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All You Can Eat

A Short One-Man Comedy by

J.C. Svec
All You Can Eat
by J.C. Svec

MANNY: a man suffering from “Buffet Performance Anxiety”

SCENE: A bare stage. The entire downstage width or apron should be the location of an implied, all you can eat, family buffet.

AT RISE: MANNY stands at either side of the stage. With both hands, he holds a large, oval, empty plate in front of him. From where he stands, MANNY ogles the extent of the buffet.

NOTE: His dialogue, unless otherwise specified, is spoken to himself.

MANNY
(Impressed) Wow! By far the largest buffet I’ve ever seen. The flyer said great food at a great place.

MANNY looks around.

MANNY, Continued
Well, who cares about what the place looks like and we’ll just see about the great food. The flyer stated Chinese, Japanese and American cuisine.

MANNY peruses his surroundings.

MANNY, Continued

MANNY pulls a flyer from his pocket.

MANNY, Continued
(Reads) Chinese, Japanese, and American.

MANNY stands on his toes and looks all around and over the buffet.
MANNY, Continued

(Satisfied) Ah, there it is. Station number five. The sushi bar. And wait... could it be? Yes it is. Soft serve ice cream with sundae fixings.

*MANNY’S attention is drawn to the middle of the buffet.*

MANNY, Continued

(Concerned) Oh, oh. We’ve got a mad rush towards one section of station two. That could only mean one thing...

*MANNY angles himself for a better look.*

MANNY, Continued

Just as I thought. Snow crab legs. That mad rush doesn’t mean a thing. *(Looks around)* If they’re any good the tables will have shell crackers...

*MANNY does an exhaustive search of the tables. He nods and begins to smile broadly towards the end of his search. MANNY looks back at the gathering around the crab legs.*

MANNY, Continued

*(Determined)* Get out of the way folks. I’ll be getting me some of those—

*MANNY’S move is stopped dead by his response to a strong smell.*

MANNY, Continued

*(Intrigued)* What’s that? *(Sniffs)* Garlic, a trace of ground pepper, lemon and... olive oil. That has to be the best lemon chicken I’ve ever smelled.

*MANNY composes himself.*

MANNY, Continued

Whoa, whoa. Get a hold of yourself Manny. You’re acting like you’ve never been to one of these before. And we all know that couldn’t be anything further from the truth. Don’t let your mind get ahead of your stomach. First things first. There are rules to remember and procedures to follow. Let’s not let a little lemon chicken destroy all protocol. Take a deep breath. *(Breathes deeply)* One: salads belong in restaurants, not at a buffet. Two: never eat too much of one item. Three: follow the proper eating guidelines. An appetizer sampler, snow crab legs, appetizers, appetizer seconds, meal taste-test, meal with rice or lo-mein, meal seconds, rice and lo-mein optional, an appetizer nosh, snow crab legs, if available, dessert, and dessert with ice-cream. Four: take what you want but eat what you take. Five: soda fills, water flushes. *(Bows his head)* Amen.
MANNY touches his stomach.

MANNY, Continued

Time to take care of business.

MANNY stretches his arms and shakes his legs one at a time. He looks around, makes several moves towards several different stations. MANNY reaches for a number of different foods but eventually returns to his original location. He closes his eyes and pinches the bridge of his nose.

MANNY, Continued

Oh boy. Feeling a little woozy here. (Wipes his forehead) I’m hungry. Yeah, that’s it. A little warm in here, too. I need to eat something, that’s all. (Laughs) Well, I’m in the right place for that. No shortage of food at this place. Now, let’s rock and roll.

MANNY remains frozen. He looks down at his legs.

MANNY, Continued

C’mon legs, do your stuff. You lead and the rest of us follow. (Remains frozen; to his legs) Snow crab legs! GO!

MANNY is forced to address a waiter. [The waiter is unseen by the audience.]

MANNY, Continued

(Embarrassed) No, everything’s fine. Just checking out the landscape before I forge ahead.

MANNY bows at the waist in respect to the waiter’s culture.

MANNY, Continued

(Nervous) This is ridiculous. (Kids) Come on ol’ boy, get with it. (Closes eyes) Travel back and remember... remember...

Silence.

This is Not the End of the Play

Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes