

ACT I

Scene 1

Fade up opening music which is a cross between a Current Affair and X-Files. Open on an empty stage with an old forties microphone and stand in the middle. The cast are dressed in forties attire. To the right in the sound effects man with an array of equipment and props for on sight sound effects.

NONA: Good evening ladies and gentlemen My name is Nona Vent and welcome to The Unexplained Files.

Audience applause.

NONA This is the first of our series recorded live and exclusively at the opera house. Later in the program we'll expose The new wave of terror that has silently sneaked into our city. The cosmic mime cult. And shed light on the amazing Invisible Hamster sightings. Before we begin can we ask any one in the audience if they have seen the invisible Hamster.

Audience reaction.

NONA *(cont'd)* I thought as much. Now to our first story. It can happen to anyone at anytime.

SFX A man and woman breathing heavy like they are having passionate sex.

NONA: A disease that has spread through Sydney like wildfire.

SFX They get excited and peak.

NONA: *(cont'd)* Spontaneous Human Combustion.

SFX Explosion

NONA: Its explosive Impact has been devastating. Overnight support groups have sprung out of nowhere. Capitalist and political groups have also jumped feet first into the fire to exploit the outbreak for personal gain. Fred Nile has become morally outraged. But that's to be expected. With us in the studio tonight is . DR LOUIS CYPHER, Biophysicist and chemist, leading the fight to find a cure for spontaneous combustion. Would you please welcome DR LOUIS CYPHER,

Audience applause.

CYPHER: Thank you. Thank you Nona .

NONA: Doctor, what causes Spontaneous Combustion ?

CYPHER: Well, Nona . Research has shown a number of possibilities. An imbalance of acid and alkaline, Chemicals in the body. Sunspot activity. ASIO intelligence testing or possibly, an adverse reaction to reality tv, an ET death ray. Or just something in the water.

NONA: You mean like this glass of water.

CYPHER: Precisely

NONA: Are any of these theories sound ?

CYPHER; Possibly, but I believe my theory is better. I believe that some people have too much atomic activity in their body. And if an electron spins off out of control it causes a chain reaction and ...BOOM!

NONA; Can you substantiate this theory ?

CYPHER; Most certainly. In fact we have been performing experiments on a number of people.....

NONA: People ?

CYPHER: Of course. Since the new legislation it's become illegal to experiment on animals, so we've substituted with homeless people.

NONA: Very sensible.

CYPHER: Thank you. I've brought in Volunteers to demonstrate my theory. May I ?

NONA: Of course.

SFX Muffled sound of people wearing gags

NONA: Why are they wearing gags?

CYPHER Uh, it's a preventative measure.

NONA: What does it prevent?

CYPHER: It prevents them from saying no.

NONA: I see.

CYPHER: With this volunteer I will demonstrate the fragility of the human atomic structure and the possibility of stimulating an atomic reaction on a molecular level through the use of a simple device.

SFX Electrical build up and explosion.

Ah, as you can see this person was a POP. A Potential Organoexplosive Person. He was suffering from Nuclear Thermalorganic Syndrome. N.U.T.S. for short. This simple device just sped up the process.

NONA: So, how can you tell if someone has NUTS.

CYPHER: Very simple I make a small adjustment here.

SFX Clicking

And it will tell me the amount of nuclear activity present in the subject's body. And If this alarm goes off.

SFX Air raid siren.

CYPHER: Ah hah !

SFX Explosion

NONA: Doctor how do we know these volunteers weren't rigged to simply support your theory.

CYPHER: Perhaps a volunteer from the audience

General murmurs of no from the audience.

NONA: Perhaps not. We cross now to an interview done earlier by our intrepid reporter Ash Smoulder with a homeless person who doesn't wish to be identified

Scene 2

ASH: POP's are living off a special pension. One that barely covers the cost of this kind of housing. And even this is a problem because these houses have been declared a fire hazard unfit for POPs to live in.

P.O.P: (*Sounds like Dame Edna Everage*) It's not fair, Possums. I mean, I can't get a job, can't live anywhere. People avoid you like the plague. Scared you're gonna blow up all over them. I mean, what's a girl to do ? And now they're talking about sterilizing us. It's just not right, I tell you. There should be a law against it.

Scene 3

CYPHER: Sterilization alone won't solve the problem but it will reduce the risk of more POP's.

NONA: But there's no substantial evidence to suggest NUTS is hereditary.

CYPHER: True. But why take the risk. Better to be safe then sorry. As you know there is the possibility it's contagious.

NONA: But how can that be ? As you've said this problem is initiated at a sub atomic level.

CYPHER; Let me explain it in simple terms a politician can understand. I call it the tuning fork theory. When a tuning fork at a given frequency vibrates another tuning fork designed for exactly the same frequency, in close proximity will also vibrate. The same is true of human molecules

NONA: Some might say that is a rather dubious analogy.

CYPHER; That's true SOME MIGHT. But those same people are not as privy to the research and knowledge that I have accumulated on the subject.

NONA: So what you're saying is, leave it to the experts they know what they are talking about ?

CYPHER: That is always the wisest course of action.

NONA: Dana Scrawny conducted the is interview dealing with another troubling aspect of NUTS.

Scene 4

DANA: There was an incident with your husband.

A.W: (*Sounds like Ita Buttrose*) It was impossible to have any sort of intimate relationship with him. If we wanted to have sex he insisted on wearing a full body asbestos suit in case I had any....hot flashes.

DANA: That must've been humiliating.

A.W: It got worse. Whenever I....got excited. He would spray me with the fire extinguisher.

DANA: How awful.

A.W: I told him I couldn't live like this anymore. I was tired of taking cold showers all the time.I..I.. He made me so angry I started losing my temper.

DANA: And what did he do ?

A.W : He called the fire brigade. He thought I was going to explode.

DANA: What happened then ?

A.W; He ran outside and....(*tears*)

DANA: It's all right.

A.W: AND THEN THE STUPID BASTARD RAN IN FRONT OF THE FIRE TRUCK!

Scene 5

ASH: Johnny Firebird is a self proclaimed NUTTER. Almost a third of the profits from his new album Fireball XL500 goes directly to POP charities and support groups. Johnny what have you got to say about the way POP's and people suspected of having NUTS are treated.

JOHNNY: (*Sound like Jimmy Barnes*) Yeah, well, it's not fair you know. There are like these people out there and no one can relate to them , or what they're going through, you know.

ASH: You initiated the POP charity concert. In fact you lead board of organizers.

JOHNNY: Yeah, Yeah. There were a few hitches there.

ASH: Like what ?

JOHNNY: Well, they wanted to make it a non-smoking event, didn't they. I said you can't do that. If you did that the people it was meant for wouldn't be allowed in, would they. Didn't make sense as far as I was concerned. They said the venue has very strict fire regulations. And I said they can only explode once and besides only people they're hurting is themselves so where's the harm.

ASH: So how did you solve this problem ?

JOHNNY: We moved the concert to the crematorium. Turned out to be a bonus really. Great ambience, they even had their own organ.

ASH: I understand that even though this was primarily a charity event. Financially you did quite well.

JOHNNY: Well,....there were expenses that had to be looked after, you know.

ASH: You were busted with four hundred kilos of cocaine the next day.

JOHNNY: Yeah, that's what I mean by expenses ,you know. Musicians you see, you can't pay them in cash, they lose it in taxes, you see.

ASH: The cocaine was for the bands ?

JOHNNY: And the roadies. Gotta keep them happy.

ASH: What about the escort girls ?

JOHNNY: Well, again you see. Musicians you got to keep them under control. If there out shagging groupies their wives find out, you know. So, you got to keep them in the hotel. And well, you've got to keep them entertained some how or they'll wreak the place. So, yes the Girls were vital, for everyone's sake . Yeah.

Scene 6

DANA: I am standing outside The City's largest nuclear facility .with Frank Burns a former employee of the plant who has been dismissed because he has been diagnosed with NUTS. Mr. Burns do you feel you have been unfairly discriminated against?

BURNS: Well, not really no ?

DANA: How can you say that ? They fired you on very personal medical grounds.

BURNS: Yeah, but I can see their point. You can't have people exploding around nuclear reactors it can be very unhealthy for all concerned.

SFX Atomic explosion.

DANA: Dana Scrawney, Unexplained Files. Help I'm Blind. I'M BLIND!

Scene 7

NONA We conducted an opinion poll of what typical Sydney siders had to say about the current crisis.

OWNER: (*Outragious French accent*) I run a Restaurant and find we cannot employ P.O.Ps because if one explodes while they are serving a customer it can put everyone off their dinner.

FIRE CHIEF I'm a fire chief. And It's a bit embarrassing if you have to put out a fire and your own men at the same time.

MINISTER I'm a minister. I say they are ungodly and they should be blown up the lot of them.

NONA: Doctor I believe you've been developing a cure for some time.

CYPHER: It's not a cure, just medication to alleviate some of the symptoms.

NONA; Symptoms ?

CYPHER: Yes, it helps represses a persons atomic structure and stops them getting hot flushes. However it must be taken regularly as directed.

NONA; Are there any side effects ?

CYPHER: Just two. It's addictive, so you'll be taking it the rest of your life and it grows hair on your teeth.

NONA; Doctor ,it seems a lot of people have profited from this disaster, including yourself.

CYPHER: WHAT! uH..ah..What are you implying ?

NONA: I'm saying that a lot of organizations such as BANG, FOOM, FIRE among others have had a net profit turnover of more the 900,000 dollars per anum. And your name features prominently in the records of all these organizations.

CYPHER: Where did you hear that ?

NONA: We have our sources.

CYPHER; It's a lie I tell you. A blatant lie.

NONA: Then how do you explain the seven million dollar increase in your personal wealth , spread over several off shore accounts.

CYPHER; I..I..I.. do very well on the scratchies.