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Your Money or My Sanity

A 10-Minute Comedy by
Rusty Harding

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Your Money or My Sanity

by Rusty Harding

CHARACTERS:

2M or 1M / 1 Either M or F

MAN: *M, Any age*

THIEF: *M/F, Any age*

SYNOPSIS:

A thief discovers his would-be victim isn't quite the easy target he expected.

SETTING:

A deserted city street

Your Money or Your Sanity

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AT RISE:

The setting is a deserted city street. A MAN walks along nonchalantly. A THIEF hovers in darkness nearby, suddenly stepping out as the MAN walks by. The THIEF jabs a gun into the MAN's back.

THIEF
Your money or your life!

MAN
Which one?

THIEF
What?

MAN
Which one do you want to hear about; my money or my life? Like most people, I'm more partial to one than the other, but it might actually surprise you as to which.

THIEF
I don't want to *hear* about your money, I want you to give it to me!

MAN
Oh, this is a holdup?

THIEF
Of course it is! What did you think it was?

MAN
(*Shrugging*) I don't know. You come up behind me and ask some esoteric question about money and life, so it could be anything. Why didn't you just say "this is a holdup?"

THIEF
I jabbed a gun in your back!

MAN
Really? I don't know it's a gun. You could have your hand shoved in your pocket and just be pretending.

THIEF
I'm not pretending.

MAN
Well, I don't know that. Let me see it.

THIEF

What?

MAN

Let me see the gun. Call me a skeptic, but before I go handing my money over to a complete stranger, I want to make sure it's a genuine robbery. I mean, suppose I give you my wallet and you really don't have a weapon? Wouldn't I look stupid?

THIEF

You're gonna look dead if you don't hand over the money!

MAN

Nope. Not till I see the gun. Sorry.

THIEF

Oh, for cryin' out loud! *(Holds the gun in front of the man's face)* Here, see?

MAN

Woah! That's a Walther POS!

THIEF

A what?

MAN

A Walther POS. They only made about 500 of those things. That's a real collector's item! Got to be worth five, maybe ten thousand dollars at least!

THIEF

(Looks down the barrel of the gun) Ten thousand dollars?

MAN

Yeah. *(Starts to laugh)*

THIEF

What's so funny?

MAN

It just occurred to me; you're going around robbing people with a gun that's worth more than you'll probably ever take in!

THIEF

Maybe so, but I still want your cash. Hand it over.

MAN

Jeez, what a hassle. *(A beat)* Hang on.

The MAN takes out his wallet and starts to pull photographs from inside.

THIEF

What are you doing?

MAN

If you don't mind, I'm taking out some personal photographs. They're not worth anything to you.

THIEF

Well hurry it up!

MAN

Okay, okay, hold your horses. Oh, yeah, definitely got to keep this one. *(Holds it up over his shoulder)* My wife, see?

THIEF

Yeah, she's pretty.

MAN

(Holds up 2nd picture) And these are my kids.

THIEF

Yeah, yeah, real cute. Hurry up!

MAN

Hmm, this is my brother in law. *(Shoves a picture back in the wallet)* Tell you what, you can keep this one. He's pretty much a jerk.

THIEF

Just hand over the wallet!

MAN

You know, you have a very surly attitude.

THIEF

I'm a thief!

MAN

And why is that?

THIEF

Huh?

MAN

Why did you become a thief? Did you lose your job or something?

THIEF

What are you; a social worker?

MAN

No, I'm just a concerned citizen who worries about the less fortunate members of society. I like to think that everyone is basically decent, and that it's only circumstances that drive some of us to less than admirable behavior. So, what happened to you?

THIEF

Nothing.

MAN

Nothing?

THIEF

No, nothing. I just happen to find it easier to *take* money than to *earn* it. Satisfied?

MAN

Actually, I applaud your candor. Not everyone would have the guts to be that honest. Especially a thief.

THIEF

Are you going to give me your wallet or not?

Starts to hand over the wallet, then pulls it back.

MAN

What are you going to do with the money?

THIEF

Say what?

MAN

What are you going to do with the money? Are you going to use it for basic necessities? You know; food, shelter? Or are you just going to throw it away on booze or some other useless element? I work very hard for my money, friend, and I like to think it'll always be used to the betterment of either myself or those around me. Call me idealistic, altruistic, or even quixotic, but there it is.

THIEF

(Growing more and more puzzled) Quixotic?

MAN

Yes, you know, as in Don Quixote. Always tilting at windmills; chasing after the elusive dreams of life. Didn't you read the book?

THIEF

Book?

MAN

The famous novel by Cervantes. It used to be required reading in high school.

THIEF

High school? Are you serious?

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes