

MR. BURNS, A POST-ELECTRIC PLAY

CALLBACK SIDES



SIDE	CHARACTERS (LISTED ALPHABETICALLY)
#1	JENNY, MARIA
#2	JENNY, MARIA, MATT
#3	COLLEEN, JENNY, MATT, QUINCY, SAM
#4	COLLEEN, GIBSON, JENNY, MARIA, MATT, SAM
#5	COLLEEN, MARIA, QUINCY
#6	COLLEEN, GIBSON, JENNY, MATT, QUINCY
#7	BART, BURNS
#8	BART, BURNS
#9	JENNY, MARIA, MATT

(SIDES BEGIN ON NEXT PAGE →)

MARIA

Okay yes, so he has a dolly. He's got containers of gasoline. He's determined, he's set and ready to go. And then he has a, a. A flash? A very vivid – just like how you picture something, a waking fantasy.

And he can see himself, at the front gate of the plant. And there's reactor A, right above him.

And he doesn't look at it he presses on and up the little service roadway and he's at the shed, the the service shed and so he, yes, he's totally picturing himself busting at the lock, until he busts it open. And he this shed is vast, and shadowy, and at the end of it this hulking generator. And he's maneuvering the dolly inside when he realizes, that there's no noise, in the shed, these big machines and it's so quiet. He lowers the dolly. He steps inside. There's the generator. He touches it: it's cold, dead. Too late.

And his heart is pounding. And he has a flutter in his stomach which he thought what is this, is this adrenaline? And he thinks: probably not. And this ache, starting up in his head.

JENNY

Wait this is how you know? Is that the first? Headache?

MARIA

This is what he. This is just what he said. He's got an ache. And the stomach.

And he leaves the shed and the reactor is right there, right above him, half in the sun light.

And now he gets the first wave of nausea and. [REDACTED]

And.

This is weird.

He doesn't want the reactor to get to watch him die.

And this is the point where he snaps out of it. He's standing at the station, with his dolly, and, gas canisters, and he looks up the roadway leading to the plant. And he knows he can't do it. He drops the siphon. He walks away.

He said: it's not knowing, that's the problem.

He said: I think I can handle anything, if I know what it is

I just can't manage the dread.

Bitty pause.

And then we talked about duct tape.

MATT

And so it's that, it's that and it's all of them sitting around the kitchen table and it's like 'die Bart die I'm going to kill you Bart dah dah dah dah' and then's like one written in pen and he's like this one is written in pen and Homer's like oh I wrote that one because when (*Laughs tumultuously.*) when when ah Bart 'oh I wrote that one because for that time when Bart tattooed this on my butt' and he like pulls down his pants and his butt is tattooed with the word 'wide load'

Laughter.

and the whole family is like 'ahhhh!' and starts laughing laughing for like a really weirdly long time, Marge, Lisa, and the baby are just like: ha ha ha ha ha

....it's very....I just thought it was funny that they would just take a break from the episode to laugh at Homer, anyway...

JENNY

There's a court case

MATT

Right. Right right right: the court case. But *before* the court case. At the end of that sequence. You see uh a ketchup bottle spurting 'die Bart die' onto a letter it's a reveal and it's Sideshow Bob

MARIA

Sideshow Bob...

JENNY

Right. Played by Kelsey Grammer

MATT

A clown gone wrong. Very very wrong.

MARIA

Okay but I thought. Mr. Burns. And a fish? A fish with three eyeballs?

MATT

(Takes a microsecond to process this.)

Blinky? No. No. That's a whole other episode.

JENNY

Mr. Burns runs the nuclear power plant.

MATT

You're thinking of the episode where the nuclear power plant is polluting the Springfield river. But Burns doesn't try to kill him. Not in *that* episode.

MARIA

"Ex-cellent", right?

She flutters her fingers uncertainly.

MATT

"Ex-cellent"

He tents his expertly.

JENNY

But I'm pretty positive that I don't know how much longer we can go on buying lines.

QUINCY

What, really.

MATT

Jenny, that's. No.

COLLEEN

That's not on the table. We rely on the booth.

JENNY

You aren't dealing with people. People are making anything up and when I tell them no, thanks, it's starting to get ugly.

COLLEEN

But you've had that. People making things up, people getting angry.

SAM

You get that all the time.

JENNY

I've gotten people who are hungry, and desperate. I've gotten people who are crazy. But after the show last week in Pond Creek a man came up to me, I do remember him vaguely, and he said you used my line. I said no...he said you used my line and you never paid me for it I said I can assure you, no, he said "Calm thyself, Bartron, and tell us now where the magic space crystals which can save the galaxy are hidden" I gave you that line, you said you didn't want it, and now you're using it, pay up. I said that can't have been the line you offered me.

I said look -- we found the day, we found the line I wrote down -- I said look, that's the line, that's your signature, that's not the line in the show

He said what is this book, what is it, it's pen on paper that doesn't mean anything, you rewrote the page, you forged my signature, you stole my line and I want my payment. And he knew, he knew it wasn't his line, he was lying to my face and he knew I knew he was lying.

This guy was bold. Lately people are bold, and that's new.

JENNY

we did. We had to make a decision on it they were going to offer Heretic to Richard's.

GIBSON

We decided.

MARIA

Yes.

GIBSON

Was I peeing? I don't remember this.

COLLEEN

You were in the room.

JENNY

I think you were angry. Maybe you weren't listening.

GIBSON

I don't. I really don't.

Do you know what this is, do you know what this is, this is brain damage.

MARIA

(This is exact and absolute.)

Oh, no. Don't go there.

GIBSON

Of course it is. Deposits. Ruptures. Plumes. Seepage.

MATT

Gibson./ No. Really.

SAM

Gib.

GIBSON

(Continues over.)

West Vermont -- no one knows what happened to those people *no one knows what caused that* hundreds of miles from anything everything a-okay then skin peeling off

MATT

Okay. No.

SAM

Gibson

GIBSON

no-go-zones marked off with blocks of spray painted concrete and...electrical tape...that doesn't mean anything *no-one knows what's really going on* tanks with what in them, what and underground everyone's guessing /no one knows the boundaries or what's creeping and what's in the water or what's we don't even know what's been seeping all this time from wherever through shale or any or

COLLEEN

Yeah...okay...

MARIA

You need something black but with that reddish sheen, like, viscous but also

QUINCY

But it's a cartoon I think even just, mud, something black and solid.

MARIA

But it can't look like mud it's got to look like engine oil. So it's not just that he's dirty but it's that thing like, all during the journey, he's *clinging* to the underbelly of the car, hot engine oil, in his face **uh** but he holds on, he perseveres. Like that's what makes him scary.

QUINCY

I just think, something on a person's face is funny. I think it's better if it's not realistic I think that's just distracting.

COLLEEN

Okay this is that discussion.

QUINCY

This is a cartoon. That's what we're doing. A cartoon. You keep trying to turn it into a Drama.

MARIA

I'm not trying to turn it into a Drama Quincy I'm trying to create a...richer sense of reality and that's part of what makes it funny; things are funniest when they're true. (*To everyone.*) Right?

She gets no playback.

QUINCY

I just think, if we're giving everything motivations, then where's the power, where's the joy. No motivation, no consequence, that's the *point* of a cartoon. Where else do we get to experience that, *nowhere*.

MARIA

I'm just saying I think we have a chance to like, to like, engage at the same time with, like...larger. ...are we just entertaining them? We have an opportunity here to provide...*meaning*.

QUINCY

Meaning is everywhere. We get *Meaning* for free, whether we like it or not. Meaningless Entertainment, on the other hand, is actually really hard. Look if you don't like what we're trying to do why don't you go somewhere commensurate with your matchless aesthetic. Go to one of the Dramas. I heard that blonde in The West Wing, the one on the Tulsa circuit, is pretty sick. Maybe they'll take you in there. It's not like you're really pulling your weight here anyway.

MATT

It's a bit much?

COLLEEN

Yeah how much are you using?

MATT

That was half a stick. But the eraser is still loaded, it's good for a few more sessions.

COLLEEN

Go easy on it. We've only got 6 boxes and there's a fire in Heretic Homer.

GIBSON

Wait, Heretic Homer, we don't really want Heretic Homer do we?

COLLEEN

We're negotiating for it.

GIBSON

Wait that wasn't what we decided. Heretic Homer is a wildly inaccurate show.

COLLEEN

No, we did -

JENNY

We did, Gibson.

COLLEEN

you [Quincy] were at the Landing and what you [Gibson] don't remember --

QUINCY

Alright wait yes. Yes. We can't -

GIBSON

What don't I remember? I was there.

QUINCY

Okay obviously we can't decide every decision by quorum, but I think we should decide on a *category* of decision which is decided by quorum. And I think repertoire should fall within that category of decision.

COLLEEN

(To Quincy. Perfunctory.)

Right. Yes. Right. *(To Gibson.)* What you don't remember is that yes, we all agreed that Heretic Homer is a bad show, but, a) we may be able to improve it. Matt has a line.

GIBSON

A line

COLLEEN

and b) Springfield Files is an even worse show

GIBSON

But Springfield Files was a great show. People remember loving that episode.

COLLEEN

Back in the day. Yes. Our version sucks you know it does. If we don't play it we lose it anyway and every single time we *do* play it we diminish our reputation.

BURNS

This is no Victory Bart Simpson and
don't imagine that it is you may have
Succeeded but you haven't Triumphed, no,
Only freakish dumb luck plucked you from me

*(This next bit may be to the audience, and
perhaps a little out of time.)*

and if you think God or fate, fortune or
any assortment of sentimental
somesuch *rescued* you oh my delightful
little charmer, what a savage surprise
is the rest of your life going to be

BART

This is it Burns. You're never coming back.

BURNS

(Sly, mocking.)

What, never?

BART

No, never!

BURNS

(The same.)

What, never?

*Maybe Bart drives the other sword into Burns?
Maybe not. In any case, Burns laughs and
regains any lost vigor.*

Kill me now Bart Simpson yes
kill me all you like but don't be surprised
when you and I meet again I'm never
leaving I don't go away I'm here for
a hundred years I'm here for a thousand
years a hundred thousand a *million* I
will be here Bart Simpson for Forever

*Burns slips into the river. Perhaps there is a
brief upsurge of dead piranhas.*

BART

You'll stay away Forever!

BURNS

Bart Simpson. After so many years.

BART

Mr. Burns. Looks like the cat dragged you in.

MR. BURNS

You're looking as fresh as a daisy;
life has been kind to you, a pity;
the world has so much to teach us, and
it's my responsibility and
yes I will confess it, my pleasure,
to see that you are educated

BART

Sucks for you I'm such a bad student

BURNS

I feel I can motivate you to learn;
Our first teacher is our loving family

BART

(Bluffing.)

Loving family? Ha! Homer there is
a small time drunk, my sister is the most
annoying nerd on the planet and mom

God love her, ya gotta love 'er but that
blue hair, the nagging, well good riddance to
them all, that's what I say, I'm better off
without them, it's time I was my own man.

BURNS

You'll be alone Bart Simpson, soon enough.

BART

(Trying to affect a casual air.)

The beef you have is with me Mr. Burns
why don't you just let my family go now

BURNS

Let them go you say. Let them go where? Out
into the storm? That would hardly be kind.
I slipped the rope as I plunged from the dock:
we're mid stream now, in the middle of a
raging river; if the crocodiles don't
eat them the piranhas will and if the
piranhas won't the current will dash them
into a thousand pieces on the rocks
no, much better if we remain inside
tonight; we'll play cards, and drink *hot cocoa*.

JENNY

Where were we?

MATT

They're on a houseboat.

JENNY

On, is it Cape Fear? In the cartoon?

MATT

Terror Lake.

JENNY

Right! And there are piranhas.

MATT

There are *piranhas*.

JENNY

And he's running, right? From the piranhas? He's running and...

MATT

Yes...yes...he *is* running – okay yes Sideshow Bob gets on the boat, and he cuts the line -- and he's going to – um – he's got a machete and ...

JENNY

Oh

MATT

So he takes Bart, he takes Bart out of the hold, onto the deck, and Bart like (*Finds it.*) *runs away* and he runs to like the back deck and he looks over the railing and there are *crocodiles*

JENNY

Oh *right*, the crocodiles.

MATT

And the crocodiles are snapping up at him and Bart says: (*Intake of breath, and then:*) 'oh no!' and so he runs to the front of the boat and there are piranhas and he says: (*Intake of breath, and then:*) 'oh no!' and he runs to the back again and there's all these crocodiles and he's like: : (*Intake of breath, and then:*) 'oh...right.'

They all laugh at this.

JENNY

But wait we're forgetting...I think there's a cactus...before...

MATT

The *road trip*. When they're driving to Terror Lake –

MARIA

(*She remembers this one!*)

They drive – they drive through a cactus patch! They drive through a cactus patch! Right?!

MATT

Right, right right right! Homer's like: 'hey everybody – want to drive through that cactus patch?' and they're like: 'yay!' While Sideshow Bob is hanging on underneath the car: "Ouch! Ouch! Ouch!"