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Trapped in My Own Life

An Absurdist Comedy by

Greg Freier

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Trapped in My Own Life

by Greg Freier

CHARACTERS:

LEO MORELLO; *50's, Father*

LISA MORELLO; *50's, Mother*

AUGIE MORELLO; *Early-20's, Son*

ANGIE MORELLO; *Mid-20's, Daughter*

ANGELO MORELLO; *Late 20's; Son*

POPS MORELLO; *Late 70's-80's, LEO's Father*

TIME:

1954. Autumn.

SETTING:

A New York row house. A very lived in, lower end row house. The main room consists of both the living area and the dining area. Stage right is a sofa, with two chairs on either side, all very worn looking. A coffee table sits in front. Stage left is a dining room table, with mismatched chairs, with a setting for six. There is a closet door on the back wall with a phone and radio sitting on a table along the wall. The kitchen door is stage left. Stage right is an archway that leads to the front door, all bedrooms, and the bathroom. In general, the house has the overall feel of being on the verge of condemned.

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ACT I: SCENE 1

(AT RISE: LEO, LISA, ANGIE, ANGELO and POPS seated around the dinner dressed in their extremely over-comfortable “I don’t care what I look like” clothes. As usual, they are talking loudly and demonstrably. After a moment AUGIE enters from the kitchen with a bowl of corn. He is dressed for his job; that of a movie-theatre usher. AUGIE addresses the AUDIENCE as his family continues their animated conversation behind him.)

AUGIE

(Addressing the AUDIENCE) A wise man once said, “Any avenue of pleasure is just the mere use of insanity gone right.” Obviously he never met my family. I mean just look at them. It’s like one giant embarrassment with a healthy dose despair built in for good measure. I mean the closest to any avenue of pleasure we’ve ever been, would’ve been fourteen blocks away, and then six over...and even then, the sewers would have been backed up. I mean how in the heck I got stuck in this family is beyond me...the only way I can figure it...is God lost a bet that day.

LEO

(To AUGIE) Hey kid, you coming with that corn or what?

LISA

(To LEO) Just start with your chicken like always. You never eat the corn first. You always eat the chicken.

ANGELO

Someone want to pass the rolls?

ANGIE

They can’t be passed. They’re sitting right in front of you.

ANGELO

Then pass the butter for god’s sake.

LISA

The butter’s right next to the rolls.

ANGELO

Then pass the corn. Just pass me something.

(AUGIE hands him the corn and then sits.)

LEO

Hey Pops, pass the potatoes. All I've got is chicken down here.

POPS

Kiss my ass. You'll get the potatoes when I'm done with the potatoes.

LEO

Well then pass the damn corn down here.

ANGELO

How can I pass the corn when I just got it?

LEO

Then just put some corn on your damn plate and pass it down. I mean how difficult is it to pass corn?

AUGIE

(To the AUDIENCE) You think this is bad. You should be here on Thanksgiving.

LEO

(To AUGIE) Why do you got to do that all the time?

AUGIE

Do what?

LEO

Talk to people that aren't there. It drives me nuts.

AUGIE

I'm a writer. Writer's do things like that.

LISA

No, crazy people are what do things like that.

ANGIE

And if there's anyone that's crazy in this family, it's him. You should see the things he does to himself in the bathroom.

LEO

Don't be looking at your brother in the bathroom.

ANGIE

I don't look on purpose. He doesn't close the door all way.

LEO

(To AUGIE) You start closing the door. Your sister doesn't need to see that kind of stuff.

AUGIE

What kind of stuff? All I do in there is take a shower and brush my teeth.

LISA

You still need to close the door. Especially when you're using the toilet.

AUGIE

I don't use the toilet in there. I go at work. It's cleaner.

LISA

You start using the toilet at home young man. Strange toilets are bad toilets.

LEO

(To POPS) You about done with the damn potatoes down there yet?

POPS

You want them so bad, come down and get them.

LEO

Angelo, give me the damn potatoes.

ANGELO

Fine, here's the potatoes.

(ANGELO passes down the potatoes.)

POPS

I hope you like lumps. Because that's all those potatoes are.

LISA

They're supposed to be that way. He's like them lumpy.

LEO

(Threatening) And watch your mouth there POPS, because I know what's coming out next.

ANGIE

(To AUGIE) So what's the movie tonight?

AUGIE

I forgot to look, but I know it's a new one.

LISA

How can you not know what movie it is? It's your job to know what movie it is.

ANGELO

(With sarcasm) Because he's too busy being a big time writer.

LISA

That still doesn't mean he can't know his job.

ANGIE

(Equally sarcastic) One would think a real writer would notice everything around him?

AUGIE

A writer's got to be selective. Not everything's worth noticing.

ANGELO

Especially if you can't write.

AUGIE

And this coming from someone who needed help filling out his last job application.

ANGELO

(Threatening) Don't you make me come over there.

LEO

Will the two of you shut up and eat your damn dinner.

LISA

(To AUGIE) Does your boss know that you don't even know the movie tonight?

AUGIE

What difference does it make? I mean all I do is walk up and down the aisles.

LEO

Well start knowing these things. I mean how in the hell are you ever going to get ahead in life if you don't know anything.

AUGIE

(Matter-of-factly) I'm going to be a writer.

LEO

Not if you don't know anything you're not.

POPS

(Holds up his glass) Someone want to get me some more tea? This chicken's too dry to swallow.

LISA

There is absolutely nothing wrong with the chicken.

POPS

What are you talking about? This stupid chicken is as lumpy as the potatoes.

LISA

Well then don't eat if you don't like it.

POPS

I never said I didn't like it. I just said it was lumpy and too dry swallow.

LISA

(Beat) Angie, go get him some more tea so he doesn't talk anymore.

ANGIE

Why do I always have to get him his tea? Why can't Augie get it for a change?

LEO

Because you're mother asked you. And don't make her ask you again.

ANGIE

Fine. I'll get him some damn tea.

POPS

(Hands her his glass) And put some more lemon in it. The lemon's the only thing that makes it taste good.

(ANGIE grabs the glass with obvious disgust.)

ANGIE

(To herself as exits to kitchen) God I hope he's dead soon.

LISA

(To LEO) Before I forget, I'm going to need seven more dollars this week.

LEO

For what? I already gave you the money for the week.

LISA

Because tomorrow's Friday and I forgot to buy the fish this week.

LEO

Then we don't have to have fish.

POPS

I hate fish. Fish is stupid and it smells.

ANGELO

(To himself) Like he's got room to talk.

LEO

(*To ANGELO*) I heard that down there mister. You'd better watch yourself if you know what's good for you.

ANGELO

I'm sorry. What can I say?...I was just thinking out-loud.

LEO

Well don't.

LISA

(*Beat*) So you going to give me the seven dollars or what?

LEO

All I've got left is a twenty and I don't get paid until Tuesday.

LISA

Well then give me the twenty and I'll give you back thirteen.

LEO

Because I need at least fifteen for Saturday night. It's poker night. I can't play with just thirteen.

LISA

Why not?

LEO

Because I'm not any good, that's why.

AUGIE

(*To AUDIENCE*) And the funny part is...he doesn't even realize he just insulted himself.

LEO

(*To AUGIE*) Why don't you shut up and go to work.

AUGIE

Because I've still got another hour.

LISA

Well then quit talking to people that aren't there. You know how it upsets your father.

(*ANGIE enters with the tea and crosses to POPS.*)

POPS

I'm still hungry, what kind of dessert we having?

LISA
Tapioca.

POPS
Is it going to be the lumpy kind?

ANGIE
(*Slams glass of tea on table*) Here's your stupid tea.

ANGELO
Anyone up for some pool after dinner?

LISA
(*To LEO*) Don't even think about it. You don't blow fish money on pool.

ANGELO
Don't worry about it. I've got a couple bucks left, and besides I get paid tomorrow.

LEO
(*To LISA*) There you go. He gets paid tomorrow. He can pay for the fish.

LISA
No he can't. His money's not for fish. Fish money is your responsibility.

LEO
What difference does it make where the fish money comes from?

LISA
Because it does, that's why.

ANGELO
Augie's got tons of money, let him pay for the fish. It's not like he pays for anything else around here.

AUGIE
I'm saving up for a typewriter. Besides mom said dad's money's the fish money.

POPS
What part of I hate fish don't you people get.

LISA
(*To POPS*) Shut up and drink your tea.

POPS
(*Looks at his tea*) How can I drink it? That girl didn't put any more lemon in it.

ANGIE

That's because we were out of lemons. And the names 'Angie' for eight billionth time.

POPS

I don't care what your name is. I want some lemon in my damn tea.

ANGIE

Then go to the store and get it yourself.

POPS

I can't. I don't know where it is anymore.

AUGIE

I'll pick you up a lemon on the way home from work, Pops.

POPS

What in the hell am I supposed to do in the meantime.

LISA

Put some of your lumps in it.

ANGELO

So are we going to play pool or what?

LISA

Your father is not playing pool.

LEO

Would you quit answering for me? I can talk for myself you know.

LISA

Not when you give the wrong answers you can't.

POPS

(To LEO) She's one of those nasty ones just like your mother was, God rest her soul.

LISA

Why don't you do us all a favor and go to the store and get a lemon.

LEO

(Threatening) Just leave it alone, Pops. The last thing we need is fight in here.

AUGIE

(To AUDIENCE) He's right you know. This is just normal conversation.

LEO

(Threatening to AUGIE) What did I tell you?

AUGIE

I can't help it. It's all part of the exposition.

LEO

And if you don't knock it off, you're going to be on display in one of those expositions here soon.

ANGELO

I know I'd pay to see that.

POPS

(Takes a sip of tea) This tea tastes like swill.

LISA

There is nothing wrong with the tea.

POPS

Then why does it taste like swill?

LISA

(To LEO) Would you do something about him?

LEO

Like what?

LISA

I don't know...couldn't we just put him to sleep?

LEO

It's six o'clock. He's not going to want to go to bed this early.

LISA

I was talking permanently.

ANGIE

We should be so lucky.

POPS

You people make me sick—talking about me like I'm not here.

ANGELO

What do you expect? When's the last time you were nice to anyone?

LEO

(To ANGELO; threatening) What did I tell you about talking to Pops that way?

ANGELO

What's the big deal? I was just asking him a question. What's wrong with asking questions?

LEO

Don't make me come over before I'm done with my chicken.

POPS

Come on. Beat him with your chicken. I could use a good laugh.

LEO

(To POPS) Don't you start either, or I'll come over there and take your teeth.

LISA

(To LEO) What are you talking about; his teeth are real.

(POPS smiles.)

AUGIE

(To AUDIENCE) This is where I'd normally interject something, but this seems to be entertaining enough.

ANGELO

(Points at AUGIE; addresses LEO) Can I please knock him out just this one time?

LISA

That's enough out of everybody. Just finish your stupid dinners, so we can eat the damn tapioca and be done with it.

POPS

(Beat) I don't like tapioca.

(LIGHTS DOWN.)

ACT I: SCENE 2

(AT RISE: The next morning; AUGIE is seated at the dinner table, still dressed in his pajamas, writing in a notebook. After a moment, LISA enters with a pot of coffee.)

LISA

Shouldn't you be writing in your room?

AUGIE

I can't, Angelo's snoring in there.

LISA

It's almost 7:30. What's he doing, he's got to be work in hour.

AUGIE

Must still be tired from playing pool last night.

LISA

Well you march in there right now, and tell him to get up before he's late for work.

AUGIE

I'd love to, but last time I did that he threw a chair at me.

LISA

Then take the chair out the room first. Just go tell him to get up before he's late. It's not that difficult.

AUGIE

That's easy for you to say. You haven't woke him up since he was six.

(ANGIE enters dressed in her bathrobe. Her hair is a complete mess.)

LISA

(To ANGIE) What are you doing up so early? I thought you worked the night shift tonight.

ANGIE

I do, but Angelo's snoring again.

LISA

(To AUGIE) I thought I just told you to go wake your brother up?

AUGIE

(Writing) I will, let me just finish this one sentence first.

LISA

(With attitude) Either you do it now, or I'm going to stab you with your pen.

AUGIE

(Puts down the pen) Fine, I'll go wake him up.

ANGIE

(To AUGIE) You might want to take the chair out the room. He threw it at me last time.

AUGIE

(As exits) Beats getting stabbed with a pen by your mother.

LISA

I tell you, there's something seriously wrong with that boy.

ANGIE

Is that coffee fresh?

LISA

It was when I made it.

(ANGIE pours a cup.)

ANGIE

I take it Pops is still sleeping?

LISA

Unless we luck out and find him dead later.

ANGIE

(Beat) Is it just me or does he get worse every day?

LISA

Hard to say. He was always such a bastard to begin with.

(A loud crash comes from the bedroom area.)

ANGIE

Augie must have forgot to take the chair out.

(LEO enters wearing pajama bottoms and a stained tee-shirt. He crosses to the table and sits.)

LISA

What is this, everyone sleep in instead of going to work day.

LEO

What are you talking about? It's Friday. I don't go in until 10 on Friday's.

LISA

Then sit down and drink your coffee.

(LISA pours LEO a cup of coffee.)

LEO

(With sarcasm) I love you too.

LISA

And when you're done with your coffee, go do something with that son of yours.

LEO

They're adult men. I don't care what they do with themselves anymore.

LISA

Angelo's throwing chairs again.

LEO

Well then take the chairs out of the room. I mean how difficult is that?

(AUGIE enters.)

AUGIE

(Matter-of-factly) Angelo's up.

LEO

Take the damn chair out of the room next time would you please, so I don't have to listen to your mother bitch first thing.

AUGIE

Sorry, I was working on a story in my head. I forgot.

LEO

The only work you should be working on is work people can see. So if I can't see it, it's not real work. You understand me?

AUGIE

(To AUDIENCE) I'd answer no, but I've already had a chair thrown at me and been threatened with a pen.

LEO

You just want to die today, don't you?

LISA

(To LEO) Just finish your coffee and ignore him. Maybe if we ignore him long enough he'll go away.

AUGIE

What, and walk away from all of this.

ANGIE

(Beat) I can kill him if you'd like.

AUGIE

Thanks sis, much appreciated. I'll make sure that comment reflects in your next Christmas present.

ANGIE

(With disgust) I'm going back to bed. *(Exits)*

LEO

(To AUGIE) Why don't you do me a favor and go back to bed too?

AUGIE

I can't. Angelo ate my bed after he threw the chair at me.

ANGELO, *Offstage*

(Screaming) What are you doing you stupid old man? Get the hell out here. NOW!

(ANGIE enters and sits on the couch.)

LEO

Why can't this house ever be quiet in the morning?

LISA

(To ANGIE) I thought you were going back to bed.

ANGIE

I will the minute I move out.

AUGIE

(To AUDIENCE) Five...four...three...two...one....

(ANGELO storms in wrapped in nothing but a towel.)

ANGELO

You've got to do something about that stupid old man before I kill him.

LEO

What did he do this time?

ANGELO

He got in the damn shower with me.

LISA

Well you should've had the door locked. If the door was locked, he wouldn't have got in there.

ANGELO

I forgot. I mean how in the hell am I supposed to know he's going to get in the shower with me.

LEO

Because he's crazy, that's how you should know.

ANGELO

What? So you're saying this is all my fault.

AUGIE

I know I always lock the door.

ANGIE

You don't even close the door, what are you talking about.

LISA

(To ANGIE) Quit talking about your brother and the bathroom. It's not nice.

LEO

I don't even look in the mirror without locking the door anymore. Two times last month I went in there to brush my teeth, and before I knew it POPS was sitting on the toilet reading the paper.

ANGELO

Why can't we just put a lock on the outside of his door then? Then we can just lock him in when need to use to the bathroom.

LISA

Just go get ready for work will you. You're going to be late again.

AUGIE

And I'd hate to have to tell your boss you were late because you were showering with your grandpa.

ANGELO

I'm going to kill you when I get home.

AUGIE

I've got to work tonight. You'll have to wait until tomorrow.

LEO

Will you two shut up?

LISA

(To ANGELO) And what are you standing around for? Get ready for work. You can't afford to lose another job.

ANGELO

(To AUGIE; threatening) I'm not going to forget this. (Exits)

AUGIE

(To himself) Sure you will. You're an idiot.

LEO

That's enough out of you.

LISA

(To LEO) Bacon and eggs, or pancakes?

LEO

Pancakes.

LISA

Anyone else want pancakes.

ANGIE

I'm too tired to eat.

AUGIE

I'd rather have bacon and eggs.

LISA

I'm making pancakes. You want bacon and eggs, go to the diner.

AUGIE

I'll just stick with coffee then.

LISA

(To LEO) And before I forget, I'm going to need the fish money before you go.

LEO

I thought I already said no to the fish money.

LISA

It doesn't matter what you say. Give me the fish money. It's Friday. We have fish on Friday.

AUGIE

I'd give her my fish money but I need it to buy a typewriter.

LEO

(*To LISA*) Could you do something about this kid?

LISA

Just give me the fish money.

LEO

Could I maybe have my pancakes first?

LISA

Only if you promise me the fish money.

LEO

Fine. I'll give you the stinking fish money.

LISA

Then you can have your stinking pancakes.

(*LISA exits to kitchen.*)

AUGIE

You think she'll ever realize we all hate fish?

LEO

What you care? You work on Friday's.

AUGIE

Now you know why.

(*POPS enters wearing his bathrobe, looking fresh and with a big smile on his face.*)

POPS

Anyone want to see how clean I am?

AUGIE

(*Matter-of-factly*) No thank you.

POPS

I smell good too. Lucked out this morning. ANGELO had the shower all ready for me when I got in there.

LEO

(*With disgust*) That's because it was Angelo's shower you got into.

POPS

(Beat) So he wasn't just testing the water for me then?

AUGIE

I'm afraid not. Angelo's not that nice.

ANGIE

One would think all that screaming he did would've given you some kind of clue.

POPS

I wear ear plugs in the shower. Can't hear a thing once I'm in there.

LEO

What in the hell do you wear ear plugs in the shower for?

POPS

To keep the water out of my ears.

AUGIE

He has an incredible fear of having his brain washed.

ANGIE

I don't think he has enough brain left to worry about something like that.

LEO

Will you two shut up?

(POPS crosses to table, sits, and then grabs a coffee cup.)

POPS

(Indicating empty cup; to AUGIE) Give me some coffee, would you please?

AUGIE

(Still writing) Let me finish this sentence first.

POPS

What's with you and all this writing all of a sudden?

AUGIE

I want to be a writer.

POPS

What for? Writing's stupid.

AUGIE

(Continuing to write) Writing is not stupid. It's the only true art form left you can do with minimal talent.

ANGIE

What makes you think you even have that?

AUGIE

(Writing still) You're Christmas present just got downgraded another notch.

POPS

(To AUGIE) So you going to give me some coffee or what?

LEO

Give me the damn cup. *(POPS hands him the cup.)* I mean how difficult is it to get coffee?

POPS

It's not difficult at all...you just have to ask the right person.

LEO

(Pours coffee; gives cup to POPS) Here's your stinking coffee. And there's no lumps in it so don't even go there.

POPS

Why would there be lumps in my coffee?

ANGIE

Probably for the same reason there's lumps in your head.

(LISA enters with a plate of pancakes.)

LISA

(To LEO) Here's your pancakes. Now give me the fish money.

LEO

I'll get the stupid fish money when I'm done with my pancakes.

POPS

Those look good. Go make me some pancakes too.

LISA

Nobodies getting anything until I get the fish money.

LEO

When I'm done with my pancakes I'll give you the damn fish money. What part of this aren't you getting?

(LISA picks up the plate of pancakes.)

LISA

What part of this aren't you getting?

LEO

Fine, I'll get the damn fish money. *(Exits)*

POPS

Why don't you give me his pancakes then? He can have the pancakes you haven't made for me yet.

LISA

Will you shut up if I do?

POPS

Of course I will. I'll have food in my mouth.

LISA

(Gives pancakes to POPS) Remind me to feed you more often then.

AUGIE

Any stamps in the house?

LISA

Just the ones we use for bills.

AUGIE

Can I use one of the bill stamps then?

LISA

Of course not, then we won't have enough stamps for the bills.

AUGIE

Why don't you just buy an extra one with the fish money?

LISA

Because it's fish money not stamp money, that's why.

AUGIE

Why can't the money just be money, money?

LISA

Because we're on a budget, that's why.

AUGIE

Yeah, but one stamp isn't going to ruin the fish money.

LISA

Of course it is. Because then I'm going to have to find extra stamp money from someplace else.

AUGIE

But isn't that what you're doing with this new fish money that was dad's poker money.

LISA

That's different, because poker money isn't real money like fish money.

AUGIE

So I shouldn't ask for an envelope then either, is what you're saying?

LEO

(Entering) Where in the hell is my wallet?

LISA

It's on the dresser like you always leave it.

LEO

If it was on the dresser I would have found it.

LISA

Did you look in your underwear drawer then?

LEO

Of course not, that's for my underwear not my wallet.

LISA

Well look there anyway. Every time you lose your wallet it's in your underwear drawer.

LEO

And what if it's not in the underwear drawer?

LISA

If it's not in your underwear drawer come back out and I'll tell you to look in sock drawer.

LEO

Fine, I'll look in my underwear drawer. *(Exits)*

POPS

What did you do to these pancakes? They're good for some reason.

LISA

Shut up and eat.

ANGIE

If you're going to make some more pancakes, make some extra. I changed my mind. I'm getting kind of hungry over here.

LISA

(To AUGIE) You going to want pancakes too?

AUGIE

No, I just need an envelope and a stamp.

LISA

Well then go to the store and buy one for god's sake. *(To no one in particular)* Tell your father I'm in the kitchen when he comes back with the fish money.

(LISA exits to kitchen. LEO enters.)

LEO

Where in the hell is your mother?

AUGIE

Kitchen.

LEO

(Crosses to kitchen door; to LISA) Okay now what? It wasn't in the underwear drawer and it wasn't in the sock drawer.

LISA, *Offstage*

Go look over by the radio then.

LEO

Why would it be over by the radio?

LISA, *Offstage*

Because that's where you hid it before you went out last night.

(LEO crosses to radio, reaches behind it and removes his wallet. He then crosses to the table and sits.)

LEO

God I hate that woman some times.

ANGIE

(To LEO) I don't know why you bother to hide it. It's not like mom's ever taken money out of it before.

LEO

That's not the point.

AUGIE

What is the point then?

LEO

The point is it's none of your business.

(ANGELO enters. He is dressed in jeans and a well-worn work shirt, and carries a hard hat.)

ANGELO

My lunch ready yet?

LEO

How in the hell would I know. Go ask your mother.

(ANGELO crosses towards kitchen.)

AUGIE

(To ANGELO) And on your way you can smell POPS. He's very clean he said.

ANGELO

(To AUGIE) I'm still going to kill you tonight.

(ANGELO exits to kitchen.)

AUGIE

And like I said before, you're going to have to wait until tomorrow. I've got to work tonight.

POPS

(Looks up from his plate) He didn't smell me, did he? I wasn't paying any attention.

AUGIE

I'm afraid not. He was too busy wanting to kill me again.

ANGIE

And one of these days we're going to luck out and he's going to.

AUGIE

You're Christmas present just been downgraded to nothing.

LEO

Will you quit talking about Christmas? It's only September for the love of God.

AUGIE

I'm just trying to give us all something pleasant to look forward to.

LEO

What, are you kidding me? We have fish for Christmas.

(ANGELO enters from kitchen carrying a lunch pail.)

ANGELO

(To AUGIE) Don't forget I'm going to kill you tonight.

AUGIE

How could I forget? It's the only thing I have to look forward to in life.

ANGELO

I'm serious this time.

LEO

(To ANGELO) Will you shut up and go to work. You're going to be late again.

ANGELO

(To AUGIE) You better be here when I get home. *(Exits)*

AUGIE

Make sure someone reminds him I'm at work when he gets home. I don't want him to think I forgot about him or anything.

LEO

Could you just for once, go five minutes without being a smart ass?

AUGIE

But if I did that, Angelo wouldn't want to kill me all the time.

(LISA enters with a plate stacked with pancakes.)

LISA

Okay, so who wants more pancakes?

LEO

(Looks down at the table) What in the hell happened to the pancakes I had before?

LISA

I gave them to Pops. And where in the hell is the damn fish money you still haven't given me?

LEO

(Reaches into his wallet and removes \$20; hands to LISA) Fine, here's your damn fish money. Now give me some stinking pancakes.

LISA

How many you want?

LEO

Who cares how many I want, just give me some.

LISA

I can't, you don't have a plate.

LEO

Well then get me a damn plate.

LISA

Augie, go get your father a plate.

AUGIE

If I do, can I have a stamp and an envelope?

LISA

What's with the stamp and the envelope all of a sudden?

AUGIE

I finished my story. I want to send it out.

LISA

I already told you, those stamps are bill stamps.

LEO

Just give the kid the damn stamp so I can have my stinking pancakes will you already.

LISA

Well then don't go blaming me at the end of the month when I need extra stamp money.

LEO

As long as it's not fish money, who in the hell cares?

AUGIE

So I can have a stamp then?

LISA

According to your father you can.

AUGIE

What about an envelope?

LEO

If you don't get my damn plate, you're not going to live long enough to worry about it.

AUGIE

Wouldn't that disappoint Angelo if you killed me first?

LEO

(Shouting) Go!

AUGIE

(Stands) No need to yell. I can take a hint.

ANGIE

No you can't, or you wouldn't be living here anymore.

AUGIE

(As he crosses to kitchen) Your Christmas present just got downgraded to you have to buy me an extra one with the money I was going to buy you one with. *(Exits)*

LEO

(To LISA) This is all your fault. If you hadn't of gotten me drunk that one night, he never would have been born.

POPS

Can I have some more pancakes? These are really good for some reason.

LISA

(To ANGIE) You still want some pancakes over there.

ANGIE

(Crosses to table and sits) I'll take a couple.

LISA

(To POPS) Let me give these two some pancakes, and then you can have some more.

ANGIE

I'm going to need a plate.

LISA

(Loudly off to AUGIE) Bring out another plate for your sister.

AUGIE, *Offstage*

Can I have an envelope too?

LEO

If you don't get out here with two plates this second I'm going to come in there and put you in an envelope.

AUGIE, *Offstage*

I'll take that as a yes.

LEO

(*To LISA*) Is it too late to send him to summer camp?

LISA

It is on our budget.

(*AUGIE enters with two plates and puts them on the table.*)

AUGIE

So where are the stamps and the envelopes?

LISA

I'll get them after they eat their pancakes.

(*LISA serves LEO, POPS and ANGIE the entire plate of pancakes.*)

ANGIE

How can you mail your stupid story out? I thought it had to be typed.

AUGIE

It will be. I get paid tonight and then I'll have enough to money buy a typewriter in the morning.

LISA

Then what do you need a stamp and envelope today for?

AUGIE

Because that way tomorrow after I learn to type, and then type the story, it'll all be ready to go.

POPS

How can you not know how to type? Even I know how to type.

LEO

When did you ever learn how to type?

POPS

What, are you kidding me? I was a war correspondent back in the big one.

LEO

No you weren't.

POPS

Of course I was. That's where I learned to type.

LEO

You were a shoe salesman. You were never in any war.

LISA

And from what I've heard, you weren't even a good shoe salesman.

POPS

That's because I wasn't one.

LEO

(To LISA) Don't waste anymore of your time. The man's clearly insane.

POPS

That doesn't mean I can't type.

AUGIE

I believe you Pops. You can show me tomorrow when I come back with the typewriter.

POPS

If I still remember how, I will.

LEO

And of course you won't because you never knew how in the first place.

POPS

You know what you are?

LEO

Completely sane.

POPS

No, the kind of guy I never would have sold shoes to even if I had been a shoe salesman.

LEO

Don't worry. You're the kind of guy I never would have bought shoes off of anyway.

POPS

(Beat; To LEO) You're the one that should be sent away to summer camp... *(Points at AUGIE)*...not him. He's at least sort of nice to me.

AUGIE

That's because you don't join me in the shower.

POPS

(Beat; To LISA) Just give me some more damn pancakes.

(LIGHTS OUT.)

ACT I: SCENE 3

(AT RISE: Late morning, the next day; POPS is seated at the kitchen table staring blankly at AUGIE's new typewriter. The table is devoid of anything with the exception of the typewriter and a stack of paper sitting next to it. AUGIE is still dressed in his usher's uniform with the appearance that he slept in it.)

AUGIE

(To AUDIENCE) He's been like that for the past fifteen minutes...totally clueless...my guess is, and I'm basing this on probable fact, that not only has he never typed before, but he's probably never even seen a typewriter before. I mean for all we know, he'll probably start blowing into the stupid thing in another five minutes.

POPS

(Pause) Are you sure this is a typewriter?

AUGIE

Positive.

POPS

I've never seen one that looks like this before.

AUGIE

That's because this one's newer than the ones you used to type on.

POPS

It's not that.

AUGIE

Then what is it?

POPS

There's too many keys on this one.

AUGIE

How can there be too many keys? Typewriters are all the same.

POPS

If they were all the same, there wouldn't be this many keys.

AUGIE

(To AUDIENCE) I'm beginning to think he wasn't a war correspondent after all.

POPS

Plus all the letters are in the wrong place. They're not alphabetized like the alphabet.

AUGIE

That's because they're not supposed to be.

POPS

Then how in the hell are you supposed to get the letters in the right order?

AUGIE

By hitting the right one I would imagine.

POPS

(Beat) This is stupid then.

LISA

(Entering from kitchen) I just made some fresh coffee. Anyone want some?

POPS

I do.

LISA

Augie?

AUGIE

Might as well since I've got to teach myself to type now.

LISA

(To POPS) I thought you were supposed to be teaching him.

POPS

I can't. This is the wrong kind of typewriter.

LISA

How can it be the wrong kind? That's the only kind there is.

AUGIE

This one has too many keys apparently.

POPS

Plus they're all in the wrong order.

LISA

(Beat; To AUGIE) He hasn't tried to blow into yet, has he?

AUGIE

Not yet. But I think that's just because he hasn't found a valve.

LISA

(Shakes her head) I'll go get the coffee. *(Exits to kitchen)*

POPS

Next time you decide to buy a typewriter by yourself, take me with you instead.

AUGIE

That way I'll get the right kind, I'll take it.

POPS

Of course. I'd hate to see you get ripped off like this again.

(ANGIE enters.)

AUGIE

I'll keep that buried in the back of mind.

ANGIE

(Notices typewriter) So that's it I'll take it.

AUGIE

I suppose that all depends on who you're talking to.

ANGIE

So I'll take it he can't really type then.

POPS

I can type just fine. The problem is he bought the wrong kind of typewriter.

ANGIE

How can he have bought the wrong kind of typewriter? That's the only kind there is.

POPS

I wish everyone would quit saying that.

ANGIE

(Beat; To AUGIE) He hasn't tried to blow into yet, has he?

AUGIE

(Nods) Apparently I didn't get the kind with the inflator valve.

(LISA enters with a pot of coffee.)

LISA

There wasn't any clean cups, so you're going to have to use what's on the table.

AUGIE

Unless they're invisible, there aren't any cups on the table.

LISA

Well then start playing with your typing. I'm not doing dishes until after lunch.

AUGIE

I'd love too, but I'm waiting for Pops to finish staring at it first.

LISA

And what's it doing out here anyway? Why isn't it in your room where it should be?

AUGIE

Angelo's got the dresser in front of the door. I can't get in there.

LISA

So that's why you're still in your work clothes.

AUGIE

I had to sleep on the couch. He wouldn't let me in.

ANGIE

Consider yourself lucky then. I think this time he really was going to kill you.

AUGIE

If he was really sincere about it, he wouldn't have put the dresser in front of the door. That's not Angelo's way.

LEO

(Entering) Why in the hell does it still smell like fish in here?

LISA

Because we had fish last night, why do you think?

LEO

Then open some windows.

LISA

They are open.

LEO

Then open them wider. I hate the smell of fish.

LISA

Then breathe through your mouth. That'll cut down on the smell.

LEO

But if I do that, my breath will smell like fish.

LISA

It does on the days we don't have fish, so I don't see what your problem is.

LEO

Shut up and get me some coffee.

LISA

Get your own coffee. There's no clean cups.

LEO

Why the hell not? I mean it's not like you have anything else to do around here.

LISA

(Hands LEO the coffee pot) Here's the pot. Stick it where you want to.

(LISA exits kitchen.)

POPS

(To LEO) Before you stick it where you want to, look at this. He bought the wrong kind of typewriter.

LEO

(Not listening to POPS) I'm going to kill that woman one of these days.

POPS

It's got too many keys and everything.

LEO

(Still not listening) I mean all she has to do around here is cook and clean. I mean how hard can that be?

POPS

Plus they're all in the wrong order.

AUGIE

(*To LEO*) I hate to say it, but I think POPS is trying to get your attention over there.

POPS

(*Beat*)

He bought the wrong kind of typewriter.

LEO

(*Beat*) How can he can he buy the wrong kind of typewriter? That's the only kind there is.

ANGIE

Not according to him it's not.

POPS

This one has too many keys.

AUGIE

Plus they're all in the wrong order he keeps telling us.

LEO

(*Shakes his head*) Just tell Angelo to kill him instead of you when he gets up. I mean at this point, who cares. I just need a stupid cup of coffee. (*Crosses towards kitchen*) You'd better be doing the dishes when I get in there or no more fish money....and by that I mean ever...

(*LEO exits to kitchen.*)

ANGIE

Or until next Friday, whichever comes first.

POPS

You still got the receipt for this thing?

AUGIE

I didn't exactly get it from a receipt kind of place.

POPS

So you bought a hot typewriter is what you're saying then?

ANGIE

A hot typewriter...I'm impressed.

AUGIE

It's not a hot typewriter. The guy I bought it off of just has a low overhead, that's all.

ANGIE

Trunk of a car I take it.

AUGIE

Back of a truck actually.

POPS

And I suppose they're only open whenever you happen to see the truck too.

AUGIE

No, this guy's pretty regular. Every Saturday across from the deli. About 8:30 to noon... give or take.

ANGIE

Or until the cops show up I suppose.

AUGIE

I wouldn't know. I always got there at opening.

POPS

Well next time you see him, tell him you want your money back.

AUGIE

I'd love too, but he's one of those nine feet tall guys with brass knuckles for teeth.

POPS

Well then take me down there next Saturday. I'll see to it you get your money back.

AUGIE

Or how about I just learn to type on this one. That might keep us all alive a little longer.

ANGIE

(With a sarcastic smile) I don't know... I'd kind of like to see Pops in action. I bet he could get your money back.

POPS

You're damn right I could.

AUGIE

I'll just stick with this one. But I promise, next time I need to buy a new one, I'll take you with me.

POPS

You'd better. Because there's no valve on this one to blow into.

AUGIE

(To POPS) Why don't you go and take a shower before Angelo gets up? I need to figure this typing thing out.

POPS

I already took one. I'll just go in the kitchen and find some coffee. (*Crosses towards kitchen*)

AUGIE

Just make sure you get a clean cup first. You don't want dad's sloppy seconds.

(*POPS exits to kitchen.*)

ANGIE

You knew this typing thing with Pops was going to be a complete waste of time.

AUGIE

Of course I knew. But you've got to give him a sense of worth once in awhile.

ANGIE

Yeah, but you could have been wasting your time typing by now, so I don't see what the point was.

AUGIE

What could I do? I got home. Put the typewriter on the table. And he sat down.

ANGIE

Well you should have told him to get up.

AUGIE

But if did that he might have thought I was being mean, and then next thing I know, he's in the shower with me tomorrow.

ANGIE

(*Beat*) It's not that hard you know.

AUGIE

Typing? (*Beat*) You know how to type?

ANGIE

Of course I do. I don't want to be a waitress all my life.

AUGIE

Any chance you could show me?

ANGIE

What's it worth to you?

AUGIE

(*Beat*) I could reinstate your Christmas present I suppose.

ANGIE
What else?

AUGIE
Why does there have to be more?

ANGIE
Because I know something you don't.

AUGIE
That doesn't mean you have to charge me for it.

ANGIE
Of course I do. We're family.

AUGIE
Exactly. We're family. So you should just show me out of the kindness of your heart.

ANGIE
But we're not that kind of family.

AUGIE
(Beat) Okay...got me there. What else do you want?

ANGIE
How about next week's paycheck.

AUGIE
You're kidding me, right?

ANGIE
You know me better than that.

AUGIE
How about I just let Angelo beat me up and you can watch.

ANGIE
Angelo beating you up doesn't buy me anything.

AUGIE
(Beat) How about a quarter of my paycheck and Angelo doesn't beat me up.

ANGIE
I don't know, I kind of like the Angelo beating you up part.

AUGIE

(Pause) Half my paycheck. That's my final offer.

ANGIE

And what if I say no?

AUGIE

What if he just roughs me up a little instead?

ANGIE

(Beat) Half your paycheck and two Christmas presents.

AUGIE

(Beat) And I get to pick the presents?

ANGIE

Five dollars at least on both.

AUGIE

And no Angelo?

ANGIE

We'll save Angelo for another day.

AUGIE

(Beat) Deal.

ANGIE

I'll get it in writing from you later.

(ANGIE sits behind typewriter.)

AUGIE

We can type it up together.

ANGIE

All right, so where's this stupid story you want to type up?

(AUGIE lifts the stack of typing paper and removes a notebook from underneath. He turns a few pages.)

AUGIE

(Hand ANGIE the notebook) It's right here. *(Points to the page)* That's the title there.

ANGIE

(Reads the page) "Trapped in My Own Life" ... good title.

AUGIE

Which is followed by my completely miserable story.

(LIGHTS FADE OUT. END ACT I.)

ACT II: SCENE 1

(AT RISE: Two days before Christmas. A tree stands along the back wall with a smattering of presents below. AUGIE is seated at the kitchen table typing away. After a moment LISA enters from the kitchen.

LISA

I thought we decided you should type in your room for the rest of your life.

AUGIE

I would, but Angelo's still in there. Apparently he's too depressed about losing another job.

LISA

Well then he's being nothing but stupid.

AUGIE

Of course he is. This is Angelo we're talking about.

LISA

I mean if anything he should be out there looking for another one, because God only knows one isn't going to come and find him. Not with his lack of everything.

AUGIE

That's what I told him too.

LISA

(Beat) So, what was that loud crash I heard?

AUGIE

(Nods) I think the chair is finally broken this time.

LISA

I'll let your father deal with him when he gets home.

AUGIE

Kind of pointless, don't you think?

LISA

It doesn't matter what I think. As long as I don't have to deal with it, that's all that matters to me.

AUGIE

(Beat) You ever think of writing a book on parenting skills?

LISA

One failed writer in the family is enough.

POPS

(Entering) I'd say good morning, but I noticed it was lunch time.

AUGIE

And as you already said good morning at breakfast time there's no reason to say it again.

POPS

That's right, I forgot about that. *(To LISA)* Now go make me some lunch before it's dinner time.

LISA

(Beat) You want some lunch?

POPS

Of course I do. It's what I always eat at lunch time.

LISA

Well then there's the kitchen...go make your own.

POPS

(To AUGIE) Is she kidding me or what?

AUGIE

I doubt it, it's the holiday season.

POPS

But I haven't made my lunch since 1947.

LISA

Well then today's your lucky day. I've got laundry to do. *(Exits)*

POPS

(Crosses to table and sits) You go make me a sandwich then. Baloney and cheese. Rye bread. Just a little bit of mustard and horse radish.

AUGIE

I'd love to, but I'm kind of busy writing at the moment.

POPS

Well then finish up go make me a sandwich. I'm starving over here.

AUGIE

Making a sandwich isn't all that difficult you know.

POPS

Of course it's not. I just refuse on principle is all.

AUGIE

Well then I guess you're going to starve for awhile then.

POPS

(Beat) Your father was right about you.

AUGIE

I seriously doubt that.

POPS

Don't you ever correct me again. Especially when you're not going to make me a sandwich.

AUGIE

How about you bring the stuff out here, and then I'll make it for you. How does that sound?

POPS

By the time I brought everything out here I could have just made it myself.

AUGIE

Exactly. Problem solved.

POPS

(Beat) Your father was right about you.

AUGIE

(Points towards the kitchen) The sandwich stuff is in there. Just through that door.

POPS

(Beat) Your father was very right about you. *(Exits)*

AUGIE

(To AUDIENCE) Of course he was right about me. I'm the only one around here who's not like him.

(LISA enters with laundry under one arm, and ANGELO by the ear with the other. He is still in his pajamas.)

ANGELO

Will you let go of my damn ear for God's sake. I'm not a little kid, I'm almost 30.

LISA

(Lets go of ear) Well then start acting like it and go out and find another job.

ANGELO

(Rubs his ear) It's two days before Christmas. No one's going to hire anyone two days before Christmas. When Christmas is over, I'll go find another job.

LISA

As far as you're concerned, Christmas is over.

ANGELO

What's that supposed to mean? I've got presents under the tree.

LISA

Not when Santa still has the receipts you don't.

ANGELO

You can't do that. That's not fair.

LISA

You've got twenty minutes to get your butt out the door.

ANGELO

(Beat; with attitude) Fine.

LISA

If anyone needs me, leave me alone. I'll be downstairs doing the laundry.

(As LISA exits POPS enters with an empty plate and sits at the table.)

ANGELO

I can't believe she'd take my stupid presents back just because I lost my job.

AUGIE

Santa's funny that way. He likes nice boys. Boys without massive attitude problems.

ANGELO

(Leans into AUGIE) That's it...right after Christmas...I'm going to kill you.

AUGIE

Why don't you just do it now? You've still got about nineteen minutes.

POPS

He can't kill you now. She'd take all his presents back.

ANGELO

And I'm not losing my presents over you.

AUGIE

But wouldn't killing me be like an extra present?

ANGELO

December 26th. 12:01 A.M. You're dead. (*Crosses away*)

AUGIE

Well, try not to wake me. I haven't been sleeping very well lately.

ANGELO

(*Stops; turns*) 12:01...in the A.M. (*Exits*)

POPS

So you going to make me a sandwich or what?

AUGIE

Probably the, "or what." I want to get this story in the mail today.

POPS

You and your stupid stories.

AUGIE

You won't be saying that when they publish the first one.

POPS

You sent your first one out three months ago. If it was any good, you would've heard back by now. So go make me a sandwich before I die over here.

AUGIE

Well then you're going to have to die. I've still got about another page or so to go before I'm done.

POPS

(*Beat*) Your father was right about you.

AUGIE

Well then go find him. Maybe he'll make you a sandwich.

POPS

How can I find him? He's at work.

AUGIE

Then go to his work and find him. I'm sure he's got an extra sandwich. He always has an extra sandwich.

POPS

But he probably ate it by now.

AUGIE

(Beat) You're not going to leave me alone until I make you a sandwich, are you?

POPS

Have I ever before?

AUGIE

Fine. I'll go make you a stupid sandwich. *(Rises; crosses towards kitchen)*

POPS

And not too much horse radish...too much horse radish gives me gas.

AUGIE

I'll keep that in mind. *(Exits)*

(ANGIE enters wearing her waitress uniform.)

ANGIE

This has got to be the worst day ever.

POPS

Okay, good it's you. Go in the kitchen and help Augie make me a sandwich. You make better sandwiches than he does.

ANGIE

Go make your own damn sandwich. I've got better things to worry about.

POPS

And me starving to death should be one of them.

ANGIE

Whatever...I lost my job today okay. So I'm really not in the mood.

POPS

Then you'd better go find another one quick, because according to that mother of yours, Santa's still got receipts for all the gifts under that tree.

ANGIE

Like I care at this point.

POPS

How could you not care about presents?

ANGIE

Because I just lost job. What, are deaf or something?

POPS

Of course I'm not deaf. I'm hungry is what I am.

LISA

(Entering) I thought I heard your voice. Why aren't you at work?

ANGIE

Because the back of the building fell off, that's why.

LISA

How can the back of the building fall off?

ANGIE

How in the hell would I know. All I know is when I got to work, there was a big commotion, and someone said the back of the building fell off.

LISA

Well what did your boss say? That Mr. Pointy guy.

ANGIE

He didn't say anything.

LISA

Well did you at least ask him?

ANGIE

I couldn't, he wasn't around.

LISA

How could he not be around, he was the boss?

ANGIE

Because the back of the building fell on him, that's why.

POPS

Well good for him. I never like that Mr. Pointy guy anyway. He always skimped on the horse radish.

ANGIE and LISA

Shut up.

POPS

Fine. *(Stands)* I'll be in the kitchen checking on my sandwich. *(Exits)*

LISA

So what are they going to do? Just close the place now?

ANGIE

How in the hell would I know. I just found out fifteen minutes ago.

LISA

Well what are you going to do now? You can't just not have a job.

(ANGELO enters dressed nicely for someone like Angelo.)

ANGIE

I've only been out of a job fifteen minutes, give a break here.

ANGELO

(With disgust) There. Happy now? I'm dressed.

LISA

Of course I'm not happy. Why would I be happy? Get a job. Then I'll be happy.

ANGELO

My presents better still be here when I get back.

LISA

Just go for the love of God. Before all the extra jobs are gone.

ANGELO

Fine. But I'm serious about my presents.

LISA

One. Two. Three. Four...

ANGELO

Alright. Alright already. I'm going. You don't have to count. I'm almost 30 you know.

LISA

Then what are you still standing there for? Go.

ANGELO

I'm going already. *(Starts to exit)* There. See. I'm gone. *(Exits)*

LISA

Someone needs to smack some sense into that boy here one of these days.

ANGIE

Be a complete waste of time if you ask me.

(AUGIE and POPS enter from kitchen; POPS is eating his sandwich.)

AUGIE

(To ANGIE) What are you doing here? You're supposed to be at work.

ANGIE

The back of the building fell off.

AUGIE

(Beat) It didn't by chance fall on Mr. Pointy?

POPS

(With a smile) It most certainly did.

AUGIE

Good. Never liked him much. He always skimped on the horse radish.

LISA

That's still no reason wish somebody dead.

POPS

What are you talking about? You do it all the time with me.

LISA

Of course I do. But that's different. I know you.

POPS

(With disgust) I'll be in the kitchen eating my sandwich. *(Exits)*

AUGIE

(To ANGIE) If you want I could talk to Mr. Lardner about getting you a job.

ANGIE

Why would I want you to do that? Your job stinks.

AUGIE

Of course it does, but it's still a job.

LISA

Your sister's too good for that kind of job. She needs a real job where she can get ahead.

AUGIE

(With sarcasm) My apologies. I didn't realize waitressing was such a high-end job.

LISA

It is when you compare it to ushering.

AUGIE

I'll make sure to inform the head of our union then before he gets too delusional and thinks we're actual, real people.

ANGIE

Since when do you have a union?

AUGIE

It's a hypothetical union, that way we don't have to pay dues.

ANGIE

Which is exactly what your job is...hypothetical.

AUGIE

Regardless, the money's still real.

LISA

Speaking of which, you're going to have to start contributing more money with everyone out of jobs.

AUGIE

As long as it doesn't go to fish, I can give a little more.

LISA

You're going to have to give a lot more than a little at the rate things are going around here.

AUGIE

A little is all I make, so that's the best I can do.

LISA

Well then go find a second job. Because I doubt a little is going to be good enough.

AUGIE

How about the other two just find first jobs and then I can keep my little with my one job.

LISA

Because that's not the way things work around here. You do what you can to help the family.

AUGIE

(Points at ANGIE) Well if that's the case, shouldn't she be out looking for a job?

LISA

Don't you talk back to me.

AUGIE

I wasn't talking back. I was making an obvious point.

LISA

Well don't. The only point you ever need to make is none. Have I made myself clear?

AUGIE

Doubtful. But what do I know.

ANGIE

I'm going to go get changed before he opens his mouth again.

AUGIE

But you're dressed perfectly for a waitress interview now. Changing would only cheapen your obvious skill levels.

ANGIE

Once Angelo's done killing you. I'm killing you next. *(Exits)*

AUGIE

(To AUDIENCE) That's the one thing you've got to love about this family. Idiotic determination.

LISA

Shut up and go find second job before I get in line to kill you too.

AUGIE

Are you going to return my presents if I don't?

LISA

(Screams) Go!

AUGIE

Okay, just checking. No need to get all worked up. I mean I'm sure there's nothing under the tree that I really want anyway...like every other Christmas. *(Exits)*

(POPS enters from kitchen.)

POPS

(To LISA) I'm still hungry. Make me another sandwich.

(LISA screams in frustration as LIGHTS FADE OUT.)

ACT II: SCENE 2

(AT RISE: Noon, the Monday after Christmas; POPS seated at the kitchen table eating a large meatloaf sandwich. An apple and banana sit in front of him. The typewriter is still in its place. After a moment, LISA enters from kitchen.)

LISA

(To POPS) Is that a legal sandwich or did you steal it?

(LEO Storms in.)

LEO

(To POPS) You finally did it, old man. This time you went over the edge. And by the edge I mean all the way this time. Not just halfway like the other times....

LISA

Don't tell me you lost your job too.

LEO

Of course I didn't lose my job. I lost my lunch is what I lost.

(POPS ignores them and continues eating)

LISA

And you came all the way home because of that.

LEO

Of course I did. It was a meatloaf sandwich. I love meatloaf sandwiches.

LISA

Why didn't you just go out and buy one then? It's not like you don't have any money.

LEO

All I've got left is my poker money, and I'm certainly not going to blow my poker money on a meatloaf sandwich, especially when I already had one. And besides your meatloaf is better than any I can buy.

LISA

(Beat; to POPS) What do you got to say for yourself?

POPS

He's right. This is the best meatloaf sandwich I've ever had.

LEO

(Grabs the sandwich) Give me that sandwich. That's my sandwich.

POPS

You might want to be careful then. I put a little horse radish on it.

LEO

What are you kidding me? I hate horse radish.

POPS

(Smiles) I know.

LEO

(Looks at sandwich then hands back to POPS) Fine. Take the stupid sandwich then. *(To LISA)* Any meatloaf left?

LISA

I don't know, you'll have to go look.

LEO

(Threatening to POPS) For your sake, there'd better be some damn meatloaf left. *(Exits to kitchen)*

(ANGELO enters dressed in his pajamas.)

ANGELO

Anyone call me about a job yet?

LISA

You hear the phone ring?

ANGELO

Of course not. If I heard the phone ring I would have answered it.

LISA

(Beat) Why aren't you dressed?

ANGELO

Because I don't have anywhere to go.

LISA

What do you mean you don't have anywhere to go? You've got plenty of places to go.

ANGELO

What are you talking about? What places?

LISA

Places that have jobs.

ANGELO

What, are you kidding me? I just did that the other day.

LISA

And you still haven't found one. So until you do...I don't want see you again.

ANGELO

But what if I'm looking for a job and a job calls here looking for me?

LISA

Then we'll take a message.

ANGELO

But what if no one hears the phone ring and the job doesn't call back? Then I'm out of a job that I didn't get because I wasn't here.

LISA

(Beat) One...two...three...four....

ANGELO

Fine. I'll go look for a stupid job again.

(ANGELO exits as LEO enters from the kitchen.)

LEO

The only thing left in the fridge is leftover fish and no one eats leftover fish.

LISA

It's for fish stew. You'll eat it tonight.

LEO

But I hate fish and I hate fish stew. Just make another meatloaf.

LISA

I can't make another meatloaf even if I wanted to. All the food money's gone for the week.

LEO

(Reaches into his pants and pulls out some money) Then take this and go out and buy some stuff for meatloaf.

LISA

I can't do that. That's your poker money.

LEO

Then this week it can be meatloaf money. What difference does it make what kind of money it is?

LISA

Then why did you make such a big stink when I wanted it for fish money?

LEO

(Loudly with attitude) Because I hate stupid fish.

LISA

(Beat) That's your poker money and it's going to stay your poker money.

LEO

(With frustration) Then what in the hell am I supposed to have for lunch all week?

LISA

Whatever you find in your lunch pail.

LEO

(With drawn out frustration) But we don't have anything.

LISA

We've got plenty of things. You just don't where to look.

LEO

How can I not know where to look? We only have one place to look.

LISA

Just don't worry about. Tomorrow when you open your lunch pail, they'll be lunch in it.

LEO

But what about today? I'm starving here for God's sake.

LISA

Just take your poker money around the corner and buy a meatloaf sandwich at the deli.

LEO

But that's my poker money again. I don't want to blow it on a meatloaf sandwich at the deli for twice as much as you can make it.

LISA

Then you're going to have to starve.

LEO

I can't work if I'm starving.

LISA

Well if you don't get back there in the next few minutes it won't matter anyway because you're going to get fired.

LEO

(*To POPS*) You're going to pay for this. One way or another...I promise you...you're going to pay.

LISA

Will you get going already?

LEO

Fine...I'm going. But next time we have meatloaf...he doesn't get any.

LISA

Go.

LEO

And I mean it...no meatloaf for you...maybe even forever. (*Exits*)

POPS

That might be the best sandwich I've ever had.

LISA

I'd watch yourself if I were you. Acting like yourself is one thing, but stealing his lunch...that's violence territory.

POPS

Nonsense. He's just a winded lard ass. Always has been, always will be.

LISA

Well I hope to hell I'm around when he proves you wrong.

ANGIE

(*Entering*) I ran into dad on the steps—what's he so mad about this time?

LISA

(*Points at POPS*) He stole his meatloaf sandwich.

ANGIE

And he's still alive?

LISA

Unfortunately.

ANGIE

Dad loves meatloaf sandwiches.

POPS

So do I...that's why I ate it.

LISA

Just ignore him. He'll be dead here soon enough. So what happened with the job? Find one or not?

ANGIE

I applied at four places, one of them I got to actually talk to someone.

LISA

So that's a no is what you're saying?

ANGIE

I should know something by tomorrow I think.

AUGIE

(Entering) Good news, I got that second job you wanted me to get. I start tomorrow.

LISA

What kind of job and where?

AUGIE

The deli. The one around the corner.

LISA

Couldn't you have done better than that? I mean how much can the deli pay?

AUGIE

It's pays more than Angie and Angelo are making.

ANGIE

Watch your mouth. It's not my fault the building fell on Mr. Pointy.

LISA

And even if it was, she'll still make more money waiting tables than you'll make at your two jobs combined.

AUGIE

I didn't realize this was a competition.

LISA

It's not. It's about survival of this family. And I expect a lot more out of you than what you've been doing.

AUGIE

What are you talking about? I'm now doing more than the two of them combined.

LISA

That's besides the point. You're still not doing enough.

AUGIE

I bet you won't be saying that when my first story sells.

ANGIE

What are you kidding me? I helped you type that story, remember? The only thing good about it was the title.

AUGIE

You just watch...the minute that story sells and I get that first check...I'm out of here.

LISA

You'll do no such thing. Check or no check. We're a family and we're staying a family.

AUGIE

But I thought the entire point of a family was to grow up, become an adult and then move as far away as possible. *(To AUDIENCE)* At least that's always been my take on it.

LISA

The only place you're going to be moving into is a mental hospital. What with all that talking to people that aren't there that you do.

AUGIE

Well if that's the case, at least I'll have my own room.

POPS

(To AUGIE) Since you're working at a deli now, go practice making me another sandwich.

LISA

You just had a sandwich, you don't need any more sandwiches.

AUGIE

So that's why dad was so mad when I passed him. He stole his sandwich, didn't he?

LISA

Right out of his lunch pail.

AUGIE

I'm amazed he's still alive. Dad loves meatloaf sandwiches.

(ANGELO enters dressed in jeans and a ripped sweatshirt.)

LISA

What are you dressed like that for? I thought I told you to get dressed and look for a job.

ANGELO

I was going to go down to the docks, what do you expect me to dress like?

LISA

Like someone that's not homeless, that's what.

ANGELO

If I dress any nicer than this, I'll get beat up.

AUGIE

I can lend you my sports jacket.

ANGELO

I still haven't forgotten about killing you.

POPS

Is somebody going to make me another sandwich or what?

LISA, AUGIE, ANGELO, ANGIE

Shut up.

POPS

(Beat; with disgust) I think I'll just go to my room until dinner time.

LISA

We're having fish stew, so there won't be any need for you to come out then either.

POPS

Well that's where you're wrong. I love fish stew. It's just the fish that I hate. *(Exits)*

ANGIE

(To LISA) Are you sure we can't do something about him?

LISA

Not legally, no.

ANGELO

Maybe I'll luck out then and meet some people down at the docks that know some people, that know some people, that can do something about him.

LISA

Well if you do, you stay away from those kinds of people...unless of course they pay a lot of money, then we can talk about it with your father.

ANGELO

I'll see what I can do.

LISA

Get going then...and be home by six...unless of course you meet those kind of people and have to stay out later...but not too late...I don't like to worry.

ANGELO

Don't worry. It's only twelve-thirty. Got plenty of time to see what I can do.

LISA

But try to get a job first. That's the reason you're going down there...not for the other.

ANGELO

(Smiles) I'll see what I can do. *(Exits)*

AUGIE

What do you bet the only thing he does is get himself beat up for being an idiot?

ANGIE

Then why don't you go with him. It'll save him having to beat you up.

AUGIE

Thanks, but I've got some writing to do.

POPS

(Off stage) I've changed my mind. I still want a sandwich.

(LEO enters without stopping by the others; continuing to cross down the hall.)

LEO

(With anger) Don't worry. I've got it covered.

(LIGHTS OUT.)

ACT II: SCENE 3

(AT RISE: A short time later; LEO is seated at the kitchen table staring at a bowl of fish stew. LISA enters from kitchen and hands him a beer.)

LISA

So?

LEO

(Beat) I don't want to talk about it.

LISA

(Beat) You got fired, didn't you?

LEO

I said I don't want to talk about it.

LISA

I told you that was going to happen if you were late getting back.

LEO

I wasn't late getting back.

LISA

If you weren't late getting back, then what are you doing here?

LEO

I don't want to talk about it I said.

LISA

I don't care what you want to talk about. I want to know why you're here.

LEO

(With frustration) Because I got fired, okay.

LISA

No, it's not okay.

LEO

Just leave me alone, we'll talk about later.

LISA

We'll talk about it now. Later doesn't do any good.

LEO

And neither is talking about now.

LISA

(Beat; forcefully) What happened?

LEO

(Beat) A meatloaf sandwich. Okay. That's what happened.

LISA

How could you be fired over a meatloaf sandwich? Pops stole your meatloaf sandwich.

LEO

There was another meatloaf sandwich.

LISA

So you bought one with your poker money is what you're saying?

LEO

Of course not. That money's still my poker money.

LISA

Then how could there be another meatloaf sandwich?

LEO

Because there was, that's why.

LISA

That doesn't make any sense. How could there be another meatloaf sandwich if you didn't buy one?

LEO

Because it was my bosses meatloaf sandwich.

LISA

And you got fired because your boss had a meatloaf sandwich?

LEO

(Beat) I didn't know it was my bosses meatloaf sandwich. I thought maybe I had two and didn't see one when I came home to kill Pops.

LISA

This still doesn't make any sense. Just because your bosses meatloaf sandwich wasn't your meatloaf sandwich doesn't mean he can fire you.

LEO

(Beat) I punched him in the face.

LISA

What did you do something stupid like that for?

LEO

After biting into his meatloaf sandwich that I didn't know was his, I told him the meatloaf stunk.

LISA

That still doesn't mean you had to punch him in the face.

LEO

His wife made the meatloaf.

LISA

Then you could've just apologized and gone back to work.

LEO

I couldn't.

LISA

And why not?

LEO

(Beat) Because he insulted your meatloaf.

LISA

He's never had my meatloaf. How can he insult it?

LEO

It doesn't matter if he had it or not. He said he was sure my wife's meatloaf stunk way more than his. I had to defend your meatloaf. What else was I going to do?

LISA

(Beat) This has got to be the stupidest thing ever.

LEO

Why, because I was defending your honor?

LISA

You weren't defending anything. You were being a stupid idiot is what you were doing.

LEO

You're just saying that because you weren't there.

LISA

And if I had of been, I would have punched you right back in the face for being such a stupid idiot.

LEO

(Beat) There's just no talking to you some days.

LISA

(Beat) So what are you going to do now?

LEO

I'll go find another job. What's the big deal?

LISA

The big deal is, there's no jobs out there...What the hell were you thinking?

LEO

What can I say? He insulted your meatloaf.

POPS

(Entering) What's all this talk about meatloaf out here?

LEO

Go back to your room. I don't want to deal with you right now.

POPS

I can't. I'm hungry now.

LEO

I don't care what you are. I said, go back to your room.

POPS

I don't want to go back to my room. There's nothing to do in there.

LISA

Then go find something to do. We've got more problems than we need out here right now.

POPS

Make me a sandwich...and then I'll go back to my room.

LISA

(Threatening) You want a sandwich? Make it yourself. I've had it up to here with you and your stupid sandwiches. From now on you want a sandwich...there's the kitchen.

POPS

(To LEO) You going to let her talk to me like that?

LEO

(Beat) Go to your room before I kill you.

POPS

(To LISA) You going to let him talk to me like that?

LISA

(Screams) Go!

POPS

You do realize this is my house. If it wasn't for me...you wouldn't have anywhere to live.

LEO and LISA

(Screaming) Go!!

POPS

You want me to go? Fine, I'll go. But when I die...I'm leaving this house to someone that'll make me a sandwich. *(Exits)*

LEO

Obviously he forgot he signed the house over to us twenty years ago.

LISA

I don't care about the stupid house. Without any money how we going to live?

LEO

Don't worry about it. I'll find a job tomorrow. It's not like I don't have connections or anything.

LISA

Yeah, but all your connections are the wrong kind. How they going to help you find a job?

LEO

I've got more than one kind of connection you know. I'm a lot more worldly than you think I am.

LISA

No you're not. The only thing your connections are good for are poker and tickets to the Yankees games.

LEO

Hey don't knock those tickets. Box seats are nothing to sneeze at.

(ANGELO enters.)

ANGELO

(To LEO) What are you doing home? You get fired too?

LEO

Mind your own business.

ANGELO

(Beat) Oh, this is just great. Now what are we going to do? You're the one that made all the fish and food money.

LEO

Watch your mouth. I'm still your father.

ANGELO

What did I say? It's not my fault I like to eat.

LISA

So what happened at the docks? You at least find a job or what?

ANGELO

I couldn't find anything down there. And I looked everywhere. Even in the places I shouldn't be looking.

LEO

What the hell is that supposed to mean?

ANGELO

It's not supposed to mean nothing...I just thought you know, that while I was down there...maybe I could take care of another problem is all.

LEO

You stay away from those kinds of people. I don't care how annoying Pops is. That's not the way you deal with that kind of thing.

ANGELO

Who said anything about Pops?

LEO

Don't give me that crap. What else would you be looking for down there? And besides those kind of people don't hang out down there anymore. They got their own place now...over on East 6th...in the back of that Jewish deli.

LISA

(Beat) And how exactly would you know that?

LEO

You hear things while you're getting your bagel smeared. What can I say?

LISA

Well you stay away from those kind of people too. You don't need any more problems than what you've already got.

LEO

For the last time, I'll find a job in the morning. Just quit worrying about it before you get on my nerves.

LISA

(Beat; with real anger) I'll be in the bathroom cleaning the toilet. *(Exits)*

ANGELO

If you want, maybe we can go looking for jobs together tomorrow. Beats the hell out of looking all alone.

LEO

Thanks, but no thanks. I've got to find a real one. Not one of your kind of jobs.

ANGELO

What's that supposed to mean?

LEO

Since you don't know, that should answer your question right there.

ANGELO

(Beat) What's that supposed to mean?

LEO

Go help your mother clean the toilet.

ANGELO

You're joking, right?

LEO

Do I look like I'm joking?

ANGELO

(Beat) Fine, I'll go help mom clean the toilet. *(As exiting)* God just once...I'd like to get a little respect around here.

LEO

I can't believe this stinking day.

(AUGIE enters dressed in his deli work clothes carrying a paper bag.)

AUGIE

Nothing screams a great day at work like coming home and smelling like corn beef and pastrami. They should bottle that stuff. I tell you tomorrow...I'm going see if I can't get a little of that pickled onion smell mixed in for fun... *(Realizing his dad is home)* Shouldn't you be at work?

LEO

Mind your own damn business.

AUGIE

You want to me drop it is what you're saying. I can do that. *(Crosses to table, opens bag and takes out a sandwich)* You want a meatloaf sandwich? I've got two of them in here.

LEO

(With disgust) A meatloaf sandwich?

AUGIE

Yeah, I got two. You want one?

LEO

(Beat) You just want me to kill you, don't you?

AUGIE

For what? Being nice and offering you a meatloaf sandwich?

POPS

(Entering) Did someone say something about a meatloaf sandwich out here?

AUGIE

I did. I've got two. Want one?

POPS

What kind of stupid question is that? Of course I want a meatloaf sandwich.

AUGIE

(To LEO) You're sure you don't want it?

LEO

(Loudly) Go to hell.

AUGIE

(To POPS) All yours.

POPS

(Takes the sandwich) Who's meatloaf?

AUGIE

Kreizer's.

POPS

Kreizer's meatloaf is always dry.

AUGIE

Don't worry about it. Got plenty of horseradish on these.

POPS

Not too much horseradish, right?

AUGIE

Just eat it. It's a good sandwich.

POPS

Get me a glass of milk then just in case.

AUGIE

Trust me on this one. I made the sandwich myself.

POPS

I'd still rather have some milk all the same.

LEO

(Screams at POPS) Eat the damn sandwich for love of God!

POPS

Fine. I'll eat the sandwich. Just calm your pants down. Not my fault you got fired today over a meatloaf sandwich.

(POPS bites into his sandwich. LISA enters with a toilet brush in her hand.)

LISA

What's all the racket about out here? I about smacked Angelo in the face with the toilet brush.

AUGIE

I brought home two meatloaf sandwiches.

LISA

Oh that's just great. Of all the days you got to bring home a meatloaf sandwich.

AUGIE

How was I supposed to know?

POPS

You're right. There's not too much horseradish on this at all. Just the right amount.

LISA

I mean why couldn't you bring home pastrami or something like that?

AUGIE

Cause we had extra meatloaf. I still don't see what the big deal is?

LEO

What, are you a stupid a moron?

LISA

He lost his job because of a meatloaf sandwich. The last thing your father needs to see today is another meatloaf sandwich.

POPS

I'd like to see another meatloaf sandwich. This one's pretty good.

LEO and LISA

Shut up.

(POPS shrugs and goes back to eating his sandwich.)

AUGIE

I mean what am I supposed to do? Call home every time I want to bring home a sandwich?

LISA

Well you should've today. That's all I'm saying.

AUGIE

Fine. Next time I bring home a sandwich I'll come in and ask first. That way I'll know what kind of sandwich not to bring in.

LEO

Don't you get lippy with your mother.

AUGIE

When did I get lippy? I just wanted to make sure I understood is all. Normal families don't have these kinds of problems.

LEO

You don't like it here. There's the door. Feel free whenever you want.

AUGIE

I'd love too. But I'm the only one around here that seems to have a job. Two in fact.

LISA

Don't you ever talk that way to your father again.

AUGIE

Why, because I'm telling the truth?

LEO

The last thing we need around here is the truth. The truth is nothing but a waste of time.

AUGIE

(To AUDIENCE) I hate to admit it, but he would've made a great attorney.

LEO

That's it. Get out.

POPS

But if you throw him out, what are we going to do for food?

(They all pause and look at LEO. ANGELO enters.)

ANGELO

You left me in there without the toilet brush. How am I supposed to clean the toilet without the toilet brush?

AUGIE

(Crosses to ANGELO and hands him his meatloaf sandwich) Here, use this. (Exits)

(LIGHTS OUT.)

ACT II: SCENE 4

(AT RISE: The next afternoon; AUGIE seated at the kitchen table typing. After a moment LEO enters. He removes his coat as he crosses into the room.)

LEO

What are you still doing here?

AUGIE

(Typing) I figured you were kidding around, so I didn't take it personally.

LEO

When have I ever kidded around?

AUGIE

(Looks up) Okay then. How about this...you had a meatloaf sandwich issue and I was the one you took it out on. How does that sound?

LEO

Or how about you and that stupid typewriter go someplace else. How does that sound?

AUGIE

Sounds great, but this is the only place I can type. Angelo sold my desk for pool money.

(LISA enters in a bathrobe and with her hair wrapped in a towel.)

LISA

(To LEO) That stupid father of yours has to go. I don't care what you say anymore.

LEO

What in the hell did he do now?

LISA

What does it look like he tried to do?

LEO

How in the hell would I know? I'm not a mind reader.

LISA

Of course you're not, you're an idiot.

LEO

You watch your mouth. I'm your husband. You don't talk to me that way.

LISA

I'll talk to you any damn way I want.

LEO

You take that back or you're going to get an attitude adjustment.

LISA

The only one here that's going to get an attitude adjustment is you. And it's going to be with a frying pan. You understand me?

LEO

Loud and clear.

LISA

I mean what he did was disgusting.

LEO

You going to tell me or what?

LISA

(Beat) He tried getting into the shower with me while I was cleaning it.

LEO

So what? You were cleaning the shower. What's the big deal about that?

LISA

I clean it while I'm taking one, that's what.

LEO

Well why didn't you just lock the door like you tell everyone else to do? You know what kind of idiot he is.

LISA

The door was locked. He jimmied it with a screwdriver.

(POPS enters dressed in a bathrobe with a shower cap in his hand.)

POPS

Where do we keep the soap? I can't find the one you threw at me.

LISA

I'm going to kill him. I swear to God I'm going to kill him if you don't do something about him.

LEO

What do you want me to do?

LISA

I don't care. Anything. He saw me naked for god's sake.

LEO

Well then that should be punishment enough.

(ANGIE enters from out.)

LISA

(To LEO) I hate you. *(To ALL)* I hate all of you.

(LISA storms off.)

AUGIE

(To no one in particular) What did I do?

(ANGIE enters removing her coat as she does so, revealing her "interview" waitress outfit.)

POPS

I kind of smell over here. Either of you two know where I can find the soap?

ANGIE

I'll take by it all by all the noise in here, Pops finally got in the shower with mom.

AUGIE

Saw everything.

POPS

What are you talking about? I didn't see anything.

LEO

And what in the hell possessed you to jimmy the lock for?

POPS

I ate a lot of onions yesterday. I smell. I need a shower. It's as simple as that.

LEO

Thank God I was adopted. I'd hate to think you were my real father.

AUGIE

(*To LEO*) Wait a minute here...you were adopted?

POPS

Of course he was adopted. You don't think I'd have a real idiot son like that.

ANGIE

(*With surprise*) You were adopted?

LEO

What, you thought that idiot old man was my actual father?

AUGIE

Of course we did. Why wouldn't we think that?

LEO

(*Gestures towards POPS*) Then you're stupider than he is.

ANGIE

And you were going to tell us this when?

LEO

What are you talking about? We told you when you were little kids.

AUGIE

How little exactly?

LEO

(*Beat*) Okay, maybe we only told Angelo. I mean how in the hell can I remember this stuff. It was a long time ago. What can I say? It's done and over with.

POPS

And so could my shower if anyone would tell me where the soap is.

ANGIE

(*To LEO*) How could you not tell us you were adopted?

LEO

I don't see what the big deal is.

AUGIE

(*To ANGIE*) He's got a point, because when you think about it, it means we're not genetically linked to Pops.

ANGIE

(*Beat*) That's true. I haven't thought of that.

(*LISA storms in and grabs her shower cap from POPS.*)

LISA

Give me that damn hat.

AUGIE

(*To LISA*) So how come you never told us dad was adopted?

LISA

That's because he's not. Those two have been playing that stupid game for thirty years.

AUGIE

(*To LEO*) So you're not adopted then?

LEO

What difference does it make if I was adopted or not?

AUGIE

(*Points at POPS*) Well for a moment, I didn't have to worry about turning into him.

LISA

No one could ever be that big of an idiot.

(*ANGELO enters carrying the day's mail.*)

ANGELO

Before you yell at me, I forgot to look for a job today.

LISA

(*Calmly*) I'm sorry, I stand corrected.

ANGELO

I thought I could win some money playing pool instead.

AUGIE

You lost all my desk money I take it?

ANGELO

Not all of it. The rest I spent on beer.

LISA

Did anyone in this stupid house find a job today?

ANGIE

I tried, but there's nothing out there.

LEO

She's right. But I got my connections working on it.

LISA

And what are we supposed to do for money? The house payment's due in less than a week.

AUGIE

Don't look at me. My two jobs couldn't pay the electric, let alone the house payment.

ANGIE

Maybe we can sell Pops.

LISA

If there was a market for him, we'd have sold him years ago.

LEO

Just everyone quit worrying about it. Everything's going to work out fine.

LISA

No it's not. We don't have any money coming in.

LEO

So we miss a payment, what are they going to do?

LISA

They're going to throw us out is what they're going to do.

LEO

We haven't missing a payment in twenty years. Things are going to be fine.

POPS

Is anyone going to tell me where the soap is or what?

LISA

Would somebody please kill him for me before I do it myself.

ANGELO

(Hands LISA the mail) Oh yeah, here's the mail by the way.

POPS

All I want is some soap. What is so difficult about that?

LEO

(To POPS) Will you shut the hell up?

LISA

(Looking at mail) Oh great. Nothing but bills. Now what are we going to do?

AUGIE

That one there looks like it might be for me.

LISA

(Hands him the letter) Well if it's a bill, keep it to yourself.

LEO

And besides we've got some money in savings. Everything will work itself out.

LISA

What are you talking about? We haven't had money in savings for years.

LEO

(Beat) Are you sure?

LISA

Of course I'm sure. I'm the one that pays the bills and balances the books we don't keep.

ANGIE

So we're actually in trouble is what you're saying?

ANGELO

I can go back to the pool hall and try and win some money.

AUGIE

That's worked out real well so far.

(AUGIE opens his letter.)

ANGELO

Just because I've forgot to kill you so far doesn't mean I've forgotten.

AUGIE

(Starts reading letter) I'll remind you later to be on the safe side.

LEO

I mean worst case scenario...what...we sell some stuff around here.

LISA

Have you looked at the stuff around here? What exactly can we sell?

LEO

(Beat) Okay. Fine. It was just a thought.

AUGIE

(To himself) I don't believe this.

(AUGIE holds a check in his hand and stares at it.)

LEO

(Beat) What's that you got in your hand?

LISA

It looks like a check.

ANGELO

Why would someone give him a check?

POPS

If it's a check. That means someone can buy me some soap.

AUGIE

(Staring at the check) They bought my story. I don't believe it. They actually bought my story.

LEO

You're kidding me. How big of a check?

(LEO crosses to AUGIE.)

AUGIE

Big.

LEO

(Looking at check) Holy crap.

LISA

Let me see that. *(Looks at check)* Dear God. This will make the next three house payments plus.

ANGIE

We can't be supported by him. It's too embarrassing.

AUGIE

Don't worry about it. You won't be. I'm moving out.

ANGELO

If he moves out I get his room.

ANGIE

(To ANGELO) You're already in his room. Don't be such an idiot.

ANGELO

Yeah, but not all by myself.

LEO

Nobody's getting anything. He's not going anywhere.

LISA

Your father's right. We're a family. And families help each other at times like these.

AUGIE

(Calmly) I'd rather move out. I don't want to be trapped in my own life anymore.

POPS

(With frustration) Could somebody please get me some soap?

LEO, LISA, ANGELO, ANGIE, AUGIE

Shut up!

POPS

(Beat) I don't like you people.

(POPS sits on the couch.)

LISA

(To AUGIE) And you young man, you're not going anywhere. You're staying here and helping your family like you were raised to do.

LEO

You heard your mother, now sign over that check right now.

AUGIE

What, are you kidding me? This check is my way to finally having a life.

ANGELO

I could always end it for you now if you like.

LEO

(To ANGELO) Why don't you shut up before I end yours.

ANGELO

Oh sure, just because he has money now he's suddenly better than me.

ANGIE

Of course that makes him better than you. Quit being such an idiot.

ANGELO

(To ANGIE, threatening) You're next on my list.

ANGIE

Whatever.

LISA

Will everyone just shut up for a minute?

AUGIE

(To himself) I could actually get an apartment with my own bedroom with this kind of money.

LEO

You already got a bedroom. You don't need another one.

LISA

Your father's right. Plus you'll still to get to keep some of the money for yourself. It's not like we need all of it.

AUGIE

But you're forgetting the all-important part.

LEO

And what exactly is that?

AUGIE

(Beat) It's my money.

LISA

This is no time for being selfish.

AUGIE

Actually it is when you think about it.

LEO

You watch your mouth, and listen to your mother young man.

AUGIE

I mean think about it...when's the last time someone around here didn't want to kill me because they hated me while reminding me they wanted me to move out? I mean when you think about, this is the perfect time to be selfish.

ANGELO

Now you know why we all hate you.

AUGIE

(Beat) I rest my case.

LISA

Nobody in this house hates you. We love you. Now you do what's right by your family and give us the check.

AUGIE

But if I do that, then I'll have to be in charge around here. And I don't want to be in charge around here.

LEO

What are you talking about? You're not going to be in charge around here.

AUGIE

Of course I would. I'd be the primary source of income around here.

ANGIE

(To no one in particular) I don't like where this is going.

AUGIE

Actually when you think about it...I'd be the only source of income around here.

LEO

I don't care what you say. The only one in charge around here is me. End of story.

AUGIE

(Starts to exit) Well then I guess I'd better start packing.

LISA

You're not packing anything. You're staying right here and you're helping your family out. I'm not going to say it again.

ANGELO

I could just take the check from him.

LEO

Why don't you just shut up before you make things even worse.

AUGIE

I wouldn't worry about Angelo. He's not bright enough to make things worse around here.

ANGELO

Once you move out...I'm going to hunt you down like an animal.

LISA

(To ANGELO) Go to your room.

ANGELO

I don't want to go to my room. I'm almost thirty.

LISA

Then sit on the couch with Pops and shut up.

ANGELO

Fine. *(Sits on couch)*

AUGIE

(Points to ANGELO) Plus if I stayed, how would he hunt me down?

LISA

Will you quit being such a smart ass for a minute, and get real here?

AUGIE

(Beat) I'll do my best.

LISA

Good. That's better...So what do we got to do to make you stay?

LEO

But whatever it is, you're not going to be in charge. There's no way in hell on that one.

AUGIE

What makes you think I want to stay? I mean this is what I've been dreaming of all my life.

ANGIE

Just let him go. It's not like the rest of us won't find work here soon.

LISA

(To ANGIE) Go sit on the couch and shut up with the other two.

ANGIE

What, are you kidding me?

LISA

Sit.

ANGIE

(Crosses to couch) Fine. I'll sit on the stupid couch. *(Sits)*

AUGIE

(With a big smile) I'm kind of starting to like it around here.

LISA

Good. That's what we want to hear. Now let's all settle down and figure this whole thing out.

AUGIE

(Beat) I think I'd still rather leave though.

(AUGIE starts to exit once again.)

POPS

This is all getting ridiculous. Someone make me a sandwich for God's sake.

(AUGIE stops in his tracks.)

LEO

Will you shut the hell up with the damn sandwiches.

POPS

What for? I'm hungry. I want a sandwich. I really don't think that's asking too much.

LISA

Will everyone shut up with everything?

AUGIE

(Beat) Okay...on second thought...you win...I'll stay a little while longer...but on one condition.

This is Not the End of the Play

Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes