

**Cast of Characters**

MAN

WOMAN

**Setting**

The Customer Service Desk of the Zoning Office.

**Acknowledgments**

*Inside The Department of The Exterior* was originally produced by Theatre Odyssey in Sarasota, Florida in the Summer of 2009. It was directed by Preston Boyd with the following cast:

WOMAN..... Melliss Kenworthy  
MAN..... Fred Zimmerman

**INSIDE THE DEPARTMENT  
OF THE EXTERIOR**

**by Philip Hall**

*(A MAN stands at a large counter behind which a WOMAN officiates. The WOMAN is filling out an important-looking form with a pen.)*

**WOMAN.** Last name?

**MAN.** Schulman.

**WOMAN.** S-H-U...

**MAN.** S-C-H-U...

*(The WOMAN rips up the form and grabs a new one. She performs this action carefully and deliberately each time throughout. When the new form is situated just so on the counter, she begins writing again.)*

**WOMAN.** S-C-H-U...

**MAN & WOMAN.** *(Together:)* L-M-A-N.

**MAN.** Okay.

**WOMAN.** Address.

**MAN.** The old Beatty place. Just bought the old Beatty place.

*(A look from the WOMAN.)*

You want a number.

**WOMAN.** I do.

*(The MAN begins to search his person feverishly.)*

**MAN.** Just moved in.

*(He continues the search as the WOMAN continues the inquest.)*

**WOMAN.** What's your first name, Mr. Schulman?

**MAN.** Oh, I'm not Schulman.

**WOMAN.** You're not?

**MAN.** I'm Bahrkowski.

**WOMAN.** And who is Schulman?

**MAN.** He's the brother-in-law. *My* brother-in-law.

**WOMAN.** Who owns the house?

MAN. He does. It's his house. I'm just...

WOMAN. The brother-in-law. Good. And who will be doing the work?

MAN. Oh. I will.

*(The WOMAN rips up the form and grabs a new one. She begins to write again.)*

WOMAN. Barkowski. That's B-A-R...

MAN. B-A-H-R...

*(The WOMAN rips up the form and grabs a new one.)*

WOMAN. B-A-H-R...

MAN. K-O-W...

WOMAN & MAN. *(Together:)* S-K-I.

WOMAN. First name.

MAN. Peter.

*(She does nothing.)*

MAN. P-E-T-E-R.

*(As the WOMAN writes, the MAN finds a piece of paper on his person.)*

MAN. Ah! Seven-three-oh!

WOMAN. What?

MAN. Seven-three-oh is the address.

*(She merely stares at him.)*

MAN. Seven-three-zero Bellevue Lane.

WOMAN. That's what it says on the mailbox?

MAN. No.

WOMAN. What?

MAN. That's why I'm here.

WOMAN. What?

MAN. The mailbox.

WOMAN. Yes?

MAN. I want to put up a mailbox.

WOMAN. That's what you're applying for?

MAN. Yes.

WOMAN. Today?

MAN. Yes.

*(The WOMAN rips up the form and grabs a new one.)*

WOMAN. Not a conforming structural perimeter addition or out-building.

MAN. No.

WOMAN. But a mailbox.

MAN. Yes.

WOMAN. Good.

MAN. Yes.

WOMAN. I think we're getting somewhere.

MAN. *(Under his breath:)* I wish I could agree.

WOMAN. Now. Is there an existing mailbox?

MAN. There was.

*(She stops as if ready to destroy the form.)*

I ran over it.

WOMAN. Destroyed?

MAN. Pretty much. *(A look from the WOMAN.)* The little flag still wiggles...

WOMAN. So. You're replacing an existing mailbox.

MAN. Doesn't really exist.

WOMAN. *(Quickly:)* You're replacing or augmenting a Previously Existing Postal Delivery Depository Structure.

MAN. *(Tiring:)* Oh God, I guess I am.

*(The WOMAN rips up the form and grabs a new one.)*

WOMAN. Good. Now. Was the Previously Existing Postal Delivery Depository Structure grandfathered or conforming?

MAN. *(Has no idea.)* It was one of those fat concrete things. Looked like a manatee was eating your bills.

WOMAN. *(Thinking it over:)* How close to the road was it?

MAN. Close enough for the guy in the little mail truck to...

WOMAN. Can the postal representative reach your postal delivery depository structure without leaving his vehicle or driving on the curb?

**MAN.** He can't *now*. The thing's in *shambles*.

**WOMAN.** *Could* the postal representative reach your delivery depository structure without leaving his vehicle or driving on the curb?

**MAN.** By God, I believe he could.

*(The WOMAN rips up the form and grabs a new one.)*

**WOMAN.** You're non-conforming, Mr. Bahrkowski.

**MAN.** Tie me down and beat me.

**WOMAN.** You're infringing on our easement.

**MAN.** Don't we *want* the guy to be able to reach the box from his little truck?

**WOMAN.** Not in [*Name of local municipality*] we don't. *(After a bit of writing:)* Yes. Now. Are there any sizeable protrusions, extensions, revisions, enhancements, embellishments, or bulbous decorations?

**MAN.** Bulbous?

**WOMAN.** Are there any ornaments or decorations of a cartoonish, frivolous, flippant, or insouciant nature?

**MAN.** It'll have the house number on it.

**WOMAN.** Anything over an eighty-six point type is deemed signage.

**MAN.** Deemed?

**WOMAN.** Signage is a different form.

**MAN.** Tell ya what. I'll put little house numbers on it, but I won't really *mean* it.

**WOMAN.** *(Really moving now:)* Is there anything protruding or existing on said structure that could be interpreted as offensive to any race, religion, political party, or sexual minority?

**MAN.** Are you kidding?

**WOMAN.** Any illumination from a neon, incandescent, fiber optic, natural gas or propane flame fixture?

**MAN.** Jeez.

**WOMAN.** Signature here, please.

**MAN.** What's this?

**WOMAN.** Your case number.

**MAN.** Case number sounds serious.

**WOMAN.** Absolutely. UCNC PD. *(You-see en-see pee-dee.)*

**MAN.** That's...

**WOMAN.** Uniform Construction of Non-Conforming Postal Depository.

**MAN.** I just want to put up a mailbox.

**WOMAN.** And you will. Case number UCNC PD dash Seven.

**MAN.** *(Signing:)* What happens now?

**WOMAN.** A hearing.

**MAN.** Hearing?

**WOMAN.** At which time the non-conforming nature of your structure will be considered vis-à-vis the building code.

**MAN.** How can I build a conforming one?

**WOMAN.** You have several options.

**MAN.** Gimme one.

*(WOMAN reaches below her desk and produces a rather plain-looking mailbox.)*

**WOMAN.** The PDR-1. The [*Name of local municipality*] Regulation Postal Depository and Receptacle.

**MAN.** You sell mailboxes.

**WOMAN.** Postal Depositories and Receptacles.

**MAN.** How much?

**WOMAN.** This one?

**MAN.** Sure.

**WOMAN.** The PDR-1 is one-ninety-nine-ninety-five.

**MAN.** Two hundred dollars for a mailbox.

**WOMAN.** We have larger ones.

**MAN.** That'll be fine. How do I...

**WOMAN.** We have a payment plan. We take Visa, MasterCard. You're not American Express, are you?

**MAN.** Cash?

**WOMAN.** This isn't a bank. We can put the purchase on your utility bill.

**MAN.** Great.

*(The WOMAN rips up the form and grabs a new one.)*

WOMAN. That's S-C...

MAN & WOMAN. (*Together:*) H-U-L-M-A-N.

MAN. Good. When do I get...

WOMAN. It will be delivered to your home address in six to eight weeks.

MAN. But it can't be delivered to the home address. (*Beat.*) There's no mailbox.

WOMAN. We can't deliver to a home with no mailbox.

(*There is a pause.*)

MAN. You don't see the irony, do you?

WOMAN. We didn't plan very well, did we Mr. Bahrkowski?

MAN. Not for this, we didn't.

(*The WOMAN rips up the form and does not grab a new one.*)

WOMAN. Perhaps a P.O. Box is what you need.

MAN. I think you're right.

WOMAN. The Post Office is that way. Next!

(*Blackout.*)

*End of Play*

## KNOCKERS

by Chris Sheppard and Jeff Grove