



FIRST ACT – SAMPLE

By Robert J. Wheeler, 15 Windsor Cres., London, ON N6C 1V6 Canada
Revised Feb. 23/25

Setting – Prime Minister's office. Run time -- approximately 90 minutes.

Actors – 2 M – 1 F -- 1

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My scripts are on PGC site.

<https://www.canadianplayoutlet.com/pages/search-results-page?q=robert%20wheeler>

Email robwheeler999@gmail.com if you would like to read the play for a possible production and I will send it to you.

Note: The play will be successful (funny) if the actors' actions and expressions match their exaggerated dialogue. Also, humor will come from bizarre situations woven throughout the play.

Character Name	Brief Description	Age	Gender
SYLVIA JACOBS	Prime Minister of Canada	55-65	Female
ALFRED ADAMS	Sub Prime Minister of Canada	25-35	Male

NOTE: SYLVIA has a dyed-in-the-wool, strong East Coast accent. Periodically Sylvia is seemingly out of touch with reality. I want Sylvia to be perceived as a female "Columbo" – brilliant, but disarmingly so. She needs to have the accent throughout.

ALFRED is a wet-behind-the-ears, young male, weaselly, similar to a young Martin Short at his comedic best.

ACT ONE, SCENE ONE

SPOTLIGHT UP ON CURTAIN OR IN FRONT OF STAGE IF
THERE IS NO CURTAIN:

A muted instrumental version of “What A Wonderful World” plays.

A large Canadian flag is on the USC wall.

VOICE OVER: It’s 2124, one hundred years into Canada’s future. Life in Canada will be vastly different a hundred years from now. So, settle in, let today’s reality drift away, and the country’s future drift onto the stage. It’s a time when the Country has a Newfoundlander prime minister and a British Columbian sub prime minister. A few will grumble that they won’t be here to see it, so why bother? Answer -- we are a curious species. Our offspring could have a spirit shadow and that shadow could be us.

The music ends, the curtain opens.

LIGHTS UP ON:

Place: Prime Minister’s office.

Time: One hundred years into the future of Canada.

A large Canadian flag is on the UC wall.

UR and UL are doors into the office.

DR is a large desk and chair with a cellular phone, NOTEBOOK, LARGE.

DL is a smaller desk with chair, laptop computer and three cordless phones – black, red and white. A smaller Canadian flag stands at the corner of the table. In a drawer or under the desk are a bamboo hat, a cowboy hat, a red and green striped push on tie, a sheath of papers in folder labeled I.D.I.O.T.

Both tables face DS.

DR, at her desk, is SYLVIA JACOBS, Prime Minister of Canada, flamboyant and possibly a little overweight, dressed in loose fitting, vivid colored apparel. (speaks with a definite east coast accent and with the booming voice of authority)

Sylvia appears serious as she reads from the large book that is flat on the desk. She occasionally jots on the book with a pencil.

ALFRED, at the smaller desk, is a perpetually nervous type, reads from an iPad-like electronic device. Alfred is thin and short, dressed in formal futuristic office attire. He's a young, intense and weaselly, which includes his weaselly voice.

Prime Minister Sylvia Jacobs is focused on open large book in front of her. Every so often she jots on it with pencil.

The BLACK PHONE on Alfred's desk RINGS. It's the first bars of Star-Spangled Banner. Alfred answers it.

ALFRED: Alfred Adams, sub prime minister of Canada speaking. *(pause)* It's you again? I told you the prime minister is busy, very busy. *(pause)* She's dealing with matters of urgent national importance. You have no idea of the pressure she is under! *(pause)* Yes, tremendous pressure! *(pause)* No, that's impossible. I told you . . . *(pause)* I know who you are! *(pause)* Yesterday I put Lee Ming through. She hung up on him. *(pause)* Yes, Lee Ming, the Chinese chairman. *(pause)* She hung up without one thought of repercussions. Call back some . . .

Sylvia leans back in her office chair, bringing the large book up, sits its bottom on the desktop.

The audience can read the large print title -- LARGE PRINT CROSSWORD.

Sylvia continues to look at the crossword.

SYLVIA: Alfred! Who's dat?

Alfred puts a hand over the receiver.

ALFRED: Prime Minister, it's Jeb.

SYLVIA: Jeb Wilson, du president of du U.S.?

ALFRED: It is.

Sylvia looks up from the crossword, contemplates, looks into the crossword book.

SYLVIA: What's he want now?

ALFRED: A video conference.

Sylvia casually picks up a hand mirror from her desk, casually looks at herself in it, looks to Alfred . . .

SYLVIA: Hang up!

ALFRED: But . . .

SYLVIA: *(interrupting)* What did I say?!

Alfred hangs up the phone.

SYLVIA: I can't take any more of his whining.

ALFRED: *(sarcastic)* Right.

SYLVIA: Tell him I'll call him when I get time.

Alfred appears bewildered, snatches up each of the phones, listens for a half a second into each, picks up the black phone last, listens into it, throws his head back, frustrated.

Sylvia jots on the crossword.

Did yu tell 'em?

Frustrated, Alfred drops the black receiver on its base.

ALFRED: Oh, he got the message.

SYLVIA: Alfred. What's a six-letter word for a type of music?

ALFRED: *(hesitates)* Prime Minister. Let me think. *(pause)* Uh . . . warble . . . anthem . . . melody, uh . . .

SYLVIA: . . . dat ends with a "d".

Alfred throws his head back, gives her a frustrated look.

ALFRED: Oh, in that case . . . uhm . . . ballad. Yes, ballad. That's six letters.

SYLVIA: That's it! You know the crossword's good for the mind. It's keepin' yu from bein' a complete idiot.

ALFRED: *(an unbelieving look, swallows pride)* It's good you choose not to get them all.

SYLVIA: How's that?

ALFRED: Without your crossword challenges I'd slide into idiot land.

SYLVIA: No truer words were ever spoken.

Alfred is dismayed. Sylvia puts the crossword down, wheels her chair closer to Alfred.

SYLVIA: Alfred, what do you tink?

ALFRED: Prime Minister, can, can you be more specific?

SYLVIA: About my record! It's been three years since I was re-elected. I'm the first Newfie prime minister, female at that.

SYLVIA: *(sarcastic)* Right. Alfred, you tink I'm doing okay?

ALFRED: Okay? Better than okay! Prime Minister, you're an over achiever. You will always think you haven't done enough.

SYLVIA: You've got me feeling better already.

ALFRED: Let's review your record since you were first elected.

SYLVIA: That's a pretty good idea.

ALFRED: You've enacted numerous historic policies to benefit Canadians.

SYLVIA: I done what I thought was good for the Country tanks to the oil slush fund slushing around.

ALFRED: Moving the nation's capital was a good idea.

SYLVIA: Parliament hill made fur some fancy condos for the homeless, with a nice view of the river. Gives the new residents something to do.

Alfred gives Sylvia a questioning look.

They can look at the river.

ALFRED: The move was long overdue.

SYLVIA: Flin Flon, Manitoba makes the perfect capital fur the country.

ALFRED: As you recall, it was one of my recommen . . .

SYLVIA: *(interrupting)* Being located pretty much at the centre of the country made it the perfect location for the capital. Keeps everybody pulling together.

ALFRED: As you will recall it was . . .

SYLVIA: *(interrupting)* Anoder of my successes.

ALFRED: Due to the influx of oil money, you gave Canadians the “no work option” policy if they combined it with mandatory exercise.

SYLVIA: One balances the other.

ALFRED: It put you way out in front of the other parties when it comes to the popularity poll.

SYLVIA: If Canadians don’t want to work, I don’t think they should have to.

ALFRED: Adding mandatory weekly exercise kept everybody fit and busy. That was a stroke of genius.

SYLVIA: Then I coupled it with the weekly subsidy of ten thousand dollars for each citizen taking the option.

ALFRED: Which I recom . . .

SYLVIA: (*interrupting*) I have to admit, enacting the “no work option” policy for Canadians was one of my better moments.

ALFRED: You’ll recall I re . . .

SYLVIA: (*interrupting*) I done good on that one.

ALFRED: You won a record ninety-nine percent voting approval in the last election, thanks to . . .

SYLVIA: (*interrupting*) Just ninety-nine per cent?

ALFRED: The unions! They demand that citizens work!

SYLVIA: Why?

ALFRED: Without a workforce they can’t have labor negotiations, reject everything, and go on strike.

SYLVIA: What are we doing about that?

ALFRED: It’s been a tough sell, but we’ve initiated mandatory classes aimed at bringing the unions and the general population up to speed on current Canadian cultural standards.

SYLVIA: Good.

ALFRED: Canada needed a labor force to fill the jobs vacated by Canadians taking the “no work option” and you took my advice and fixed everything.

SYLVIA: Replacement workers! I imported workers from all over Europe, even Asia!

ALFRED: Providing the country with replacement workers was a stroke of genius, thanks to . . .

SYLVIA: *(interrupting)* With replacement workers there's no need for immigration.

ALFRED: Absolute genius! As I am sure, you remember, you followed my advice and . . .

SYLVIA: *(interrupting)* You're right, Alfred. I am pretty smart.

Alfred reacts, could bite a fist which Sylvia ignores.

It was just outsourcing. Everybody's doing it. They can send a few bucks to their homeland. I'm not adverse to spreadin' wealth around.

ALFRED: As your most trusted advisor, and one not adverse to personal wealth accumulation, I was wondering . . .

SYLVIA: And then I enacted the refining law that made it mandatory that oil strained from Canadian oil sand be responsibly refined by Canadian government refineries.

ALFRED: Thanks to our Research and Development.

SYLVIA: Right. Them creating the anti-ignite additive that causes refined petroleum to be non-flammable made it possible.

ALFRED: Petroleum is being pumped all over the world because you, on the advice of your most trusted adviser, made petroleum as ignitable as milk.

SYLVIA: Do you remember how R & D made it flammable again?

ALFRED: Ultraviolet light!

SYLVIA: That's it! Alfred, I don't tink you're as much of an idiot. I'm pretty sure you're not a complete idiot.

ALFRED: Expose petroleum to ultraviolet and the additive dissolves, then it's back to a combustible fuel.

SYLVIA: That's right. You got a good memory for some stuff, not history though.

ALFRED: Thanks to R and D, and crucial advice from me, you created the infrastructure required to pipe refined petroleum around the world.

SYLVIA: I'm getting smarter and smarter.

Alfred reacts.

ALFRED: It was the “no work option” policy that put you over the top. I can’t imagine any party coming up with a better platform.

SYLVIA: It’s created a huge problem for me.

ALFRED: You’re the most popular prime minister in history. How can that be a problem?

SYLVIA: I’ve done more for the people than any previous government!

ALFRED: So?

SYLVIA: Alfred!

ALFRED: What?

SYLVIA: You know what I am, right?

Alfred is uncertain of his next comment.

ALFRED: Heterosexual?

Sylvia glares at Alfred, he cowers.

Bisexual?

Sylvia glares at Alfred, he cowers more.

Homosexual? Lesbian?

Sylvia glares at Alfred, he cowers more.

Pansexual?

Sylvia glares at Alfred, he cowers more.

Asexual?

SYLVIA: What’s dat, asexual?

ALFRED: Asexual is not being sexually attracted to other people.

SYLVIA: I’m a politician. I’m not dat. What’s du oder one, du pansexual?

ALFRED: Pansexual is being attracted to people of any gender identity.

SYLVIA: Dat's the one fur me. I love 'em all. Every vote counts, so I'm goin' with that one. Although my question had to do with my office, my title. You remember?

ALFRED: Yes, yes, yes, how could I miss that. You're, you're, uh, the prime minister?

SYLVIA: Close. I'm that but also the head of the Conservative Party.

ALFRED: So?

SYLVIA: I've enacted more socially responsible policies than any previous government!

ALFRED: Ouch.

SYLVIA: Some in the Party are saying I got socialist leanings!

ALFRED: That's bad, real bad.

SYLVIA: If I'm going to retain a shred of credibility with the Party I'm going to need you to find me some capitalist leanings. Any new ideas?

ALFRED: Sorry. I forgot. Congratulations.

SYLVIA: As the only sub prime minister appointed from British Columbia, I expect you to remember these things.

ALFRED: Sorry. I've been dealing with trivial national issues.

SYLVIA: In dees modern times, twenty-one twenty-three, it's easy to furget stuff with everyone drivin' hard to keep up on the information highway What's the world coming to? It's a wonder anyone gets time to tink.

Alfred tries to speak, is cut off.

Alfred, where do you think I rate on dat information highway?

ALFRED: You on the current information highway?

SYLVIA: Yes.

ALFRED: Honestly?

SYLVIA: Sure, I like honesty

ALFRED: On a scale from one to ten?

SYLVIA: Sure, that'll do

ALFRED: On the low end.

SYLVIA: Be honest. How low?

ALFRED: On the information highway I'd rate you as . . . dismally low.

SYLVIA: Precisely, how low . . . four, five?

ALFRED Lower.

A look of dismay from Sylvia.

Road-kill.

SYLVIA: That's under one, right?

ALFRED: Dead and well buried.

SYLVIA: You know Alfred, for a politician, you lack a considerable amount of tact.

ALFRED: Sorry, really sorry. I try to give you another perspective, but you're right, I'm way out of line.

SYLVIA: Being Prime Minister is hard enough without dem information highway distractions.

Alfred reacts.

It's up to me to see this Country through these perilous times.

ALFRED: Yes. Everything changed since the rest of the world ran out of oil.

They walk in front of their desks.

SYLVIA: Except for du Alberta oil sands.

ALFRED: It's easier to pump oil out of wells than strain it from sand, so logically, the Alberta oil sands oil had to be the last to go. That's good, isn't it?

SYLVIA: Alfred, you're not grasping the situation! Can't you see how our oil is part of my current predicament!

ALFRED: But we have the treaty!

SYLVIA: The treaty! Ha!

ALFRED: If you abide by the International Democratic Imperative Oil Treaty all nations signed, things will move along fine

SYLVIA: The International Democratic Imperative Oil Treaty. Ha!!

ALFRED: Idiot!

SYLVIA: How dare you?! I'm your prime minister!

ALFRED: Prime Minister, I was referring to the treaty. The treaty acronym is I D I O T, idiot.

SYLVIA: I keep forgetting about dat.

Alfred picks up a one-inch sheath of papers in a folder that has "I.D.I.O.T." printed on it from his desk, reads.

ALFRED: I-D-I-O-T. The International Democratic Oil Treaty.

SYLVIA: (*sarcastic*) The damn IDIOT! Not you this time, it's the treaty I'm referring to.

ALFRED: Because of IDIOT World War Three has been averted. IDIOT allows all nations a way to share our oil fairly. I like IDIOT.

Alfred drops the treaty on his desk.

SYLVIA: Even though I'm not an idiot lover, I still think you're pretty smart.

ALFRED: Prime Minister I mean . . .

SYLVIA: (*interrupting, snickers*) You'd think that since the internal combustion engine has been banned years ago, and the threat to the environment eliminated because of our environment friendly refinin' updates, that the demand for oil would have dried up long ago, but no, working parts around the world still need lubricatin'.

ALFRED: Don't forget the surge in demand because of all the new environmentally friendly consumer products that have been invented in the last fifty years that need oil for production.

SYLVIA: True. I've made it amply clear to all nations an IDIOT, not you, has tied my hands regardin' them gettin' extra oil.

ALFRED: Countries shouldn't be trying to get more than their IDIOT allotment.

LIGHTS OUT:

END OF ACT ONE, SCENE TWO

ACT ONE, SCENE THREE

LIGHTS UP ON:

Place: Prime Minister's office.

Time: One hundred years into the future of Canada.

VOICE OVER: Six months later.

The desks, chairs, iPad like device, notebook and crossword puzzle book and phones are as they were before.

Prime Minister Sylvia Jacobs paces back and forth D.C. Alfred tries to keep up with her like a puppy dog as he occasionally glances into his iPad-like device.

SYLVIA: Now you've really gone and done it! The idiot strikes again and it's not the treaty I'm referrin' to!

ALFRED: I thought the ten-thousand-dollar weekly subsidy for those taking the "no work option" instead of working, would dry up the oil slush fund.

SYLVIA: You assured me it would soak up all the extra trillions, but as it turned out, so far . . .

ALFRED: Given more time to shop, Canadians went into a rampant spending spree, causing the economy to take off like a rocket, and our tax income to balloon. My bad.

Sylvia stops pacing.

SYLVIA: It's not entirely your idiot fault.

ALFRED: No? I'm not the complete idiot this time?

SYLVIA: No, not complete this time, but there'll be plenty of opportunity ahead fur dat.

Alfred breathes a sigh of relief.

ALFRED: If it's not me, then . . .

SYLVIA: It's du oder idiot. The oil slush fund slushing around is a big part of the problem! It's the IDIOT price of oil! It's that IDIOT's fault.

ALFRED: Right, the other idiot did it.

SYLVIA: Mostly.

Sylvia gives Alfred a condemning look then starts pacing again with Alfred in tow.

SYLVIA: Idiots abound! They're all around me!

Alfred cautiously moves away from Sylvia.

ALFRED: You mean . . .

SYLVIA: *(interrupting)* I get rid of money, then, like magic, more idiot money pours in!

ALFRED: When supply is short of any commodity and demand is high, prices are bound to climb. It's basic economics.

SYLVIA: Dat together with the IDIOT treaty propin' up the price tu give countries incentive tu inventin' new greener energy sources. Both are thorns in my side.

ALFRED: But the country has never been so prosperous.

SYLVIA: Alfred, we're livin' in flux time, a space between old energy source goin' out and new energy source comin' in.

Sylvia stops suddenly and Alfred can't stop so bumps into her. She turns to him.

You're aware of the Baker Report On Crime.

ALFRED: Yes. Crime has taken a sharp decline. You've saved scads of money on police and prisons!

SYLVIA: Damn! Everywhere I turn I'm saving money! The compulsory government exercise regimen for those opting not to work, that you recommended, is to blame for dat.

ALFRED: How's dat?

SYLVIA: People are exercisin' instead of creatin' crimes! Tanks to you crime is at an all time low!

ALFRED: That's bad?

SYLVIA: Your idiot ideas torpedoed the status quo!

ALFRED: We've provided citizens everything they could want or need. They have no desire to steal or harm others.

SYLVIA: Now you tell me?

ALFRED: How was I to know regular exercise could be harmful?

SYLVIA: When we started payin' citizens to exercise we demolished the status quo.

ALFRED: That's not the least of it.

SYLVIA: The hospital scandal?

ALFRED: Yes.

SYLVIA: I admit, I failed to foresee the hospital crisis.

ALFRED: With the population not working and exercising on a regular basis, obesity, stress and sickness have plummeted.

SYLVIA: Hospitals are closin' at an alarmin' rate!

ALFRED: People are so healthy, doctors have nothing to do!

SYLVIA: Damn! We're payin' doctors to twiddle deir thumbs. The fates are conspirin' against me. Hospitals closin', prisons closin', police departments closin'.

ALFRED: We're stuck with the healthiest population ever!

SYLVIA: The status quo blew up and flew right out the winda.

ALFRED: *(disbelief)* No!

SYLVIA: A few in the Party have gone a step further, callin' me a socialist.

ALFRED: Mudslinging from our own party?

SYLVIA: They gone to callin' me Silvi Douglas, Tommy Douglas's darlin' behind my back.

ALFRED: They wouldn't.

SYLVIA: It's not a label I appreciate or deserve.

ALFRED: Definitely not!

SYLVIA: To combat the Party nay sayers I need to come up with socially irresponsible schemes to dispense with the IDIOT money that looks responsible.

Alfred types into his iPad-like device.

ALFRED: Irresponsible schemes that look responsible.

SYLVIA: Any capitalist ideas that might work?

Alfred paces, looks into iPad device.

ALFRED: I've got scads of socialist ideas. Capitalist ideas? None.

SYLVIA: You know I'm countin' on yu.

ALFRED: Yes, yes, yes. I understand. Let me think about it.

SYLVIA: No more subsidy ideas.

ALFRED: I'm your idea man. If I concentrate, something's bound to pop in.

SYLVIA: Somethin' new, that's never been done.

ALFRED: *(bright idea)* That's it!

SYLVIA: You're sure?

ALFRED: Bonuses!

SYLVIA: I'm not too keen on bonuses.

ALFRED: It's the perfect solution! Bonuses to all of your staff, yourself included, and an added bonus to you and your most trusted advisor, whomever that might be.

SYLVIA: That would take care of a lot of the surplus.

ALFRED: It's perfect!

SYLVIA: But den, dere's the repercussions.

ALFRED: Euphoria?

SYLVIA: You tink?

ALFRED: As the leader of the Conservative Party, you can't be against personal wealth accumulation.

SYLVIA: Down in the States they be doin' bonuses all over and du world tinks they're all a bunch of crooks! No, I don't want the world to tink of me that way.

ALFRED: You're sure?

SYLVIA: Bonuses would come back to bite me in the end.

ALFRED: *(sarcastic)* Nobody would want to see your end bitten.

SYLVIA: Least of all you, right?

Alfred cowers.

ALFRED: Healthy bonuses would dry up the oil slush fund. You'd be doing it for the Country.

SYLVIA: It would help with the money excess.

ALFRED: It might be worth the risk.

Alfred evil smiles.

SYLVIA: I'll tink about it. Any other ideas?

ALFRED: Ideas. Ideas.

SYLVIA: Good ideas.

ALFRED: Just good ideas.

SYLVIA: You've had enough idiot ideas.

ALFRED: So now I'm an idiot?

SYLVIA: Idiots come up with idiot ideas. Some of your ideas are idiot ideas. I need new, smart ideas with a strong capitalist ring, where money disappears like magic?

ALFRED: *(new idea)* I've got it!

SYLVIA: It better be good.

ALFRED: We could buy a professional sports team.

SYLVIA: A sports team?

ALFRED: Maybe a team in the National Football League. I've heard the Buffalo Bills are thinking of moving to Toronto.

SYLVIA: A sports team!

Sylvia paces back and forth, Alfred, like a puppy behind her. She stops suddenly. He bumps her. Sylvia is overjoyed regarding the idea.

Now you're talkin'! A single team?

ALFRED: Yeah, I thought . . .

SYLVIA: We'll buy 'em all. Buy up the NFL. Then we buy up all the teams in major league baseball too. The MLB.

ALFRED: Hold on now. That might . . .

SYLVIA: The Blue Jays are drawing too many to their games. They could be a problem.

ALFRED: We send the Blue Jays somewhere nasty.

SYLVIA: Newark, New Jersey! I've heard there's a cesspool of crime down there.

ALFRED: The Newark Blue Jays.

SYLVIA: Sounds dull.

ALFRED: Perfect!

SYLVIA: Nobody'd want to see dem dare.

ALFRED: Perfect. There's the Buffalo Bills in the NFL.

SYLVIA: Why do we want 'em?

ALFRED: They're big-time losers. We buy the Buffalo Bills and move them to Toronto!

SYLVIA: The Toronto Blue Bills? It doesn't sound right.

ALFRED: The Bills are a perennial miserable team.

SYLVIA: Just what we need. The Buffalo Blue Bills?

ALFRED: Alliteration is good.

SYLVIA: Although, it conjures up a disturbin' image.

Alfred's face turns sour.

ALFRED: Very disturbing.

LIGHTS OUT:

END OF ACT ONE, SCENE THREE

ACT ONE, SCENE FOUR

LIGHTS UP ON:

Place: Prime Minister's office.

Time: One hundred years into the future of Canada.

Sylvia and Alfred are as before.

ALFRED So, where does that leave us?

SYLVIA: We leave the Bills in Buffalo, then buy up the entire NFL and MLB.

ALFRED: Buying both leagues could be overdoing it. You know, excessive.

SYLVIA: Nonsense. It's the perfect solution. If it works out we'll do the same to basketball. We buy the National Basketball Association. Tanks.

ALFRED: Buying up all the teams in the NFL and Major League Baseball would give Canada a monopoly.

SYLVIA: Monopoly ain't good, not competitive. We don't buy one team in each sport.

ALFRED: How about we don't buy New York Yankees in baseball and the New England Patriots in football?

SYLVIA: Why's that?

ALFRED: They're perennial winners!

SYLVIA: Smart.

The red phone RINGS, an oriental tune. Alfred answers it.

ALFRED: Prime Minister Sylvia Jacobs' office, Sub Prime Minister, Alfred Adams speaking.

(to Sylvia) China.

Sylvia takes her red phone.

A red spotlight goes on Alfred.

Alfred puts down the phone, puts on the bamboo hat, becomes Lee Ming, takes the red phone.

SYLVIA: Lee Ming. How you doing, eh? (*pause*) Tae Chi keeping you limber? Or maybe Tae Kwon . . .

LEE MING: Sylvia. I'm fine. I hope you are also fine. It is good China and Canada have an ongoing prosperous and mutually beneficial relationship.

SYLVIA: It is good.

LEE MING: Sylvia, you know we make much for the Canadian population.

SYLVIA: True.

LEE MING: I need extra fossil fuels to keep Canadians supplied.

SYLVIA: Lee, how much do you need?

LEE MING: A million barrels.

SYLVIA: We don't do barrels no more.

LEE MING: No?

SYLVIA: Gone to pails.

LEE MING: Pails?

SYLVIA: Long story short, there's a complicated calculation.

Sylvia grabs a pencil, writes on a pad.

In pails it comes out to forty-two million, nine thousand, two hundred twenty-one and . . . a tird.

LEE MING: How do I know it'll work out to a million barrels?

SYLVIA: You can't check du calculation.

LEE MING: Why not?

SYLVIA: We use du Canadian pail.

LEE MING: How much for that many pails?

SYLVIA: You're wantin' extra oil? I can't do extra. No. You remember you signed onto the IDIOT?

LEE MING: You think I'm an idiot?! You a bigger idiot!

SYLVIA: No, Lee Ming, I don't tink you're an idiot.

Sylvia puts a hand over the receiver and mouths that Lee Ming's an idiot, then speaks into the phone.

It's the IDIOT treaty, the International Democratic Imperative Oil Treaty all nations signed. Regulates oil distribution.

LEE MING: China exception because we send whole country a state-of-the-art Multi-functional Sensing Centre. Every household have one.

SYLVIA: That's a generous offer, but . . .

LEE MING: We can't export them because all countries spend most of their income on oil.

SYLVIA: Maybe dat's not it. Maybe it's because of the crappy programing. It's all cops catching murderers or crooks and makin' them pay for teir crimes. I tink it's the programmin' dat makes buyin' Multi-functional Sensin' Centres unattractive.

The red spotlight goes off Lee Ming. He takes off the hat, puts down the phone, becomes Alfred. Alfred does a frantic throat cutting motion.

Hang on would you Lee, I got a Sub Prime Minister with a throat problem. *(to Alfred)* What?

ALFRED: A Multi-functional Sensing Center in every household with ultra realistic murder, theft and all sorts of crime could go a long way to solve our doctor, hospital, police and prison problem.

SYLVIA: And help restore the status quo. Hum. Not bad, not bad at all. But dare's the IDIOT fly in du ointment. *(into phone)* Lee, I'm tempted, but no, I can't accept your offer.

The red spotlight goes on Alfred who picks up the phone, puts on the bamboo hat, becomes Lee Ming, speaks into phone.

LEE MING: Great Britain, Spain and Portugal get better rate?

SYLVIA: Let me check.

Sylvia grabs a notebook on her desk, looks into the book while talking on the phone.

Lee, you got the population volume discount. *(pause)* So . . . oh, too bad. You got a lot of industry, right? Dat's it. Because of the Global Oil Unit Guarantee Equation, better known by it's acronym, GOUGE . . .

LEE MING: You use idiot Canadian pail to gouge China!

SYLVIA: No! GOUGE is the acronym for the Global Oil Unit Guarantee Equation.

LEE MING: First you call me idiot, now you gouge China.

SYLVIA: IDIOT uses GOUGE to calculate distribution!

LEE MING: You get an idiot to gouge China. You big idiot.

SYLVIA: GOUGE calculated China to be way over their IDIOT smoke producing limit.

LEE MING: You against China.

SYLVIA: Not me, it's GOUGE that's driving your price up, way up.

LEE MING: That equation unfair!

SYLVIA: Haven't you heard? Smoke's killing off every livin' ting!

LEE MING: Ahuuuuuuua!

Sylvia holds the phone away from her ear then hangs it up. The red light goes off Lee Ming. Alfred takes off the bamboo hat, puts down phone, becomes Alfred. Sylvia looks at Alfred.

SYLVIA: He's having a meltdown.

ALFRED: That might have been a mistake.

LIGHTS OUT:

END OF ACT ONE, SCENE FOUR

ACT ONE, SCENE FIVE

LIGHTS UP ON:

Place: Prime Minister's office.

Time: One hundred years into the future of Canada.

VOICE OVER: One year later.

The desks, chairs, iPad like device, notebook and crossword puzzle book and phones are as they were before.

Prime Minister Sylvia Jacobs and Sub Prime Minister work at their desks, Sylvia at the crossword and Alfred something official.

SYLVIA: You know, Alfred, you'd be wise to do the occasional crossword. It sharpens the mind.

ALFRED: I've been busy keeping up with the times.

SYLVIA: I know about the times.

ALFRED: It's all about Winkie, Gobble, Sniffle, Twiddle, Twaddle, Suntime and Multi-functional Sensing Centres. You know about those?

SYLVIA: As long as they're not a problem for the country, they're fine with me.

ALFRED: No problem. I'll continue to keep you abreast of the times as they unfold.

SYLVIA: I'm all over the times, over them like a wet blanket! Very wet blanket. That's it! The crossword word is "blanket" because it's an eight-letter word for a covering. Blanket.

Sylvia jots on the crossword, stops, looks to Alfred. Alfred counts to seven on fingers.

ALFRED: You're a letter short.

SYLVIA: I just noticed dat. HUUuum. Blankets! That's eight.

Sylvia jots on the crossword.

ALFRED: A covering is singular, so blankets won't be right.

Sylvia gives Alfred a stern look.

SYLVIA: If I say it's right, it is!

Alfred shrugs.

So, how we doin'?

Sylvia stands, moves in front of her desk. Alfred gives a questioning look.

With the Country.

ALFRED: Oh, the Country.

Alfred joins her.

SYLVIA: Yeah, the Country. It's kind of important.

ALFRED: *(shrinks back)* Not toooo bad.

SYLVIA: Which means?

ALFRED: *(delaying)* Well.

SYLVIA: Well what?

ALFRED: The sports team purchases worked fairly well.

SYLVIA: So we got rid of a chunk of money? Trillions, right?

ALFRED: At the start.

Alfred clears his throat as a delaying ploy.

We invested with the clear intention of divesting ourselves of surplus cash resources by setting it up so we'd overpay for the teams.

SYLVIA: How'd we do that?

ALFRED: I didn't want us to look too irresponsible, so we used dummy multiple bidders to drive up the prices.

SYLVIA: The capitalist system in action! There'll be no more socialist accusations from the Party now. You done good. We done something right.

ALFRED: Yes and no.

SYLVIA: Oh-oh. Fill me in.

ALFRED: Because nobody was working, they attended sporting events, so we were really raking in the mula, so then I thought, if I lowered the ticket prices to practically nothing we'd lose a ton, so . . .

SYLVIA: But then, because of the lower ticket prices, attending sporting events became more attractive. Attendance figures soared and so did our income. Right?

ALFRED: You got it.

SYLVIA: What about the Newark Blue Jays? We gotta be losing money there.

ALFRED: They're selling out! Canadians are driving to the games. We're making a fortune on fuel taxes.

SYLVIA: Another setback.

ALFRED: What now?

SYLVIA: Simple. We sell the teams at a big loss.

ALFRED: Sell the teams! Are you nuts? Because of record attendance, the teams are worth a hundred times what we paid for them. If we unload the teams now we'd unleash an economic tsunami with devastating world-wide repercussions.

SYLVIA: Losing money used to be so easy. We keep the teams den. So, what's the damage?

ALFRED: We've got an extra trillion kicking around.

SYLVIA: My God, the surplus will be astronomical!

ALFRED: What have China and America decided to do about IDIOT? Any friendly overtures?

SYLVIA: Yes, but I told them an IDIOT, not you, tied my hands.

ALFRED: And they believed you?

SYLVIA: They did.

ALFRED: So, no Fusionmobile convertibles or Multi-functional Sensing Centres?

SYLVIA: No. None of that.

ALFRED: I thought we would co-operate for the right incentive. Fusionmobile convertibles and Multi-functional Sensing Centres sounded good to me. A pail of oil here, there. Who's to know?

SYLVIA: The IDIOT, not you, won't allow it.

ALFRED: But Prime Minister, we're living in twenty-second century, not the twenty-first. Surely, we can bend a little for an attractive incentive.

Sylvia glares at Alfred.

SYLVIA: Why do people keep calling me Shirley?

ALFRED: My bad. Sorry, Prime Minister.

SYLVIA: We haven't always been batting a thousand in the intelligence league, but we've always been an ethical country. The world knows that.

ALFRED: You've decided nobody in this country will get bonus oil incentives, no matter how attractive?

SYLVIA: That's correct.

ALFRED: You're aware heads of state, and the governing bodies of all the countries in the world except Canada, get huge incentives from all over. You know that, right?

SYLVIA: There are rumors to that effect.

ALFRED: After those leaders and their governing bodies leave office they're set for life. I'd like to be set for life. Wouldn't you?

SYLVIA: I've always been set for it. You? Really? Okay, I'm raising your salary.

ALFRED: By how much.

SYLVIA: A couple, maybe three percent. How's dat?

ALFRED: It's better than nothing.

A SIREN SOUND blares. Alfred rolls on his chair over to his desk and looks into the iPad-like device.

It's a security alert! Our border air drones report a U.S. military buildup on our south and north borders.

SYLVIA: Really? The U.S.?

ALFRED: Yes!

SYLVIA: What do you think we should do?

ALFRED: *(intense)* Surrender!

SYLVIA: Have we been attacked?

ALFRED No, but . . .

SYLVIA We can't surrender until we've been attacked!

ALFRED: How about, about, about . . . we say we've been attacked, then surrender! It'll work! I can make it work.

SYLVIA: There's the satellites. GPS will tell a different story.

ALFRED: Duress! We say duress caused us to surrender. It can happen to people, so it can happen to countries.

SYLVIA Duress?

ALFRED Yes. If we fly the white flag on capital hill at Flin Flon. They'll get the message.

SYLVIA: What about the true north strong and free?

Horried, Alfred peers into his iPad-like device.

ALFRED: There's tanks, missiles, all sorts of nasty looking wheeled military vehicles and troops, thousands and thousands of troops perched on both north and south borders.

SYLVIA: Jeb's trying to get my attention.

ALFRED: He's got my full attention. I don't want to think about what'll happen if, say they cross the border.

SYLVIA: Maybe history will repeat itself. It does, you know, every so often, history, right on que, repeats itself.

ALFRED: Chile, President Allende? Canada?! You and me?! You think?

SYLVIA: Early stages. Hard to say.

ALFRED: We could die over a few pails of oil!

SYLVIA: Forty-two million, nine thousand, two hundred twenty-one and a tird pails and my word to an IDIOT, not you, du treaty.

ALFRED: It's forty-two million, nine thousand, two hundred twenty-one and a third pails or death! I choose giving them all we got.

SYLVIA: Do that and we've created world war tree.

ALFRED: I don't care. I've changed my mind. I don't like IDIOT.

SYLVIA: I've never liked it, but, I have to admit, it has kept the world at peace.

ALFRED: I'm going to find a loophole. We'll be out of that IDIOT treaty before the day is done.

Alfred picks up the I.D.I.O.T. sheath of papers, rapidly turns the pages.

SYLVIA: No loophole!

ALFRED: It could save our lives!

SYLVIA: We're livin' in perilous times. We have to see it through.

Alfred drops the I.D.I.O.T. sheath of papers on his desk.

ALFRED: How about we beef up security?

Sylvia gives Alfred a questioning look.

Our personal security!

SYLVIA: If you want to, go ahead, double it.

Alfred types into his iPad like device.

ALFRED: Done.

SYLVIA: It won't change anything.

Alfred reacts with surprise.

ALFRED: Why do it?

SYLVIA: To make you feel better.

Alfred looks into the iPad-like device.

ALFRED: Hold on! An update! There's an armada of Chinese ships, including troop carriers, on the east and west coasts, just out of our jurisdiction.

SYLVIA: Lee Ming's noticed our border anomaly and is wanting some of my attention.

ALFRED: Prime Minister, please tell them they can have as much oil as they want!

Alfred goes down on one knee, pleads.

Please!

SYLVIA: And renege on IDIOT?

ALFRED: Not me, the IDOT treaty. I'm too young to die.

SYLVIA: You ever see sharks when dey smell blood in the water?

Alfred jumps up, runs around.

ALFRED: Ahuuuuuu!

SYLVIA: A half dozen sharks or so converge on one livin' creature. It's either old or ailin' from somethin'. There's a lot of thrashin' in the water and then the water oozes red, and you know somethin' has died, been sacrificed to the appetite of the supreme beast of the oceans.

ALFRED: Ahuuuuuu

LIGHTS OUT.

END OF ACT ONE – END OF SAMPLE