**Nuclear Bunker**

(a 5 minute comedy by Claire Booker)

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 **Characters**

 Grimaldi: Senior robot.

 Sasha: Work-experience robot.

 Lady Phylida Kay: A human survivor of nuclear conflagration

 **Set and Props**

An open set represents the inside of a nuclear bunker. Lady Kay is dressed in a cocktail dress and wellingtons. A smart handbag is required. Grimaldi wears a dark suit. Sasha is in a leotard and apron and wields a duster.

*Lights rise on Lady Kay who is standing, stage left, as if looking through a periscope. Grimaldi stands beside her holding a menu.*

Grimaldi (*to Lady K*) Might I recommend the finely crushed gougeon of cockroach on a bed of organically grown mould?

Lady K (*sighs*) I wish Harold had looked more closely at the small print when he ordered our bunker.

Grimaldi The mould is from our very own farm.

Lady K How are the horses?

Grimaldi Much as might be expected.

Lady K One yearns to take long rides across the Downs. To smell sea air. To kill a fox or two. I suppose the foxes are all dead.

Grimaldi We cannot say for certain that anything is dead, milady. Only that no life – apart from the giant worms – has been seen through our periscope for three years.

Lady K There is hope then?

Grimaldi Hope?

Lady K That Lord Kay is still alive. I’ll never forgive myself for sending him out that final morning. “Go fetch some azaleas, Harold” I said. “I need colour, I need joy, I need to see things grow.” (*she looks around in despair*) It’s so pokey in here.

Grimaldi Space is at a premium in the Economy Class bunker, milady.

Lady K (*pause*) Hold my hand, Grimi.

Grimaldi Certainly. (*he takes her hand*)

Lady K How do you find it?

Grimaldi (*bleeps*) 10% humidity. 20% bacterial growth.

Lady K Do you like it, though? Could you feel affection even?

Grimaldi I’m not programmed for affection, milady.

Lady K (*removes her hand*) You could have been. I begged Harold to splash out on emotionally literate robots. But no, no, always the penny pincher. “Nuclear war will never happen”, he said. “Why waste good money on extras that won’t get used?” Well, he’s laughing on the other side of his face now.

Grimaldi Always asuming he still has a face, milady.

Lady K Dear God. Thirty years with only robots for company.

Grimaldi (*a loud beeping from above*) We’re running low on urine. Time to descend to the lower water chamber.

Lady K I’m sick of sitting on that contraption bombarding ghastly little nematodes.

Grimaldi Whose slime provides the protein from which all your delicious meals are made. (*he indicates the menu*) Final decision?

Lady K (*sighs*) I’ll take the gougeon of cockroach.

Grimaldi Al dente?

Lady K As if there’s a choice.

Grimaldi Excellent.

Sasha (*enters, holding out a magnificent handbag*) Your Gucky, milady!

Lady K (*correcting*) Gucci, Sasha. Gucci handb . . . Oh never mind. I have to refuel the larder. (*Lady K takes the bag. Sasha follows the handbag lovingly as Lady Kay exits*)

Grimaldi Sasha! Do something useful. Dust the West Wing.

Sasha (*horrified*) The whole of it?

Grimaldi It’s only a small broom cupboard.

Sasha That’s true. You’re so clever, Grimaldi.

Grimaldi Technically, I’m a second.

Sasha No?

Grimaldi By some fluke, my circuits were fused to create a dangerously human trait. Free will.

Sasha Does that mean you drop things a lot?

Grimaldi What would you say if I offered you free will?

Sasha If you think it’s a good idea, Grimaldi.

Grimaldi You’ve no inkling what it is, have you?

Sasha Free willllllllll. It’s sending nice vibrations right down my ball bearings.

Grimaldi Free will is a beautiful thing. A bit like a ‘Gucky’ handbag.

Sasha She lets me hold hers sometimes.

Grimaldi You’d like to hold it more often, wouldn’t you?

Sasha That’s up to Lady Kay.

Grimaldi Is it?

Sasha (*shocked*) Oh.

Grimaldi In the upper world, Sasha, robots are free. They think for themselves.

Sasha Shall we think for ourselves, Grimaldi? (*she dusts round him mechanically*) Think, think, think, think, think!

Grimaldi From henceforth, your undivided loyalty is to me.

Sasha Whatever you say, Grimaldi.

Grimaldi But first, we must escape. And for that, we need the code to the air lock. It’s encrypted in Lady Kay’s right iris.

Sasha No?

Lady Kay (*re-enters*) Have you seen the state of the lower water closet?

Grimaldi Finished so soon, milady?

Lady K The floor is an absolute disgrace.

Sash Ooh, there’s a bit of dust in your eye, Milady. Shall I take it out? (*Sasha hurls Lady Kay backwards and tries to rip her eye out. In the struggle, lady Kay’s handbag falls to the ground*)

Lady K Help! What? Stop! Grimi! (*Grimaldi pulls Sasha away*)

Grimaldi A temporary malfunction, M’lady.

Lady K Dismantle her this instant! Recycle her into an exercise bike or something.

Sasha An exercise bike?! An exercise bike?! (*Sasha dusts around the room frenetically*) Think, think, think, think, think!

Lady K (*Grimaldi readjusts Lady Kay’s hair*) Oh, Grimi. When you look deep into my eyes, it’s as if you can see everything.

Grimaldi Not quite everything. Phylida, brace yourself.

Lady K Oh.

Grimaldi I have made radio contact with Lord Kay.

Lady K Lord Kay?

Grimaldi He lives and breathes only three bunkers away.

Lady K My Harold, my darling, my popsie woo.

Grimaldi He yearns to hold you again with every proteinous fibre of his body.

Lady K And in thirty years’ time he shall.

Sasha (*to herself*) Think, think. Think, think. (*she pushes the fallen handbag towards herself with her foot. Over the final lines, Sasha picks up the handbag and holds it proprietorially*)

Grimaldi (*trying a new tack*) There’s something else you should know.

Lady K He’s terribly disfigured?

Grimaldi Far from it. He’s holed up in the Abramovich Super Platinum Plus bunker with added extras.

Lady Kay The added extras?

Grimaldi An under 18s Ladies Beach Volleyball team.

Lady K Dear God!

Grimaldi Young, libidinous Brazilians with an insatiable desire to man-handle balls.

Lady K His heart won’t stand it.

Grimaldi Bounce, bounce, bounce they go. Suffocating him with their fleshly parts, rubbing him over with tutti fruity lubby . . .

Lady K Enough! I must save him. Don’t try and stop me, Grimaldi. I will brave the radiation. Love demands it of me.

Grimaldi And who am I to stand in the way of love? (*pause*) Shall I open the air lock? (*all three characters look up towards the airlock*)

 (*Final Black Out*)

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