

CATALINA EARTHQUAKE MUSEUM

"Lost Out of Transit"

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Based on the concept created by Roland Mann

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT: EARTHQUAKE MUSEUM - FOYER - EVENING

The museum's lights grow dim as visitors and workers alike trek towards the exit. The lights in various displays cases click off one after the other as the crowd passes them by.

INTERCOM

The Catalina Earthquake Museum will now be closing for the night, but please feel free to visit us on the morrow!

GIANI WILSON, a finely dressed barman in his mid-20's, follows the crowd. He stops at seeing the JANITOR, an old man with a heavily stained uniform, head into a maintenance closet with a keys in hand. The janitor departs, still in uniform but without his keys.

Giani smirks and checks out the area before sneaking into the closet. A moment of silence precedes a sudden series of CRASHING NOISES.

Giani emerges from the closet, his uniform in shambles, but smiling as he twirls the janitor's keys and heads back into the museum.

INT: EARTHQUAKE MUSEUM - PROF. LUX'S LAB - MOMENTS LATER

ABIGAIL LUX, a blonde-haired beauty in her mid-30's, stretches in her chair as her computer slowly shuts down. Her lab room is neatly organized and twice so in cleanliness, with even a jar of dirt twinkling with a fine sheen.

Abigail reaches down and grabs her handbag and begins to pack away her essentials. Such essentials include, a bottle of hand sanitizer, a box of tissues, a packet of sanitizing wipes, a bag of surgical masks, etc.

Abigail carefully inspects her gloves and seeing them still spotlessly white exits her office.

INT: EARTHQUAKE MUSEUM - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Abigail walks towards the exit with a tired smile when FELIX WEATHERBY, the middle-aged curator dressed in a business suit, turns around the corner and spots her.

FELIX

Ah, Miss Lux, a moment if you please.

Abigail stops and turns to face Felix who walks briskly up to her, his hands clasped behind his straightened back.

ABIGAIL

Mr. Weatherby? Is something the matter?

Felix sneers and looks askance towards the museum interior.

FELIX

It would seem that we've had another mishap with one of our exhibits. It seems to have... disappeared.

Abigail's eyes widen.

ABIGAIL

(stunned)

Someone stole an artefact?

Felix nods and glances at the nearby cases.

FELIX

The most precious one in fact, a medallion that belonged to the esteemed founder of this very museum.

Abigail nods but tilts her head in confusion.

ABIGAIL

Then shouldn't we call the authorities?

FELIX

I'm afraid that due to a certain somebody who shall remain nameless...

CUT TO:

EXT. EARTHQUAKE MUSEUM

PULL OUT on the entire museum as it trembles down to its foundations.

FELIX (O.S.)
GIANI! WILSON!

CUT BACK TO:

INT. EARTHQUAKE MUSEUM - FOYER

Abigail blinks owlishly as she brushes her hair back down.

FELIX
The authorities are rather lax in
their arrival time. That being
said...

Felix removes a small remote from his shirt pocket and
presses a button. STEEL PLATES SLAM down in front of the
museum's doors and Abigail leaps in fright.

FELIX (CONT'D)
The museum will be under lock down
until either the medallion is found
and put back into its proper place
or the authorities arrive.
Whichever comes first.

Abigail gapes at Felix, looking back and forth between him
and the doors.

ABIGAIL
What do you expect me to do in the
meantime? Why should I be forced to
find this-this trinket? I am no
investigator!

Felix smiles amusingly at Abigail.

FELIX
But Miss Lux, is that not what
you're doing in regards to the "Big
One"?

He turns and starts walking back the way he came.

FELIX (CONT'D)
If you should need me, I'll be
making my own investigation through
our security footage.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. EARTHQUAKE MUSEUM - 2nd FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

A visibly frustrated Abigail stomps through the hall, uttering a faint, feline growl at every smeared glass case she passes. Turning around a sharp corner, she bumps into somebody and falls onto her behind. The person (Giani) leaps back in surprise and starts to box at the air.

GIANI

ACK! You'll never take me alive!

She starts to glare up at Giani when she sees the dirt stain on her lab coat.

ABIGAIL

Oh my God, oh my God, get it off,
got to get it off!

Giani opens his eyes and looks down at Abigail as she hastily digs through her purse.

GIANI

Hey... I know you... You're that
new historian Weatherby hired.
Abbey?

Abigail furiously rubs at the spot on her coat as she slowly looks up at Giani.

ABIGAIL

Abigail. My name is Abigail Lux and
you...

PUSH IN on Giani's name tag.

Abigail's eyes widen before narrowing sharply.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Are the reason I'm in this mess!

GIANI

Excuse me? Look, if it's about
scaring you--

ABIGAIL

Me?! I wasn't the one screaming
about not being taken alive! No,
it's because of you that the
authorities are taking so long
getting here!

Giani's eyes widen in surprise before they narrow. His fists clench and open rapidly.

GIANI

Well that's just what I need!

He starts walking away. Abigail quickly gives chase.

ABIGAIL

Wait! Where are you going?!

GIANI

I'm going to go find a way out! I will not be caught up in whatever nefarious plans you and the government has for me thank you very much!

ABIGAIL

Nefarious WHAT? Are... Are you MAD? Do I look like I work for such a disgusting thing as our government?

Giani stops and turns to look Abigail over. A SLOW PAN over Abigail's form, from black heels, to stocking legs, etc. He slowly starts to smirk.

GIANI

Nah, you look way too clean to be with those guys.

Abigail rolls her eyes and crosses her arms.

ABIGAIL

Look, I have little patience for foolishness so just explain to me why you're lurking about the hallways.

GIANI

Lurking about? I don't lurk, lady. I investigate.

Abigail raises an eyebrow.

ABIGAIL

Investigate what?

Giani eyes Abigail with his own eyebrow raised.

GIANI

... Nonya.

ABIGAIL

Nonya?

GIANI

Nonya business that's what. I get that you're new here but let me make this perfectly clear. You work for Weatherby. Ergo facto, I have no reason to trust you.

Abigail groans exasperatedly and massages the bridge of her nose.

ABIGAIL

Look. It's late, I'm tired, you're deranged, and frankly I'd rather not have to deal with you but until the missing exhibit is found--

GIANI

Missing? Who is missing?

ABIGAIL

Not who, what. A medallion. That's why the museum is under lock down.

Giani taps at his lower lip, glancing upwards.

GIANI

A missing medallion huh...? Wait! I know who did this! I saw his trail a ways back that way! Come with me!

Giani grabs Abigail and pulls her right off her feet as he races through the halls.

CUT TO:

INT. EARTHQUAKE MUSEUM - 1ST FLOOR HALLWAY - EVENING
(FLASHBACK)

The emergency exit door slowly opens as dirt-grimed fingers grasp the edge.

GIANI (V.O.)

There's only one man I know besides me that likes to lurk these halls at this time of night...

FISHSTICKS JONES, an elderly man garbed in a filthy raincoat, peeks around the corner. He smiles a gap-toothed grin and shuffles his way into the museum.

GIANI (V.O.)

A man that picks anything that
isn't tied down... And that is the
man they call Fishsticks Jones...

Fishstick Jones heads further into the museum, leaving a trail of muddied footprints behind as he goes.

INT. EARTHQUAKE MUSEUM - 1ST FLOOR HALLWAY - EVENING
(PRESENT)

Abigail glares with a disgusted sneer at the muddied footprints. Her eyes follow the trail to the end of the hallway. Her face flushes red at the freshly mopped sign sitting besides one large splotch of mud.

Giani nods and crosses his arms.

GIANI

It's Fishsticks alright. Probably out to "pay" his bar tab again with something from the museum. That's going to be a pain to clean.

Abigail's shoulders tremble, fists clenching tight.

ABIGAIL

Who is this man that would dare to desecrate the sanctity of freshly mopped floors!

Giani glances at her out the corner of his eyes and discretely puts some space between them.

GIANI

Fishsticks Jones, like I said. He's just some bum that likes to sneak in here and catch some sleep in the bathrooms every now and again.

ABIGAIL

A BUM? What kind of bum sneaks into a museum of all places?

GIANI

The kind that knows we've got bottles of champagne both in and out of the display cases?

Abigail rubs tiredly at her eyes with the palms of her hands.

ABIGAIL

I don't believe this. You have to
be on some manner of medication.
Your delusions of a thieving bum,
while imaginative are just that!
Nothing but a figment of your
psychosis!

Giani reels back in surprise before he glares at Abigail. He
scowls viciously as his fists clench and open at his sides.

GIANI

If you think that I'm some kind of
psycho, then why don't you prove me
wrong? Follow these tracks and see
what old Fishsticks has gone and
done this time for yourself.

Abigail spares a quick glare at Giani before she storms down
the hallway with Giani at her heels. They arrive at the
barroom doors. Giani holds up the janitor's keys with a
smirk.

Abigail snatches them out of his hands. She unlocks the doors
and shoves them open.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. EARTHQUAKE MUSEUM - BARROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The BARROOM DOORS SLAM OPEN, revealing a glaring Abigail and a smirking Giani. Both of them spot something out of sight and rapidly pale to ghostly white. Their eyes widen to the size of dinner plates and their pupils shrink to tiny dots.

Abigail's arms slowly fall down to her sides, her mouth flapping soundlessly.

Giani hands rapidly clench and open as he gibbers incoherently.

PULL ACROSS the barroom, past empty tables and chairs to the counter where a swaying Fishsticks Jones sits atop a tall bar stool with a half empty bottle of champagne in hand and an empty glass in the other.

FISHSTICKS

(drunkenly)

H-Here's to... to you good old
buddy... May-May ours be a fiend-
friend... ships. Friendship that
last for... forever!

He pours himself a glass of champagne.

FISHSTICKS (CONT'D)

Ours... Ours is the kind of
friendli-shipness that even... that
skeleton guy can't get between!

He raises the glass high into the air before taking a drink straight out of the bottle. He rubs at his scruffy face and spots the gaping Abigail and Giani. He raises the glass.

FISHSTICKS (CONT'D)

And here's to the happy couple!

He gulps the glass dry.

FISHSTICKS (CONT'D)

And here's to me! Got past ol'
Weather-beebie's nose yet again!

Fishsticks chugs the entire bottle and promptly falls onto the floor. PAN SLOWLY across the downed Fishsticks to a wheelchair resting beside him. PULL BACK to see a decayed corpse resting atop the wheelchair.

Its skin is grimy and putrid in some places while its clothes have clearly not been washed for several decades. Its foul stench wafts upwards in a visible smoke of disgusting greens and revolting yellows.

Abigail's gloved hands grip Giani's shoulders as his own do the same to the lapels of her coat.

The two scream bloody murder.

The DOORS SLAM OPEN on the opposite side of the bar and Felix races in. He slides to a stop in the middle of the barroom and leans heavily upon his knees gasping for air.

FELIX

I think... I just lost... a few
more... hairs just now...

His breathing slows and he rises upright and brushes some errant dust from his shoulders. He slowly starts to look around the room.

FELIX (CONT'D)

Now what seems to be the--

Felix sees the corpse and his eyes widen with surprise before he sighs with visible relief.

FELIX (CONT'D)

THERE you are!

He looks towards the gaping Abigail and Giani. He nods with a large smile stretching on his wrinkly face.

FELIX (CONT'D)

I have to say, Miss Lux, I hadn't
expected you to find our missing
exhibit so quickly, and with Mr.
Wilson's aid no less!

Felix heads over to the corpse and starts to wheel it towards the two.

FELIX (CONT'D)

I honestly thought he'd have you
going on one of his silly
investigations. A job well done
Miss Lux!

The pair hastily leap aside, both squeaking at the corpse's approach. Felix notices Abigail's horrified gaze upon the body.

FELIX (CONT'D)
Is there a problem Miss Lux?

Abigail points a quivering finger at the medallion around the corpse's neck.

ABIGAIL
Th-There clean... b-b-but...?

Felix blinks before nodding with an understanding smile.

FELIX
Ah, I see. I never did mention anything about the medallion having been removed from our founder's neck did I? Ah well, old age tends to make one forget the smaller things in life and death.

Felix looks back at the unconscious Fishsticks and snorts in disgust. He starts to wheel the corpse out of the room.

FELIX (CONT'D)
(murmuring)
I think an increase in the security of the display cases are in order. Can't have that old bum "bernie-ing" off with anymore drinking buddies.

The doors of the barroom shut behind him, leaving the pair alone with the unconscious drunk. Abigail and Giani slowly turn to face each other.

Their eyes roll up into their heads and they collapse to the barroom floor, still holding on to each other tightly.

ABIGAIL
(whimpering)
Dirty...

GIANI
(simpering)
Mommy...

In his corner, Fishsticks snorts and rolls over. He hugs the bottle of champagne like a teddy bear.

FISHSTICKS
Wait 'til the honeymoon you two.

THE END