happening Scene 2a is still happening simultaneously but perhaps the lights or dimmed and there is no sounds but the actors are still acting. Spleef and Franklin enter the alleyway.)

FRANKLIN

I figured you out LUMBERTITS!

SPLEEF

I swear I'm not into LINDA!

FRANKLIN

Linda? This isn't about Linda? This is about you!

SPLEEF

Okay, what's up then?

FRANKLIN

I know who you really are!

SPLEEF

You don't know me.

FRANKLIN

I know you're not Jaike Lumbertints.

SPLEEF

What? You don't know—

FRANKLIN

What? That Jaike Lumbertints has a mole on his check.

(Franklin points to a poster of Jaike Lumbertints in the alley way at the mole. Simultaneously Jojo starts going off the rails a little in the café in Scene 2a.)

SPLEEF

That's not true. Somebody probably just graffiti'd that on there.



FRANKLIN

Or that Jaike Lumbertints and the entire lumbertints family is Welsh and that's its highly unlikely your uncle, whose only a few years only than you by the way, is born and raised in LA.

SPLEEF

Unlikely, but not untrue. He's my uncle through marriage. To my aunt...  
Nessie.

FRANKLIN

I don't buy it, but it doesn't matter. 'Cause ya know what really gave it all away?

(suddenly his tone changes from investigatorial to infatuated)

When you sang in there and that beautiful voice sounded nothing like Jaike Lumbertints or anything I've heard before today. And it was the same voice on Jojo's trashy track. It was the only thing that keep me from ripping my ears off during that song but it was beautiful.

SPLEEF

It was?

FRANKLIN

In my whole life I never thought I could fall in love with someone so quickly and so intensely simple from hearing their voice.

SPLEEF

Oh Franklin, do you really mean all this?

FRANKLIN

Of course.

SPLEEF

You're completely right. I'm just a kid who ran away and has been trying to make it in this world. You know, some one said I looked like that Jaike Lumbertints guy and I just played it up. All the tourists pay a ton of dough just to take pictures with me. And I think they know I'm not the real Lumbertints, but they still wanna take a picture with me so they bust out their polaroids and money and just start snappin' away.

FRANKLIN

And then you get them to buy you a free lunch, or dinner, or whatever you can get, huh?

SPLEEF

What?

FRANKLIN

And then you don't pay taxes for 5 years even though you make six figures pretending you're a homeless person?

SPLEEF

Where is this coming from? I thought you loved me?

FRANKLIN

I only love the law.

(shows badge)

I with the IRS NCIS LAPD SWAT joint task force and you've defrauded us for to long.

(Jojo finally loses it in the café as spleef is going on this rant.)

SPLEEF

No! It wasn't my idea. It was all Jojo. He's got this weird food obsession. We were dating a while back and he wanted me to feed him food in wild intimate scenarios. He was the nibbler and I was the nibbling. And sometimes he would feed me. He is addicted to sex with all different kinds of food. He thought up this whole scheme just so he could get free food from this restaurant to fornicate with, I swear. I was just hungry but he was lustful. And he's been kicked outta most places in town, so he tries to sneak back in with unsuspecting tourist.

FRANKLIN

That's a bunch of bologna! You know you're a real sick-o Spleef Jones, trying to get a way with tax evasion and putting it all on some pour aspiring artist. It's despicable.

(Franklin takes Spleef offstage in handcuffs. Scene 2b fades out as scene 2a fades back in. Jojo is molesting food and Linda is freaking out.)

LINDA

This is disgusting! Uh!

(Linda exits scene 2a and enters scene 2b. Lights are up on both now. Jojo is getting jostled around and Linda simple comes out to an empty alley way only to find Spleef and Franklin aren't there. Jojo gets dragged out of the restaurant but not before pocketing most of the food that was on the table. Linda exits scene 2b and reenters scene 2a and again she is alone. End scene)

ACT I

SCENE 3

JOJO

Ya'll got time for me to blow ya mind?

(Man and Woman just walk by trying to ignore Jojo)

Eh-yo! Yo? Where ya'll from?

WOMAN

Atlanta!

JOJO

(Stopped in his tracks, stunned face)

NO SHIT!

(Jojo lifts up his left sleeve on his shirt and shows a huge ATLANTA tattoo on his left arm.)

I'm from Atlanta!

(Curtain Call)