

Is This Seat Taken

A Play in One Act

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STRANGER

You wouldn't believe me if I told you.
How's the murder case going?

JOSEPH

How do you know I'm a detective?

STRANGER

You wouldn't believe me if I told you.

JOSEPH

Yo lady. Where the hell did you come from?

STRANGER

You wouldn't...

JOSEPH

...believe you if you told me? Look, I just wanna
read my paper.

STRANGER

How's Catherine? Did she leave her husband yet?

JOSEPH

Catherine? How did you? Wait a minute. Is
this a joke? Look, I don't mean to be rude.
I just wanna...

Start

STRANGER

...JOE, it's me.

JOSEPH

Me?

STRANGER

It's MICHAEL.

JOSEPH

That's not funny lady.

STRANGER

I'm the only one who knows about Catherine.

JOSEPH

I don't know what you're talkin' about. Get
away from me.

STRANGER

Her last name is Barlow. You met in Atlantic City.
You meet twice a week at an apartment in the
city. You're on your way there now. Come on,
JOE. It's me. I'm here to help you.

JOSEPH

Help me? With what?

STRANGER

My murder.

(JOSEPH drops his paper)

STRANGER

How did you break your finger?

JOSEPH

None of your business.

STRANGER

I know how.

(JOSEPH gets up to leave)

STRANGER

Beating your steering wheel the day of my funeral.

(JOSEPH stops)

STRANGER

I saw how hard you cried.

JOSEPH

You saw me?

STRANGER

Yeah, I know I don't look the same. But this
is the only way I could come back.

JOSEPH

(looks her up and down)

What the...?

STRANGER

I know, really. Would you look at these
ridiculous shoes? Not the easiest to walk in.

(JOSEPH shakes his head and continues to leave)

STRANGER

You like your coffee with one sugar and one
Splenda.

(JOSEPH stops)

STRANGER

You love the song,
(sings exaggeratedly)
"Feelings, nothing more like feelings."

JOSEPH

(looks around, embarrassed)
Would you keep it down?

STRANGER

Ask me anything.

JOSEPH

Alright, what happened at the Christmas party last
year?

STRANGER

(loudly and laughing)
That's easy. You got drunk and went home with
Beatrice, the lunch lady.

JOSEPH

Shhh, I said keep it down!

STRANGER

What else ya got?

JOSEPH

What's my favorite sport?

STRANGER

Hockey.

JOSEPH

Car?

STRANGER

Porsche.

JOSEPH
Food?

STRANGER
Your wife's Fettucine Alfredo. Actually, it's
mine too.

JOSEPH
It was MICHAEL'S favorite.

STRANGER
That's what I'm tryin' to tell ya.

JOSEPH
What do I do when I'm upset?

STRANGER
Go to the Casino.

JOSEPH
To play what?

STRANGER
Black Jack. JOE, it's me. Listen to me. Look at
me. The day of my funeral you came up to my casket
and whispered, "what am I gonna do without you"?

JOSEPH
(sits back down)
How did you know that?

STRANGER
Because I heard you, it's me.

JOSEPH
I-I-I-I...don't understand.

STRANGER
I was sent to help you find my killer.

JOSEPH
I don't...understand.

STRANGER
(puts her hand on his shoulder, pauses)
Things are not what they seem.

End