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THE FEARLESS PIGEONS

by Barry Kay

EXTRACT

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THE FEARLESS PIGEONS - by Barry Kay. Draft 5.0

PART ONE

NIGHT. INSIDE THE SUBURBAN HOUSE OF THE PIGEON FAMILY LOOKING OUT THROUGH THE LOUNGE-ROOM WINDOWS INTO THE FRONT YARD AND THE STREET. INSIDE AND OUTSIDE IT IS DARK AND STILL.

A DOG STARTS BARKING OUTSIDE IN THE FRONT YARD, THEN THE SOUND OF A CAR APPROACHING. AS THE CAR TURNS AND STOPS, THE HEADLIGHTS PIERCE THROUGH A BARRED FENCE, SENDING SHADOWS ACROSS THE CURTAINS.

A BARRED SECURITY GATE OPENS IN THE DRIVEWAY - THE CAR'S HEADLIGHTS SEND THE BARRED PATTERNS MOVING ACROSS THE ROOM. WHEN THE GATE OPENS THE CAR DRIVES UP TO THE HOUSE.

THE CAR ENGINE STOPS, CAR DOORS OPEN, CAR DOORS CLOSE. THE BEEP OF THE CAR'S CENTRAL LOCK. THE DOG CONTINUES BARKING.

CLARE

(Outside)

Hello Wolfie! Hey, Wolfie? What's the mmatter?

PENNY

(Outside)

Clare, come here! Get away from the dog. Be quiet, Wolfie. Quiet!

CLARE

(Outside)

What's the m-matter with him, M-Mum?

PENNY

(Outside)

Come inside now. Come on, that's a good girl. Clare!

CLARE

I'm com-ming.

THE SOUND OF A KEY IN THE FRONT DOOR, IT OPENS.

(NB ALL OF THE FOLLOWING ACTION AND DIALOGUE IS IN THE NEAR DARK UNTIL SPECIFIED THAT THE LIGHTS ARE ON.)

CLARE (cont'd)

(Inside now.)

Count to twenty - no, no, ten - no, twenty!

PENNY

(Also inside.)

No, Clare. Slow down. I'm not playing. Just let me-

SOUND OF A LIGHT SWITCH- BUT NO LIGHTS. PENNY GROANS.

CLARE

Turn on the lights, M-Mum.

PENNY

You just stay where you are - keep still - you'll break something.

CLARE

No, I won't.

PENNY FUMBLING IN THE DARK TOWARDS ANOTHER LIGHT SWITCH. STILL NO LIGHTS.

PENNY

I don't believe this! Now just stay calm, Clare. Clare-? Ah, the alarm!

PENNY FUMBLING IN THE DARK FOR THE HOUSE ALARM KEY-PAD. THE BEEP OF BUTTONS BEING PRESSED.

PENNY (cont'd)

Clare? No! No, I'm not playing! Clare!

PENNY'S FORM IS NOW SILHOUETTED AGAINST THE WINDOW. SHE TRIPS/KICKS AGAINST SOMETHING ON THE FLOOR. THERE IS A GRUNT. PENNY FREEZES. BRIEF PAUSE.

PENNY (cont'd)

(whispering)

Clare?

SUDDENLY A SHADOWY HUMAN SHAPE APPEARS NEXT TO PENNY.

PENNY SCREAMS AND HITS OUT WILDLY AT THE SHADOWY SHAPE.

SHADOWY SHAPE

Hey! What's the-?! Where's-?!

PENNY

Aaah!! Get away! Get away!!

SHADOWY SHAPE

Hey, - Ah! Wait?! Hey Ow! No, it's okay- Wait-! Where's-?

PENNY IS FLAILING AND THROWING THINGS AT THE SHADOWY SHAPE - ANYTHING SHE CAN FIND.

PENNY

Get away from me! Get away! Get out! Ow!

UTTER CONFUSION. THE SOUND OF PORCELAIN SMASHING ON THE FLOOR.

PENNY (cont'd)

Aah! Get out! Leave me alone!! Get away from me!(A bump) Aaah! Shit!!

A TORCH LIGHT FLASHES ABOUT. PENNY BECOMES EVEN MORE HYSTERICAL.

THE SHADOWY SHAPE

Wait- No-

PENNY

No! No! Go away! Get out. Get out of my house!

A HUGE SOUND OF SMASHING GLASS AND SPLASHING WATER - A FISH TANK TOPPLING OVER.

PENNY (cont'd)

Ah! Please. Please. No! Help me!

SUDDENLY THERE IS LIGHT - LOTS OF IT - FROM A SIGN MADE OF LIGHTS ILLUMINATING THE WORDS "HAPPY BIRTHDAY". A MAN (FRANK) STANDS HOLDING A TORCH. HE IS WEARING WHAT APPEARS TO BE A RATHER ILL-FITTING SUPER HERO COSTUME (THE LOOK WITH THE 'UNDERWEAR' ON THE OUTSIDE OF TIGHTS). PENNY IS FLAILING ON THE GROUND IN WATER AND BROKEN GLASS WITH LITTLE FISH FLIPPING AND FLOPPING ABOUT. CLARE IS NOWHERE TO BE SEEN. BOTH PENNY AND FRANK ARE DAZZLED BY THE SUDDEN BRIGHT LIGHT.

PENNY (cont'd)

Go away! Leave me alone! Go away! Get out! Go away!!!

FRANK

(standing over Penny)

Penny! It's me!

PENNY

Go away! Get away!

FRANK

Penny!

PENNY

Frank?

FRANK

Yes. Yes, it's me. Calm down.

PENNY

Frank?

FRANK

Yes. Are you-?

PENNY

Frank!

PENNY HURRIEDLY EMBRACES FRANK.

FRANK

No, no, you're all wet... Ah- There, there, Pen.
It's all right. Everything's all right.

PENNY SHOVES FRANK AWAY.

PENNY

What the fuck are you doing, Frank?

FRANK

(scolding)

Penny.

PENNY

What do you think you're doing?!

FRANK

It's- It's- Well, it was *supposed* to be a
surprise.

PENNY

Frank! You scared me to death!

FRANK

No... well, I didn't mean to. I came home nice and
early and... and set everything up and... I waited
and waited. You were- Why are you so late? I must
have fallen asleep.

PENNY

Jesus, Frank.

FRANK

I'm sorry. Where's-?

PENNY

I've never been so scared in my life.

FRANK

Well, I'm- I'm sorry. Where's Clare?

CLARE LEAPS OUT OF HER HIDING PLACE NEARBY.

CLARE

Boo!!

FRANK IS STARTLED BUT PENNY, ALREADY ON EDGE, IS SO SURPRISED SHE
LOSES HER FOOTING, SLIPS AND FALLS DOWN AGAIN. CLARE IS
DELIGHTED.

FRANK

(Helping PENNY to her feet)

Clare!

CLARE

I told ya you wouldn't find mme.

PENNY

(Struggling to her feet)

Clare!

FRANK LEANS DOWN AND GRABS PENNY'S WRIST AND RAISES HER TO HER FEET IN A DEFT DANCE-LIKE MOVE. HE SPINS PENNY ON THE SPOT AND THEN CATCHES HER.

FRANK

Never fear my dear, your hero is here.

PENNY

Frank!

PENNY PUSHES FRANK AWAY AND TURNS ON CLARE.

PENNY (cont'd)

Don't you ever do that again, Clare!

CLARE

You couldn't find mm-me!

PENNY

(Scrambling back to her feet.)

I told you I didn't want to play!

CLARE

You just couldn't find me!

PENNY

I wasn't even looking for you! You stupid girl!

CLARE

I'm not stupid!

FRANK

(Standing between them.)

All right. All right. That's enough.

CLARE

I'm-mm not stupid!

FRANK

No, of course not.

PENNY

(Noticing FRANK'S clothes)

What are you wearing, Frank?

FRANK

Well... ah, Clare said she wanted a costume party.

CLARE

(Suddenly excited again)

Yeah! That's right! Costumes!!

PENNY
Clare-!

CLARE
Dad, where's mm-mm-mm-my- ?

FRANK
It's just up-

PENNY
Clare! Your father and I are talking.

CLARE
But I have to-

PENNY
Clare!

FRANK
She just-

CLARE
I just-

PENNY
It's rude to interrupt, Clare. You know that.

FRANK
But she just wants-

PENNY
She has to learn, Frank.

FRANK
Yes. Yes.

CLARE
It's not fair!

PENNY
Now, what's this all about, Frank?

FRANK
Clare- we thought it'd be fun to dress up... for your party... But I- I didn't have time to-

PENNY
You look ridiculous.

FRANK
Yes, well... you look nice.

PENNY
Really? It's brand new - a birthday present to myself.

FRANK

It's nice. It suits you.

PENNY

It's all ruined now - Aah!

PENNY STARTS LEAPING ABOUT AND SHAKING HERSELF VIOLENTLY.

PENNY (cont'd)

Something's on me! Ah get it off! Get it off. What is it?

FRANK

Keep still. It's just a fish. You knocked over the fish tank.

CLARE

No! Mm-my fish! Mmm-my fish!!

CLARE AND FRANK TRY TO GRAB THE FISH BUT THEY SLIP OUT OF THEIR HANDS. FRANK GETS UP AND WALKS OUT OF THE ROOM.

CLARE (cont'd)

Daddy, we have to save the fish. We have to save them!

FRANK

(Offstage)

Yes, yes, I know.

PENNY

Frank? Where are you going-? Frank?!

FRANK

(Offstage)

Just a minute. Won't be long!

THE 'REGULAR' LIGHTS IN THE ROOM COME ON.

CLARE

Hurry, Daddy, they'll die!

FRANK

(Offstage)

I know. I'm coming.

PENNY

They're already dead, Frank! Frank? Come back here! Oh, leave the fish alone, for goodness sake, Clare!

CLARE

I can't hold them. They're going to die!

PENNY

They're already dead!