

PINA COLADAS

A Play in One Act

by

Trey Nichols

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by Trey Nichols

3730 S. Sepulveda Blvd. #202
Los Angeles, CA 90034
(310) 926-1061
trey@treynichols.net

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Cast of Characters

Carl: A man in his 40's.

Claire: Carl's wife; in her 40's.

Scene

The interior of a car on a narrow, sloping residential street in the hills above West Hollywood or Beverly Hills, just after a light rain.

Time

Present. Around midnight.

SETTING: The front seat of Carl and Claire's car, a fairly recent model, modest and bland. Headlights are on.

AT RISE: Carl is at the wheel; Claire sits beside him. They are attired in casual evening wear and have Hawaiian leis around their necks. At the moment, they look like they're in shock. Carl cranks the emergency brake.

CARL
Oh my god! Oh my god!

CLAIRE
Oh god.

(CARL whips his head around to look out the rear window.)

CARL
I didn't even see him! Did you see him?!

CLAIRE
I didn't see him.

CARL
He's not getting up. He's just lying there. Is that his hand?

(CLAIRE cranes her head around to look out the rear window.)

CLAIRE
(shudders)
It's too dark.

CARL
He was just, he was just there! He just popped up, these fucking tiny streets, I hate these hills, and so slick when it rains you can't see shit, what was he doing there?! Oh my god!

CLAIRE
He was crossing.

(They sit there a moment, then CARL gets out his cellphone and starts dialing.)

CLAIRE (CONT.)
Who are you calling?

CARL
911, who do you think?!

CLAIRE
Don't.

CARL
What?! He could be seriously hurt!

CLAIRE
Don't you think you should check first?

CARL
I don't want to get out of the car.

CLAIRE
Carl.

(CARL'S still dialing. CLAIRE gently but definitively places her hand on his phone. He stops, looks up at her, relents. He unfastens his seatbelt and opens his door.)

CARL
Try to stay calm.

(CARL gets out of the car. CLAIRE sinks low in her seat and flips down her visor to watch Carl in the mirror; then she digs into her purse and makes a quick speed dial call. She's nearly giddy with excitement.)

CLAIRE
(quickly and quietly, into cellphone)
Larry it's me, I have to make this fast. Have you had "the talk" yet? Well hurry, something's happened: Carl just hit some guy on your street. About two blocks from your house. Are you kidding? This could be great for us! He had about four mai tais on an empty stomach. If Carl's in jail, things will be a lot less messy for us. Have the talk with Marlene and I'll see you tomorrow. Wuv you. Wuv you more! Woogy woogy wuvvy, shit gotta go!

(CARL gets back in the car. He looks dazed. Blood is smeared on his hands and face.)

CLAIRE
Oh my god, what happened?

CARL
(mumbling)
Cuckold.

CLAIRE
Excuse me?

CARL
His name. It sounded like he said Bob Cuckold or Buckles or something. Then he coughed up a lot of blood. Then he...I think he's dead. Oh god...

CLAIRE
Then we need to call 911.

CARL
Are you listening to me? I may have just killed a man. I had four mai tais at the party, I'm fucked. I mean, this is a tragedy and everything, but I'm fucked. We're fucked.

CLAIRE
Well we can't just leave the scene.

CARL
We're going back to Larry and Marlene's.

CLAIRE
What?!

CARL
Larry's a lawyer, he'll know what to do.

CLAIRE
We are not going back to Larry and Marlene's.

CARL
They need to know about this. They hosted the party, it happened on their street. Larry poured my drinks for chrissake, he may be partly culpable.

CLAIRE
Oh, now that is ridiculous!

CARL
I'm just saying! We need to go back.

CLAIRE

We are not bringing Larry and Marlene into this!

CARL

Well I'm not calling 911 until I talk to Larry.

CLAIRE

Then we can just sit here.

CARL

Fine, we'll just sit here.

(They just sit there for a moment.
Then CARL takes out his cell phone and
starts to dial. CLAIRE snatches it
away.)

CARL

What is the matter with you?

CLAIRE

You are not calling Larry.

CARL

Why the hell not?!

CLAIRE

Because Larry is busy at the moment.

CARL

Well, yeah, I'm sure he and Marlene are in the middle of
cleaning up, but I--

CLAIRE

That's not what I mean.

CARL

Oh?

(Pause.)

Then what...what...what do you mean?

CLAIRE

At the moment, Larry is asking Marlene for a divorce.

CARL

What?!

CLAIRE

Yes. A divorce. So you see why it might not be a good idea
to drop in and tell them you just killed a man on their
street. It might complicate things.

CARL

Oh my god. Larry and Marlene. Wow. God. I'm always the last one to find out about these things. How did you find about?

CLAIRE

Larry told me last week.

CARL

Oh.

CLAIRE

While he was fucking my brains out.

CARL

Ah.

(Pause.)

CARL (CONT.)

'Scuse me.

(CARL steps out of the care and wretches loudly. Then he gets back inside.)

CARL (CONT.)

Can I borrow a tissue?

(CLAIRE digs into her purse and pulls out a small Kleenex packet. She gives CARL a tissue. He wipes the corners of his mouth.)

CARL (CONT.)

I feel like such a fool.

CLAIRE

I was going to tell you back at the house.

CARL

Tonight? After the party?

CLAIRE

Yes.

CARL

Sorry I fucked things up.

CLAIRE

It's okay.

CARL

But god! Larry?!

CLAIRE

It just happened.

CARL

I should have known. I should have seen this coming. I saw the two of you tonight, in the backyard, on that swing thingy, sipping your pina colodas, smiling and whispering.

CLAIRE

Mm-hm.

CARL

And when it started raining, everyone else ran inside, but you two, you just sat there laughing, getting soaked. Poor Marlene, looking all over the house for Larry. While you two sat out there, planning your escape.

CLAIRE

I'm sorry, Carl.

CARL

Just answer this: how did it start?

CLAIRE

Oh, Carl...

CARL

Just tell me.

CLAIRE

It was last year. It wasn't lust at first sight or anything like that. I've never been interested in Larry. I placed a personal ad in the LA Weekly.

CARL

So you started it?!

CLAIRE

Face it Carl, things haven't been good between us for a long time. Maybe we've been together too long.

CARL

I never felt that way.

CLAIRE

That's part of the problem. You don't notice these things. I still care about you, Carl, I do, and I know you love me, but sometimes I feel like, together, we're just a worn-out recording of an old song.

CARL

A favorite song!

CLAIRE

But how long can you keep playing it before you get sick of it?

CARL

Okay, fuck this metaphor. I love you, Claire!

CLAIRE

It's too late. Larry answered the ad. Anonymously. Neither of us knew who the other was, only what we'd described in our personal ads...and we had so much in common, getting caught in the rain and sipping champagne and making love in the dunes of a cape...

CARL

Wait a minute! I saw that ad! But the day I wrote a reply I was running late for yoga class and never made it to the post office.

CLAIRE

(revolted)

Yoga...

CARL

The yoga was for you, baby! The health food, all of it, the healthy diet, I thought we were being enlightened. Or at least in sync.

CLAIRE

We were never in sync. Larry and I are in sync. Our first date was at O'Malley's. When I walked in the place, I couldn't believe it was him. I told him that, I said, "Aw, it's you." Then we laughed for a moment. And I said--

CARL

Enough!

(Beat. Then CARL offers her his cell phone.)

CARL

Call him.

CLAIRE

What?

CARL

Call Larry right now.

CLAIRE
No.

CARL
Then I will.

CLAIRE
No!

CARL
Claire, you need to see for yourself what kind of guy Larry is. He's one my best and oldest friends, I love him dearly, and he's a total bastard. If there's one thing I know about Larry, it's that he will never, ever, leave Marlene. Never. Not to break your cheating heart, but it's true.

CLAIRE
You're wrong.

CARL
Wanna bet?

CLAIRE
Yeah. What shall we bet?

CARL
If you're right, I call 911 for our dead pedestrian. If I'm right, we ditch the dead pedestrian and make another go of our, what did you call it? our "worn out recording."

CLAIRE
You're on.

(CARL takes out his cell phone
and dials.)

CARL
Hey Marlene, it's Carl. Oh, Larry told you about that, did he? Yeah. It was fine, the guy got scratched up a little, that was all. Hey, thanks for a great party. Could I talk to Larry for a sec? Thanks.

(He offers the phone to CLAIRE.
She takes it, looking stunned.)

CLAIRE
Larry?
(Pause.)

CARL
(on a note of triumph)
I'll give you two some privacy.

(CARL gets out of the car.
CLAIRE stays on the phone.)

CLAIRE

Mm-hm. Mm-hm. Perfectly. Bastard.

(She hangs up. Sits there for a moment.
Gets out of the car.)

(Suddenly, a beat-up male body is hoisted
onto the roof of the car, it's battered
face and arms slapping over the windshield.
After a moment, CARL and CLAIRE get back in
the car, slightly winded. They face each
other.)

CARL

What time is it?

CLAIRE

Almost midnight.

CARL

Here's the plan: we go home; get some shovels; some
blankets; flashlights; a bottle of champagne. And drive to
the cape.

CLAIRE

There is no cape.

CARL

Then Venice Beach.

CLAIRE

Kiss me.

(They kiss; it's a doozy. CARL
smacks the CD player ON button.
Rupert Holmes' "Escape (The Pina
Colada Song)" plays. Or not.)

BLACKOUT

THE END