

DQP's thoughts on platforming:

This play is magical realism in a small New York shop. It explores themes of self-security and the cards you play in life. The content warning would be grotesque violence towards the end. If a production is held, an intimacy director would be advised to have on the team. It may be suitable for a reading at Working Title Playwrights Monday Night Development Workshop... with MUSIC!

FIVE DOLLAR PSYCHIC

A ten-minute play

By Lee Raines

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

HUNTER	Late teens/early 20s. Any gender. Any Race. Good-natured and inquisitive, but troubled.
MADAME BAJOUR	Female, 50+. Female. Any Race. A store-front psychic. Heavily made up. Sharp-eyed.
DEMON #1	20s-30s, Any gender, Any race.
DEMON #2	20s-30s, Any gender, Any race.
DEMON #3	20s-30s, Any gender, Any race.

SETTING

Night. A store-front psychic's front room. There is a small table with two chairs. A deck of mystical cards sits on the table. A sign reads, "PSYCHIC \$5."

PRODUCTION NOTES

The script includes several technical elements. These elements enhance the play but are not required for a successful production.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank the staff and members of New York Theatre Workshop's Mind the Gap Inter-Generational Theatre Workshop. The play is dedicated to workshop participant Elijah "Smitty" Smith.

FIVE DOLLAR PSYCHIC

SETTING: A store-front psychic's front room. MADAME BAJOUR sits at a small table. On the table is a deck of mystical cards. We hear a crack of thunder. HUNTER enters, wet from the rain.

HUNTER

Hi, sorry, are you open? I really just need to get out of the rain. But I'll pay. Is it really just five bucks?

MADAME BAJOUR nods.

That's amazing. My Nana used to say, (imitating his Nana, comical) "The only thing that never goes up in price in New York City are the five dollar psychics!(looking out window) Do you think my bike is safe out there?

MADAME BAJOUR

You want advice? It will cost you.

HUNTER

Oh, right, sorry, yeah, okay, here you go, five bucks.

HUNTER puts money on table. MADAME BAJOUR takes it.

Is my bike safe?

MADAME BAJOUR

I'd keep my eye on it.

HUNTER

I mean it's locked, it's a good lock, and it's pretty deserted out there, with the rain, but, I dunno, it's so dark out there. This is the only place on the block with any lights. I like your sign, by the way. (beat) It's probably safe, but I'd hate to lose that bike, y'know? It's my escape. It's like my life, y'know? My favorite place in the world? The downward slope of the Manhattan bridge coming into the city from Brooklyn. Whenever I'm there, I'm like, "Yaaaaah! Hoo-loooo!" (beat) So I get anxious about my bike.

MADAME BAJOUR

You worry a lot.

HUNTER

I do, I do, I worry too much, way too much. (beat) So, what exactly do I get for five bucks?

MADAME BAJOUR

For five dollars I do palm reading. But palms only show past. For a little more, I do card reading.

HUNTER

Ah. What are they, like, Tarot cards?

MADAME BAJOUR

Tarot? No. I don't use Tarot. But these are . . . similar.

HUNTER

Okay, so how much for the "not Tarot but similar" cards?

MADAME BAJOUR

This is not joke. These cards hold great magic.

HUNTER

Sorry, sorry. So, they like, tell the future?

MADAME BAJOUR

What cards reveal depends on person who turns them. Three cards, thirty dollars.

HUNTER

Wow. Well . . . okay

HUNTER checks his wallet. He takes
out a twenty.

Dang, I only have a twenty. You take Apple pay?

MADAME BAJOUR

For you, special price.

MADAME BAJOUR takes the money. She taps the cards.

Shuffle cards. Place top three cards face down on table.

HUNTER shuffles and begins to place a card using his left hand. MADAME BAJOUR stops him.

Stop. You deal cards with left hand, yet you are right handed.

HUNTER

Hey, you're right! Wow, I never noticed that before. Is that bad? Should I do it over?

MADAME BAJOUR

No, no, is good. You have unique gift, my child. We call this "Fataluna."

HUNTER

Fataluna! Sweet!

HUNTER finishes placing the cards and puts the deck on the table.

MADAME BAJOUR

Good. Now. Turn over first card.

HUNTER

Which one?

MADAME BAJOUR

You choose.

HUNTER turns over first card. It glows with purple light. We hear the intro to "Step Into the Bad Side" from the musical Dreamgirls. MADAME BAJOUR shrinks back, fearful.

HUNTER



What is that? WHAT IS THAT? Where'd that music come from? What's going on?

MADAME BAJOUR

You chose three Demons! Very bad card! Very dark magic!

THREE DEMONS appear. They dance
ominous, Temptations-like moves,
advancing toward HUNTER.

HUNTER

What the fuck? WHAT ARE THEY?

MADAME BAJOUR

(terrified)

DEMONS! TERRIBLE DEMONS! BEWARE! BEWARE!

HUNTER

What do I do? WHAT DO I DO?

MADAME BAJOUR

You can do nothing! Demons have great power! Pray for mercy!

MADAME BAJOUR holds up an amulet,
kneels and prays in Latin.

Sancte Michael Archangelo, defende nos in proelio! Contra
neguitiam/

HUNTER

Stop doing that and help me! There's gotta be something I can
do! Another card? Should I turn another card?

MADAME BAJOUR

No! Too dangerous! Next card could give them more strength!

The THREE DEMONS circle HUNTER,
grabbing at his wrists and ankles.



HUNTER

I don't care! I don't care! I
have to do something!

MADAME BAJOUR

IMPERET ILLI DEUS SUPPLICES
DEPRECAMUR TUQUE-

HUNTER grabs second card and turns it
over. It glows red.

The music changes to Jackie DeShannon's "What the World Needs Now Is Love". The DEMONS release HUNTER and perform Supremes-like moves.

HUNTER



What? What? What just happened?

MADAME BAJOUR

Is love card. You chose wisely.

HUNTER

Love card? The love card? Seriously?

HUNTER holds the card toward the DEMONS. They back away.

I got the freakin' love card!

HUNTER holds the card up toward the DEMONS again. They back further away.

It works! The love card totally works! This is so cool!

HUNTER is suddenly, rapturously in love.

Oh my God, I'm so happy! I'm in love! I'm finally, totally, completely in love! Look everyone! I got the love card! The love card! This is the best thing that's ever happened to me! Oh my God, these cards are fantastic! What's this one say?

HUNTER grabs the third card. It glows green, Suddenly, the music changes to "Love Hurts" by Nazareth.

What is that? What's happening?



The DEMONS advance toward HUNTER aggressively.

MADAME BAJOUR

Is betrayal.

HUNTER

Betrayal? Betrayal? No, that's not possible. That's not possible. It's not true!

MADAME BAJOUR

I'm sorry.

HUNTER

Please, don't do this! That can't be true. It's not true, it's not! Please don't do this! I was so happy. I was so in love. It's not fair. Please make it stop. I'm begging you. It hurts so much. My heart. It hurts too much.

HUNTER drops to his knees.

I was so happy. I was so happy.

HUNTER collapses, sobbing. The music from "Step Into the Bad Side" overlaps with "Love Hurts". The THREE DEMONS overtake HUNTER and start to drag him offstage. HUNTER realizes what's happening.

What's going on? What is this? Stop! Let go! Let go of me!

HUNTER kicks at the demons. The fight intensifies.

Do something! Help me! Help me!

MADAME BAJOUR

I have no power over these demons.

HUNTER

Then gimme another card! I need another card!

MADAME BAJOUR

You paid for only three!

HUNTER

I don't care! I'll pay whatever you want, I'm good for it, I swear! Take my wallet! I just need one card! You have to help me!

MADAME BAJOUR

I'm sorry.

MADAME BAJOUR prepares to leave.

HUNTER

You can't leave me here! You have to save me!

MADAME BAJOUR

No, child! You! Only you can save yourself from demons. That has always been true. And always be true. Your fate lies in your own hands. I go now.

MADAME BAJOUR exits.

HUNTER

Get the fuck off me!

As HUNTER fights the DEMONS, the table tips over, spilling the cards onto the floor. HUNTER searches through them.

Fuckers. I'll get my own damn card! Just need to pick the right one, that's all. Okay. How about this one? No, wait. This one! Uhhh - yes, this one!

HUNTER turns over the card. It glows white.
HUNTER reads the card.

The Physician! Yes! Yes! That's good! I get that. The Physician!

HUNTER holds up the card. The DEMONS freeze for a moment, then renew their efforts.

Mother fuckers.

HUNTER takes the card and slashes DEMON #1's throat with it. DEMON #1 falls back, clutching his throat. The other DEMONS freeze, then renew their efforts. HUNTER slashes at them, but the card is losing its power. He shakes it vigorously.

Seriously? These cards lose power? Fuck.

HUNTER searches for another card.

Come on, come on, which one, which one? GET OFF ME! Okay, okay, um you!

HUNTER turns up a card. It glows white. He reads.

"Cast Off Burdens". Cast off burdens. Yes, yes, okay, I get that, too! I can do that!

HUNTER rolls the card up and stabs DEMON #2's hand. When DEMON #2 pulls his hand back, HUNTER stabs it in the heart.

Cast off burdens! Yes!

DEMON #2 clutches his heart and falls backwards to the floor. DEMON #3 grabs HUNTER, pins him to the floor and grabs his neck. HUNTER reaches blindly for another card.

Fataluna, fataluna, come on, come on, Fataluna! Yes!

HUNTER picks up a third card. It glows white. He reads.

The Altruist. Altruist, altruist . . . ah! Yes! The Altruist! I get it, I get it, I can do it! YES! FATALUNA!

HUNTER stabs the card into DEMON #3's back. DEMON #3 arches his back and falls backwards. HUNTER holds the card toward the DEMONS. They slither and roll offstage. The music fades out. HUNTER looks at the card.

The Altruist. Nice. Yeah, I'm keeping you. Matter of fact-

HUNTER searches for the other cards.

Here we go, Cast Off Burdens! Sweet! Now where the heck's the - The Physician! Yes yes yes! Hello, Doc! Okay, I'm keeping you guys close. Next to my heart. The rest of you go fuck yourselves.

One of the cards starts glowing.

Great. Just great. So now what? Okay. Deep breath. Okay.

HUNTER makes spooky magical gesture.

Fataluuuuuna!

The card starts blinking.

The Bicycle?

HUNTER picks up the card and reads.

(HUNTER gasps)

THE BICYCLE!

LIGHT CHANGE. We hear George Michael's "Freedom". HUNTER mimes jumping on a bike and starts pedaling. If possible, a projection shows he is on the downward slope of the Manhattan Bridge. HUNTER stands on the pedals and stretches out his arms.

YAAAAH! HOO-LOOOOO! ALL YOU DEMONS CAN SUCK IT! I'M STRONGER THAN EVER!

HUNTER resumes pedalling.

NEW YORK, I FUCKING LOVE YOU! And I'm coming for you! You hear me. New York City? I'm - WHOA! JESUS, LOOK OUT!

HUNTER swerves to avoid a pedestrian.

He shakes his head.

I love this city. But sometimes, I wanna kill some of these assholes. (yelling back) STAY OUT OF THE GOD DAMN BIKE LANE!

HUNTER stands back up on his pedals and throws out his arms.

FATALUNA!

Music swells as lights fade.

END OF PLAY