

MY ~~PERFECT~~ ALIBI

a comedy in two acts

(or one act of violence followed by two acts of cover up)

by

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CHARACTERS

- DAVE - Twenty-five to thirty, laid back, living in the moment.
- GLADYS - Mid twenties to mid thirties. Would be career woman, has given up looking for Mr. Right. Just wants her life back.
- MEG - Gladys's roommate, mid twenties to mid thirties. On the same career path as Gladys but would chuck it all for one good fantasy--just doesn't know what that fantasy is.
- ANDREA - Dave's neighbor, mid twenties to mid thirties.

SETTING

Dave's one bedroom apartment.

Stage right is a kitchenette with a pass thru peninsula (or island) giving us clear view into the kitchenette. Continuing upstage is a door leading off left to an all in one hall--broom--linen closet. Along the back wall far right is another door leading to the bedroom and turning left a third door opening into the bathroom. Next to this is a stretch of wall with a small table holding bric 'n' brac, including the house phone and answering machine. Along the left wall (upstage) is window covered with out of date curtains and down left stands the front door opening outside to a concrete patio shared by all the residents of this apartment complex. Downstage right there is a small K-mart table with two chairs that serves as the formal dining room. Downstage left of center is a sofa facing the fourth wall (audience) and an unseen TV. Next to the sofa is a side table on which sits a Video game box for Grand Theft Auto among other debris.

There is more than five feet of clear walkway between the back of the sofa and the upstage wall.

TIME

ACT I

- Scene 1 A sunny mid afternoon
Scene 2 Forty-five minutes later

ACT II

- Scene 1 Moments later

A NOTE ON THE DIALOGUE:

1. A slash “ / “ indicates the character with the next line of dialogue begins his or her speech (overlapping dialogue).
2. Dialogue in brackets “ [] ” is unspoken, although the character is thinking it.
(please note these passages will also be highlighted in grey in this script)
3. Dialogue in parenthesis “ () ” is spoken aloud but is an aside.
(also note that these passages are NOT highlighted and SHOULD BE read aloud)
4. Grammatical errors; sentences beginning in lower case; or UPPER CASE; used in place of common punctuation (even a few misspellings), were, indeed, intended.

ACT I

(At rise.

An apartment living room. We can see the kitchenette from here as well. Mary Tyler Moore would faint. This is a man's apartment. A bachelor's apartment. And is in deep need of rescue.

DAVE sits facing us on the couch. He has a remote in his hands and is currently playing a rather loud video game. The doorbell rings.)

DAVE

(Engaging the controller as he rises from the couch:)

Yep. Yep, yep. Hold on, I'll be right there. Hold on. Hold onnnnnnn. Hold it----
There.

(He hits save on the controller.)

Coming.

(He drops the controller onto the sofa as he crosses around the back of the couch to answer the front door. He opens the door to let in:)

DAVE

(Pleased to see her:)

Gladys!!

GLADYS

(Stepping into the room but only a step:)

You're smothering me.

(That said she draws a handgun out of her purse and points it at Dave. The gun fires once, followed by two more shots. A beat. A fourth shot is fired from the gun.)

(DAVE falls back behind the sofa, onto the floor. GLADYS says nothing. She stands there shocked, unsure what to say, what to do, how to react. Even unsure of what has just happened. She looks over at DAVE, lifeless on floor. There is a pause.)

GLADYS

Dave?

(No reply. Nor can she really expect one to follow any time in the near or far future. Pause.)

If it helps I saw this going so much differently on the drive over here.

(Pause. She looks around again very aware now not to touch anything...)

GLADYS

What now?

(She checks her watch. With her foot she carefully swings the door closed, making sure it latches. She now focuses on the gun in her hand--what is that doing there? She holds it by two fingers on the grip as if it were a foreign object or a dirty diaper. She debates where to set it down. Drop it on the floor? Lay it next to the body? Softly release it onto the sofa? Back in her purse? She chooses her purse. She now moves away from Dave and around the front of the sofa; further into the room.)

Shit.

(She moves to the window and peaks out through the curtains to see her car. She is now overtly aware of other windows to the other apartments around her.)

Shit. Shit, shit, shit.

(She begins to pace. Her attention turns to the TV screen. She looks down at the remote on the sofa. Tucking her hand into the cuff of her sleeve she pushes a button on the controller. BANG! BANG! Whiirrrrr!!! The sounds of Dave's video game come back alive. GLADYS jumps at first but then realizes...)

OK, OK, that can work. Nobody heard anything. Just--

(She reads the box on the coffee table the game came out of:)

-- Grand Theft Auto.

(Looks to Dave:)

Thank you.

(She starts to move around the apartment cautiously; checking out all the details herein. Dishes in the sink, what cupboard doors are open, what are shut, nothing in the microwave, half filled grocery bags used as trash cans

hanging from the door knob. Finding a paper towel rack on the counter she uses a paper towel to protect herself from leaving prints as she check the bathroom--opening the door she looks inside: nothing to speak of. She decides NOT to look in the bedroom. Coming full circle into the living area voices from the TV start talking aloud. A male voice screams out at the cops daring them to try and take him alive. GLADYS again jumps. She catches herself and breathes through her mouth--in/out, in/out. She debates turning the sound off but then again, thinks better of it. Returning to the matter of the answering machine, using her paper towel she--

TV

Take that you son of a --

(Shots fire.)

GLADYS

Oh for godsake--

(The phone rings. GLADYS jumps again--it is all she can do to hold silent. She looks around the room to find where the ringing is coming from. It's an Iphone or an Android phone or who the hell cares what it is because it won't stop ringing. And it's hooked to up to a docking station next to a pile of mail. The torture ends only to be replaced by:)

PHONE STATION

(Dave's voice:)

You know what to do. -- BEEP --

(Dial tone.)

GLADYS

Thank god. Good. Good.

PHONE STATION

(Mechanical voice:)

You - have - three - new - messages.

(GLADYS takes a deep breath. She moves back to the TV remote and, although she 'wants' to shut it off, she lowers the volume then returns to the more pressing matter of how to leave--She tries to think. Trying to figure out what to do next--aaaah, crap, she can't help herself: she has to know. She moves back to the phone and carefully using a paper towel over her finger she touches buttons.)

PHONE STATION

(Mechanical voice:)

You - have - three - new - messages. First - new - message.

(Woman's voice--could easily be Gladys)

Dave, do not think I am returning your call: I am definitely NOT returning your call. I want you to stop calling. Got it? Stop. I'm tired of changing my number.

-- BEEP --

(Mechanical voice:)

Second new message.

(Same female voice:)

Really Dave? Really? Twenty-three CALLS!? I wish someone would kill you and take you out of my misery. - BEE--

(GLADYS swiftly tries to shut off the machine as the messages continue: "Third - new - message. (Dial tone.) You - have - forty-two - old - messages. First - old - message" In the process she realizes and tries to wipe off her finger print from the off button which turns the system back on:)

PHONE STATION

(Mechanical voice:)

Recording - out - going - message.

GLADYS

Holy crap--

(She stops herself.)

PHONE STATION

-- BEEP --

(Plays back her message:)

"Holy crap."

(GLADYS tries to hit buttons without leaving prints on the phone or the docking station, using the paper towel, her elbow or anything to just make it stop. She finally, slams the phone down on the ground and smashes it into the carpet with her shoe until there is no doubt the phone is as dead as Dave. She stops to breathe. The TV answers her with another volley of gunfire. She tries to regain her composure. She wants to cry but there's no time for that. She fishes into her purse, removing the gun, again holding it by two fingers and sets it aside. She then rummages through her purse to find a prescription bottle of pills. She takes two then looking around debates how to swallow them without water. She tries -- she gags. She spits them out in her hand. Another breath: another try... she gags. One more time. She swallows. A beat. She can't breathe. She rushes to the sink and again using any way she can to not touch anything she turns on the water and sticks her head under the faucet. After succeeding on flushing down her medicine and then shutting off the faucet, she looks over the sink area to see:)

GLADYS

Hair? Hair? Is that my... ?

(She tries to examine it without touching the counter. She can't be sure. She leans back on the counter... thinking... defeated?)

Cleaning supplies. I need cleaning supplies. Scotch tape.

(She returns to her purse. She pulls out her cell phone and through the following dialogue she returns the gun to her purse and after covering her hands further with more paper towels looks around for cleaning supplies, tape, bleach, anything--wiping away the prints she's not leaving behind as she goes and discarding her used paper towels into her purse in the process.)

Hello? Hello? God, answer. Answer, answer, answer--

(Someone answers:)

Hello!?! -- Meg? Meg? It's me. Gladys. -- How many Gladys's do you know? ---- Three. I know three Megs, thank you very much. -- Meg Ryan does too count, I met her last year at that *thing* convention. -- OK; fine--that's not the point. I need you to do me a favor.

GLADYS (Continued:)

I need you to come and...

(Peering out the window again:)

let me use your car for the afternoon. -- You can drive my car. - No, there's nothing wrong with it. Haven't you ever just wanted to drive a convertible? It's such a beautiful day. You *can* drive a stick, right? -- Why do you need to know? Just get the second set of keys from the desk. -- Third cubby on the left. -- Are you looking at it? -- Are you standing in front of the desk right now? -- Well, go there. -- That's nice, good for your mother. OK, are you there? -- OK, look on top of the desk. You see the cubby holes? -- Where we put the stamps. -- Where they're supposed to go. -- OK, good, third cubby out (on your left.) -- Far left. -- In the back. -- Good. Use them. -- And leave me your car--stop talking while I'm talking, OK? - Leave me your car. -- No, I don't have keys. Just leave them in the glove compartment. -- Why not--just do it.

(Looks outside again.)

Address? Uh.

(Looking through Dave's mail setting next to the now defunct docking station:)

324 Mockingbird Lane. - No, that's not the Munsters. -- Apt. twelv--No, never mind you don't need to know that--Just leave the car.

(She carefully picks up the remnants of Dave's cell phone and tries to return it into its cradle as she continues on the phone:)

Hey, can you do me this one?: drive it around the block and walk over - There's no parking, that's why. -- Yeah, just walk up and take my car. Leave your car. -- Because I asked you. I'll owe you one. - OK, fine: remember the time you and-- -- Good, and I'll never bring it up again. -- This is the last time, I swear. Just... do this one thing for me and don't ask any questions. -- Thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you. Just hurry. -- Oh, and bring me my iPad.

(She hangs up. She then wipes off her cell phone and puts it back into her purse. She looks around again but not back at Dave. Finally she sits down on the sofa, careful not to leave any marks, threads or hairs where she sits. She stares into the set as Grand Theft Auto continues to berate her senses. She looks at the controller. Using the paper towel, which now has become an appendage of her hand, she hits the button on the game controller. The sound rises back up. Guns fire. Tires squeal. GLADYS sits silently waiting.)

Lights fade.

SCENE 2

(At rise:

GLADYS is still on the sofa. DAVE is still lying behind the couch, still dead. The game is still shouting out at us, however GLADYS is now holding the controller; paper towels embedded between her own flesh and the plastic of the remote. She is totally absorbed into the game and all but oblivious to the scene behind her. She drinks beer from a can, found, ostensibly, in the refrigerator, through a straw she has concocted from a ball point stick pen she took from her own purse. She would talk to the screen if she had her druthers but she is still too aware for that.)

(There is a knock at the door. GLADYS freezes in position. Only her eyes move. She waits. Waits for whoever it is to go away or holler for her to turn the volume down. Either would be okay. Anything but:

(Another knock. A series actually, suggesting somebody playful behind the door. Someone in a good mood A mood that is bound to change for both of them if Gladys were stupid enough to open the door. All this is conveyed by GLADYS's not moving at all. There is a long pause. GLADYS's eyes glance to the window. Carefully, quietly she inches her way to the edge of the couch and then to the floor. She moves across the floor, staying low and sets herself under the door, below any hope of being seen through the door's peephole. Having succeeded so far, she then stretches herself over toward the window to check to see if Dave can be seen should the friggin' would be Avon Lady decide to sneak a peek before giving up. Everything seems safe as long as she doesn't open the door. Still low, GLADYS scootches her way across the room to take asylum in the kitchen. Half way there:

(The doorbell rings.

(GLADYS stops but only for a moment then double paces her scootching into the kitchen. Pause. We can just see her,

crouched on her haunches, praying or making some deal with the forces of the universe to send the caller away. She is almost in tears when:

(Her cell phone rings... from her purse... on the sofa.

(GLADYS raises her head just enough to see over the counter and visually locate her purse on the couch. Pause. The phone continues to ring.)

MEG

(On the other side of the door:)

Gladys? Are you in there? Gladys?

(GLADYS doesn't reply. She doesn't move.)

MEG (outside)

(Playfully:)

I know you're in there.... I can hear you.

(No reply. Maybe if she just says nothing--)

MEG

Gladys?

GLADYS

(Covering her mouth to answer if only to not have her name said again:)

Coming. Be right there.

(She opens and closes a cabinet door, hoping it will sound like an actual door; it doesn't. She hurries up and goes to the front door but doesn't open it.)

Meg?

MEG (outside)

Who else, silly? Open the door.

GLADYS

What are you doing here?

MEG (outside)

You asked to borrow my car.

GLADYS

Where is it?

MEG (outside)

Around the corner.

GLADYS

Great. Thanks. Take mine.

MEG (outside)

Are you going to open the door?

GLADYS

Nope.

MEG (outside)

You also asked me to bring you your laptop.

GLADYS

What?

MEG (outside)

I've got it here--

GLADYS

Just leave it in the car.

MEG (outside)

(Giggling:)

What is going on?

GLADYS

I'm not dressed, alright?

MEG (outside)

Have you got a man in there?

(A beat.)

GLADYS

You caught me. So just put the iPad back--

MEG (outside)

Laptop.

GLADYS

What?

MEG (outside)

I brought you your laptop.

GLADYS

Fine; just put the laptop back in the car, okay?

MEG (outside)

I can't leave it in the car with the door unlocked.

GLADYS

Then lock the door.

MEG (outside)

With the keys in the glove compartment?

GLADYS

Then leave it unlocked. I'll take my chances. Or leave it on the doorstep.

MEG (outside)

Glads, I'm not going anywhere until you tell me what is going on.

(Pause.)

MEG (outside)

The neighbors are looking at me strange.

(GLADYS panics. She pulls the cushions off the sofa and throws them over Dave.)

MEG (outside)
(Continued--to a neighbor:)

Hi, how ya doin'?

(But before there can be an answer GLADYS opens the door and pulls MEG inside, swiveling her around in the process so that Meg's back is to the sofa while at the same time GLADYS swings the front door closed again with her foot.)

MEG
What the he---... You're not undressed.

(GLADYS just stares at MEG. At this point we can see that both women are roughly the same age, in similar styles, career women in search of their careers. But this isn't the moment for that. MEG stares back at GLADYS who stares at MEG who stares at GLADYS. Nothing is said and Gladys has still not let go of Meg's shoulders; holding her in place. The stare down continues.)

MEG
Is this a blinking contest? Cause I'm pretty good at those--

GLADYS
(Finding the words:)
If I tell you this... it will change our relationship forever.

MEG
You're gay?

GLADYS
No.

MEG
Bi-Curious I think they call it now--

GLADYS
I'm not---...
(She stops herself: it's not worth discussing now.)

(A beat.)

MEG

Where are we anyways?

(No reply.)

Are you going to let go of my arms?

(No reply. Still playing along:)

Where-are-we?

GLADYS

(Deciding to bring her up to date slowly:)

... Dave's.

MEG

(Realizing... letting it sink in:)

Dave? "Dave" Dave? *Mystery* Dave?

GLADYS

Don't.

MEG

Dave is here?

(GLADYS strains not to answer.)

MEG

Is Dave here?

GLADYS

Yes... and no.

MEG

Whaddo you mean?

GLADYS

(Let's go of one and only one arm.)

Don't .. judge me.

MEG

(Takes in the moment:)

Wowww.

(Enjoying a secret as much as the next guy:)

Wha'd you do?

(Pause.)

GLADYS

... I'm going to let go now. But--before I do--I need you to promise. You won't say anything.

MEG

(Thinks on it and then:)

Did you cheat on your diet?

(A beat. GLADYS lets go of her other arm. MEG feels her freedom again and watches GLADYS for the next move. GLADYS does NOT look at Dave. So MEG, naturally turns to see... a pile of pillows on the floor.)

MEG

(Taking a stab in the dark:)

You re-decorated?

(GLADYS sighs and stepping sheepishly between MEG and the pillow she picks them up one by one and returns them to the top of the sofa. MEG starts to react. GLADYS moves quickly to shush her, following her as MEG backs herself to the closed front door)

GLADYS

No, no, no, no--No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no--you promised, you promised, you promised.

(Gladys would put her hand over Meg's mouth if need be but luckily for her MEG has chosen to silence herself, placing her own hands over her own mouth. There is a long pause then slowly the hands come down.)

GLADYS

You promised.

MEG
That's...

GLADYS
I know.

MEG
That's...

GLADYS
I know.

MEG
That's not Dave.

GLADYS
What?

MEG
That's--I don't think that's Dave.

GLADYS
Of course it's Dave. I would know Dave. I think I know Dave better than you.

MEG
(Moving closer to look:)
That's not... It's... I don't know who that is but...

(The two women look down at the body together.
GLADYS moves MEG around the other end of the sofa; to
see him from another angle:)

MEG
Oh, now I see it.

GLADYS
It's Dave.

MEG

Now, it looks like Dave.

(Whispering:)

Is that Dave?

GLADYS

He can't hear you.

MEG

What happened?

GLADYS

(Debates a moment:)

... You don't want to know.

MEG

Well... I can see--

GLADYS

The less you know the better.

(Reaching for it:)

Is that my laptop?

MEG

(Still staring at Dave:)

You're not going to... ?

GLADYS

What you don't know can't hurt you--

MEG

Clichés? Is that it?

GLADYS

You can't tell them what you don't know.

MEG

I get it, I get it.

(Meg Releases the laptop. Somberly:)

Oh my god, I think he's dead.

GLADYS

Yeah, I think so too.

(Gladys sits down at the table with the lap top. Opens it up, turns it on and starts to type.)

Why did you bring me this?

MEG

(Tries to look away from Dave but keeps coming back to him as she takes in the whole scene:)

It's your lap top.

GLADYS

I asked for my iPad.

MEG

You didn't say iPad.

GLADYS

Nobody uses these anymore.

MEG

It was in your room.

(Distracted by the TV:)

Can I turn that--

GLADYS

No.

MEG

Okay...

GLADYS

(Focusing on her task at hand:)

I don't know if this even works.

MEG

Oh it works. I was watching a movie on it yesterday.

GLADYS

What're you doing using my laptop?

MEG
You weren't.

GLADYS
It's mine.

MEG
How bout I just turn it down?

(GLADYS stops--looks at MEG --MEG drops the subject.)

MEG
What are you doing?

GLADYS
Posting on my blog.

MEG
Hunh?

GLADYS
Five minutes.

MEG
... Why?

GLADYS
(Typing as she talks her way through her movements:)
First I'm checking for movie times. (God, I pray he has Wi-Fi). OK, I'm in.

MEG
(Trying not to look at the body:)
Why're you--?

GLADYS
Dammit, there's nothing out worth seeing right now?

MEG
Disney has that--

GLADYS

Keep in mind I have to see any movie I'm claiming to be watching right now.

(Finds one.)

Got it.

MEG

What?

GLADYS

George Clooney.

MEG

What movie?

GLADYS

I don't care. I'll see it.

MEG

Did he write it or direct it?

GLADYS

Good point.

MEG

Did you check his pulse?

GLADYS

Don't touch him.

MEG

I saw an episode of Miami Vice.

GLADYS

(Still working on the lap top:)

"Miami Vice?"

MEG

CSI Miami, Miami something, I don't know. They're all kinda the same, you know? Anyway, in it, was this storyline where everyone thought this guy was dead, in real life he probably woulda been dead, but this was a TV show so they missed all the vital organs and he wasn't dead.

GLADYS

That's great. OK: listen to this: "Dave really has me mad now, I want to head over and give him a good piece of my mind but George Clooney has a new picture out and nothing can help me...

(Slows because Meg is still talking:)

forget... Dave... better... than... George...

(Finally gives up reading altogether.)

MEG

(Continued under Gladys: beginning after "Dave really has me mad now":)

So he's able to testify for the police and they send out a news story saying that he is dead--when he isn't but they want everybody to think he's dead so they can run a sting operation. Then he comes out of the coma and all hell breaks loose.

(Stops; realizes Gladys has stopped reading.)

Why'd you stop?

GLADYS

What? You weren't listening.

MEG

(Quoting quickly:)

"Dave really has me mad now, I want to head over and give him a good piece of my mind but George Clooney has a new picture out and nothing can help me forget Dave better than George."

GLADYS

... How do you do that?

MEG

You're sure he's dead?

(No reply.)

Fine; read the rest.

GLADYS

(Reading:)

"and nothing can help me forget Dave better than George. The man is so... (and I just put "dot-dot-dot" better to leave it to the imagination--I'm talking about George there:) "The man is so (dot-dot-dot) it's not fair. So I spent the afternoon with George, hating Jessica Biel the whole time (she's in the movie too).

MEG

Jessica Biel? Or Jessica Alba?

GLADYS

Who cares: I hate them both. "hating Jessica Biel the whole time and wishing I actually had butter and salt on my popcorn but these thighs don't happen by themselves, girls.

MEG

(Starting off again as she stares over at the body:)

It's just if... he's not really dead--like in the show I was talking about: turned out he wasn't dead. Then there was a big shootout in the hospital. And of course he dies--big dramatic scene. Miami Medical: that was it. No, I don't think that's even a show. Was it?

GLADYS

(Continued over Meg:)

"So take a page from my book and chew on that. Ta-ta for now. Starbucks is calling. After that, I have to go running. Can't put it off again." Signed. Sealed. Spell check, spell check, spell check. How did I misspell George? Oh, screw it what the hell--and Delivered.

(She hits the send key triumphantly.)

MEG

(Concluding:)

What I'm trying to say is I don't think he's really dead, if we don't make sure.

GLADYS

So make sure.

MEG

Are you sure?

GLADYS

I'm not going to touch him. If you want to touch him: be my guest: touch away.

MEG

(Checking his wrist for a pulse:)

Well, you don't have to be so snarly about it--He's dead.

(She lets go of his arm as if it were contagious.)

GLADYS

Are you sure?

MEG

I think he peed himself a little too.

GLADYS

Dead people do that.

MEG

Did you send it?

GLADYS

What?

MEG

The post?

GLADYS

Yes.

MEG

I don't think someone watching their weight would go to Starbucks.

GLADYS

Don't break the routine: that's the key. The little things.

(Long pause. MEG sits at the sofa.)

MEG

So...