

The Shadow Barista

By

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## **Cast of Characters**

Barista- Works in a coffee shop. Tries to not be an asshole.

Shadow Barista- Speaks the Barista's inner thoughts.

\*Note: These characters can be cast as any gender or mixed genders. For example, the Barista could be played by a tiny little girl with a huge, loud man playing her inner voice or vice versa.

Yoga Mom

Rich Mom One

Loud Asshole

Slow Elderly Customer

Fox News Enthusiast

Rich Mom Two

\*Maybe these customer characters are played by two alternating, quick changing actors. Feel free to cast six actors if you've got them or one actor if you think they can handle it.

## **Setting**

The play takes place in a coffee shop, with the Barista and Shadow Barista behind the counter.

Somewhere, maybe on a wall or the counter, posters are hung. There is one saying "We support public education" along with a couple others, maybe for a local theater production or concert. Maybe the counter has a lower part for the register and a higher part that hides the espresso machine and coffee machine (should budgets and time not allow for a giant espresso machine on stage.)

*AT RISE: The BARISTA and the SHADOW BARISTA stand behind the counter, reading the same book. YOGA MOM enters.*

BARISTA

What can I get for you today?

YOGA MOM

I'm doing well. How are you?

*(A Beat.)*

BARISTA

I'm doing just fine. What can I get for you today?

SHADOW BARISTA

Deaf bitch.

YOGA MOM

Um...I'd like a hot tea?

BARISTA

Here is our tea list.

YOGA MOM

Ooh. I'd like a yerba mate.

BARISTA

What size?

*(The YOGA MOM is now on her phone.)*

SHADOW BARISTA

WHAT SIZE YOU DUMB BITCH?

YOGA MOM

Oh, sorry. I'd like a small.

BARISTA

I'll have that right up. It'll be Two Dollars and fourteen cents.

*(Transaction occurs.)*

Have a good one!

*(The YOGA MOM exits.)*

BARISTA

You know you don't have to be so mean.

SHADOW BARISTA

It isn't my fault she can't hear.

BARISTA

And don't make fun of deaf people! Jesus. That's terrible ableist bullshit. Besides, you don't even know what that poor woman is going through today.

SHADOW BARISTA

Yeah. Must be really hard paying a hundred dollars a month for yoga.

BARISTA

People have back pain. Anxiety.

SHADOW BARISTA

Well, you know, \*you\* thought it, so don't come yelling after me.

(RICH MOM ONE enters.)

RICH MOM ONE

I'd like a large dirty chai, light chai, with soy milk and a pump of caramel-

BARISTA

-We don't really do pumps here-

RICH MOM ONE

Make that half a pump. Sugar free caramel. Decaf, for the espresso.

SHADOW BARISTA

Tell her the espresso machine's broken. TELL HER THE ESPRESSO MACHINE IS BROKEN.

BARISTA

I'll have that right up.

SHADOW BARISTA

NOOOOOOO!

RICH MOM ONE

*(Looking through her name-brand purse.)*

Oh, fiddlesticks. I left my wallet in the car. I'll be right back.

*(RICH MOM ONE exits. BARISTA fiddles with espresso shots, milk steaming, and syrup.)*

SHADOW BARISTA

You should have told her the espresso machine is broken.

BARISTA

No. That's not my job. Also...you're an asshole.

SHADOW BARISTA

I am just the voice inside your own head.

BARISTA

YEAH. And you're an asshole. Stop that.

(RICH MOM ONE re-enters, with wallet.)

RICH MOM ONE

Oh my gosh. I can't believe it. They gave me a ticket while I was in here.

SHADOW BARISTA

Woow. You didn't pay for the meter and you got a ticket. That's so straaange you entitled shrew.

BARISTA

...Yeah, these are some of the most heavily ticketed meters in town.

RICH MOM ONE

I wish I'd known that before.

SHADOW BARISTA

Or...this is crazy...you could PAY THE FUCKING QUARTER LADY.

BARISTA

Would you like a receipt?

RICH MOM ONE

Oh. No thank you.

(RICH MOM ONE leaves without tipping.)

SHADOW BARISTA

Didn't leave a goddamn tip.

BARISTA

Do you really have to point out every negative thing?

SHADOW BARISTA

Don't blame *me* for what your head does like its a *problem* or something. You need me. And you should listen to me more often. I am the most honest expression of your basic instincts that Polite Modern Society has attempted to strip away. I am your truest self. Out in the jungle, you'd be saying whatever the fuck you want. Out in the jungle, you'd be *me*.

(LOUD ASSHOLE CUSTOMER ENTERS)

LOUD ASSHOLE

GIVE ME A LARGE COFFEE. BLACK.

(LOUD ASSHOLE throws cash on the counter)

SHADOW BARISTA

Doo it. Dooo it.

BARISTA

(*Incredibly quiet.*)

Is that for here or to go?

LOUD ASSHOLE

(*Somewhat thrown off. And a notch quieter.*)

Uh...To go.

BARISTA

(Still incredibly quiet)

Here is your coffee, sir. Here is your change. Have a nice day.

(LOUD ASSHOLE leaves the store.)

SHADOW BARISTA

See...now didn't that feel nice? Maybe you're subtle commentary on his behavior will make him less likely to do that to someone else.

BARISTA

Maybe you're right! Maybe listening to the voice telling me not to take this stupid bullshit isn't really so bad!

(*SLOW ELDERLY CUSTOMER enters.*)

BARISTA

(To SHADOW BARISTA)

Don't you dare. Don't you dare say something bad about this sweet kind soul-

SHADOW BARISTA

OH HH MY GOOOOOOD. CAN YOU HURRY THE FUCK UP? JEY-SUS H. CHRIST ON TOAST. COME OOOON. COME OOOON. YOU CAN DO IT! COOOOME On. STOP WASTING MY TIME.

You know old people probably do this on purpose. Look behind that placid smile: it's pure evil. They've waited their whole lives to take advantage of young people and make us wait on them and we can't do shit about it because they survived World War II or something.

JESUS! HURRY UP!

*(SLOW ELDERLY CUSTOMER makes their way, very, very slowly to the counter. All the while SHADOW BARISTA complains and the BARISTA angrily stares down SHADOW BARISTA.)*

SLOW ELDERLY CUSTOMER

Hey there, tiger. I'd like a small decaf coffee today.

BARISTA

You got it.

*(BARISTA glares pointedly at SHADOW BARISTA as the BARISTA gets the coffee.)*

BARISTA

Here is your decaf coffee. On the house. Or, on the tip jar, I guess. I'll cover it. And I hope you have an absolutely wonderful day.

SLOW ELDERLY CUSTOMER

Whaat?

BARISTA

IT'S ON THE HOUSE.

SLOW ELDERLY CUSTOMER

Well, thank you, sunshine!

*(SLOW ELDERLY CUSTOMER exits, once again, VERY, VERY slowly. SHADOW BARISTA is on the edge of saying something, but the BARISTA's glare holds them back. The*

ELDERLY CUSTOMER is slow, even in shutting the door behind them.)

BARISTA

I'm better than this. We are both better than this.

SHADOW BARISTA

No, you're not.

BARISTA

Yes I am!

SHADOW BARISTA

No...you clearly are not. You are the one thinking these terrible-ass thoughts all the time.

BARISTA

Well, I will be better then! There must be some genuinely nice people out there that don't think this shit. I want to be that kind of person. I want to love everyone and be positive.

*(BARISTA and SHADOW BARISTA spot a customer coming in at the exact same time)*

BARISTA and SHADOW BARISTA

Jesus Christ.

*(FOX NEWS ENTHUSIAST enters. Maybe he's wearing a MAGA hat or shirt. Maybe he's wearing the most offensive conservative shirt the cast can find...)*

FOX NEWS ENTHUSIAST

Hi. I'd like a medium coffee.

BARISTA

Okay.

SHADOW BARISTA

Please don't say something stupid. Please don't say something stupid. Please, for the love of all that is holy do not say something stupid that will piss me off.

BARISTA

Here's that medium coffee; it'll be \$2.17.



*(He pays the money.)*

FOX NEWS ENTHUSIAST

There you go.

*(FOX NEWS ENTHUSIAST turns to leave.)*

BARISTA

Phew.

SHADOW BARISTA

That guy always has to say something.

BARISTA

But we're safe.

*(They are not, in fact, safe.  
The FOX NEWS ENTHUSIAST starts examining the "We  
Support Public Education" poster suspiciously.)*

FOX NEWS ENTHUSIAST

Who put this up here? There's no association marked on the poster.

*(Maybe the lights change to reflect how pissed off the  
SHADOW BARISTA is. Maybe they don't.)*

BARISTA

Um. I guess someone just brought it in and we hung it up.

*(FOX NEWS ENTHUSIAST examines the poster for a little  
while and turns to go. As he is examining it, SHADOW  
BARISTA begins to berate him.)*

SHADOW BARISTA

YOU KNOW WHAT? Public Education landed THIS ONE'S ass a full ride to college

*(SHADOW BARISTA gestures to the BARISTA)*

and now they work here to pay their GODDAMN rent, so don't you DARE insult the brave, hardworking, caring teachers that pass through this coffee shop EVERY SINGLE FUCKING DAY, you DIPSHIT!

BARISTA

Sir.

*(FOX NEWS ENTHUSIAST turns around.)*

BARISTA

We put it up because all of us here at this coffee shop are, in fact, proud to support public education.

*(FOX NEWS ENTHUSIAST gives the BARISTA a look like they're an idiot. But he doesn't argue before exiting. The BARISTA turns to the SHADOW BARISTA.)*

You know. Sometimes. Occasionally. You may actually have a point.

SHADOW BARISTA

Damn straight.

*(They stand there for a moment in harmony. Then RICH MOM TWO enters.)*

Aaand...here we go again.

RICH MOM TWO

Do y'all sell frappuccinos here?

BARISTA

No. The closest thing we would have is an iced latte.

RICH MOM TWO

I'd like a medium iced vanilla latte, light ice, with skim milk, extra vanilla and whipped cream.

SHADOW BARISTA

And now you're just-you're just gonna-

BARISTA

I'll get right on it.

*(The BARISTA goes to pull a triple shot of espresso.)*

SHADOW BARISTA

You know you *could always* tell her-

*(There is a horrible clanging sound. The espresso machine goes haywire and the steam wand fizzles.)*

BARISTA and SHADOW BARISTA  
Well darn it.

BARISTA  
The espresso machine is broken.

END OF PLAY