“Untitled Puppet Show” or “On the other side of ‘Anchovy Avenue’”
By Daniella De Jesús
List of Characters
Child/Numba 4
Miss Lady/Carmen Nieves
Lil Fish/Ru Jones
Piqa Delia
Yara Bigsby
Garbauge Le Funk
Norma

Descriptions

The Peoples:
Child- a 7 year old child of any gender
Miss Lady/Carmen Nieves- host of Anchovy Avenue, female
Ru Jones- puppeteers Lil Fish, any gender
Norma- a janitor and mother, female

The Puppets:
Lil Fish- an adorable anchovy (think Slimy the Worm from Sesame Street)
Numba 4- a wrap with anchovies, scrambled eggs, and lettuce
Piqa Delia- a picadillo empanada with a bite mark
Yara Bigsby- a jar of pickled pigs feet
Garbauge Le Funk- a french, chain-smoking garbage can (think Oscar the Grouch)

Suggested double casting for cast of 4:
Child/Numba 4
Miss Lady/Carmen Nieves & Yara Bigsby
Lil Fish/Ru Jones & Piqa Delia
Garbauge Le Funk & Norma
Scene 1

A living room. A child watches the final moments of the series finale of the beloved, long running puppet show “Anchovy Avenue”, think “Sesame Street” but grimier.

In the TV:

LIL FISH
Well we can try again tomorrow!

MISS LADY
That’s the thing, Lil Fish, there isn’t going to be a tomorrow.

LIL FISH
What do you mean? There’s always a tomorrow!

MISS LADY
Yes, you’re right, I’m sorry. That’s true, there will be a tomorrow. However, we won’t be here tomorrow.

LIL FISH
I don’t understand.

MISS LADY
Hmm... well y’know about storybooks?

LIL FISH
Yeah…?

MISS LADY
Y’know how every storybook has an ending?

LIL FISH
Yeah.

MISS LADY
Well Anchovy Avenue is kind of like a storybook. And...we’ve reached the last page.

LIL FISH
We’re ending?
MISS LADY
    That’s right.

LIL FISH
    What does that mean? Where do we go? What happens to us? Why?

MISS LADY
    Well, there’s this thing called taxes. And everybody who gets money has to give some of it to the government to pay for things that everybody can use. Anchovy Avenue is a public access show, which means we’re funded by taxes. But we’re not the only thing funded by taxes. Bridges, welfare, public education, public transportation, public parks, social security, and war are all also funded by taxes. And it’s the government’s job to decide how much money each thing gets and, unfortunately for us, funding for programs like ours has been significantly reduced, which means we won’t get as much money as we’re used to. And it kind of costs a lot of money to put on a show like this, so the show has to end, so that the government can put more money into things it thinks are more important.

LIL FISH
    Like war?

MISS LADY
    Yeah, Lil Fish, like war.

LIL FISH
    Well that stinks!

MISS LADY
    I’ll say.

LIL FISH
    That isn’t very nice!

MISS LADY
    No, Lil Fish, it’s not very nice. But you know what?

LIL FISH
    What?

MISS LADY
    Even though our story has reached it’s last page, the important thing to remember is, at least we got to tell it.
        (sung)
    It isn’t easy to say bye
Not as easy as say “hi”
Wish this string could last forever
Wrap around the whole world twice
Hugging arms of every pair out there
But now’s the end my dears
Because every story ends somewhere
And today somewhere is here.

It isn’t easy to say bye
It’s just not easy to cut ties
Wish this song would play forever
Wish that we could sing it twice
But every tune has one last note
Every song gets lullabied, I guess
It’s sad and you can cry, but know
We love you, you’ll be missed.

Yes, this is our last show.
We’d like to dance again, y’know
We’d like to see you shortly
But this is our last episode
We’d like to sing our song once mo’
We’d like to say, before we go
Goodbye, so long, au revoir,
Wadaeen, zài jiàn, adios.

LIL FISH
It isn’t easy to say bye
Not as easy as say “hi”
Wish this string could last forever
Wrap around the whole world twice
Shaking every little hand and man
We hope you’ll understand just why
It’s cuz every story ends someday
And now’s about that time.

LIL FISH & MISS LADY
So long, adios, wadaeen,
Au revoir, zài jiàn, gooooodbyyyyyyye!

In the living room:
The child throws a tantrum, hurling objects at the TV until it shatters, until there’s a giant child-sized hole in the middle. The child looks around. The child climbs into the television and escapes into...

Scene 2

The set of ANCHOVY AVENUE on the last take of the final scene of the series finale. The child has been transformed into a puppet named Numba 4, that resembles an anchovy wrap, alongside Lil Fish and Miss Lady.

LIL FISH & MISS LADY
So long, adios, wadaeen,
Au revoir, zàijiàn, goooodbyyyyyye!

The tune plays out to teary eyes and applause.

MISS LADY
Do you wanna say it?

LIL FISH
Actually, I think my friend here, Numba 4, should.

Numba 4 pulls out a director’s horn.

NUMBA 4
Ladies and friends, that’s a wrap on Miss Lady, played by Carmen Nieves, Lil Fish, puppeteered by Ru Jones, and a series wrap on “Anchovy Avenue”—hold the mayo, will ya! Thank you all for your hard work and your soft hearts!

(beat)
Cut! Check the gate, will ya!

The puppets (Lil Fish and Numba 4) go limp as Carmen Nieves and Ru Jones disappear off set. Props are collected into bins. Set pieces are taken down and rolled away. Ru Jones returns to set to take the Lil Fish puppet. Carmen Nieves returns to take the Anchovy Avenue sign. Lights are turned
off. Numba 4 is tossed into a bin with other unwanted puppets and rolled off set and out onto the street with a sign that reads “We’re Free!”

Scene 3

Inside the bin of discarded puppets including: Piqa Delia (an empanada with a bite mark), Yara Bigsby (a jar of pickled pigs feet) and Garbauge Le Funk (a french, chain-smoking, garbage can).

YARA BIGSBY
Who’s this clown?

NUMBA 4
Who are you?

GARBAUGE LE FUNK
No, who zee funk are you?

NUMBA 4
Where am I?

PIQA DELIA
We askin the questions here, kid!

NUMBA 4
I’m sorry. I uh I think I might be lost. I was at home watching Anchovy Avenue and then I was in Anchovy Avenue and now I’m here.

GARBAUGE LE FUNK
Well, we are a looooong way from Anchovy Avenue, mon petite eh...sandwich? What are you? A sandwich?

PIQA DELIA
We haven’t set foot on that show since they gentrified it!

NUMBA 4
Gentrified it?
YARA BIGSBY
Yeah, y'know, a little out with the old in with the new. The past few years it's been less
Anchovy Avenue and more Albacore Avenue, if y'know what I mean. 'Tuh, I'm surprised
they didn't change the name along with everything else!

NUMBA 4
I don't remember you guys on the show?

GARBAUGE LE FUNK
It was eh how you say? Before your time.

NUMBA 4
Oh.

PIQA DELIA
Yeah kid, a lot's happened here before you showed up. A few years ago, the show got a
new producer and they made us clean up our act.

GARBAUGE LE FUNK
Zhey said “Anchovy Avenue” as it was was just too filthy for mainstream audiences. I
zhink it was a load of bull, american children are coddled, in my opinion, zhey are too
soft!

YARA BIGSBY
Can you believe that garbage?!

GARBAUGE LE FUNK
Excusez-moi?

YARA BIGSBY
Sorry.

PIQA DELIA
And so anyways, all the funkiest puppets got booted to bins like these. To rot away until
who knows when.

NUMBA 4
Well, now that the show’s over, I bet all the other puppets are just like this.

YARA BIGSBY
Nah, the other puppets prolly got taken home by their puppeteers or put in that exhibit in
the Museum across the street.
GARBAUGE LE FUNK
  What exhibit is zhis?

YARA BIGSBY
  They were doing an exhibit on Tim Hanson and Anchovy Avenue and The Crumpet Show.

GARBAUGE LE FUNK
  Oh yes, zhat’s right, I zhink I heard about zhat.

PIQA DELIA
  Wait, hold up, rewind, what do you mean the show’s over?

NUMBA 4
  Today was the last episode.

PIQA DELIA
  No. No, no, no. That can’t be.

NUMBA 4
  What?

PIQA DELIA
  We have to get out of here. We have to get out! How do I get out? Let me out! Get me out!

  _Piqa Delia starts running around screaming, trying to climb the walls of the bin to no success._

YARA BIGSBY
  Piqa get a hold of yourself!

PIQA DELIA
  Don’t you know what this means?!

YARA BIGSBY
  No…

PIQA DELIA
  We’re gonna be garbage for real this time! Like literal garbage. We’re prolly cozied up next to a dumpster right now, a few hours short of being tossed into a garbage truck that’ll go to the Gowanus dump to be incinerated!

NUMBA 4
What’s incinerated? Is that like jail?

PIQA DELIA
See those grill marks, your whole body’s gonna be a grill mark. It means fire, flames, we’re gonna burn to a crisp!

GARBAUGE LE FUNK
Stop it! Stop it! Gather yourself. Zhat is not who you are. Piqa is not fearful, Piqa is brave. And if Piqa must go, we shall go with you and we shall go with dignity. Yes?

Beat.

NUMBA 4
It isn’t easy to say bye
Not as easy as say “hi”
Wish this string could last forever
Wrap around the whole world twice

GARBAUGE LE FUNK
Hugging arms of every pair out zhere
But now’s zhe end ma cher

YARA BIGSBY
Because every story ends somewhere
And today somewhere is here.

PIQA DELIA
So..so long, adios, wadaeen,
Au revoir, zài jiàn, goodbyyyyye

The puppets look at one another and try to make peace with their fate.

Beat.

A janitor, named Norma, empties the trash can that’s next to the puppet bin. She notices the puppet bin.

NORMA
Oooh what do we have here?
Scene 4

Norma’s home. She removes all the puppets from the bin and turns the bin on its side to create a puppet theater, complete with curtains.

NORMA

Sofia! Sandy! Mami has a special surprise for you! Tonight, we have some special guests from Anchovy Avenue. Please welcome, Garbage Le Funk and Numba 4!

GARBAGE LE FUNK

Bienvenue à Anchovy Avenue! Today we will be learning about recycling!

NUMBA 4

I thought we were gonna talk about leftovers? Get me the script, will ya?

GARBAGE LE FUNK

Well that is the thing, Numba 4, recycling and leftovers go hand in hand. Leftovers are like eh...recycled food you can still eat! For example, let's say your mama makes a delicious roast pork for dinner and there's a little bit leftover but there is no more rice and no more beans to go with it. But there is bread and onions and cheese and pickles in the refrigerator. Do you throw away the leftover pork or...do you...make a sandwich?

NUMBA 4

I'd make a sandwich, that way nothing goes to waste!

GARBAGE LE FUNK

Exactly!

NUMBA 4

Wait...does that mean that hand me downs are recycling too?

GARBAGE LE FUNK

Oh...hm I hadn’t thought of that.

End of play.