

## UNDERCOVER SALON

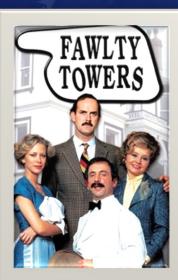
Crimedy

When a hair salon owner, who pines to be a private detective, discovers the neighboring yoga studio is a New Age front for an LSD micro-dosing pyramid scheme, she rallies her fellow misfit stylists into capturing their first criminals.









## Mixed Genre Play















## The Characters

**Sparkle's Crew** 

**The Bad Guys** 



"Sparkle" Jyoti Indrakumar Malhotra



**Amethyst** 



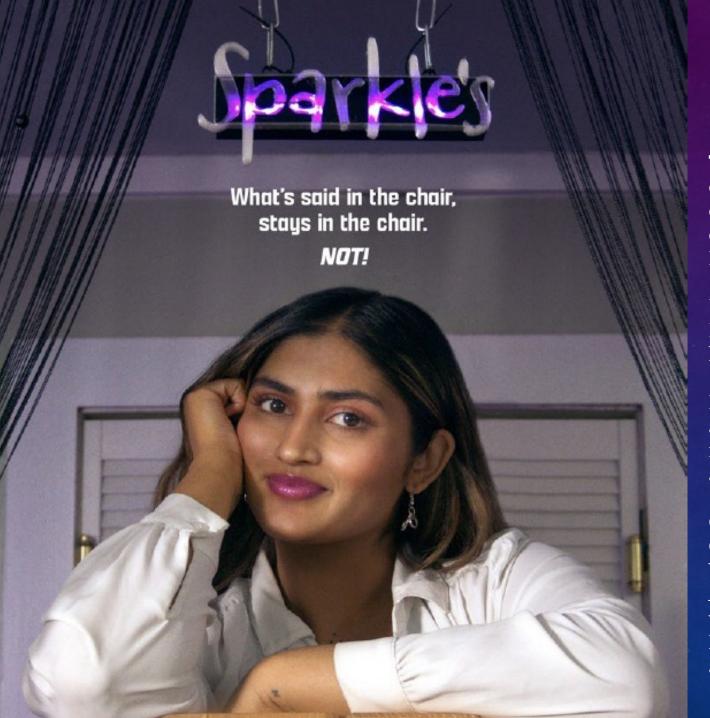
**Chuck Thomas** 



Raelene The Law



**Detective Bologna** 



## Sparke

The sole proprietor of "Sparkle's" (hair & nail) Salon and a true crime junkie, Sparkle has grown antsy, angsty. Wanting more excitement in her life (and wanting to monetize the TMI she endures daily), she gets certified online as a "Beginner" Private Investigator... (Yes! There is such a thing!)

Using her comedically wet-behind-the-ears *MacGyver* skills to DIY what she can, she nails the crooks, inadvertently recruiting her stylist cohorts along the way.

Ironically, Sparkle is the least sparkly and most grounded anchor in her salon of eccentric misfits. A shrewd, clever, nosy meddler, she's also a cheerful, upbeat, ambitious, inquisitive, altruistic people - pleaser in denial she's really an introvert.

Originally conceived as a Native American/Mexican ("Maria Consuela Rosa Lopez" – picture the crazy cross of Sofia Vergara starring as Ted Lasso (or Stephanie Plum) in *Brooklyn Nine Nine* (in a salon). Open to all ethnicities, the character was rewritten to suit a South Asian talent ("Jyoti Indrakumar Malhotra") to shoot an MFA thesis student short comedy film as a pilot proof of concept.

## Amethyst

Amethyst Renee Clinkscale, mid-50s, is a diva even in her sleep. She never met a pattern or print she didn't love. She lives out loud through words, deeds and fashion. Comfortable in her own skin, she has earned the right to speak her peace (though sometimes to her detriment).

Flashy to a fault - the more bling the better - but she's not hung up on name brands. She doesn't need a Cartier diamond when a CZ from Claire's works just fine. Subscribing to the notion that a cocktail-a-day keeps the aging process at bay, she's also not ready to face facts that her 27-year marriage to Douglas "Dougie" Clinkscale is coming to an end. Together, they have 3 children – Summer and twins Elijah and Isaiah – who will surely blame her when the news hits the fan.

This 50-something firecracker has been a stylist for over 30 years and was ready to buy the salon but the bank wouldn't approve her loan. Shortly thereafter, Sparkle waltzed in as the new owner. Trying to be a team player, Amethyst can't help but be ticked that she has to answer to someone twenty years her junior.





### Maria (or Bruce)

Maria (or Bruce) is a flamboyantly fabulous fashionista. An ambiguously gender-fluid wild card. A terrible hairdresser with an outsized ego, this gregarious party animal could be almost any age (18-88), any ethnicity and anywhere on the gender expression spectrum (nonbinary, transgender, LGBTQIA, CISgender) – or even constantly in flux, just exploring.

One of Sparkle's two employee stylists, they are just realizing they are also probably one of her only true friends in real life. Silly, witty, graceful, hip to all the gossip, down to play any game and up for any adventure, they are

For the student short/pilot proof of concept, the role was cast as a trans woman but the role was originally envisioned as the only male stylist in the salon who presented as (i.e.: everyone assumed he was) gay (endemic in that industry) but he is later revealed to be CISgender and married. Further development iterated him moonlighting as a drag queen. The Ian Wright character on the 2022 *Quantum Leap* is a reasonable gender-neutral style touchstone. For cinematic comedic contrast, the character has always been envisioned as tall, lean and lanky.



# The Bad Guys Chuck Thomas

Chuck Thomas is so laconic, this was almost left blank.

He's really not a bad guy. He's just a criminal by chronic socioeconomic desperation. Growing up in Fife, Scotland, insignificant amongst more siblings and half-siblings than anyone can keep straight, he just steals to survive.

Add to that he's a legit genius – but with minimal resources - so... that gets him in trouble plenty - reminiscent of Wil E. Coyote's grand (but back-firing) schemes!

Descendent of the most feared Campbell clan and former semi-pro football player (American not soccer), he feeds into people's misperception of his being intimidating and threatening. But those who know (and love him) know he's never hurt a fly (but don't get him started on mosquitoes!)

He rescues more kittens than he can afford to support and is always helping people in need when no one's looking.

The Bad Guys

Raelene was born into a middle-class family in West Auckland, NZ. A classic Gen X "latchkey kid," she spent her days knocking around with the neighborhood kids. Despite having a fairly stable family life, her parents were both very distant, high-functioning alcoholics who gave her food and shelter but never love.

Mainly raised by the television and lacking a sense of belonging at home, Raelene got caught up in the wrong crowd and joined a gang in her mid-teens. She got into growing and selling weed and this naturally led into more criminal behavior. Raelene's experience has shown her that you can only ever count on yourself and that is how she lives her life. She believes that she will always be betrayed. That self-fulfilling prophecy forces her to protect herself over-zealously.

Her relationship with Chuck is squirrely. They met through criminal contacts and ended up working together but whether there is sexual chemistry or sibling-like loyalty seems to oscillate.





#### Detective Samantha Bologna

Polished, professional, classic, educated and self-made, having just moved from the desk to the beat, the time is ripe for uber corporate Detective Samantha Bologna (mid 30s) to prove herself.

Though she knows the road from idea to result is not a straight line, she's often at war with her fear of failure, causing her to play it too safe.

Detective B sees a lot of herself in Sparkle, especially her flaws (that her way is always the right way). She fondly remembers what it was like to have that drive, that energy. It reignites her to follow her passions and fuels her ability to assert herself more.

This character was originally written for a Latin male (Raymond Garcia), as a potential love interest for Sparkle but the female friendship dynamic, ripe with professional conflict broke open fresh territory.

#### Synopsis

**SPARKLE**, the sole proprietor of "Sparkle's (hair & nail) Salon" and a true crime junkie, has grown antsy, angsty. Pining for more excitement in her life and wanting to monetize the TMI she endures daily, she gets certified online as a "Beginner" Private Investigator.

While Sparkle's out rookie sleuthing, certain the yoga studio just grand opening in their neighborhood is a new-age front for an LSD micro-dosing pyramid scheme, her fellow misfit stylists, AMETHYST and MARIA, are up to their shears in those exact same bad guys: CHUCK and RAELENE, who offer up secretly psychedelic green smoothies as house-warming gifts (but really to render them loopy and submissive). They climb in their chairs to get "new looks" (but really it's just to hide in plain sight as they wait for a break in the cops' neighborhood manhunt for them).

Upon her return, Sparkle immediately recognizes their new "clients" as the criminals everyone's on the look-out for. The clock ticks as Sparkle inadvertently recruits her clueless (and increasingly high) cohorts to stall while she uses her comedically wet-behind-the-ears *MacGyver* skills to DIY what evidence she can scrounge to convince **DETECTIVE BOLOGNA** (who's just humoring her) that these now unrecognizable bad guys are about to evade the police again.

Sparkle has a brief showdown complete with a good ol' fashioned Western saloon stare down complete with rolling tumbleweed (of swept-up hair clippings) and blow dryer gun slinging before making her first citizen's arrest!



#### Future Episode Ideas

#### **Shear Necessity**

When Sparkle's Salon lands in the live finals of a reality competition make-over show, opioid drug dealers hijack the opportunity to hide in plain (but changing) sight.

(True full-length pilot)

#### **Hair Muse**

Sparkle sleuths car accident fraudsters and convinces Amethyst and Maria to enroll as stooges in their stand-up class that serves as recruiting grounds.

#### Ace of Fades

The stylists' popular anti-aging techniques get them begrudgingly recruited by Detective Bologna to go undercover in a women's prison to dismantle a ring of scammers.



#### Heather Hale

#### Director, Producer, Writer

With almost twenty-five years in the business, primarily as a writer/producer trying to gain traction as a - gasp! - "female" director, Heather Hale moved cross country to invest in herself to complete her Master in Fine Arts in Film and Television with an Emphasis on Directing at the Savannah College of Art and Design. Just in time for the global lockdown, *Undercover Salon* is the resultant grueling and expensive pitch deck "portfolio" piece.

Her over 200 award-winning credits include the \$5.5M Lifetime Original Movie *The Courage to Love* (2000), that starred Vanessa Williams, the million-dollar thriller, *Absolute Killers* (2011), that starred Ed Asner and Meat Loaf, Senior Producing *Lifestyle with Roy Ice*, the #1 Life Coaching talk show on broadcast television, and two PBS series that both won Emmys. Author of several books including: How to Work the Film & TV Markets: A Guide for Content Creators and Story Selling: How to Develop, Market and Pitch for Film and TV Projects, Ms. Hale is a voting member of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences and a member of ShowBiz Mensans. https://heatherhale.com

#### **Heather Alexander**

**Executive Producer, Co-Writer** 

From the time she was little, the original Sparkle was reared to strive to do great things. After becoming a successful salon owner at such a young age, she wanted more. So, she tried her hand at producing and acting. Struggling with her career for a time, she finally embraced her truth: she was a first-generation working mom.

Now, this super-shero of sorts wears multiple capes. She is a successful hairstylist and makeup artist. She is an actor and writer with a passion for situational comedy. In particular, she loves to write about young people learning from older people's successes - and failures.

Her writing credits include: *Rumors*, an original TV sitcom pilot which was a semi-finalist in the 2013 Creative World Awards; *Oil Run*, a dramatic feature optioned by Organized Film Productions, and Producer/Editor for *The Taking of Fluffy* 2014 short comedy film. She is a Dallas Screenwriters Board Member and the Monthly Scene Read Chairperson.

<u>Heather Alexander - IMDb</u>



