

***THE COMPANY STORE***  
***A MURDER MYSTERY PLAY***

***By***

**Robert G. Borelli**

The Play

## NARRATOR

Growing up in a big city next to a bigger city gives a person a cosmic look at life. Not as experienced as one from within the fishbowl but as one who views from the rim. Winfred (Fred) Carmichael the 4th. is one of those individuals who knows when to avoid a black cat. Fred, an only child, named after his Daddy, grew up in Pontiac Michigan, when American cars were the only real cars in the world and factory smokestacks spouted smoke that blocked the sun from 7:30 AM to sundown. Fred now in his early forties, a lawyer, who like his daddy, represents Universal Motors Corporation, otherwise known as “The Company,” he is married to Martha Curry, his high school sweetheart. Fred has kept an inner circle of friends from primary school through college. Martha and Fred live very busy lives. Fred with his family’s law practice and Martha’s numerous charitable and uncharitable endeavors. Children for this couple would be an impediment, so consequently none exist. It’s 3:AM Tuesday morning and the last week of August and a new Universal Motors Model Year production is about to hit the line. Fred’s buddies, all Universal Motors executives, are distastefully unwinding, celebrating a new season of the best vehicles in the world, as usual.

*Prop: Telephone Rings 4 Times*

NARRATOR

Message Machine Kicks In.

*FRED CARMICHAEL:*

“You have reached the office of Carmichael and Carmichael, Attorney’s at Law. This is Fred Carmichael. I am not able to take your call at this time. If you would like to transmit a message after the resonance of the tone, I will return your call at the earliest moment my schedule will permit”.

*PAUL NORSTAD*

Fred, Fred, come the lake. Something horrible is happening. The lights. They have ignited; too bright. I’m bound to a chair . My head swelling. The rope is too tight. Jake should have left them alone. They’re too close! Where is Jake? The Whistle Blower, shutting us out.

NARRATOR

*THE COMPANY STORE*

*A MURDER MYSTERY PLAY*

By  
Robert G. Borelli

***NARRATOR: INTRODUCES THE CAST***

***CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE***

**Fred Carmichael**  
**Senator Paul Norstad**  
**Martha Curry Carmichael**  
**Dr. Sandra Tonement**  
**Lydia Norstad**  
**Jake Fishman**

***NOTE: THE CAST EXPLAINS THEIR ROLES &  
THEN GOES INTO ANOTHER ROOM***

***NARRATOR, CONTINUES***

Recognizing the Lake phone number, Fred tries to call up the family phone on the lake but does not get anyone to answer. He has not been up to the lake in years and fond thoughts come to mind with his cousin Paulie. Paulie, now a U.S. Senator, and his old friend Jake, who now heads up the design team for all of Universal Motors. Fred remembers all the fun they had pulling practical jokes on each other and he assumes this current phone call can be one of them. Fred remembers the mysterious lights when there was a full moon over the lake. How the guys use to tell their girlfriends that the lights were from an Alien Spaceship and if the girls did not do what the boys wanted them to do, they would turn the girls over to the Aliens. No one ever knew where the lights came from but the military once explained that they could actually be glows from the city lights as they skimmed the atmosphere.

***NARRATOR, CONTINUES***

Not sure anyone accepted that one. Fred calls again and after several more failed attempts, he decides he'll drive up to the lake after work. At 8:30 PM, Fred arrives at the lake house and gets the key from behind the porch light where it always is, and lets himself in. Stumbling around, Fred finds the light. As the light comes on, he scans the room . It has been years since Fred has been here. Immediately memories of all the great times this house possesses flashes by his mind.

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

Hello, Hello, is anyone here? Paulie are you here?

***NARRATOR:***

Suddenly a thump sound comes from one of the upstairs rooms. Fred follows the sound and it leads to one of the bedrooms upstairs. Fred uses his master key and enters the room. He turns on the lights and there sits the powerful Senator Paul Norstad tied to a chair, with his shirt buttoned open, and looks to be drugged out of his mind. Fred thinks here sits the powerful United State Senator, Chairman of the committee investigating Auto Safety. Fred imagines if Paul was found in this position by the United States Senate, they would vote him out of the Senate and drop the Universal Motor's new model recall hearing just for the pleasure of seeing him sitting in a chair, hands bound and babbling some nonsense.

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

Paulie what's going on?. How did you get in this position? Your call didn't make any sense. What did you mean when you said that my head is swelling? Why are you tied up? Is this some kind of game?

***SENATOR PAUL NORSTAD***

The Lights, the lights, They're dangerous. Too Close, Jake is with them. Other people tying me up. The Whistleblower meeting too late.

***NARRATOR:***

Just then Martha Carmichael walks in!

***MARTHA CURRY CARMICHAEL***

Fred, I thought I heard your voice. What are you doing here and why are you not in town? I am sure that you figured this out. It appears that Paulie & Jake are having a scare game in front of us girls. Just like the old days.

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

Me? What are you doing here? I thought you were out of town with your Arts Council. And what's going on with Paulie? How can you be so calm? God the man is half out of his mind. Something is very wrong here. He's not making any sense.

***MARTHA CURRY CARMICHAEL***

Don't get excited, Honey, the Art's Council is meeting here. You know how Paulie is. We think maybe he took some kind of hallucination drug last night and started acting weird. Or the guys were playing the scare game on us again with the Lights. Lydia suggested that we should lock him up in this room and tie him to a chair just in case it wasn't a game. She suggested that all us girls go to dinner. Her thinking was maybe Paulie would quit the game he & Jake were playing. We just got back from dinner. You know how Paulie is.

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

No, Martha dear, I do not know how Paulie is. But I am sure you are going to tell me. By the way, who else is here?

***MARTHA CURRY CARMICHAEL***

I just told you, the whole Art's council is here. I told you that when I left, we were meeting here. I know you don't listen to me when I tell you things.

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

I can tell you one thing that we can't put this thing to rest, and if the police are called here, word surely will get out that a very powerful senator is out of his mind on drugs. You girls are going to have to answer a lot of very uncomfortable questions. I suggest you girls get your answer messages together before something bad happens.

***SENATOR PAUL NORSTAD***

Fred! Fred! The Lights the lights they will blaze with fire.  
Why Jake?. Tell Jake! Where's Jake? Jake is wrong.

**NARRATOR:**

Martha gets all the girls together.

***MARTHA CURRY CARMICHAEL***

Girls, my husband is here and he is questioning what happened with Paulie. I am sure that there is nothing going on to scare us. My husband, the Lawyer said that we are dealing with an Untied States Senator who is currently making no sense at all. If we have to get the police involved, we need to agree on a story on what happened.

***DOCTOR SANDRA TONEMENT***

We just left him in a room and tied him to a chair so he wouldn't hurt himself. Besides, I seen men taking drugs that lost their complete mind. This could be just a slight overdose that will wear off in a few hours.

***LYDIA NORSTAD***

No! I agree with Martha we need to have one story. We have no guarantee that Paulie will come out of this in any circumstance. He could get worse. So tying him to a chair so he could not hurt himself makes sense.

***DOCTOR SANDRA TONEMENT:***

OK I can go along with that story. We were not with him when he took the drugs. I, as a Doctor, examined him and made the medical decision to tie him to a chair so he could not do any more harm to himself. We do not need to mention drugs.

**NARRATOR:**

The girls agree on their story and Martha and Doctor Sandra decide to check on Paulie again. Doctor Sandra & Martha go up to the room Paulie is in.

***DOCTOR SANDRA TONEMENT:***

How are you feeling Paulie? Oh sorry Fred how are you?

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

Sandra I did not know you were part of the Arts Council. Who Else is here?

**NARRATOR:**

Ignoring Fred, Sandra goes over to Paulie.

***DOCTOR SANDRA TONEMENT:***

Paulie, I am going to give you something to make you feel better.

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

Don't you dare give him anymore drugs. I want him to be able to tell me what is going on here!

***MARTHA CURRY CARMICHAEL***

Fred, you are overreacting, as usual. I do not know what your problem is. We think Paulie took some Hallucination drugs they were on the table near him and we had to restrain him so he would not hurt himself. Besides, you never said why you came up here.

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

Where is Jake? Isn't he on your Art Council?

***MARTHA CURRY CARMICHAEL***

Jake was here but he had to leave. He had some pressing business at the plant.

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

I was at the plant before I came here. There was no pressing business anywhere in the plant.

***MARTHA CURRY CARMICHAEL***

I don't know much about the plant but he said something about someone going to stop the release of one of the Universal Motors's models. You know Fred, he chose to work at the plant; not like you my love, he has a real job.

**NARRATOR:**

Just then, Lydia Norstad walks in the room and goes over to her husband, Paulie.

***LYDIA NORSTAD***

How' s my sweetie dumpling feeling? I don' t know why you always put our friends through our little problem? Great, Winfred Carmichael is here too. Did you beckon him to come, my love?

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

No one beckoned me to come here. And what's with this sweetie dumpling crap. I know you're a professional actress but this performance is truly unbelievable. You know Paulie and I always talk. I am not only his cousin, but I am his lawyer and we talk on all matters, all matters. You know what I am talking about.

***LYDIA NORSTAD***

Just for your information, Fred, If you are talking about Paulie and my relationship, Paulie and I are working all our martial problems out. Obviously, you don't know everything about your cousin. Why don't you just ask Paulie?

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

Right, like Paulie is in a great conversing stage now! Besides, How about this little unexplained promotion, incident? Someone important made you the manager of the prestigious Universal Motors Company Store. A position you have absolutely no experience doing. Sounds like payback for something you did for him?

***DOCTOR SANDRA TONEMENT:***

Stop it, the two of you! Even if you could ask Paulie anything, he's taken so much of that drug that he is incoherent. He keeps going in and out of consciousness. Minutes lapse without him knowing it. I just got to give him something to stabilize him otherwise, I can't predict what can happen. This is very serious. His vitals are terrible.

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

Why not call an ambulance and get him to a hospital?

***LYDIA NORSTAD***

Right, take Senator Paul Norstad to a hospital, like this! It would not take long for the story to get leaked out. This is an election year and he's running unopposed. I can just see the headlines. "Dateline Pontiac Michigan, Powerful committee chairman in the company hospital out of his mind on drugs. Yes re-elect Paul Norstad" Sandra, you're a doctor, give him whatever you think he needs to help him. I am Paulie's wife and I'll make all decisions pertaining to my husband!

**NARRATOR:**

Sandra injects Paulie in his arm. Paulie starts to mumble.

***SENATOR PAUL NORSTAD***

Jake, Jake, Why? Where are you? Not Now again. The lights coming too close will burn, will burn

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

Paulie, what are you saying. There are no real lights. That was a long time ago. Remember the military said they were glows from the city lights. We used to say that to scare the girls!

***SENATOR PAUL NORSTAD***

No! No! they will burn. Whistleblower. Knows!

**NARRATOR:**

Paul's eyes start closing.

***DOCTOR SANDRA TONEMENT:***

It looks like the sedative is working and he appears to be going to sleep. I suggest we be quiet.

**NARRATOR:**

All is silent: Jake Walks into the room.

***JAKE:***

What's going on here?

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

I thought you had gone into town.

***JAKE:***

I saw your car on 75 North, can't miss that bright red Universal Motors sedan; I figured that you were coming here. So I turned back. I had the deposition from that other law firm and I needed to get to you. I put it in your car.

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

My car was locked.

***JAKE:***

Yes but it's a Universal Motors Car. What's wrong with Paulie?

***DOCTOR SANDRA TONEMENT:***

It appears he took some hallucination drugs. He's not making any sense. You were here did you see him taking anything?

***JAKE:***

He was fine when I left

***NARRATOR:***

Just then Paulie wakes up and starts to tremble. Sandra puts her hands on Paulie's chest and starts to give him CPR.

***DOCTOR SANDRA TONEMENT:***

Someone, call 911! We need to Get an Ambulance out here! He is going into cardiac arrest. Hurry Someone call an ambulance. Now!

***DOCTOR SANDRA TONEMENT:***

I can't hear a heartbeat. I need give him another injection.

**NARRATOR:**

Lydia calls 911. After several attempts to get Paulie's heart pumping, without success, Sandra stops CPR and puts her ear to his heart.

***DOCTOR SANDRA TONEMENT:***

I can't hear a heartbeat, he is dead

**NARRATOR:**

Fred goes over to Paulie and starts shaking him.

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

Paulie, Paulie, wake up! What have they done to you? I swear I'll get whoever is responsible. All of them.

***LYDIA NORSTAD***

What did you give my husband, Sandra? Was it something that could kill him?

***DOCTOR SANDRA TONEMENT:***

I gave him mild sedatives. That's all. It was just something to put him asleep. It should not have triggered that reaction. I always carry this drug in my bag.

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

Where was your bag?

***DOCTOR SANDRA TONEMENT:***

In my Car.

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

Was your car locked?

***DOCTOR SANDRA TONEMENT:***

We all went to dinner in Lydia's car. She said she needed to get gas. And Yes! I always lock my car when I have drugs in it.

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

If I remember right, you have a Universal Motors Car?

***DOCTOR SANDRA TONEMENT:***

Yes I do. It is a 1974 Sedan. Why do you ask?

***NARRATOR.:***

Fred is Silent

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

Jake what do you know about the lights? Paulie kept talking about them. And the drugs? Paulie hasn't taken any drugs since his 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday. Why take them now?

***JAKE:***

I didn't see them Paulie said he did. It was after the girls when to dinner.

***MARTHA CURRY CARMICHAEL***

For God's sake the man was hallucinating. What difference does it make? Lights or no Lights He's dead and it's his own fault if he overdosed.

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

What do you mean it's his fault? The man is, sorry, was a United States Senator, not a drug addict. Paulie hasn't taken any drugs since college. If anyone is to take blame for his death it has to be Lydia.

***LYDIA NORSTAD***

Me, Fred ? What you are talking about. Paul has been under a great degree of pressure. This committee position pitted him directly against the Company because of the damn Whistleblower. And Sandra, yes Doctor Sandra Tonement is our family Doctor. So what's your problem?

***FRED CARMICHAEL:***

Lydia, don't give me that B.S. Paulie came to me a few days ago talking about a divorce and not anything with the Company. Everything with your marriage was heading to an end. A dead end at that. Now a real Dead End.

***MARTHA CURRY CARMICHAEL***

Whatever happened to Paulie we need to call the police! Now! We also need to get our story straight. This has to look like a natural death, not a drugged dead. So he needs to be off of that chair and on to a bed. So it looks like a natural heart attack.

**NARRATOR:**

Doctor Sandra Tonement picks up the needle that she injected into Paulie and puts it to her nose.

***DOCTOR SANDRA TONEMENT:***

The scent of this needle doesn't seem to have the scent of the regular drug. But again, hard to tell since they keep changing the formulation.

THE PLAY ENDS HERE

**NARRATOR:**

So Audience, what's going on here? Did Fred die from an overdose of drugs? Did Doctor Sandra kill him? Did he die of Boredom from this well written play? Not enough speaking Lines? Remember this is a murder mystery play, Soooo he was murdered. Audience you have around 20 minutes to render you guess. The play will resume after you all have a chance to guess identifying the murderer.

Again I want our players to come out and take their bows!

***CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE***

**Fred Carmichael**

**Senator Paul Norstad**

**Martha Curry Carmichael**

**Dr. Sandra Tonement**

**Lydia Norstad**

**Jake Fishman**

**NARRATOR:**

The Play pauses here for the audience to render their guess who the murderer was and the method of the murder and if any co-conspirators.

**THE PLAY RESUMES.**

**NARRATOR:**

We set the clock back to Monday evening. The Art Counsel is up at the lake.

***LYDIA NORSTAD***

How about we go into town for dinner? We will take my car. I need to get gas anyway.

***JAKE:***

I think I'll pass. Paulie why don't you stay with me. I want to talk to you about something.

***SENATOR PAUL NORSTAD***

Sure Jake, as long as it's not about the safety recall. You know I can't talk about that.

***LYDIA NORSTAD***

Absolutely Not! No discussion about the recall. It's been bothering Paul so much that he is having difficulty sleeping at night. See you when we get back from dinner.

***DOCTOR SANDRA TONEMENT:***

Lydia, You should have said something about his sleeping problems, I could give him something for that.

***NARRATOR:***

The girls leave to go to dinner.

***SENATOR PAUL NORSTAD***

Jake, What did you want to talk about?

***JAKE:***

It's the latest Drug high. I got this from my Detroit connection. It puts you in outer space, really relaxes you. Pop a couple of these or needle them and all your worries go away.

***SENATOR PAUL NORSTAD***

Jake, You know I don't do drugs. Right now I'm in some tough battles in the Senate and I don't need any more problems with Lydia. We are heading to a divorce.

***JAKE***

She will never know. By the time they get back the highs will be gone. Besides, I'm going to be here and I'll cover for you until you come down.

***NARRATOR:***

Paulie takes the drug. Fifteen minutes goes by and the drug starts working on Paulie.

***SENATOR PAUL NORSTAD***

What did you give me. I'm having trouble seeing you. The lights over the lake! Spacecraft coming. Save the girls Aliens, Aliens....

***JAKE***

Let's talk about how you are going to vote on the Safety Recall. The head lights are not to close. They can't cause a fire. I don't care what the Whistleblower states.

***SENATOR PAUL NORSTAD***

(Note: In drugged mode)

No the head lights they are too close. Fire coming. No I will vote for recall. Everything going down.

***JAKE***

Unfortunately for you Paulie, that's what I thought you were going to do! I can't have that happen. The cost of the recall would sink the company. I am too much a Universal Motors Man to let that happen.

***NARRATOR:***

Jake leaves the room and heads to Dr. Sandra's car. He opens the door with his Universal Motors master key and finds the sedative syringe that Dr Sandra would give to Paulie in his condition. He changes the syringe with a deadly one that he got from his Detroit connection.

**NARRATOR:**

The girls come back from their dinner. Jake finds Lydia.

***JAKE***

Lydia, we are all set. All you have to do is encourage Doctor Sandra to give him a sedative to calm him. The rest will play out itself. If we pull this off and save the company's new line of cars, fires be damned. You may becoming a widow, do you think a little romance can enter into our relationship.

***LYDIA NORSTAD***

We can talk about that after my grieving widow period is over. Oh! I dread this death of my husband he should know how I hate having to wear a black wardrobe for weeks on end.

**NARRATOR:**

Lydia take the girls in her car to go to dinner.

<b>NARRATOR:</b>
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Doctor Sandra Tonement injects Paulie in his arm with what she thinks is a sedative but it is really a deadly drug that Jake exchanged in her medical bag and the Great Senator Paul Norstad dies along with killing the Whistleblower's chance of stopping the release of the Universal Motors 1976 Sedans.

So there you have it folks. Hope all picked Jake as the killer and Lydia as his accomplice. I strongly suggest not buying any 1976 Sedans made by Universal Motors.

***THE CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE.***

**Fred Carmichael  
Senator Paul Norstad  
Martha Curry Carmichael  
Dr. Sandra Tonement  
Lydia Norstad  
Jake Fishman**

***HAVE A GREAT EVENING.***