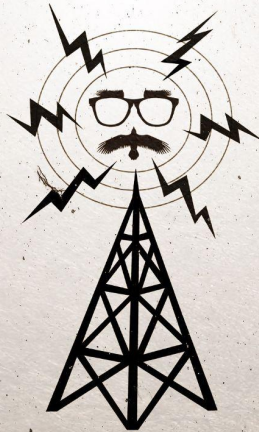


— THE CASE OF —  
THE GREATER GATSBY  
— (T) —



THE CASE OF THE GREATER GATSBY  
EPISODE 5 - HOOK  
TRANSCRIPT

*[The Case of the Greater Gatsby opening credits music plays]*

Announcer: Now presenting Fig and Ford in The Case of the Greater Gatsby. Episode 5: Hook. Written and created by Sean Persaud and Sinéad Persaud. This episode is brought to you by Hunt A Killer.

Ford Phillips (Voice Over): Mel Hammermeister stood in the doorway smoking a cigar like an army general surveying the scene of a brutal battle and it made me wish there was a term for a specific type of stress triggered after witnessing or experiencing an egregious trauma. I thought leaving the biz meant leaving my feelings behind, but the sight of Mel and her furrowed caterpillar eyebrows made me wonder. She put on a nice front, but she was always waiting in the wings, ready to drop the curtain or extend the hook. And she always aimed for the neck. I only hoped her visit today would be short. Because you know how the old saying goes: The hook brings you back, on that you can rely.

Fig Wineshine: Hiya boss, must say it's a bit of a noggin' boggler seeing you here in our extremely humble abode.

Mel Hammermeister: Feels like I'm getting fleas just standing in this doorway. What's this? This ain't a door.

Ford Phillips: It's a very tiny billboard I found on Sunset Boulevard. We're using it until we can afford a new door.

Wilhelmina Vanderjetski: The Hinge Highwaymen of Highland Park are making their way south!

Mel Hammermeister: Hm. You don't got a door, but do you got a phone?

Ford Phillips: Yes.

Mel Hammermeister: What's a famous studio head gotta do to use it?

Ford Phillips: Well I suppose asking might help.

Mel Hammermeister: Huh. Who woulda thought.

*[Willy PICKS UP THE PHONE and hands it to Mel.]*

Wilhelmina Vanderjetski: Here you go, Miss Hammermeister. Don't mind Ford, sometimes he can't really read between the lines.

*[Mel DIALS A FEW NUMBERS ON THE ROTARY.]*

Mel Hammermeister: TD, you busy? Too bad! I need you to pick me up a new door from the design department. Taupe. 32 inch. Make sure the handle isn't metal. I've been burned before. Literally and figuratively.

*[She HANGS UP.]*

Fig Wineshine: Thanks bossman. I knew you were good people.

Ford Phillips: Wait for it. If there's one thing I know about Mel Hammermeister, it's that she doesn't do favors for nothing.

Mel Hammermeister: Fordy-kins, was I really all that bad? I made you a star! You could be living large by now if you'd kept to the Hammermeister plan. House in the hills, Bugati Atlantic with your own personal driver. You'd be on your third marriage to say, Rita Hayworth? Life could be swell for you in an alternate universe. But no. You were too good for us, huh? Crumbling office in a shady part of town make you feel better than all the showbiz folks you sneer at?

Fig Wineshine: Rita's not his type. Too nice.

Ford Phillips: You wanna know why I left? I'd rather be poor and decent than rich and corrupt. Plus, I was working back in pre-union conditions. There was one night you kept us Tiny Terrors up for 36 hours because the animal trainer couldn't get the dog to jump into Claudette's arms. She ended up adopting the poor mutt due to shared trauma.

Mel Hammermeister: Pshh. Claudette. Don't get me started on her. Thinks she's such a do-gooder. Really is such a shame. You both coulda been like Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, without the dancing and with half the charm.

Fig Wineshine: \*chuckles\* I'd buy a ticket to that picture.

Ford Phillips: Quiet. What do you want, Mel? There's probably a drug-fueled Satanic ritual that needs covering up at The Chateau Marmont right now, wouldn't want to keep you.

Mel Hammermeister: By now I'm sure you've heard about F. Scott Fitzgerald.

Fig Wineshine: Certainly, we're working on the-

Ford Phillips: What about him?

Mel Hammermeister: F. Scott Fitzgerald was writing a script. A sequel to *The Great Gatsby*.

Ford Phillips: Yeah. The Bigger Grimsby, or The Large Gumby or... something.

Fig Wineshine: The *Greater Gatsby*, now you're saying weird words to be a brat.

Mel Hammermeister: He wrote it outside his contract, so he was preparing to take it out. It was real hot. The first book didn't do so great, and honestly? I thought it was simplistic. But this script? Ooh! Rumors were rampant. Juicy, Hollywood insider stuff. Everyone wanted it, but the damn thing went missing on the night of his death and no one can find it. The police are saying his death was a heart attack, so that means someone took advantage of the situation and stole the script.

Fig Wineshine: How do you know he didn't just hide the thing? I sure don't like people reading my work until it's been copy edited. And sometimes even then. Imposter syndrome, ya know?

Mel Hammermeister: I saw Fitz the day he died. He said it was in his safe, and he said was going to his and Sheilah's place to put the final touches on it that night before sending it everywhere the following Monday. It was there. In that apartment.

*[THEODORE DORCAS HAMMERMEISTER enters, a brand new door strapped to his back. He's a nervous wreck of a man, who would do anything for Mel.]*

TD Hammermeister: Special door-livery!

Ford Phillips (Voice Over): The man who walked through our whole in the wall looked like a neurotic anthropomorphic turtle in a sweater vest. He had a giant door strapped to his chest like a parachute. I thought I'd seen it all.

TD Hammermeister: Hi, I'm TD. It stands for Theodore Dorcas. It's completely fine if you didn't like my joke, but can someone help me unstrap this thing from my back?

Wilhelmina Vanderjetski: Oh of course! Hey, this taupe is nice. Really brings out the mold in the corners of the room!

*[Fig and Willy help TD with the door. SOUNDS OF STRUGGLE, UNSTRAPPING.]*

Fig Wineshine: How'd you get here so fast?

TD Hammermeister: I anticipate Mel's needs. And I ran cross country in high school.

Mel Hammermeister: TD, get that door on its hinges and then head back to the studio and get the conference room ready for the production meeting.

TD Hammermeister: Ay ay, captain! Would you like some chamomile waiting for you on your desk?

Mel Hammermeister: A derby, easy on the honey.

TD Hammermeister: But your liver... the doctor says-

Mel Hammermeister: The doctor says what I pay him to say!

TD Hammermeister: Of course, your executiveness.

Mel Hammermeister: Now where were we?

*[TD begins HAMMERING the door into place.]*

Mel Hammermeister: Can't you install a door with some stealth?

TD Hammermeister: Absolutely, your brashness.

*[HAMMERING continues, but SOFTER.]*

Fig Wineshine: You were about to make us an offer?

Mel Hammermeister: Your daily rate doubled. You'll be able to afford a door for each day of the week with some cash to spare for a jar of beans. We got a deal or what?

Ford Phillips: No. No amount of money is gonna make me work for you again.

Fig Wineshine: And according to a client of ours, that script has a rather lengthy list of licentious and lawless larks.

Ford Phillips: Seems to me the thing is better off missing. Think of the lives you'll ruin by producing it.

Mel Hammermeister: Ford. I agree with you.

*[Music sting!]*

Ford Phillips, Fig Wineshine, and Wilhelmina Vanderjetski: Excuse me?

*[TD SHRIEKS and DROPS THE HAMMER.]*

TD Hammermeister: I'm ok! Just nailed my finger to the wall. As you were.

Mel Hammermeister: I don't want the script so I can produce it. A trite narrative built around a laundry list of the various scandals going on in my town? You're right, it would destroy the lives of my talent and crew. (TD in the background: Oh! It hurts!) I may be prickly, but I don't want anyone's name slung through the mud. I just wanted to buy the rights so no one else could have it. Can you imagine all that information in the wrong person's hands? Catastrophe.

Wilhelmina Vanderjetski: I told you all that Mel was a dear!

Ford Phillips: Well. Good to know you care about something.

Mel Hammermeister: Sure I care, Fordy. I just show it a bit differently than others. TD! You're getting blood on these nice people's linoleum.

TD Hammermeister: Gee whiz, look at that. Bleeding like a maple tree during sap season.

Mel Hammermeister: I assume I can trust both of you to be discreet in your search?

Ford Phillips: I'm sorry, did I miss the part where we all agreed to this?

Mel Hammermeister: \*chuckles\* You'll agree. Especially since a little birdy told me that there's something about you in that script.

Fig Wineshine (Voice Over): Ford's eyes went dark. Darker than I'd ever seen. Had this client meeting just turned into a case of blackmail? I wondered what my partner could possibly be hiding. See? He's so wrapped up in what Mel just said that he can't even hear my internal monologue right now.

Wilhelmina Vanderjetski (Voice Over): I can!

Fig Wineshine (Voice Over): Willy! Welcome to voice over land!

Wilhelmina Vanderjetski (Voice Over): It's really nice here! Everything smells like cotton candy!

Ford Phillips: I don't know what you're talking about, Mel. I've been living straight ever since I walked off your lot for the last time when I was twelve. But I'll take your offer. I don't want any lives ruined on account of the low lifes in this town. Consider us on the clock right now.

*[MEL HAMMERMEISTER takes her check book out and scribbles on it. She tears it out and hands it to Ford.]*

Mel Hammermeister: Here's your first week's pay. If you can find it in less time, you can keep the change.

Fig Wineshine: Uh, Mel, your assistant's bleeding out.

Mel Hammermeister: Assistant? That's my husband.

Fig Wineshine: Excuse me?

Ford Phillips: What now?

Wilhelmina Vanderjetski: Awww! Couples who work together stay together!

TD Hammermeister: I'll be fine, happens a couple times a week.

Mel Hammermeister: TD doesn't need half the blood he has.

TD Hammermeister: I'd give it all to Mel if I could. My little vampire.

Ford Phillips: Please stop.

*[Willy OPENS THE NEW DOOR A FEW TIMES.]*

Wilhelmina Vanderjetski: Say, this door is first rate!

Mel Hammermeister: I don't do anything half-assed. Even doors.

Ford Phillips (Voice Over): As Willy opened and shut our new door, I saw a tall, thin shadow freeze, then move with panic in two different directions at once. I looked at Fig, who'd also clocked it.

Fig Wineshine & Ford Phillips: Dash Gunfire.

Fig Wineshine: Why's he scoping out our joint?

Ford Phillips: I don't know, but I'm gonna get to the bottom of it. Hold down the fort.

*[Ford EXITS AND THE DOOR SHUTS behind him.]*

Mel Hammermeister: TD and I have to get to a production meeting. Say, Wineshine. Maybe you oughta come with. If you're gonna be at the studio while trying to find the script, might be helpful to get to know the players behind closed doors.

TD Hammermeister: You're looking for F. Scott's *Greater Gatsby* script?

Fig Wineshine: You got that right, doorman. You uh, you need a bandaid or something?

TD Hammermeister: Oh no, it usually clears up after I pass... out.

*[TD PASSES OUT with a THUNK.]*

Mel Hammermeister: Grab him by his ankles and dump in the car downstairs. Let's go.

Ford Phillips (Voice Over): I wrenched open the stairwell door and peered down at my fugitive. That ridiculous gait was unmistakable. Why was Dash Gunfire listening in at my door? And the even bigger question? Why was I even surprised? I pursued him down the stairs and onto the busy street.

Fig Wineshine (Voice Over): As Ford tailed Dash, I arrived at the studio and accompanied our newest client, and her slightly woozy assistant slash husband, to a production meeting of the

movie I was starring in. We walked in to see Whitley, the director, Darby, the young screenwriter, and Penny, the.... lots of stuff, in a heated debate.

Whitley Trufflehaus: Darby, really, you are not making it easy on him. Or me.

Darby Farnsworth: Art shouldn't be easy.

Whitley Trufflehaus: Oh, did your father tell you that?

Penny Nickelpenny: Just let the man sing his little song. We're all gonna die one day.

Mel Hammermeister: What are you all arguing about?

Darby Farnsworth: Leery wants to put one of his stupid songs in the scene tomorrow. What's she doing here?

Fig Wineshine: Hi. Love the overalls, kid.

Mel Hammermeister: Uh... Fig is...

TD Hammermeister: Just seeing how the sausage is made!

Mel Hammermeister: That's right. I see big things in her future, we want her to get a lay of the land.

Whitley Trufflehaus: Great, you can kill two birds with one stone and explain to Darby how it works when a legendary actor like Leery is number one on your call sheet.

Mel Hammermeister: How it works is your dailies look like trash, Trufflehaus. This is the most depressing picture I've seen since *Young Mister Sweetpaw*, *The Dog That Dies at the End*. This thing makes me want to claw my eyes out. Why can't you be more like *Hunt a Killer*, you know, that new movie filming in the soundstage next door? It's got everything and it's fun for the whole family.

Penny Nickelpenny: It's *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Mel Hammermeister: No one's gonna buy a ticket to a picture that's gonna make them feel miserable and helpless. They wanna laugh, they wanna feel good. We need to punch this baby up. Tell 'em what we did, TD.

TD Hammermeister: We're bringing in the Punchwhistle Twins!

Darby Farnsworth: What? Without telling me?



Mel Hammermeister: You got a real mouth on you, huh kid? You're lucky we're telling you now. Flying them in from New York City. They start tomorrow.

Darby Farnsworth: But they're not in the script!! What characters are they playing?

Mel Hammermeister: You tell me, hotshot. Guess you better hit those keys.

Darby Farnsworth: This is so unprofessional. I'll be in my office. Penny, bring me a whole pot of coffee.

*[She WALKS OUT and the door SLAMS SHUT behind her.]*

Penny Nickelpenny: TD, go get the little brat some coffee. Make it decaf. She's still growing.

TD Hammermeister: On it!

*[He runs out and slams the door.]*

Whitley Trufflehaus: Mel, it's just, I do wonder how the vaudevillian antics of the Punchwhistle Twins might play in the piece as it stands.

Mel Hammermeister: Oh, do you wonder that? Do you? I don't pay you to wonder, I pay you to make pictures people will spend money on. Change the setting to the Catskills for all I care.

Whitley Trufflehaus: Hm, that could work.

Penny Nickelpenny: It's *The Grapes of Wrath!*

Mel Hammermeister: It seems like Penny read the call sheet. Now, I'm headed out to lunch at Schwab's. Anyone else got anything to say before I go?!?

Fig Wineshine: Yeah, I heard something about a sausage?

*[Transition music]*

Ford Phillips (Voice Over): As I followed Dash, he grew more and more agitated, like something was really bothering him. Imagine my surprise when he led me right to the police station. Claudette's precinct. What on earth could he be up to that would bring him here?

*[As the COMMOTION of the police station comes back into earshot...]*

Dash Gunfire: Someone help!! I'm being followed!! This man in a trenchcoat has been following me all the way from Spring! Somebody help me, I'm frightened!! I'm frightened for my life!!

Ford Phillips (Voice Over): Dash was in full meltdown mode, flinging his lanky arms in my direction as he accused someone of... waitaminute.

Dash Gunfire: There are so many things I haven't done with my life and you don't really think about that kind of thing until you're put in danger!! We're all so fragile!!

Claudette Knickerbocker: Dash Gunfire? What on earth are you talking about?

Ford Phillips (Voice Over): I quickly moved toward Dash to calm him down as Claudette emerged from her office to do the same.

Dash Gunfire: I just reconnected with my family!! It was real touch and go there for a while, but we're in good shape now and I don't want it all to end after I've been given this gift!!

Claudette Knickerbocker: Dash, please calm down!

Dash Gunfire: I claim sanctuary!! I've been followed for blocks by a strange and mysterious - oh hey Ford. What are you doing here? Hey, you didn't happen to see the guy following me, did you?

Ford Phillips: Dash, that was me. I followed you.

Dash Gunfire: (incredibly hurt) What? Why would you do that to me?

Claudette Knickerbocker: How could you not recognize Ford?

Dash Gunfire: Oh, I have periodic face blindness brought on by stress or exposure to the sun. Plus, I wasn't wearing my glasses. I lost them 6 months ago, it's made life as a PI very hard. Also, the sun was reflecting in my eyes, which triggered my fight or flight response, which is always flight. I like keeping the suspense out of it.

Ford Phillips: I saw you skulking around the office and wanted to see what you were up to.

Dash Gunfire: Oh wow. You thought I - and then I thought you - and now we're here? At the police station? With Claudette? Just 3 old friends hanging out? What a funny story! We'll probably tell our kids about this one day.

Claudette Knickerbocker: Ford, you know just as well as I do that even if he was following you, he's probably forgotten why by now.

Ford Phillips: It's almost not even worth questioning him anymore.

Dash Gunfire: Just to clarify, I didn't mean OUR kids, like the three of us would have kids together, that's a little progressive for 1940. Just one day, we'll all have kids *individually* and tell them about this story.

Mo Beats: Well well wells, imagine my shock and surprise to find a grand hullabaloo taking place right here in the middle of the police station and of course it's been caused by two private investegators.

Ford Phillips (Voice Over): Of course Mo Beats was here, that snake didn't ever seem to miss a chance to poke his little head out -

Dash Gunfire: Oh Ford, are you talking about Mo in your head? Can I try? I been practicing!

Ford Phillips: Uh, sure Dash.

*[Dash clears his throat.]*

Dash Gunfire: Mo Beats, the slimy little weasel, slithered out of his weasel hole like some kind of slippery and slithery - hey do weasels live in holes? In the ground? What am I talking about, this is a voice over, you guys can't hear me.

Ford Phillips: That wasn't voice over.

Claudette Knickerbocker: No, we can hear you.

Mo Beats: Every word.

Dash Gunfire: Ah sugar biscuits. I just did it when I was home visiting my family! I swear!

Mo Beats: So Claudette, you tell Ford Pullups the big news?

Claudette Knickerbocker: There's no news to tell, Maurice.

Mo Beats: Aw, she just doesn't wanna embarrass me. The captain is eying one of us for a big promotion, and unfortunately I got the leg up.

Ford Phillips: And why's that?

Mo Beats: Cuz I'm onto something. Something real big. Something going on right under your nose. Maybe if you was a real detective, you'd have put it together yourself by now.

Dash Gunfire: Did you catch the Hinge Highwaymen of Highland Park? Those rascals absconded with my toilet seat. They also steal toilet stuff now!!

Claudette Knickerbocker: They're incorrigible. No, we've got our best and brightest working on that case. Which means Maurice is as far away from it as possible.

Mo Beats: PSSHHHH. Doorway thieves ain't bothering no one. Why we all so obsessed with privacy these days?

Dash Gunfire: I can't sit on my toilet.

Mo Beats: Nah, what I'm into is real insidious, real evil, the kind of collar that will upend the criminal underbelly in this town. Once I make my move, I'll show you how it's done, Actor Boy.

Dash Gunfire: I've never acted a day in my life, I don't know why you would call me that.

Ford Phillips: He's talking to me, Dash.

Dash Gunfire: Oh, sure, that makes more sense.

Ford Phillips: So you care to enlighten us about this chilling expose, or is this - like most of your exploits - all talk?

Mo Beats: You want I should give you a hint?

Ford Phillips: Please. Enlighten me.

Mo Beats: Hmm... I dunno. Maybe... you should ask your little friend-

*[Mo is INTERRUPTED by a door opening and the yelling of BARNABY NIGHTINGALE as he enters the bullpen.]*

Barnaby Nightingale: Someone please help me! Someone please!

Mo Beats: Is that... Barnaby Nightingale?

Claudette Knickerbocker: Ay yi yi. Is this how everyone's gonna enter this place today?

Ford Phillips: Barnaby! Over here! What's going on?

Barnaby Nightingale: It's this letter I got in the mail. To my home address. Threatening to kill me!!

*[Music stings!]*

*[The Case of the Greater Gatsby closing theme plays]*

Sinead Persaud: Shipwrecked Comedy Presents The Case of the Greater Gatsby

Written and created by Sean Persaud and Sinead Persaud

Directed by William Joseph Stribling

Featuring:

Sean Persaud as Ford Phillips

Sinead Persaud as Fig Wineshine

Lesli Margherita as Mel Hammermeister

Sarah Grace Hart as Wilhelmina Vanderjetski

Blake Silver as TD Hammermeister

Parvesh Cheena as Whitley Trufflehaus

Ginny Di as Darby Farnsworth

Lauren Lopez as Penny Nickelpenny

Joey Richter as Dash Gunfire

Joanna Sotomura as Claudette Knickerbocker

Matthew Mercer as Mo Beats

And Tommy Hobson as Barnaby Nightingale

Original music by Dylan Glatthorn

Audio recording by Ears Up Studio

Mixing and Sound Design by Lizzie Goldsmith

Executive Producers Paul Komoroski & Michael Walsh

Produced by Sean Persaud, Sinead Persaud, and Mary Kate Wiles

Special thanks to Kickstarter backers Katie Adamczyk, Ally Bertz Brown, Zainab Khan, Shao Chih Kuo, Jane Leach, Avalee Long, Lisel Perrine, Halsea Root, The Rude Mechanicals, Heather Tennant, and Justin Waterman.

Please rate and review the show wherever you listen. Join us on Patreon at [patreon.com/shipwreckedcomedy](https://patreon.com/shipwreckedcomedy) to receive early access to new episodes and other bonus content, and to support us making this show.

Visit Shipwrecked Comedy on YouTube to view the prequel film for this series, The Case of the Gilded Lily, or many of our other projects, like Friends 'til the End - a Broadway style song featuring Mina Harker & Lucy Westenra from Bram Stoker's Dracula.