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Elvis Has Left the Building

A Comedy in One Act by

Mike Willis

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Elvis Has Left the Building

by Mike Willis

CAST OF CHARACTERS

2W / 2M

JERRY: *The manager of the Regal Arms Apartment Building. Jerry is a pleasant man between thirty five and fifty years old. He dresses casually in jeans and a Chicago Bear's sweatshirt. He enjoys his job and looks upon the residents of the building as his family.*

CASSIE: *The cleaning lady at the Regal Arms Apartment Building. Cassie is thirty to fifty years old. She also loves her job and often goes about singing while she is cleaning. Cassie is dressed like a cleaning lady.*

BOBBI MCGEE: *A resident of the Regal Arms Apartment Building. Bobbi lives in apartment number eighteen. She is in her sixties, has long graying hair and dresses like a sixties hippie with sandals, tie-dyed long skirt, peace symbol earrings and a Graceland t-shirt. Bobbi can be classified as eccentric bordering on just a little crazy. She is a friendly, harmless sort of crazy. Bobbi's fantasies involve rock in roll stars, most of which are dead. She often calls Jerry, "Jerry lee" and Cassie, "Cass" or "Mama Cass" and refers to herself as the late Janis Joplin.*

BUDDY: *Lives nearby at the YMCA. Buddy is confined to a wheelchair. He wears wild print shirts and large black-rimmed glasses. Buddy is somewhere between fifty and sixty.*

SCENE

The lobby of the Regal Arms Apartment building in Oshkosh, Wisconsin

TIME

The present

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The play can be played on a bare-stage with just furniture and props or with a more detailed set. The furnishings should be shabby.

HISTORY

ELVIS HAS LEFT THE BUILDING was first performed by the Lancaster Community Players of Lancaster, Wisconsin on April 25, 2010. The play was directed by Judy Felsenthal and Lisa Swanson and the cast included Carson Smith as Jerry, Lisa Nikolai as Cassie, Kim Leamy as Bobbi and Bill Haskins as Buddy.

Elvis Has Left the Building

by Mike Willis

SETTING:

We are in the lobby of the Regal Arms Apartment Building in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. The main entrance from outside is stage-right. There is a large desk up-stage right with a nameplate that reads, MANAGER. Some papers and a telephone sit on the desk. There is an office chair behind the desk. Center-stage and stage-right is the lobby community area. It consists of a coffee table flanked by a sofa, two overstuffed chairs, a couple of small end tables and a floor lamp. An old rug covers the floor. The coffee table is cluttered with newspapers and Magazines. The furniture is in poor shape. The lobby has seen better days. The exit to the elevator and first floor apartments is up-stage left.

AT RISE:

Seated at the manager's desk, rummaging through some paperwork, is JERRY. CASSIE is busy stage-left vacuuming the rug. SHE is wearing headphones and is singing along quite loudly to Aretha Franklin's song, Respect. The telephone at the Manager's desk rings.

CASSIE

(Singing loudly)

R. E. S. P. E. C T... wonder what it means to me... R. E. S. P. E. C. T....

JERRY

(Shouting)

Hey! Hey Cassie... *(SHE doesn't hear him)* Hey, Aretha Franklin!

CASSIE hears HIM, shuts off the vacuum and takes off HER headphones.

CASSIE

Whatcha want?

The phone rings again.

JERRY

(To CASSIE)

I need some quiet, I gotta answer the phone.

The phone rings again.

CASSIE

Sooo? Answer it already.

JERRY picks up the phone. CASSIE begins straightening the newspapers on the coffee table at the same time eavesdropping.

JERRY

Regal Arms Apartments, this is Jerry. Good afternoon Mr. Pulaski and how are you today, sir? (*Listening*) Uh, yes sir... yes sir, I realize that Mrs. McGee can sometimes be a distraction sir, but... A nuisance, uh, yes well... I wouldn't call her *crazy* Mr. Pulaski, Mrs. McGee is a little eccentric perhaps... Yes sir, I *am* aware that she thinks she is the late Janis Joplin, but... No sir, I didn't know that she thought you were Elvis, I... (*Joking*) Well sir, Elvis was "*the king*", you know... no sir, I'm not trying to be funny... Bobbi... uh, Mrs. McGee is really a very nice person sir, she... but Mr. Pulaski, I assure you that she is harmless. (*Listening; long pause*) Yes sir, I understand that you want to be left alone, but Mrs. McGee has lived in apartment eighteen for over twenty years, even if another apartment on another floor was available, I could not ask her to move. Bobbi, is a very good tenant sir and I am sure if... I am sorry sir, but apartment nineteen was the only apartment we had available. I don't have another apartment that you can move into at the present time. (*Pause*) But sir, you only moved in yesterday, if you will just... yes sir, I will see that the movers have access to your apartment, sir, and uh, I am sorry that it didn't work out sir. Goodbye.

JERRY starts to hang up the phone, but catches himself and resumes speaking into the phone.

JERRY, *Cont.*

Wait! Mr. Pulaski, are you still there? Yes sir, I forgot to ask you if there was an address where we can send the check returning your rental deposit. Yes sir, I think I have your former address somewhere here in our files, let me just check. (*Looking in a file*) Yes Mr. Pulaski, I have it right here. So, you want me to send the check to your former address in Memphis then? (*Listening*) Well, sir, the check should go out sometime next week, if your situation changes call and let me know before Friday and I can always send it to your mother's address in Tupelo. I'm sorry things didn't work out, sir. Goodbye, sir.

JERRY hangs up the phone and crosses to CASSIE.

CASSIE

Let me guess. We have an opening in apartment nineteen again?

JERRY

Yep. That was Alvin Pulaski, he just moved into nineteen yesterday. He's not even coming back to get his stuff. He's sending some movers over for it.

CASSIE

Bobbi?

JERRY

You got it. He didn't want to be, *the king*, I guess. She kept calling him Elvis Presley.

CASSIE

(Bad Elvis impersonation)

Well, uh, bless a my soul a whatsa wrong with me... *(As herself)* There are a lot worse things a person could be called.

JERRY

You got that right. I think he just panicked after she showed up at his apartment door last night with an angel food cake for a house-warming gift.

CASSIE

Why would an angel food cake panic him?

JERRY

It wasn't the cake... it was when she asked him to sing Love Me Tender.

CASSIE

Good, song.

JERRY

Yeah, one of my favorites.

CASSIE

So, what are you gonna do?

JERRY

I don't know... put a sign in the window, run an ad, try to find a new tenant I guess.

CASSIE

You've got to talk to her, Jerry. Management has already come down on you once for not being able to keep anyone in apartment nineteen.

JERRY

I know, it's just that... well, you know, she's...

CASSIE

A nice lady, I know. A nice lady who thinks *she's* Janis Joplin, *you're* Jerry Lee Lewis and *I'm* Mama Cass.

JERRY

It could be worse.

CASSIE

Yeah, you could be Sonny and I could be Cher.

JERRY

Or I could be The Captain, and you could be Tennille.

CASSIE

You might look good in a skipper's cap.

JERRY

What about The Carpenters? I could be Richard and you could be Karen.

CASSIE

That's enough. Seriously, you could lose your job if renters keep moving out of apartment nineteen.

JERRY

I know, but...

CASSIE

Look, I love Bobbi too, but she's going to cost you your job if you don't talk to her and tell her she needs to go easy on anyone who moves into apartment nineteen. How many does this make?

JERRY

What?

CASSIE

How many renters have moved out of apartment nineteen because they didn't want to live across the hall from Bobbi?

JERRY

I don't know... uh, three maybe.

CASSIE

Jerry?

JERRY

Okay, maybe four.

CASSIE

Un-uh, think again. There was Conway Twitty and then the one with the blue-suede shoes, uh....

JERRY

Carl Perkins.

CASSIE

Yeah, Carl Perkins... then there were the three black fellas... Jimi Hendrix, Otis Redding and the last one, the blind guy, Ray Charles. That makes five.

JERRY

Four! Jimi and Otis were roommates; you can't count them as two.

CASSIE

All right four, but that makes four tenants, five with Elvis, who have moved out of apartment nineteen in the last year, because they don't want to live next to *Janis Joplin*. I'm sorry Jerry, but for your sake, you've got to talk to her.

JERRY

I know, but what am I gonna say? I don't want to hurt her feelings, she's such a...

CASSIE

(Finishing the sentence)

...nice lady. I know.

JERRY

And she's harmless. She wouldn't hurt a fly.

CASSIE

I agree.

JERRY

Why can't people just play along with her, go with the flow, have a little fun.

CASSIE

Some people just don't know how to go with the flow and have fun.

JERRY

Well, they should. Look at you and me, we go along with it.

CASSIE

We're employees, Jerry. We're paid to put up with the tenants. We don't have to live right across the hall from her.

JERRY

I'm not putting up with her. I kinda like it when she calls me Jerry Lee, even if I can't sing or play the piano.

CASSIE

I didn't mean it like that, I... you know how I feel about her. She's a sweet old lady, but...

JERRY

Yeah, I know you're fond of her. I also know you get a kick out of it when she calls you Mama Cass.

CASSIE

But the tenants aren't like us, Jerry. We get paid... they pay to live here. Some of them just want to be left alone and not be mistaken for some old rockin' roller.

JERRY

Most of them don't mind.

CASSIE

True, but the ones who have moved out of apartment nineteen, do.

JERRY

Well...

The phone rings.

JERRY, *Cont.*

Crap! Now, what?

JERRY crosses to answer the phone and CASSIE goes back to straightening the newspapers and magazines as JERRY converses on the phone.

JERRY, *Cont.*

Manager's desk, this is Jerry. Yes Frank, what can I do for you? Hmm... Mrs. McGee did *what?* I'm sorry... no, I didn't forget... I know Mrs. McGee likes to be called Janis Joplin. (*Listening*) I see, and you want me to do, *what* exactly? (*Pause*) I know she left the building awhile ago, but I will be sure to speak with Miss Joplin the moment she returns. Yes Frank, I promise I won't forget. I'll speak with her the moment she shows up. Goodbye.

JERRY hangs up the phone and crosses to CASSIE.

JERRY, *Cont.*

That was that eye-talian guy Frank up on the second floor, apartment twenty-one.

CASSIE

Ol' blue eyes?

JERRY

That's the one.

CASSIE

What did he want?

JERRY

He wants me to speak to Bobbi the minute she returns.

CASSIE

Now, what? What did she do this time?

JERRY

It seems that Bobbi heard that Frank had a sore throat so she brewed him up some medicine for it.

CASSIE

Oh, no.

JERRY

Oh yeah... told him she used it herself at Woodstock in sixty-nine. He said he wasn't sure but he thought it had jalapeno pepper in it along with some guacamole, sour cream, spicy picante sauce, a dab of cheez-wiz, a shot or two of Jack Daniels and some honey.

CASSIE

Oh, my god.

JERRY

Bobbie told him to warm it up in the microwave and then drink a big glass three times a day.

CASSIE

Do we need to call an ambulance?

JERRY

No, you won't believe it, but he said it worked wonders. I'm supposed to tell Bobbi to stop by his apartment so he can thank her properly.

CASSIE

Thank her *properly*? I wonder what that means.

JERRY

I'm not sure, but he wants the recipe too... wants to give it to his friends Dino and Sammy up on the third floor.

CASSIE

Next thing you know the whole Rat Pack will be drinkin' jalapeno and honey hot toddies.

JERRY

It *is* flu season.

BOBBI enters from outside. SHE has a large canvas bag slung over her shoulder. The bag has a large peace symbol painted on the side of it. BOBBI is in her sixties and is dressed like the aging hippie that SHE is. SHE looks very much like Janis Joplin might look if she were alive.

CASSIE

(Noticing BOBBI)

Here she comes, now remember you have to talk to her about apartment nineteen.

JERRY

Oh... *crap.*

CASSIE grabs the vacuum and starts to exit up-left.

JERRY

Where are you going?

CASSIE

I still have the landings to vacuum.

JERRY

Chicken!

CASSIE

That's right.

CASSIE doesn't make it. BOBBI sees HER and JERRY and crosses quickly to them.

BOBBI

(Cackling with excitement)

Hey, hey... ooh eeey, hey, Jerry Lee, you there, Mama Cass. You two have got to see what I got here in my bag. Sit yourselves down right now and take a gander at this.

CASSIE

I'm sorry, but I still have the landings to vacuum, Mrs. McGee.

BOBBI

Nonsense, Cass Elliot... that can wait, everyone in this building is blinder than Stevie Wonder. They wouldn't see dust or dirt on the landings if it were an inch deep. *(Pointing to the chairs)* Now, you sit right there and Jerry Lee you sit over there. I've got somthin' in here for both of you.

BOBBI plops down on the sofa, places her bag on the coffee table and starts to rummage through it.

BOBBI, *Cont.*

(Cackling)

Ooooh eey, hey... I went down to the 99 cent store and boy did I make a killin'. I got all sorta bargains. Wait till ya see what I got. *(Looking in the bag)* Let me see... oh here it is.

BOBBI takes a small bottle of hand lotion out of the bag and hands it to JERRY.

BOBBI

Here Jerry Lee, this is for you.

JERRY

Hand lotion?

BOBBI

For men... it's extra heavy-duty. It has lanolin in it.

JERRY

Well, thanks Mrs. McGee.

BOBBI

Janis.

JERRY

Sure. Thanks, Janis.

BOBBI

You're welcome. I noticed the other day that your hands were kinda rough... probably from poundin' on that keyboard all day.

JERRY

Keyboard? I'm not playing the piano much right now, Mrs... uh, Janis.

BOBBI

(Laughing)

Not the piano silly, your computer. You're always banging away on the keyboard of that stupid computer.

JERRY

Oh.

BOBBI

I thought that lotion might soften your hands back up, make 'em feel better. Then, when they get good and soft and feelin' good, maybe you'll start playin' that piano again, Jerry Lee.

JERRY

It'd be a miracle, but maybe.

BOBBI takes a tube of Ben-Gay out of the bag and hands it to CASSIE.

BOBBI

Mama Cass, this is for you.

CASSIE

Ben-Gay?

BOBBI

I saw you holdin' your back like you was havin' some pain the other day. You should be careful, a woman your size, liftin' too much. You take some of this, slap it on where it aches, (*Giggling*) or better yet, get Jerry Lee to rub it on nice and slow and it will fix you right up.

CASSIE

I'll bet it would. Thanks, Mrs. McGee.

BOBBI

Janis.

CASSIE

Thanks, Janis.

BOBBI

You're welcome. (*Looking in her bag*) I got something for everyone in the building in here. That 99 cent store is something I tell you. Did I tell you I went to the 99 cent store?

JERRY

Yes, you did.

BOBBI

Ooooh, eeey, I made a killin' I tell ya. Look at this.

BOBBI takes out some tubes of facial cream and hands one to CASSIE.

CASSIE

It's facial cream.

BOBBI

Helps get rid of wrinkles. I got it for the Stone brothers, Mick and Keith down the hall.

JERRY

I'm sure they can put it to good use.

BOBBI

No doubt, and oh, uh look what I got here.

BOBBI takes a jar of something out of her bag and hands it to JERRY.

JERRY

What is it?

BOBBI

It's wax.

JERRY

Wax?

BOBBI

(Excited)

Yeah, real *bees-wax!* Ya don't find that everyday, oooh eeey, only at the 99 cent store, ya know. Did I tell you two, I made a killin' there?

CASSIE

Yes, yes you did. Who's the bees wax for?

BOBBI

Oh that's for Brian Wilson in twenty-eight.

JERRY

What do you do with it?

BOBBI

Put it on your surfboard, of course.

JERRY

Of course.

CASSIE

Does Mr. Wilson do a lot of surfing?

BOBBIE

(Seriously)

Naw, I don't think so, not any more. I think he quit after he moved to Oshkosh. Probably didn't think he'd be able to find any wax for his board around here. Good thing I went to the 99 cent store, huh? Now he can wax up his board, head over to Lake Michigan and get some exercise instead of just sitting around his dumpy ol' apartment all day.

JERRY

Those are some great gifts, Bobbi. I'm sure the tenants will all be very pleased with them.

BOBBI

Janis... I hope so. That 99 cent store that's somethin', ya know. You can make a killin' there. Ooooo, eey, hey!

JERRY hands the jar of wax back to BOBBI.

JERRY

It certainly looks like it... and thanks for the hand lotion. I think I better go put some on right now.

JERRY starts to leave.

CASSIE

Jerryyy? Didn't you have something you wanted to talk to Janis about?

JERRY

(Stopping)

I can't remember, did I?

CASSIE

Yes, I believe you did.

JERRY

Well, I seem to have forgotten what it was... maybe it'll come to me later.

CASSIE

Apartment, nineteen?

JERRY

Apartment, nineteen?

CASSIE

Yeah, apartment nineteen.

BOBBI

Apartment nineteen? That's Elvis's apartment. He just moved in yesterday. I took him an angel food cake last night for a house-warmin' gift.

JERRY

Yeah Bobbi, that's what I need to talk to you about.

CASSIE

Well, I gotta go vacuum those landings. Thanks for the Ben-Gay, Janis.

BOBBI

You're welcome, dear. And if you find you aren't able to reach where it aches, you give ol' Jerry Lee a call. I just bet he'd be glad to come by and rub it in for you. Heh, heh, ooy eey. Now, there's some California Dreamin' for ya, Mama Cass. Heh, heh, ooo, ey.

CASSIE

(Chuckling)

I might just do that. Gotta get to work, you have a good day, Janis.

CASSIE takes the vacuum and exits up-right.

BOBBI

You too, sweetheart.

JERRY

(Calling after CASSIE)

Traitor!

BOBBI

(Rising)

Well, I better start deliverin' this stuff, ain't got much time... *(Slyly to JERRY)* I got plans later.

JERRY

Wait, uh Mrs. McGee... I mean Janis, I need to talk to you about something. It's about....

BOBBI sits back down on the sofa and JERRY sits in one of the chairs.

JERRY, *Cont.*

Well, it's about... let's see...

BOBBI

Did you forget again?

JERRY

What?

BOBBI

Did you forget what it was you wanted to talk to me about? If ya did Jerry Lee, it's okay. I forget things all the time.

JERRY

No, I didn't forget, it's just that I, uh...

BOBBI

If ya didn't forget, then ya gotta quit all the hem-hawin' around Jerry Lee and spit it out. Otherwise people'll think you're stupid.

JERRY

(Finally)

It's about Mr. Pulaski, in apartment nineteen.

BOBBI

(Whispering)

Oh, you mean, *Elvis*. Don't you go worrying about me Jerry Lee. I ain't gonna tell anyone outside of this building, that we got, *the king*, livin' here.

JERRY

No Bobbi, uh, Janis that's not what I...

BOBBI

My lips are sealed. Yessir, you can count on me. Even if they were to promise me an all-nighter with Kris Kristofferson I wouldn't tell. They won't get it out of me, I can promise you that.

JERRY

(Confused)

Who?

BOBBI

The National Enquirer!

JERRY

The National Enquirer?

BOBBI

Imagine what would happen if those devils where to write that we had Elvis livin' right here at the Regal Arms in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Why, think of the nut-cases we'd have showin' up here. They'd be comin' from all over the country, buggin' poor Elvis, uh, I mean Mr. Pulaski for mementos.

JERRY

Mementos?

BOBBI

You know, sweat-stained scarves, rhinestones, stuff like that.

JERRY

Sweat-stained scarves?

BOBBI

Sure. Haven't you seen those sex-crazed girls fightin' over the scarves the king throws out in the audience at his concerts? If it got in the Enquirer, we'd have every sex-starved crazy woman in the country camped on the doorstep of the Regal Arms.

JERRY

And that's bad?

BOBBI

You bet your grand piano it is, Jerry Lee. Word would get out who's livin' here... all of our covers would be blown. None of us would have a minute's peace, including you, Jerry Lee.

JERRY

Well, I don't know...

BOBBI

Think about it Jerry Lee. We gotta keep Elvis's secret.

JERRY

Well, under the circumstances that shouldn't be too hard.

BOBBI

It could be harder than you think. The King's Alvin Pulaski disguise didn't fool me for a minute.

JERRY

It didn't?

BOBBI

Not for a minute. I saw right through it. Then after what happened last night, that only confirmed it.

JERRY

Why? What happened last night?

BOBBI

After I gave him his cake, I asked him to sing Love Me Tender for me.

JERRY

And?

BOBBI

And, he told me he couldn't remember the words. That sealed it for me. That right there, that's when I was positive that Alvin Pulaski was Elvis Presley.

JERRY

Because he couldn't remember the words to "Love Me Tender"?

BOBBI

That's right. Everyone knows Elvis was always forgettin' the lyrics to his songs during his final concerts. Had to be the onset of early Alzheimer's. When Mr. Pulaski couldn't remember the words to Love Me Tender, I just knew that he was, *The King*.

JERRY

I see.

BOBBI

Jerry Lee, we have to make sure that no one outside of this building ever finds out that Elvis is living in apartment nineteen.

JERRY

He's not. He's not living in apartment nineteen.

BOBBI

Sure, he is. I just told you, I took him cake last night.

JERRY

He moved. The movers are coming for his things later today.

BOBBI

Moved? Where did he move to?

JERRY

Back to Memphis.

BOBBI

Memphis? That's just crazy. The King is worse off than I thought. His mind must be totally gone. Everyone knows him there, he'll never get a moments peace. Did he say why he was moving?

JERRY

Well, he just said that... he had to move because... well...

BOBBI

(Upset)
Oh, no!

JERRY

What?

BOBBI

Crap, it's all my fault, isn't it? He panicked when he knew that I recognized him. He was afraid that I was going to blab to the Enquirer.

JERRY

No, Bobbi it's not that. It had nothing to do with you. I think he was just homesick for Graceland.

BOBBI

Are you sure? Jerry Lee, are you sure Mr. Pulaski's leaving had nothing to do with me?

JERRY

(Lying)

Yes, I'm sure that Elvis's leaving had nothing to do with you, Bobbi.

BOBBI

Janis.

JERRY

Janis. I think maybe Mr. Pulaski just missed Memphis so bad that he had to go home. Some folks have trouble with change, can't seem to go with the flow. You know how it is.

BOBBI

I certainly do. I wish I had told him right off that his secret was safe with me. I never would have told the Enquirer that The King was living in apartment nineteen at the Regal Arms.

JERRY

I know you wouldn't.

BOBBI

Not even for an all-nighter with Kris Kristofferson *and* Willie Nelson.

JERRY

That would be interesting.

BOBBI

It was.

JERRY

What!?

BOBBI

Just kidding. Gotcha, Jerry Lee. *(Starting to leave)* Now, I gotta deliver my little gifts.

JERRY

But Janis, I need to...

BOBBI

I can't wait to see the look on Bing's face when I show him what I got him. He's a golfer Jerry Lee. So, I found this here plastic golf tee that when ya put it in the ground it looks just like a woman's bare butt lookin' right back up at ya. That's where ya put your balls Jerry Lee, right before ya tee off. He's gonna love it. That 99 cent store, oooy, eee, you sure can make a killin' there. Gotta go.

BOBBI exits up-right laughing.

JERRY

Crap!

JERRY LEE starts to cross to the manager's desk as CASSIE enters from up-right.

CASSIE

That must have gone pretty well. I just passed Bobbi in the hall and she was laughing.

JERRY

That's what the 99 cent store can do to ya.

CASSIE

What did she say when you told her?

JERRY

About, what?

CASSIE

About the problems you are having with her and tenants moving out of apartment nineteen. You did tell her, didn't you Jerry?

JERRY

Well...

CASSIE

Jerry, did you tell Mrs. McGee why Mr. Pulaski moved out of apartment nineteen or not?

JERRY

I did tell her something.

CASSIE

Which was?

JERRY

(Giving in)

All right... I told her that Elvis moved back to Graceland because he was homesick.

Jerry!

CASSIE

JERRY sits on the sofa, his head in his hands.
CASSIE crosses and sits next to him and puts
her hand on his shoulder.

JERRY

I'm sorry, I just couldn't. She's such a...

CASSIE

(Finishing HIS sentence)

...nice lady, I know. But Jerry, what about apartment nineteen? What about your job?

JERRY

I don't know. But, I just couldn't tell her, Cass. Not that she gave me much of a chance.

CASSIE gives JERRY a big hug.

CASSIE

You old softie. I guess that's why I'm crazy about ya.

JERRY

(Somewhat surprised)

You are?

CASSIE

Yeah. I've got one more landing to do before I get off and then I'll be headin' home. If you're not doing anything tonight, my back *is* kinda sore.

JERRY

You need some Ben-Gay.

CASSIE

Got some... but, I don't think I can reach the spot where it aches.

JERRY

Maybe I could come by later and rub it in for you?

CASSIE

That would be nice. If ya got any hand lotion, be sure to use that first. I noticed your hands are a little rough.

JERRY

Will do.

See ya later Jerry Lee.

CASSIE

Lookin' forward to it, Mama Cass.

JERRY

JERRY rises and watches CASSIE exit to the hallway up-right. BUDDY enters from the main entrance to the building. HE is in a wheelchair. BUDDY is wearing a wild print shirt and has large black-rimmed glasses. His hair is slicked back.

Excuse me.

BUDDY

JERRY rises and crosses to his desk.

Can I help you?

JERRY

I hope so. This is the Regal Arms, isn't it?

BUDDY

Yes, it is.

JERRY

Nice, building.

BUDDY

You think so?

JERRY

Yeah, real fifties looking.

BUDDY

Hasn't been touched since.

JERRY

BUDDY
I'm here to pick up a friend of mine, we've got a date. I'm a little early; I didn't know how long it would take me to get here from the Y.

JERRY
The Y?

The YMCA, that's where I'm staying.

BUDDY

Oh.

JERRY

Mind if I just wait in the lobby until she comes down? She told me she'd meet me here.

BUDDY

No, not at all, make yourself at home.

JERRY

Thanks.

BUDDY

BUDDY wheels himself over next to the sofa.

What's your friend's name? I can call her apartment and let her know that you're here.

JERRY

That's okay, I don't want to bother you.

BUDDY

No bother, that's what I'm here for. What's her name?

JERRY

Uh, Janis Joplin?

BUDDY

What?

JERRY

Janis Joplin. Well, that's what she told me her name was. I'm not really sure...

BUDDY

No, that's fine, I know who you mean. I'll give her a call.

JERRY

JERRY picks up the phone.

Who should I say is waiting?

JERRY, *Cont.*

Bud... uh, no... better make that, Buddy.

BUDDY

Buddy? JERRY

Holly. BUDDY

Buddy Holly? JERRY

BUDDY
Bud Hollingsworth really, but Janis calls me Buddy Holly.

JERRY
I understand. I'll give her a call... uh, Buddy.

JERRY dials BOBBI's apartment and leaves a message.

JERRY, *Cont.*

(Leaving message)

Janis, this is Jerry Lee, I know you are probably still handing out the gifts you bought, but I want you to know that there is a Mr. Buddy Holly here in the lobby waiting for you.

JERRY hangs up the phone and crosses to BUDDY.

BUDDY
Thanks, I appreciate it.

JERRY
No, problem. Tell me, Buddy, how long have you known Mrs. McGee... uh, I mean Janis?

BUDDY
Not long. We just met this afternoon at the 99 cent store... over in the personal hygiene section. Janis was looking for some deodorant for her friend Jim Morrison. He sweats a lot. That 99 cent store is a great store. You can make a killin' there.

JERRY
Yes, I heard that. If you don't mind my asking Buddy, what happened to your legs, airplane accident?

BUDDY
(Smiling)
Airplane accident? Oh wait, I get it... no, it was a car accident actually. You know, Janis thought the same thing.

JERRY

I'll bet she did. So then, you are aware that our Janis Joplin... uh, Mrs. McGee is... well, she's just a little, uh...

BUDDY

Nice!? Yes, she really seems to be.

JERRY

I am glad that you think so Buddy. We think a lot of her around here.

BUDDY

I do, I really do. We hit it right off this afternoon at the 99 cent store. I told you we met at the 99 cent store, didn't I?

JERRY

Yes, yes you did.

BUDDY

You can make a killin' there.

JERRY

That's what they say. (*Holding out his hand*) Buddy, my name's Jerry, I'm the building manager.

JERRY and BUDDY shake hands.

BUDDY

Sure, Jerry Lee... Janis told me all about you. Boy, your hands *are* rough, just like Janis said they were. I helped her pick out the hand lotion. I hope you like it, it has lanolin in it.

JERRY

Yeah, it was real thoughtful, thanks. Janis is still delivering the things she bought this afternoon. I'm sure she'll be right down after she finishes.

BUDDY

Janis wanted to make sure that she got a little somethin' for everyone in the building. She loves it here. And, after hearing her talk about everyone who lives here, I can understand why.

JERRY

You can?

BUDDY

Sure, after listening to Janis go on about what wonderful friends she has, I feel like I know everyone in the building.

JERRY

(Getting an idea)

Say Buddy, you like living at the Y?

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