

Mockery Manor SEASON 3  
Episode 9: The Master Puppeteer  
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Music and Sound Design by Laurence Owen

Cowboy MUSIC

THE PROSPECTOR

Previously on Mockery Manor:  
Time is running out as the evidence against JJ mounts. JJ, Bette and Parker gather in the parlour at the Four Spurs Saloon to try and figure out whodunnit. JJ is alarmed to hear that someone has been in her room and stolen the letter from Mrs Wainscoat that lured her to the mine train on the night of the murder. Parker tells them how Clay's stalker Abilene gained access to the VIP lounge because of a Mockery security pass. Bette reveals that Abilene's son Brian is the spitting image of a young Clay. Fenwick reveals that Bobby has collapsed, and Harry has been arrested for poisoning him! Not only that, but Harry's real name is Jacob, and he used to be a private investigator who was hired for a job ten years ago that involved infiltrating Clay's inner circle. Hoo-boy, that's a whole heap of revelations! Finally, Bette tells the others to gather the suspects for a Poirot-style showdown. And that's you all caught up. Y'all enjoy the episode now!

MOCKERY THEME MUSIC.

MARGOT

Long Cat Media presents Mockery Manor, season 3, episode 9: The Master Puppeteer.

INT. PARLOUR

Bette is getting things ready. Also present: Paul, JJ and Parker. Hustle and bustle in the background.

BETTE

OK! We're all set. Almost. Parker?

PARKER

Yes boss.

BETTE

Can you put these name cards in the places I've marked on the table plan?

PARKER

Okey dokey.

BETTE

I've calculated who should sit next to who and in who's eye-line for maximum psychological disruption. I am the master puppeteer and they will dance to my tune!

PARKER

Blimey.

PAUL

Hello, uh, excuse me, Bette, if I may ask a question...

BETTE

No, Paul, you may not. I told you, you can only be here if you don't speak.

PAUL

Yuh but I do need to--

PARKER

*Paul.* Just be grateful your grubby little show is getting a scoop.

PAUL

100%, 100%. But I really do need to say something and then: my lips are sealed. I promise.

BETTE

Ugh! What? Quickly.

PAUL

Your sister, JJ, is she going to be here? Because she might not be terribly happy to see me. She might attack on sight.

BETTE

Oh why's that, Paul? Is it because you followed her to an NA meeting and fundamentally violated her privacy?

PAUL

Ah. So you know about that then?  
You know what, maybe I'll just go  
now...

BETTE

Oh grow a backbone, Paul. Just take  
your camera and get behind the  
curtain, please.

PAUL

Curtain?

BETTE

This one here. See, no-one will even  
know you're here. Including JJ. Now  
go. Curtain. Hop to it.

Paul GRUMBLES.

PAUL

(mutters) Shouldn't have to put up  
with this, I'm a respected  
journalist.

BETTE

Time please, Parker.

PARKER

Almost eleven.

BETTE

JJ should be back by now.

PARKER

Where is she, anyway?

BETTE

On her way here, I hope.  
(deep breath) Alright Parker, tell  
Fenwick to bring them in. It's  
showtime.

He OPENS the door. SHOUTS through.

PARKER

(calls) Detective. Bring 'em in.  
(mutters) Can't believe I'm working  
with Fenwick.

FENWICK

(distant) Alright you lot! Parlour.  
Now please. No dawdling. Thank you  
for your co-operation.

(MORE)

FENWICK (cont'd)  
All your questions will be answered  
soon enough.

They start to enter, GRUMBLING. Includes: Kirsteen, Anna  
Lou, Harry/Jacob, George, Magenta, Bernard.

Bette is nervous.

FENWICK (cont'd)  
(sotto) Armstrong: the psychic's  
husband is in the kitchen making hot  
wings.

BETTE  
Leave him. He has his instructions.

FENWICK  
Does he, now? And what's my role in  
this, Armstrong?

BETTE  
You just relax, Fenwick.

FENWICK  
Oh, I see. Put me in the corner with  
a sausage roll like granny at the  
Christmas party. Once again, youth  
tramples experience.

BETTE  
I'm not excluding you. Well I suppose  
I am, actually, but I really need to  
do this on my own, Fenwick. It's my  
turn to save JJ.  
I'll let you know if I need any help.

FENWICK  
Right.  
(mutters) This is gonna be a  
disaster.

BETTE  
What?

FENWICK  
What? Didn't say anything.  
I'll stand by the door, shall I.  
Discourage anyone from leaving.

BETTE  
Good idea.  
(weak cough) Hello everyone! Thank  
you all for coming.

KIRSTEEN

(sarcasm) How could we not. Such a fine invitation!

GEORGE

This is very strange, Bette. Very strange indeed.

BETTE

Ha, yeah. Please, take a seat, everyone. There are name cards where I'd like you to sit...

Chairs SCRAPE, people CHATTER over Bette.

BETTE (cont'd)

(sotto) ...oh, you're just going to ignore the name cards, of course you are.

(louder) Can you sit where your name card... see the name cards? Hello?

(gives up) OK, fine, sit where you want. Make yourselves comfortable.

(sotto) Any sign of the others, Parker?

PARKER

Nah, the saloon's empty.

BETTE

(sotto panic) Great greatgreatfanbloodytastic

(louder) OK, so there should be a couple more joining us so I think we should just wait for them.

(beat) Talk amongst yourselves.

KIRSTEEN

(mutters) She's jumpier than a cat on the 4th of July.

JACOB

(whispers) What kinda stunt you pulling here, Bette?

BETTE

(whispers) Just solving a murder, Harry. I mean, Jacob. 'Jacob', I like it. Why didn't you tell me that was your real name? When we were... y'know.

JACOB  
 (whispers) Maybe if you'd let me  
 talk, I would have.

BETTE  
 (bashful) Ha, right, yes. Anyway, I'm  
 glad you're here. Wasn't sure you'd  
 be able to come. No charges?

JACOB  
 No proof.

CHAIR SCRAPE.

MAGENTA  
 Shall I go get us a few drinky-poops  
 and nibbles? Yes, I'll do that!

BETTE  
 Sit down, Magenta. I think it's best  
 we get started.

MAGENTA  
 (grumbles) Ugh. Alright.

BETTE  
 (Detective mode) You're probably  
 wondering why I've invited you all  
 here today. Why I've engineered  
 this... little reunion.

KIRSTEEN  
 Oh Lord. Someone's read too much  
 Agatha Christie.

BETTE  
 Evidently the letters I sent you were  
 sufficiently provocative to ensure  
 your attendance.  
 Parker, Magenta, thank you for  
 delivering them.

PARKER  
 No problemo! This is fun, innit.

MAGENTA  
 Didn't have much choice in the  
 matter, did I.

BETTE  
 As you know, inside each letter, I  
 wrote a short phrase. And that short  
 phrase is why you're here.

(MORE)

BETTE (cont'd)  
Because on reading that short phrase,  
you came to know that I know your  
secret.

MAGENTA  
That was the most clumsily-worded  
sentence I've ever heard.

PARKER  
Shhh!

MAGENTA  
This is going to take ages, isn't it.

PARKER  
Shush! Keep going Bette. You were  
saying something about secrets?

BETTE  
That's right. Every single person in  
this room has a secret.

ANNA LOU  
(whispers) Oh Lord.

BETTE  
As my dear sister and I know only too  
well, secrets have a habit of  
isolating us from our fellows. Thus  
we are forced to manage our secret  
alone... a situation that invariably  
leads to disaster.

PARKER  
Hear hear. Open, honest communication  
is the foundation of a healthy  
relationship.

BETTE  
Yes, thank you Parker.

KIRSTEEN  
So let me get this straight. We're  
here because you don't want us to  
suffer alone? How very kind of you!  
Unless the purpose of bringing us  
together is, in fact... blackmail?

GASPS.

GEORGE  
Oh, I hope not.

BETTE

No, Kirsteen. The purpose is finding your husband's murderer. Something one would hope you'd be in support of.

KIRSTEEN

You know who did it?

BETTE

I do.

GEORGE

Good heavens!

BETTE

I think. I'm pretty sure, anyway. Like, 94%

FENWICK

(sotto) Keep it together, Armstrong.

KIRSTEEN

If you know, why the hell haven't you told the cops?

BETTE

Because I needed to be sure. And because the cops are coming to us.

KIRSTEEN / FENWICK

Huh? What?

BETTE

But first, let's clear up who poisoned Bobby. Jacob.

JACOB

I did not poison Bobby. The only prints on the glass were his. And the crap they found in his drink, it was--

BETTE

--Bobby's pills? Crushed into a powder.

JACOB

Yup.

BETTE

Someone with access to Bobby's pills slipped them into his drink. So who could that be?  
Jacob.

JACOB

I told you, I did not do it.

BETTE

Although you had good reason to hurt him, did you not? Did Bobby like you when you first met, ten years ago?

JACOB

Take a wild guess.

KIRSTEEN

Bobby's a petty, bigoted son of a bitch, how do you think he treated Jacob?

BETTE

Badly, I imagine?

KIRSTEEN

Dang right he did.

BETTE

Especially as he suspected that you and Jacob were... ahem.

KIRSTEEN

Before anyone clutches their pearls, Clay and I had an open marriage. It worked for us. OK?

BETTE

Was Bobby vindictive?

KIRSTEEN

Hmm, no, not really.

BETTE

(surprised) Oh! Really?

KIRSTEEN

Bobby's not an emotional man. He might seem it, but underneath all that melodrama and caterwauling, he's a cold, calculating little bastard. Whereas in my experience, to be vindictive, to be petty?

(MORE)

KIRSTEEN (cont'd)

You gotta be soft as a peach and just as easily bruised.

GEORGE

Gosh, you've such a way with words, Kirsteen. Magical.

KIRSTEEN

And of course, Bobby's focus was always on his greatest asset: Clayton. A man he'd been sucking dry his whole adult life.

PARKER

Now there's an image.

BETTE

Of course. And if Bobby knew that Jacob was collecting evidence for an expensive paternity suit against Clay, I imagine Bobby would have become... protective.

GEORGE

A paternity suit? Oh, it's all true then?

BETTE

That Clayton could fill the Mine Train rollercoaster with his illegitimate children? I'm afraid so, George.

MAGENTA

Oh, so that's what you asked the Tarot the day before the concert.

PAST GEORGE

(echoey) I'd like to know if what I heard about him is true.

GEORGE

I... I did. How did you know that? I didn't say it out loud.

MAGENTA

I'm a gifted psychic, my dear.

GEORGE

Oh, of course.

MAGENTA

(sotto) And a lip reader.

GEORGE

Pardon?

MAGENTA

Nothing.

BETTE

How did you know about Clay's offspring, George?

GEORGE

I'd heard rumours for years through the fan club... but I always dismissed them. Until Clay's stalker paid me a visit.

BETTE

Abilene. She showed you a photo of her son, Brian.

GEORGE

She gave me a tape of his singing voice, too. Uncanny.

BETTE

What did she want from you?

GEORGE

She wanted me to offer Brian a job here in Claytonville, as a tribute act.

BETTE

Going back to Bobby for a moment, once he figured out what you were doing, Jacob, I'll wager he came after you.

JACOB

What are you basing this on?

KIRSTEEN

A vivid imagination.

BETTE

I'm basing it on what you told me, Jacob. I thought you were referring to Clay at the time, but I know better now.

JACOB

What I told you?

BETTE

Do you not remember? It was a couple of weeks ago when we last, erm, hung out in my office...

FLASHBACK CUE.

FIRST FLASHBACK. BETTE'S OFFICE

HEAVY BREATHING, ZIPPERS, clothing RUSTLE etc.

BETTE

Shall I put Bogan Bay on? I don't want anyone to hear us.

HARRY / JACOB

No, please don't.

BETTE

Don't take your shoes off, I haven't hoovered in a while. Oh wait, let me put the 'do not disturb' sign on the door. Oh blast, where did I put it?

Bette SEARCHES.

HARRY / JACOB

We need to get a move on. I've only got twenty minutes.

BETTE

Twenty minutes? That's not long enough. Not for me, at any rate.

HARRY / JACOB

Well, I have to get back to work, so it's 20 minutes or nothing.

BETTE

Ugh, how tiresome! You really should go into business for yourself, Harry. Make your own schedule.

HARRY / JACOB

Been there, done that.

BETTE

You have?

CRUNCH

HARRY / JACOB  
 (irritated sigh) What the hell did I  
 just sit on? What is this, a Cheeto?

BETTE  
 We call it a Wotsit in the UK.

HARRY / JACOB  
 Goddamn.

BETTE  
 You've got cheese dust on your  
 arse... let me brush it off.

SLAP SLAP SLAP.

HARRY / JACOB  
 No, get off me, I'll do it. Ugh.  
 Don't you ever clean up around here?

BETTE  
 You're a ray of sunshine today.  
 Shall we do this another time? You  
 don't seem like you're in the mood.

HARRY / JACOB  
 Guess not.

ZIPS UP.

BETTE  
 What's wrong, anyway?

HARRY / JACOB  
 Nothing.

BETTE  
 Tell me.

HARRY / JACOB  
 No.

BETTE  
 Is it work? Come on, spill the goss!  
 You'll feel better if you do!  
 Not letting you out of here until you  
 doooo. You'll be late for work,  
 you'll make George angry!

HARRY / JACOB  
 How are you this annoying.

BETTE  
 Just a talent I have.  
 (MORE)

BETTE (cont'd)  
What's wrong?

Beat.

HARRY / JACOB  
I'm pasting a billboard this  
afternoon. Twelve feet of Clayton's  
face.

BETTE  
OK?

HARRY / JACOB  
(angry) After that, I'm testing the  
sound system that will pump Clayton's  
songs throughout the whole park.

BETTE  
What's wrong with that? That's your  
job, isn't it?

HARRY / JACOB  
Sure is. (mutters) Shouldn't have  
come here. Working like a dog, and  
what for? To put money in the pocket  
of a blind old fool and his pill-  
popping parasitical thug. GodDAMN.

He THUMPS the table.

BETTE  
Crikey.

HARRY / JACOB  
Sorry. I'm sorry.

BETTE  
Oh no, don't apologise. I've never  
seen you show any emotions before.  
Exciting! And you know what I always  
say: strong feelings, strong tea.  
Time for a cup?

HARRY / JACOB  
No, I should go.

CLANKS MUGS.

BETTE  
Don't be silly. Sit down.  
So how well do you know him?

HARRY / JACOB  
Who?

BETTE

Clayton Woodrow.

HARRY / JACOB

Why do you think I know him?

BETTE

You said he 'pops pills.' Sounds like insider information to me!

HARRY / JACOB

Oh. Erm. I dunno. Must've read it in a magazine.

BETTE

Rather libelous! Surprised they're allowed to print that sort of thing.

HARRY / JACOB

Do you wanna go for a drink sometime?

BETTE

What, like, a date? (suspicious)  
Wait. You're changing the subject.

HARRY / JACOB

I'm just tired of meeting in your office, is all.

BETTE

You *do* know him, don't you? You just don't want to tell me! Why is he a thug?

HARRY / JACOB

Are you sleuthing me? Is that what this is? There ain't nothing to sleuth here, doll.

BETTE

Don't call me 'doll'.

HARRY / JACOB

Yeah, well, don't call me into your office again. Not until you've cleaned it.

BETTE

(splutters) I wasn't going to invite you back, anyway!

HARRY / JACOB

Got better things to do huh? Like eat Cheetoes and watch Bogan Bay?

(MORE)

HARRY / JACOB (cont'd)  
Miss your mouth with the Cheetoes,  
apparently.

BETTE  
Wotsits! They're called Wotsits! Oh  
just sod off, Harry. Just sod off!

FLASHBACK STING.

INT. PARLOUR

A beat.

MAGENTA  
Not sure we needed that much detail.

JACOB  
Oh boy.

ANNA LOU  
I feel dirty.

BETTE  
Right. Sorry. I'll keep it short next  
time.

JACOB  
You had to include the bit about the  
Cheeto, didn't you.

BETTE  
(mutters) Wotsits.

CHAIR SCRAPE.

MAGENTA  
Well, this is uncomfortable. I'm just  
going to pop out and check how  
Bernard's getting on in the kitchen.

FENWICK  
Shall I let her through?

MAGENTA  
Let me??

BETTE  
(sighs) Yes. Go on, then.

MAGENTA  
Be right back! If you're lucky!

Magenta leaves. Door SLAM.

KIRSTEEN

So the pill-popping parasitical thug was Bobby? Sounds about right.

BETTE

Would you confirm for us, Jacob?

JACOB

Yep.

Ten years ago, coupla his goons followed me down an alley... almost killed me.

The ECHOEY memory of getting BEATEN up.

PAST HOODLUM

Mr McDaniels sends his regards.

JACOB

I left town after that.

ANNA LOU

Sure sounds like a motive, to me.

BETTE

You know what, Anna Lou? It does.

JACOB

I did not try to murder Bobby.

ANNA LOU

So why are you here? In the UK? In Claytonville! At the exact same time as us!

BETTE

Very good point, Anna Lou.

GEORGE

Oh gosh. (accusing) When you replied to my job advert, you knew full well that Clayton was booked for the grand opening!

KIRSTEEN

Oh come on, guys. Isn't it obvious why he's really here? To see *me*! To re-ignite what we once had. Jacob's been carrying a torch for *ten years*.

JACOB

Uh. No, that is not the reason.

KIRSTEEN

What? That's not what you said in the bayou.

JACOB

I said it was nice to see you again. That's all.

KIRSTEEN

(splutters)

GEORGE

Young man, I think you need to tell us the real reason you're here.

Beat

JACOB

To murder Bobby.

HUBBUB.

PARKER

You literally just said you didn't do it!

JACOB

But I didn't. I didn't even try. Hell, I never even made a plan in the first place. I guess I thought I'd know what to do when the time came. But when I laid eyes on him, saw how small he'd got, how old and just frail and... all the rage just drained outta me. Can't say I was too choked up when he collapsed, though.

BETTE

In my letter to you, Jacob, I told you who really poisoned Bobby.

JACOB

Yep.

BETTE

I will now tell the rest of you. The name I wrote was... Anna Lou!

HUBBUB.

ANNA LOU

I'm sorry, what?? Me??

JACOB  
(mutters, confused) Dude. What?

KIRSTEEN  
Anna Lou? Did you try to kill Bobby?

ANNA LOU  
No!

BETTE  
On the night of the concert, Anna Lou, you argued with Bobby in the VIP lounge. What was that about?

ANNA LOU  
(panic) Nothing! Nothing! We didn't argue--

PARKER  
You did! I saw ya!

BETTE  
(accusing) You hated Bobby! Didn't you?

ANNA LOU  
No!

BETTE  
You wanted him dead!

ANNA LOU  
I didn't! I didn't!

BETTE  
So tell us what you argued about! And why you snuck into Clayton's room the day after the murder and stole his toothbrush!

Beat

EVERYONE  
What?

BETTE  
There's no point denying it, Anna Lou. Detective Fenwick and I were there, hiding behind the curtain.

ANNA LOU  
You... you were there?? You saw me?

PARKER

It's all kicking off!

FENWICK

Hang on. It was Anna Lou? Why did she take his toothbrush? How'd you figure that one out, Armstrong?

BETTE

The 'ping' noise.

PAST BETTE

What in this room goes 'ping'?

BETTE

I tested everything in that room and the only thing that resonated like that was a ceramic toothbrush holder. From there, it was a process of elimination. Kirsteen was on the phone to Clayton's lawyer, Bobby was shouting at the police, George was being interviewed. Which left...

ANNA LOU

Me. OK. You got me. I took Clay's toothbrush.

BETTE

You wanted his DNA.

ANNA LOU

That's right. To prove... to prove that Clay's my father.

GEORGE

Good heavens.

PARKER

Oh my God! The secret kid! It's always the secret kid!

KIRSTEEN

Are you shitting us?

BETTE

She is not shitting us. And that's why you argued with Bobby in the VIP lounge.

ANNA LOU

Yes. He found out. On the trip over, he saw my passport.

(MORE)

ANNA LOU (cont'd)  
My middle name is my momma's first  
name, and Bobby... Bobby knows my  
momma.

FLASHBACK STING

INT. VIP LOUNGE - NIGHT OF THE FALL

Clay PLAYS in the distance. The crowd CHEERS etc.

Bobby and Anna Lou in a WHISPERED ARGUMENT.

BOBBY  
So you don't deny it. You snake in  
the grass! Clay ain't giving you  
bastards any more money! You can't  
get anything outta him!

ANNA LOU  
I'm not trying to, Bobby!

BOBBY  
Liar! I know who your momma is! Won't  
rest til she gets her pound of flesh,  
huh?

ANNA LOU  
Bobby, listen to me! I'm not my  
momma!

BOBBY  
Why should I listen to a snake in the  
grass!

ANNA LOU  
Think, Bobby: if I was gonna take  
Clay to the cleaners, wouldn't I have  
done it by now? I've worked for him  
for five years.  
Goddamnit, the bartender's watching  
us...

BOBBY  
You got something planned, I can  
tell!

ANNA LOU  
OK. OK! I admit it. Momma got me to  
take this job to get close to him--

BOBBY  
I knew it!

ANNA LOU

--but then I liked my job, I liked Clay, and I stopped listening to her. I stopped doing what she wanted me to. You gotta believe me: I don't need Clay to know he might be my daddy.

BOBBY

(scoff) And you don't need his money, I suppose.

ANNA LOU

No! I swear!

BOBBY

So what are you saying? You're not gonna tell Clay who you are?

ANNA LOU

No. If Clay knew... how could I work for him anymore?

BOBBY

If he knew, he'd fire your ass.

ANNA LOU

He would?

BOBBY

In a hot second, sugar.

ANNA LOU

Oh. Are you gonna tell him?

BOBBY

Do I look stupid? Do I look like I want to hurt my oldest friend?

ANNA LOU

OK. Good. Thank you.

BOBBY

Goddamn, you got me all riled up, Anna Lou.

ANNA LOU

Bobby, now that we're talking about this... now that you know... maybe there's something you could tell me.

BOBBY

What do you want now?

ANNA LOU

I just wanna know how it happened.  
How is Clay my daddy?

BOBBY

If your momma never told you the  
facts of life, I ain't about to.

ANNA LOU

The facts of life don't explain it.  
My momma brought a paternity case  
against Clay twenty years ago--

BOBBY

So I recall.

ANNA LOU

--and she lost. The court said he  
wasn't my daddy because twenty years  
ago, there wasn't any DNA testing.  
All Clay had to do was prove he  
wasn't anywhere near my momma around  
the time of conception. And he could.  
He wasn't even in the country. He was  
in a rehab centre in Switzerland.

BOBBY

I know. I arranged it.

ANNA LOU

OK. So Momma lost. She was so angry.

BOBBY

What do you want from me? Sympathy??

ANNA LOU

I wanna know HOW I am my father's  
daughter. Because all these years  
later, my momma swears blind I am who  
she says I am.

BOBBY

Sounds like she's lying to you,  
sugar. And if you know what's good  
for you, you'll drop it.

AD BREAK.

FLASH FORWARD STING.

INT. PARLOUR

BETTE

Well, that doesn't add up.

ANNA LOU

The conception? I know.

BETTE

Not just the conception. If you're not making a claim to the Woodrow estate, why do you need DNA from Clay's toothbrush?

ANNA LOU

I just wanna know for sure. For myself.

PARKER

(whispers) Bette. Bette. Anna Lou might've thought that Bobby would try to silence her if she went public as Clay's daughter, so she might've tried to kill him before he could get to her.

ANNA LOU

I can hear you.

GEORGE

We can all hear you, Parker.

PARKER

Oh.

KIRSTEEN

This is painfully stupid. Anna Lou didn't poison Bobby.

BETTE

Pray tell us why you think that, Kirsteen? I'm all ears.

KIRSTEEN

Look at her! She's not the type.

PARKER

But the one who did it is always the one you don't think in a million years did it, innit. I know better than most.

KIRSTEEN

What?

BETTE

What Parker is trying to say is that appearances can be deceiving. Look at Anna Lou. So meek, so mild, and yet she was the first to approach Abilene in the VIP lounge on the night of the murder.

The ECHOEY MEMORY of the SCUFFLE.

BETTE (cont'd)

And why? Because she recognised you, isn't that right, Anna Lou?

ANNA LOU

Oh! Yes, I, I admit it. She recognised me. Momma used to take me to Clay's concerts when I was little, and Abilene was always there.

BETTE

Mmm yes, Abilene told me about the concerts. She told me a lot of things, actually. Your mother didn't take you to enjoy Clay's music, did she?

ANNA LOU

No. Momma made signs for us to hold. They'd say things like, 'absent father' and 'make him pay'.

PARKER

Make him pay?

KIRSTEEN

That's... pretty darn threatening, Anna Lou.

ANNA LOU

She was tryna shame him into settling with us in private. It didn't work. Clay's security threw us out every time.

PARKER

(whispers) Motive alert. Motive alert.

ANNA LOU

I can still hear you! And I didn't hurt Bobby!

PARKER

I'm not talking about Bobby!

BETTE

It *does* sound like a solid motive for murdering Clay, doesn't it?

ANNA LOU

What???

BETTE

The father that never acknowledged you. That turned your own mother against you.

ANNA LOU

I didn't kill Clay! Or Bobby! Why are saying that?  
You know what, this is ridiculous. I don't have to sit here while you accuse me of things I haven't done. I'm leaving.

Chair SCRAPE.

FENWICK

You're not going anywhere, sunshine.

ANNA LOU

Are you arresting me??

BETTE

No, he's not a policeman anymore, he can't arrest you. Sit down, Anna Lou. Parker, do you remember that case I had? The one I called 'The Case of the Dubious Stallion'.

PARKER

Huh. Errr...nNah. Don't think you told me about that.

BETTE

I definitely did.

PARKER

Not ringing a bell...

BETTE

The one with the horse sperm!

PARKER

Oh! (beat) Yeah, sorry, I might not have been listening.

BETTE

Anyway, the Case of the Dubious Stallion, basically, it all boiled down to the fact that people pay a lot of money for fancy horse jizz.

GEORGE

Why are we talking about horse, erm, fluid?

BETTE

Because, George, sometimes people are willing to procure fancy sperm through dubious means.

ANNA LOU

(v upset and confused) What?

BETTE

I think Kirsteen knows what I'm talking about. And Jacob, too. And Bobby, obviously.

Beat.

Do either of you want to tell her, or shall I?

Beat.

KIRSTEEN

Ugh, fine, fine. I'll do it. Although I only know some of this because Jacob told me.

BETTE

Go ahead Kirsteen.

KIRSTEEN

Before I married Clay, he got hit with a few paternity cases...

BETTE

As discussed. Including the one brought by Anna Lou's mother.

KIRSTEEN

Anyway, none of them stuck. A few years later, DNA testing comes along and a private investigator is hired -

JACOB

That's me.

KIRSTEEN

Uh huh. Jacob is hired by a collective of these women who swear on the bible that Clay is the father of their children. Jacob is tasked with stealing some of Clay's DNA for testing.

I was married to Clay by that time and when these women got in touch through their lawyer, Clay swore to me that these kids were not his. He really believed it, but he had no choice but to settle outta court. Clay was so confused. First he thought the scientist or the judge had been bribed. For a while he thought DNA testing was a made-up thing and we were all being duped. But then he realised he might've *forgotten* that he'd slept with all these women.

PARKER

How do you forget something like that?

KIRSTEEN

Well, the thing was, all these illegitimate kids were roughly the same age...

JACOB

Between 27 and 28 years old.

KIRSTEEN

Uh huh. Clay was in a bad way 27 years ago. He fell off the wagon after a real nasty divorce. So Clay thought, maybe he was black-out drunk and he just couldn't remember falling into bed with a harem of fans. From then on, Clay felt like he couldn't trust his own memory, his own mind. He was so ashamed. Wouldn't talk about it. But I know he thought about it.

BETTE

That song the night he died...

MEMORY CLAY

(sings) Sometimes I feel like I'm sinking...

BETTE

He suspected something.

MEMORY CLAY

(sings) Weighed down with all my  
regrets. Things I can't even  
remember, Things I'd do well to  
forget.

KIRSTEEN

I guess he knew something was off.  
After all, he was in rehab while some  
of those kids were conceived.

BETTE

Turkey-basting.

JACOB

That's what I thought too.

PARKER

What? Turkey basting?

FENWICK

Bloody hell.

BETTE

Maybe they didn't use a turkey  
baster, but the principle is sound. A  
DIY form of artificial insemination.

PARKER

I don't get it - ugh, OK, I just got  
it. Wouldn't Clay know his man fluid  
was being scooped into a turkey  
baster?

ANNA LOU

(upset) Ohhhh.

BETTE

Not necessarily. Anna Lou do you  
remember when you mentioned that song  
Clay released about the massage  
parlour scandal?

PAST ANNA LOU

And when the tabloids ran that expose  
about Clay's trip to the massage  
parlour after his divorce, what did  
he do? He wrote a damn song.

BETTE

That certainly got my cogs whirring,  
I can tell you.

ANNA LOU

Massage parlour?

KIRSTEEN

Oh well done, Miss Armstrong. You're  
quicker than I was.

BETTE

So you already figured it out.

KIRSTEEN

Only recently. Me and Bobby, we were  
drinking one night and he told me  
when Clay's divorce got messy, Bobby  
booked him in for a special massage  
to cheer him up. A special massage  
with a happy ending. Ugh. I believe  
Bobby was trying to shock or nauseate  
me, and he succeeded. But it all fell  
into place.

FENWICK

(mutters) Does that mean... no!

PARKER

Bobby milked him.

BETTE

Bobby violated Clay's bodily  
autonomy, for financial gain. He  
arranged for Clay's semen to be  
collected at the parlour, and then he  
sold it on the black market. The DNA  
of one of the world's biggest country  
stars. Some of his more ardent fans  
would pay top dollar.

ANNA LOU

I can't believe what I'm hearing.

FENWICK

I thought he was just another sloppy  
swordsman who couldn't keep it in his  
trousers.

KIRSTEEN

Clay wasn't like that, Mr Fenwick.

GEORGE

Oh gosh. I feel terrible for ever doubting him.

KIRSTEEN

If Bobby ever wakes up, I'm gonna kill him.

BETTE

Must've cost your mother a fortune, Anna Lou. The insemination, the court fees, the lawyers?

ANNA LOU

Momma came from money, that's what she always told us, but we were always clipping coupons, and when I was twelve, we lost the house. She never told me why. We lived in our station wagon for months.

BETTE

That must've been very hard for you and your brother.

PARKER

(confused, mutters) Brother? What brother?

BETTE

All that misery, all because Bobby needed to pay his gambling debts.

ANNA LOU

But I didn't know that. So why would I try to hurt him when I didn't know!

BETTE

Anna Lou, when did you know your mother had followed you to the UK?

ANNA LOU

(panic) I... I, my mom isn't--

BETTE

I imagine it was terribly alarming when she walked into the VIP lounge that night, bold as brass. She might've told everyone who you were! No wonder you were so quick to act.

FENWICK

(whistles, impressed) Bloody hell, Armstrong. That's detective work.

PARKER

Hang on. Her *mum* was in the VIP lounge?

GEORGE

Abilene??

KIRSTEEN

Oh my God! The stalker's your mom??

JACOB

Holy shit.

ANNA LOU

I guess the cat's outta the bag. Abilene Docherty is my *momma*.

BETTE

Tell me, Anna Lou, has Abilene *always* believed she's in a relationship with Clay?

ANNA LOU

No. No. She's always been... eccentric, unpredictable, but the last couple of years... something happened. She told me they were having an affair. She showed me gifts Clay's sent her - but they were just cheap trinkets, not the kind of thing a millionaire would give his mistress - oh, and there were letters too! Love letters!

BETTE

Have you seen these letters?

ANNA LOU

Couple of them. I told her, they're not from him. I work for Clay, I know what his handwriting is like.

BETTE

More letters. So many letters. So who do you think is writing them?

ANNA LOU

I don't know. Some creep who enjoys tormenting *momma* for fun.

JACOB

Can I say something?

BETTE

Oh. Go ahead, Jacob.

JACOB

You said earlier that you'd written in my invite the name of the person who tried to kill Bobby. You told everyone here it was Anna Lou. But that's not what--

BETTE

Yes, I know. I lied.

ANNA LOU

You did what?

BETTE

Quite an effective method for getting people to talk, but yes, a little unethical perhaps. Sorry I upset you, Anna Lou.  
In actual fact, the name I wrote in Jacob's letter was--

JJ BURSTS IN.

The door SLAMS.

JJ

It's me.

PARKER

JJ??

JJ

Hello everyone.

THEME MUSIC

CREDITS

Mockery Manor is written by Lindsay Sharman and directed by Lindsay Sharman and Laurence Owen  
Music, sound design and editing by Laurence Owen.

Hayley Evenett was Bette and JJ,  
(MORE)

## CREDITS (cont'd)

Laurence Owen was Parker and Paul,  
and John Henry Falle was Fenwick and  
Bobby D, Christina Bianco was  
Kirsteen, Luke Capasso was Jacob,  
Kristi Boulton was Anna Lou, and  
Madame Magenta was himself.

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become one of them and help me and  
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