

## SHADOW HOUR

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## CHARACTERS:

This is a trial play. Eight women and four men are required for the ensemble. Most play characters in the main story and all play members of the jury, which serves as a chorus. Double-casting is as follows:

- 1) RICHARD BARNES / SENATOR ADAM MARTIN
- 2) JULIA ROLLINS / CHRISTY CONNELLY
- 3) ELLEN FRANCIS / JUDGE EVELYN VERNON
- 4) JOE ALBERT / PROSECUTING ATTORNEY JAMES COTE
- 5) BETTY BEADE / DEFENSE ATTORNEY LESLIE WALKER
- 6) TERESE SHIPPEN / SUSAN CLOVER
- 7) RACHEL OWENS / VERONICA KRUPS
- 8) BRENDA SWIFT / DETECTIVE ELIZABETH BROWNLEE
- 9) TOM DRYALL / BAILIFF
- 10) TIMOTHY "SKRAG" SULLEN / CATERER
- 11) CORALEE LEIGHTON
- 12) BLAIR DEVEREAUX / HELEN (waitress)

## SCENE:

SHADOW HOUR is to be staged minimally. The multiple locations can be determined by lighting and the use of rising platforms.

ACT ONE

LIGHTS RISE in the courtroom. DEFENSE ATTORNEY LESLIE WALKER and DEFENSE ATTORNEY JAMES COTE are discovered. BAILIFF ENTERS

BAILIFF

All rise. Here ye, here ye, the Second Judicial Court in and for the State of Virginia is now in session. Judge Evelyn Vernon presiding. Docket number 116/7a, The People versus Adam Martin.

JUDGE enters.

JUDGE

Be seated. Let the record show that we have heard opening statements. Mr. Cote, precede with your first witness.

COTE

I call Mrs. Susan Clover.

SUSAN CLOVER takes the stand.

BAILIFF

D'yasweartotellthetruth't'wholetruth'n'notingbutthetruths'elpyaGod?

SUSAN

I do.

BAILIFF exits. COTE approaches the witness.

COTE

Mrs. Clover, how long have you known Senator Martin?

SUSAN

Eight years. I met him as a volunteer on his campaign for the Florida senate.

COTE

You began working for him after that?

SUSAN

He hired me as campaign manager when he decided to try for a seat in Washington.

COTE

You apparently did a good job.

SUSAN

We won the election, yes.

COTE

Senator Martin placed you on his staff in what capacity?

SUSAN

Administrative Assistant.

COTE

How did you meet Christine Connelly?

SUSAN

Christy was a volunteer at our Orlando campaign headquarters.

RICHARD ENTERS in another area as SENTAOR  
ADAM MARTIN. He speaks on a phone.

ADAM

Even sealed in lead and glass we have no guarantee.

SUSAN

Christy was attracted to the senator because of his stand on the environment.

ADAM

We have to recycle it.

LESLIE

Objection! Speculation on the part of the witness.

COTE

We all know the senator's stand on the environment.

LESLIE

Mrs. Clover cannot know what reasons Ms. Connelly was "attracted" to the senator.

JUDGE

Sustained.

COTE

I'll rephrase. What part did you play in bringing Christy Connelly to Washington?

SUSAN

She wrote and said she wanted to start law school at George Washington University. When a position became available for an assistant, I called her.

ADAM

Harrison won't stand for it being buried in the Nevada any more than I'd allow it to be dumped in the Atlantic. (aside) Susan! I need my copy of the Wellekin-smith bill.

LIGHT DIM in the courtroom. SUSAN leaves the witness stand and enters the second area. CHRISTY CONNELLY enters also.

ADAM (cont.)

Nobody opposes this on principle. Let's go over the numbers. Wait, I'm getting my copy now. (aside) Susan!

SUSAN

I put it on your desk.

ADAM

I need it. Please.

SUSAN exits one way, CHRISTY another.

ADAM (cont.)

The committee will negotiate the funding caps. Jim, a lot of the missiles have already been dismantled... Let the United Nations worry about that.

CHRISTY re-enters with a thick document.

ADAM (cont.)

Jim, I got it. Give me the clauses. Sixteen and seventeen. I know you object to the funding. Seventeen-C. That's it, isn't it? Okay, then let's talk about Seventeen-C. Right. Tomorrow then. Give my best to Judy and the kids. (ADAM hangs up). Hello.

CHRISTY

Hi.

SUSAN re-enters with a sandwich in deli paper.

SUSAN

I found a pile of cholesterol and white flour.

ADAM

Some people might call it a pastrami sandwich.

SUSAN

You have a banquet tonight.

ADAM

I'm not going.

SUSAN  
You promised Senator Clemmons.

ADAM  
Can you come with me?

SUSAN  
Adam.

ADAM  
Two hours.

SUSAN  
You have to get a wife of your own.

ADAM  
They'll have cheese cake.

SUSAN  
No. I'm going to see my son in the school play.

ADAM  
Something about elves, wasn't it.

SUSAN  
"Jack and the Beanstalk." He has the title role.

ADAM  
I know he's tall for his age, but...

SUSAN  
He's Jack. Here. You'll need this.

SUSAN hands him an invitation.

CHRISTY  
I like cheese cake.

SUSAN  
Senator, you remember Christy Connelly.

ADAM  
Sure. The rally at the Peabody Hotel.

CHRISTY  
And the campaign office.

ADAM

At the Peabody, you cornered me and went into an impassioned plea for the wetlands.

CHRISTY

I'm flattered you remember.

ADAM

Welcome to Washington. Where were you hiding Wellekin-Smith?

CHRISTY

I tried to read it before. I knew you'd be a supporter.

ADAM

Slow in spots, huh?

CHRISTY

It's over two hundred pages.

ADAM

Even I haven't read the whole thing.

SUSAN

I have.

ADAM

She's a wizard with a high-lighter.

CHRISTY

What did you think of it?

ADAM

I like the part where he chops down the beanstalk.

SUSAN

I'm going now or I'll miss it. Don't be late for the banquet.

ADAM

I hate going to these things alone.

ADAM and CHRISTY look at each other.

SUSAN

Oh, no.

ADAM

We won't call it a date.

SUSAN

The media will.

ADAM

I don't want to sit through it alone.

SUSAN

You can't go out with a girl this young.

ADAM

I'll tell them she works in my office and I wanted to introduce her to life in Washington. That sounds awful, doesn't it?

SUSAN

Yes.

CHRISTY

Excuse me. I'm twenty-one years old. That means I can vote and everything. Senator, I'd love to go to the banquet.

SUSAN

They'll follow you to your apartment and camp out on your doorstep.

CHRISTY

Sounds very exciting.

ADAM

She's right, Christy. You don't know.

CHRISTY

I'll deal with it. If I'm going to work for you, the sooner the better, right?

ADAM

She has a point.

SUSAN

Be careful. Both of you.

SUSAN exits, crossing to the jury area.

ADAM

How fast can you change?

CHRISTY

I took the Metro. I live across the river.

ADAM

I'd call a staff car but it's such a waste of taxpayer money.

CHRISTY

You drive, don't you.

LIGHTS FADE. After a moment, LIGHTS RISE in the jury room. JOE rises.

JOE

So. Let's see where we stand. Everybody take a piece of paper, write "guilty" or "not guilty" and pass them to me.

TOM

I'd like to talk about this first.

JULIA

There might be nothing to talk about.

TOM

We should have a discussion before we vote.

JULIA

Do you think he's innocent?

JOE

It's a vote to see where we stand.

JULIA

If any of you are thinking of voting not guilty, you'd better be in for the fight of your life.

TOM

I'm only saying we should discuss it.

JOE

Write what you think for now, and if you don't know, write "I don't know."

JULIA

Wait. Everyone should vote one way or another. If people sit here undecided.

SKRAG groans.

MRS. FRANCES

Perhaps we should...

JOE

Okay. Pick one. "Guilty" or "Not Guilty."

TOM

As long as we can have a discussion after.

JULIA

Unless we all vote "guilty."

SKRAG

Just vote, will ya?

JOE

We can talk about it later. Anybody still got votes out? One, guilty. Two, guilty. Three, guilty. Four, guilty. Five, guilty. Six, undecided.

JULIA

You got it in.

TOM

You said to choose. I voted "guilty."

JULIA

Good for you.

JOE

Seven, guilty. Eight, guilty. Nine, not guilty.

JULIA

I don't believe it.

ALL ad-lib comments.

SKRAG

Hey! Hey! There's more votes.

JOE

Ten, guilty. Eleven, not guilty.

JULIA

It's still the Middle Ages!

JOE

Twelve, guilty. So. That's the vote. Uh, one, two, three...

RICHARD

Nine guilty, two not guilty, one undecided.

THE FULL SCRIPT IS AVAILABLE AT

[www.samuelfrench.com](http://www.samuelfrench.com)