

# Frank & Pablo

## Scene Eight: Thursday Evening

*(Nighttime. FRANK is outside. PABLO enters with a beer.)*

**PABLO.** I know it's after midnight, but do you mind if I join you?

**FRANK.** Yes, I do.

*(PABLO grabs a folded chair, has some difficulty unfolding it, and sits facing FRANK.)*

Did you just get home from work?

**PABLO.** Yes. My wife is horribly upset about the...incident this morning.

**FRANK.** Women get so emotional when they are pregnant.

**PABLO.** I hear Virginia is not too happy either.

*(Beat.)*

I also assume she's not pregnant.

*(Beat. They size each other up.)*

**FRANK.** No one is happy.

**PABLO.** You tried to make my wife feel small.

**FRANK.** Maybe she feels small, because she called my wife names.

**PABLO.** Virginia threatened Tania.

**FRANK.** Pablo. You are creating havoc over twenty-three inches.

**PABLO.** It's eighty square feet, at least. If it's so valuable to you, I'll sell it to you at market price.

**FRANK.** Ah, so it's all about the money.

**PABLO.** No. But it is a way to come to terms. A rational way to make peace.

**FRANK.** I shouldn't have to spend that kind of cash. I've been tending this garden for years. Its value comes from my care.

**PABLO.** Maybe you should be grateful you've had it for free for so long.

**FRANK.** Ginny and I have been researching adverse possession.

**PABLO.** You are invoking squatter's rights?

**FRANK.** I'm thinking we might have a case.

**PABLO.** Frank, I like you. I really do. And let me tell you, you don't want to get in a legal argument with Smith, Krause, and Wilson.

**FRANK.** Sometimes the little man wins.

**PABLO.** You've never been the little man, Frank Butley. And we can't have another argument like we did this morning.

**FRANK.** That was no argument. It was an incident.

**PABLO.** I have sixty colleagues coming on Saturday. We have every right to do what we are doing.

**FRANK.** But what about my garden and the years of toil, sweat, and love I've poured into it? You are sacrificing all the work I have done. For what: to make it look ordinary and common? Just days after you said you loved it. Are you a liar, Pablo?

**PABLO.** *(Confessing in a hushed tone.)* I do like your garden. I like its grace and elegance.

*(Loudly, for Tania's benefit in case she's listening from inside:)*

**BUT** Tania's garden is **BETTER**, because it is... *(Sigh.)*  
**NATURAL.**

**FRANK.** Nature is not why people move to this neighborhood. You could have bought a house with a chicken coop in hippy-dippy Takoma Park and been as messy and native gardeny as you wanted. But you didn't want that, did you? You wanted to put down roots here...in a stately neighborhood with all the other K-Street lawyers and doctors and lobbyists. Why did you move here if you want to change everything?

**PABLO.** We don't want to change everything. We just want to add our touch to the landscape. Tania believes your plants are eroding the ecosystem. They are foreign to the natural environment.

**FRANK.** So Tania has a problem with my plants because they are from somewhere else? – Because they are... immigrant plants?

**PABLO.** (*Beat.*) No. Tania's problem is that your plants are... colonialists with gross disregard for the indigenous population.

**FRANK.** I'm surprised that you of all people, Pablo, would defend this type of...botanical xenophobia.

**PABLO.** Back away Frank.

**FRANK.** No. You tell Tania to back away from my defenseless plants. This is a border dispute. And I'm not giving up one inch of my yard without a fight.

**PABLO.** You don't want to fight with me, Frank.

**FRANK.** I would say the same, Pablo. I've been in this town a long time. I spent thirty-seven years at the Agency.

**PABLO.** The Agency?

**FRANK.** The Agency. I know P-owerful P-eople, PA-blo.

*(FRANK exits. PABLO pours his beer on Frank's flowerbed and exits.)*