

the beginning of

FLIPPER'S COMEBACK (from **POOL PARTY**)

a short comedy by Rich Orloff

Time: The present.

Place: A backyard swimming pool in Beverly Hills.

Characters: FLIPPER, the famous dolphin actor
MELISSA, Flipper's agent

In the middle of his Beverly Hills swimming pool, FLIPPER relaxes on a floatable lounge chair, the kind with arm rests. He's reading *Daily Variety*. Something catches his attention, and he makes a call on his cell phone.

FLIPPER

Hey, Leo, you ol' furball, how ya doin'?...
Don't roar at me. Did you catch the trades
today? Guess what washed-up whale's been
hit with a paternity suit?... Yep. I guess
he's been a little too free with his willie...
Hold on a sec. I got a call...

(switches to other call:)

They call me Flipper... What is it, you quack...
Cholesterol level?... How can it be too high?
90% of my diet is herring... Okay, I'll
cut out the sour cream... Don't give me
another "at your age" lecture! Go away!

(returns to first call:)

Sorry, Leo. That was, uh, that was Paramount.
They want to know if I'll do a cameo in a remake
of THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE... Because
I'll lend the film class, asshole!... Oh, yeah?
Well, if you're such a big star, when was the
last time you appeared *in* an MGM movie
and not just in front of it?!... Yeah, yeah –
hey, guess who I saw in a bar last week?...
Orca, that has-been. The way he was
guzzling gin, you'd think it had plankton in it...
Oh, well, nobody lasts forever in this town.

MELISSA (o.s.)

Flipper, are you in back?

FLIPPER

Shit. I got to call you back, Leo. There's
a shark heading my way... The kind that
gets ten per cent of everything you earn.

Flipper hangs up the phone as MELISSA enters. She carries a large plastic bag that appears to have something flat and round inside it.

MELISSA

Why haven't you returned my calls?

FLIPPER

When you give me a good reason, I'll –

MELISSA

It's a good gig.

FLIPPER

It's crap.

MELISSA

It'll pay great.

FLIPPER

It's television.

MELISSA

You made your name in –

FLIPPER

It makes me look like a has-been!

MELISSA

Flip, you want to get back in the public eye, don't you? –

FLIPPER

Not if I have to embar–

MELISSA

– Well, this is the best way to do it.

FLIPPER

Melissa, it's so stupid.

MELISSA

You're always complaining I don't get you offers, and now I get you
FLIPPER'S REUNION SPECIAL –

FLIPPER

Have you read the script?

MELISSA

I read the coverage.

Flipper picks up the script.

FLIPPER

Let me quote. "SKIP: Hey, Flipper, how'd you like to look back at some of our greatest adventures? FLIPPER – (the high pitched sound of a dolphin:) ee-ee-ee-ee". Who wrote this crap?!

MELISSA

"ee-ee-ee-ee" bought you your house, this pool –

FLIPPER

It never satisfied my soul!

MELISSA

Oh, get off your sea horse. I remember when you were an understudy at Sea World.

FLIPPER

And you sorted the herring.

MELISSA

I discovered you!

FLIPPER

I made you!

MELISSA

Flip, trust me. This show will help your career.

FLIPPER

Trust you?! I haven't trusted you since you refused to put me up for that Starkist gig.

MELISSA

They wanted a tuna fish.

FLIPPER

I can do tuna.

MELISSA

They wanted a tuna.

FLIPPER

Does nobody in this business think outside the tank?!

MELISSA

You could've read for JAWS, but no, you refused.

FLIPPER

Who knew Spielberg would become Spielberg?
"A big shark terrorizes a beach town" –
BORRRR-ING. Now E.T., there's a part I
could've done. I mean, the dialogue's crap,
but "E.T. phone home" still beats "ee-ee-ee-ee".

MELISSA

He's extraterrestrial, not aquatic.

FLIPPER

What is in the bag?

MELISSA

Nothing. Just some shopping.

FLIPPER

Why didn't you leave it in your car?

MELISSA

Flip, I'm trying to help you.

FLIPPER

If you want to help me, sell my scripts.

MELISSA

Flipper, you're an actor, not a writer.

FLIPPER

Sell my –

MELISSA

I send them out. Nobody likes them.

FLIPPER

Nobody liked PORPOISE WITHOUT A PURPOSE?

MELISSA

Not a bite.

FLIPPER

What about FLIPPER GOES TO
GILLIGAN'S ISLAND?

MELISSA

The script had a sex scene between you and Ginger.

So? FLIPPER

You're a dolphin. MELISSA

I don't care. Ginger's hot. FLIPPER

She's a person. MELISSA

We're both mammals!... I've been with women, you know. FLIPPER

Drop it. MELISSA

They like how long I can go without surfacing for air. FLIPPER

Flip, do you want the job or not? MELISSA

You know what I want. FLIPPER

Flipper, be reasonable. MELISSA

I want to direct! FLIPPER