

**A House Tour of the Infamous Porter Family Mansion with
Tour Guide Weston Ludlow Londonderry**

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a page for introspection.

The audience walks into

THE VISITOR CENTER (aka the Lobby)

The official-looking Visitor Center of the Porter Family Mansion. A spiritually whitewashed, generic feeling center with a focus on antiques and wealth. Information is often abstract.

Not much overt explanation till you get back to it after the show. (SEE END OF PLAY FOR SOME SUGGESTIONS.)

A ORIENTATION VIDEO is playing.
It loops during the pre-show.

THE LOBBY VIDEO

(Non-sensical images. Pictures of various trees. Furniture. We should get a sense of looking at the slide show of a house, but no sense of what.

A Celebrity Narrator speaks: preferably Linda Hunt.)

CELEBRITY NARRATOR

On behalf of the Hubert and Clarissa Porter Family Historical Trust, we welcome you to The Porter Family Mansion.

Get ready for an educational and interesting journey to a very different time and place than the one we live in today.

(Incomplete blueprints and examples of each mentioned thing)

The Porter Family Mansion comprises acres of gardens and land, square feet of living space, structures, rooms, doors, windows, nails, carpet, and some of the finest world collections of many different things.

(Pictures of primordial earth)

Billions of years ago, Mother Nature forged the Planet Earth and this land we stand on. Over the next millions of years she has shaped it handsomely with lava, wind and rain, endowing it with rich soils and diverse terrain, perfect for supporting all sorts of life and functions making it an attractive home.

(Pictures of trees)

Some of the redwoods, oaks, elms and bay trees you see on the property have been here for over four hundred years.

(Pictures of tribes)

The first human occupants of these lands were the Great Native Tribes, who lived across its hills for over 6,000 years, hunting herds and grinding nuts from the native trees into useful paste.

(Pictures of colonists.)

Stewardship of the land changed, when it was segmented into homesteads and farms by foreigners, who began cultivating and producing various types of food. These homesteads remained until Hubert and Clarissa Porter began acquiring the plots neighboring their own and absorbing them into their own estate.

(A small parcel of land, and picture of a shack.)

You are sitting or standing on the original parcel of land purchased by Hubert and Clarissa after their marriage. The Original Small Shack was the first structure on the property and remained that way for the first year.

As their financial success grew, Hubert and Clarissa began construction of the primary residence, a process that would not cease until their sudden and untimely deaths. After their demise, the mansion remained largely neglected and empty until the formation of The Porter Family Historical Society, which acquired the property with the mission to restore the mansion to splendor and share it with visitors large and small.

In just a moment, your guide will be taking you through the property and you will hear interesting stories about the

home and the couple who built it. We know you'll be excited and delighted to learn more.

Thank you, and enjoy your visit to the Porter Family Mansion.

I'm Linda Hunt.

THE PRE-TOUR LECTURE

(WESTON enters.

He walks through the crowd, perhaps wearing a loud shoe that echoes in a large space.

He DINGS a triangle or some sort attention summoning instrument.

He WALKS to the RECORD PLAYER that is part of a visitor center display.

HE reveals a RECORD, places it on the player, and sets it to play.

A waltz begins.

He strolls through the crowd.)

WESTON

A waltz...

Graceful.

Flowing.

Two bodies, moving, spinning, propelled by an elegant thrust.

Eyes: Locked. Searching.

Hands: Enclenched. Communicating. Whet.

Breath: Heaving. Cavities and orifices flaring and ruffling with every single "Oom-pah-pah Oom-pah-pah In-two-three, out-two-three."

A waltz is more than a dance.

It is an encounter. A private, intimate, intercourse between two souls that no-one can upon spy. The consequences of this fleeting union can be enormous. A waltz has potential to change lives, even the course of the world.

Hyperbole? Ha. No such thing. Not here.

For Hubert and Clarissa, Hubert and Clarissa Porter, first met during a waltz. They fell in love during a waltz.

Their fates were sealed the moment they began to intertwiner to the very waltz you listen upon today.

(A Shift in rhythm.

Weston moves quickly through the crowd?)

Imagine it is a hundred and fifty five years ago. And we are all members of "society." And here we are at the annual Vice Governors Ball, one of the final events of a particularly humid social season.

"Oh hello. Hello. Hello there, you, hubbub hubbub hubbub" we mutter half heartedly to the lackluster hodge podge of well heeled, self absorbed corpses we have grown so tired of seeing party after party.

(Aside to a party guest, personal)

At least the punch is strong enough to help tolerate this soul-murdering ritual...Right? Am I Right?

Desperation fogs the air. Always has at the Vice Governor's Ball, one of the last chances to secure a breeding partner before the leaves turn. The prissy little shits who've found mates earlier in the season flaunt their so-called "love" mercilessly on the dance floor, leaving those untethered souls desperate for any form of companionship moping about the perimeter.

(internal)

The best things always seem to happen to the least deserving. How sad we are. How sad to be alone, no one to waltz with, for yet another winter...

(A small sneeze.

Shift.

WESTON grabs the HUBERT mannequin.
Dressed schlubbenly)

Now, Imagine Hubert Elephus Porter, waddling among us anonymously, his ninth season and ninth V.G.B. None had gone well for Hubert. But that was not surprising to any of the whispery judgeteers that dominate humanity...

The most uncharismatic son of immigrant robber-baron Gregor Porter and turmeric addict Millie Watanabe Porter (sprinkled it heavy during the pregnancy), Hubert was

generally not liked. Hubert was generally not likeable. Terse. Slightly pungent, like cherries and chalk and urine of an older man. He also had a speaking volume that would GET LOUD AT UNEXPECTED TIMES.

Nor did Hubert have physical desirability. A rare viral palsy at the age of two left half of his face unable to express feelings, which made the broad majority of other humans uncomfortable. Which, of course, meant that he was underestimated.

(Another mannequin for Clarissa.
Wearing some nasty dress?)

Clarissa Elizabeth Framingham was no sexy cookie either. She could be thought of as the oatmeal raisin of Society.

Ah yes. Oatmeal raisin, the universal third choice, a cookie who's existence stems less from passion and more from utility, from the need to make something with those leftover oats and that half open box of Sunmaid that the twins were using to simulate two magical rabbits engaged in a scatological battle for the control of the Universe. It's not bad, it's edible, but hmm let's see what else is on the tray.

"Give me a problem and a stick of chalk!"

-Clarissa wrote in one of her feisty pubescent journals.

"That's my coming out party! Give me knowledge! Give me debate! Keep your god damn punch!"

Clarissa was only attending the Ball to temper the rage of her Aunt Maribel, a plastic beast who'd been forced to up-bring Clarissa after her parents shocked everyone by joining a nonmonogamous demon cult in Borneo. "Find a spouse so you can get out of my life, you ugly little brat," Maribel cooed as she shoved Clarissa into the ballroom. "I look forward to slicing you in half with a sword, you evil haggard cunt," Clarissa recounted whispering as she covertly middle fingered her detestable guardian. Clarissa had a filthy mouth.

(WESTON holds both mannequins as they seem to move in lost thought.)

As they wandered about, it could be reasonably assumed that neither Clarissa nor Hubert were hopeful for anything substantial to emerge from the evening.

(internal)

Who ever is?

All they hoped, as so many of us do, was to avoid humiliation...

But then, like two atoms daydreaming while hurtling around an underground tube –

(WESTON makes THE MANNEQUINS crash into to each other. They fall to the ground

WESTON impersonates gossipy party guests.

A GASP of a guest.)

Oh! Oh My! Did you see that Did they Tee hee hee! Gossip gossip snicker snicker.

(WESTON makes the mannequins move on the ground. He makes noises of effort to get oneself up.

Grunts of Hubert and Clarissa.

The mannequins are a little discombobulated, flustered.

HE slowly rights the mannequins and there's hubbub until the mannequins make eye contact.

The mannequins stare at each other intensely.

As Hubert.)

Hubert.

(As Clarissa)

Clarissa.

(As Hubert)

Clarissa?

(As Clarissa)

That's right...Hubert...

(Mannequin eye contact. CLARISSA holds her hand out to HUBERT. HUBERT takes it.

The waltz gets louder.

The mannequins begin to waltz.

The mannequins fall in love.

A PIVOT. Music change.)

How do the great symbioses begin?

How does coral find the algae to help make the majestic reefs of the tropical seas?

How does the pistol shrimp find the right goby to help him defend his burrowed hole?

How did the Protozoa know when it helped the Termite digest wood that, together, they would destroy great things?

Does a partnership of such power, significance, hope...always begin with something as simple as a stumble and a Waltz?

(A moment.

WESTON rubs something off his face.)

My name is Weston Ludlow Londonderry and this is The Porter Family Mansion.

(Beat. He stops the waltz, abruptly)

I will collect your tickets now.

TICKETS ARE COLLECTED

(An abrupt shift in energy.

WESTON collects everybody's ticket. No matter what the audience member says, he responds in the order below.)

Where you from? [response] Wonderful!

And Where are you from? [audience response] Ahhh.

And Where are you from? [audience response] Oh wow.

And Where are you from? [response] I've never been there.

Where you from? [response] Wonderful!

And Where are you from? [audience response] Ahhh.
 And Where are you from? [audience response] Oh wow.
 And Where are you from? [response] I've never been there.
 And Where are you from? [response] Wonderful!
 And Where are you from? [response] Ahhh.
 And Where are you from? [response] Oh wow.
 And Where are you from? [response] -----

(For the last person he remains silent
 and flirty or slightly judgmental.)

ONCE everyone's ticket has been
 collected.

WESTON looks in the direction towards
 the house. Assesses something.)

TOUR BEHAVIOR

WESTON

Do not veer. Do not sprint. Do not loiter.
 (to someone)
 unless I tell you.

Only certain areas may be entered by guests.
 Some by "nobody at all."
 (to someone)

Some by far too many.

Other tours will be present at the same time...lurching,
 poking, nibbling on whatever morsel of information their
 "expert guide" has whimmed to spoon them today. Pay them no
 mind, avoid their attention and do not listen to anything
 being said.

(shift.)

Also, no sighs.
 No impatience.
 No petulance.
 No asides.
 No snickers, no exasperation, no conversations.

And no questions.
 Unless they are for yourself:
 (maybe to certain people, maybe not.)
 What am I doing here?
 Why am I doing this?

Will that which has been missing finally itself reveal?
(to someone?)
You can touch anything you like.

(WESTON looks in the direction towards
the house. Assesses something. Back to
the crowd.)

We shall approach through the Gardens.

What was once the garden. The gardens were, at one time,
notorious.

As we move, force yourselves to imagine and extrapolate the
full splendor of what the garden once was. You will need to
extrapolate quite a bit if you wish to enjoy this tour.
(to US.)

Follow me.

(WESTON begins to lead the audience
down a long pathway.)

WALKING TO THE REAR ENTRANCE

WHILE WALKING, maybe Weston has a
BULLHORN.)

Note the Rocks.

Note the Mud.

Note the Unpredictable terrain.

Note that heels were a stupid choice.

Note the the tall, thick trees circling the perimeter.

Note the uncanny swirls of wind.

Note the smaller pathways, the dead ends, the tissues, the
discretion.

Note the hum of bees, the zzz of the dragonflies.
Note the crickets chirp, the frogs croak, the woodpeckers
pound.

And who smells tangerines? Cinnamon? Anyone smelling Pizza?