

# Three Family Sale

*A modern day radio show assembled by friends & performed live on Zoom*

The project works like this. We cast our play, announced our rehearsal and performance date and time and are performing our parts from locations all over the country. We want as many audience members as we can get. If you have questions DM me at @kevinhoneycutt on Twitter or message me on Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/kevin.honeycutt> If you and your friends want to produce this play we'd be honored.

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## **Welcome / Introduction:**

Hello to our listener/viewers. We are grateful you are here to share our production!

This play has been written and rewritten for many years but the seed of this idea started at a real Three Family Sale many years ago. Kevin and Ben Honeycutt collaborated to achieve the version of the show you hear tonight or whenever you listen because this show will be archived for future audiences. This play is suitable for JH and HS production and we offer it rights free to others so they may do the same as we're doing tonight.

One of the things we're seeking to do is to role model bravery and the importance of doing BIG, SCARY, BOLD and EXCITING things!

Perfect is the enemy of done and so with one run through/practice under our belts we are pleased to bring you the two act comedy Three Family Sale. There will be a ten minute intermission to let you all take care of local things in those beautiful houses of yours. There will be a reception on Facebook afterward, a curtain call if you will where the actors would love to meet our audience and "shake their hands" in a virtual way!

## **Cast**

### **Clare: Played by Michele Honeycutt**

Fifty something woman in thrift store clothing.

Works two jobs, one as a server in a coffee shop, the other as a night shift janitor at a school. Appears a bit bedraggled & tired but very pleasant to speak with.

### **Ray: Played by Ben Honeycutt**

Clare's husband. A forty-something lay-about in a pair of stained, too tight 70's gym shorts & a soiled t-shirt. Has a cast on his foot, and what we assume is engine grease under his fingernails.

### **Elsbeth: Played by Pearl Sonnenschein**

A secretary in Mitch's (her husband's) law firm. Thirty-something yuppie sort with immaculate hair & nails. Stylish clothing, and in this case, a bit overdressed.

**Mitch: Played by Nate Haislip**

An Attorney. Elsbeth's husband. Well groomed and also stylishly dressed. In this case- overdressed. Appears formal and uptight in social situations, especially this one.

**Taylor: Played by Carla Martinez**

Forward thinking, a strategic planner, and a go-getter, Taylor is an American formerly from South Asia, and operates an animal shelter in the city. Married to Kim.

**Kim: Played by Kimberly Wright**

Kim was recently promoted to Head Nurse at the general hospital in the city. She's Taylor's wife, and immigrated from South Asia with Taylor. Dressed less formally than Mitch or Elsbeth, but well put together regardless. Kim is in her mid to late thirties and is in good physical shape.

**Grace: Played by Melissa Steinman**

Young and stylish teenage girl who is graduating this year with the intention to pursue a law degree. Mitch and Elsbeth's daughter, with a warmth her parents lack.

**Jack: Played by Jace Grosse**

Though a senior in high school, Jack's graduation is a bit more up in the air than Grace's. The son of Ray and Clare, Jack is more perceptive than his Dad gives him credit for but tends to have his head in the clouds, something that worries both of his parents

**Ronda: Played by Kayla Wright**

A surly, biker chick without much to lose.

**Ronda's Friend: Played by Karen Balbier**

The best friend you'd expect for a surly biker chick without much to lose.

**Nasan (pronounced like Jason with an N) (Child 1): Played by Gibson Honeycutt**

The son you'd expect from a surly biker chick without much to lose.

**Child 2: Played by Kaylee Albier**

The younger daughter you'd expect from a surly biker chick without much to lose

**Elderly woman 1: Played by Jace Grosse**

**Elderly woman 2: Played by Bradley Hopkins**

Two ladies ages 65-75 out for weekend yard-saling. They are obvious busy-bodies but are kind natured.

**Husband: Played by Ben Honeycutt**

Downtrodden, everyman

**Wife: Played by Nat Chabot**

Self-possessed woman, looking for a cause.

**Man 1: Played by Nick Krahn**

Weekend warrior with a thirst for a deal.

**Boy 1: Played by Benji Krahn**

Very well-mannered, quiet boy.

**Barney the dog: Barked by Patti Duncan/Ben Honeycutt**

A rather dirty but somewhat lovable mutt, who stars off-screen only, until the final scene.

**Elderly Man: Played by Kevin Honeycutt**

Older gentleman in his 50's well dressed but rather shy. Appears quite subservient to his mother who accompanies him.

**Mother: Played by Nat Chabot**

Mother to Elderly Man. Has a sharp tongue & short temper. Scowls on a regular basis and seems to be very bothered by the warm afternoon. (Fans herself constantly with a newspaper.)

**Starbucks barista: Played by Patti Duncan**

Long suffering, underpaid, underwhelmed lady.

Setting: A shelter house in a park adjacent to a suburban cul-de-sac. It is early morning and barely daylight. Kim and Mitch's upscale homes are *just* visible as well as a few of boats at the edge of Ray's yard.

Year: 2018

### ACT 1: Scene 1

*[At Rise: A fifty-something woman enters right, carrying a box of paintings and gently sets them down on right picnic table. She exits right and returns with another good sized load, placing them beside the others and exits right again. Finally, she returns with one last load, as well as a large sign reading THREE FAMILY SALE. She props the sandwich board sign up down left and sets about arranging the numerous paintings. When she's almost done, a set of headlights appear left and quickly fade. Soon, a middle aged man and woman appear looking slightly overdressed and carrying boxes. They watch CLARE checking her arrangement of paintings and finally decide to place their boxes in the only remaining space, the ground. They watch with interest as she places price tags, with no apparent reason for her price scale. Finally, she notices them and crosses.]*

**CLARE**

Oh, hi! I didn't see you there! Good morning; I'm Clare, one of your partners for the day. You must be the Mullers?

**MITCH**

Meullers, we're the Meullers. I'm Mitch and this is my wife Elsbeth. *[He extends his hand]*

**CLARE**

*[Shakes hand]* Well, I'm tired already. My husband, Ray, will be here later; we live in the blue and red double wide. You know, one-eleven?

**ELSBETH**

It *is* different.

**MITCH**

First house here, I understand.

**CLARE**

Oh yeah, we'd thought no one else would ever move out here.

**ELSBETH**

I guess the city finally reached you.

**CLARE**

They've been developing like crazy.

**MITCH**

It's hot property now. I hear more people would like to move in but there's nothing left to buy.

**CLARE**

I can't believe the houses they're building. I can remember when it was all grass and sand hills. Back then, it didn't matter what our house looked like. We try to keep the yard clean, but Ray's always working on some old car, right there in the front of the house.

**ELSBETH**

Yes, he does always seem to be working on one. Is he a mechanic?

**CLARE**

Not really. He thinks he is but most of his "customers" would disagree.

**ELSBETH**

Is he working on those boats, as well?

**CLARE**

That's a recent calling for Ray. Two years ago he talked me into letting him buy one old boat. Well, then it needed a motor and the only motor he could find came with another old boat. In two years he's managed to find six more .

**MITCH**

Any of them run?

**CLARE**

Not yet, but he keeps swearin' he'll fire one up someday.

**ELSBETH**

Well, if there's ever a flood, there should be a safe place for everyone in the neighborhood.

**CLARE**

If any of 'em float.

**MITCH**

You've got a son, haven't you, Clare?

**CLARE**

I got a boy named Jack and a daughter named Bonnie.

**ELSBETH**

We've seen Jack around, but I don't think we've seen Bonnie. Does she still live with you?

**CLARE**

She moved out almost two years ago now, she's 18 months older than Jack.

**ELSBETH**

Jack is tall.

**MITCH**

And I'll bet he's a basketball player.

**CLARE**

That would require something he's never had -- *ambition*. We think that all got used up on Bonnie. You've got a daughter?

**ELSBETH**

Yes! Grace -- she's my pride and joy.

**MITCH**

*Our pride and joy.*

**CLARE**

And your name is Elsbeth; that's so pretty! It sounds like a princess right out of a story book. You know I have loved your house since they finished it. Ray says it's way too fancy, but if you've got the money, why shouldn't you have a nice house?

**ELSBETH**

Well, um Clare, Mitch and I didn't bring any tables and it doesn't look as if we have any place to put *our* things.

**CLARE**

Oh, oh yeah! What in the world am I *thinking* taking all the room? And Kim and Taylor aren't even here yet, I know! I'll just put my paintings back in the boxes and let the customers browse 'em that way.

*[MITCH enters right carrying a box, he sets it on the floor of the shelter.]*

**MITCH**

Honey I'm going to get my old clubs and the other "valuables" out of the garage.

**ELSBETH**

Don't be long, and get the lawn chairs.

**MITCH**

Done. *[He exits right as ELSBETH begins to unpack her neatly priced items.]*

**CLARE**

Hey, I've got some chains and pipe in the truck. I figured we could hang the pipe from the chains and make clothes racks.

**ELSBETH**

That's not a bad idea. Do you need help?

**CLARE**



That's a good question. But no, honey, I think I can handle it. I'll tell you what, though; if you really want to help me, you can put my paintings back in the boxes. Be careful not to scratch the frames, if you don't mind.

*[CLARE exits right and leaves ELSBETH to her task.]*

**ELSBETH**

*[To herself]* Looks like I'm now the curator of Helen Keller's early paintings.

*[She collects the paintings and over exaggerates delicate care in stacking them in the boxes. CLARE returns with the rack materials.]*

**CLARE**

*[Assembling the pipe rack, hanging chains from the rafters]* So Elsbeth, I can't get over what a pretty name that is!

*[ELSBETH winces]* What do you do, honey?

**ELSBETH**

I assume you mean do I work?

**CLARE**

That's what I mean, if it's not too personal.

**ELSBETH**

It's not too personal. I've been doing secretarial work for my husband's law firm for the last two years.

**CLARE**

Oh, he's a lawyer?

**ELSBETH**

Well actually Clare, he prefers "attorney", but that's just a pet peeve of his. He'd better not be watching TV.

**CLARE**

I'm sure he'll be right back.

**ELSBETH**

I don't know, he's an expert at the clean getaway.

**CLARE**

Well, I'll be sure to call him an *attorney* when he gets back.

**ELSBETH**

If he takes much longer, he may need one.

**CLARE**

You know, it's funny. You've lived here two years now and this is the first time we've ever talked. Ain't that weird?

**ELSBETH**

Yes, very. You know Mitch and I stay very busy most of the time.

**CLARE**

Yeah, you must with him being a lawy-- *attorney* and all. About the only time we catch a glimpse of you guys is when you have your outdoor parties. I never saw so many fancy cars!

**ELSBETH**

Just some of the partners from the firm. We like to celebrate after big cases. It seems you both have your fair share of parties as well.

**CLARE**

Oh, Ray's a bit of a legend for his gameday barbecues. He likes to hook up speakers and make it a whole event.

**ELSBETH**

*[Flatly]* We can tell. Well, it looks like we've got just about everything laid out. What on earth is keeping Mitch? He better not be watching TV, while I'm out here working myself to death.

**CLARE**

You won't be alone, Elsbeth. This is a "Three Family Sale" and I think this day might just be a hoot! Boy I tell ya, I hope we make a little money on this sale. I'd hate to think I stayed up all night putting prices on all our stuff for nothing.

**ELSBETH**

What all are you selling, Clare?

**CLARE**

My paintings, mostly. We both have a few knick knacks to get rid of.

**ELSBETH**

No boats?

**CLARE**

Are you kidding? That man wouldn't sell any of his "treasures" for nothing. Won't sell 'em, won't fix 'em... I mean,  
*can't* fix em.

**ELSBETH**

How do you find room for everything?

**CLARE**

He just keeps makin' more...

**ELSBETH**

Mitch is the same way. You should see the game room he just paid for.

*[MITCH enters left carrying a golf bag over his shoulder and a large box.]*

**ELSBETH**

*[Haughtily]* Oh speak of the devil. What kept you?

**MITCH**

Nick called; the party's been moved to 6:30. Look, honey, I scuffed my golf bag. Three years and not a scratch.

**ELSBETH**

Well, with any luck it won't be yours much longer.

**CLARE**

So you're an *attorney*?

**MITCH**

Yes, I'm a lawyer. *[Looks at the art]* And you're a painter?

**CLARE**

Well, it's just a hobby, really. But as soon as I make my first sale, it should all be downhill from there.

**MITCH**

You seem to have a sizeable body.

**CLARE**

I know, Ray's been telling me to lose weight, but it's not easy once you pass forty!

**MITCH**

*[Embarrassed]* Oh! No, I meant that you've done quite a few paintings.

**CLARE**

Oh, well let me show them to you and maybe, if you like 'em, I'll give you a neighbor discount.

*[Takes a painting from a box, holding it away from audience.]*

**MITCH**

*[Looking at the painting]* Look Elle, it's an angel.

**ELSBETH**

It is? Oh, it is. I see it now, sure.

**CLARE**

Yes, she's my guardian angel. You won't believe it, but right after I painted her, she saved our lives.

**MITCH**

How did she accomplish that?

**CLARE**

Well, I hung her up on the wall while she was still wet, I was so excited. I'd never painted an angel before. Can you believe that?

**ELSBETH**

Yes. *[Catching herself]* Inspiration works that way sometimes.

**CLARE**

Well anyway, she was hanging directly over an outlet that Ray had about a million wires plugged into, and sometime that night, something shorted out and the wall caught on fire! Me and Ray slept right through since Ray took the battery out of the smoke detector to run Jack's remote control car. Jack was just a little boy back then.

**MITCH**

How'd you get out?

**CLARE**

It's the darndest thing! That fire burned its way up the wall, till it got to my angel, then it just went out.

**MITCH**

Just like that?

**ELSBETH**

You can see where the frame was scorched.

**CLARE**

I woulda got her a new frame but I didn't want to do anything to change her.

**ELSBETH**

Why on earth are you selling her -- uh, it?

**CLARE**

Oh my, I'm not! I brought her to watch over our sale; you notice there's no price tag on *her*.

**MITCH**

Well that's an interesting story, but did you ever think this miracle might have had more to do with building materials than guardian angels?

**CLARE**

Oh, I *know* it was a miracle. She watches over me; I can feel it.

**ELSBETH**

I hope she watches over all of us today. I've got a feeling we could use the help.

*[From left, another couple, TAYLOR and KIM, enters, carrying their own boxes.]*

**MITCH**

Good morning, Can I give you a hand?

**TAYLOR**

I'd prefer a standing ovation.

**MITCH**

Huh?

**KIM**

Never mind her, Mitch. She's here under protest. If you wanna help, there's one more box in the trunk.

*[MITCH exits left]*

**CLARE**

Good morning! How are you guys? Are you ready for the big sale?

**TAYLOR**

I didn't want to get up for this.

**KIM**

Taylor likes to get up at the crack of noon on Saturday.

**TAYLOR**

There might be a good reason for that. Who was it that got all this junk together and priced it while you slept peacefully on the couch?

**KIM**

I did not sleep *peacefully*; you made a lot of noise. Besides, I'd happily trade you. Next time you can take my Friday Night shift at the hospital and I'll focus on finding our best off-brand trinkets we can sell.

**CLARE**

Ray told me about your promotion to Head Nurse, Kim. Congratulations!

**KIM**

Thank you. I'm really happy about it. Not so happy about the new sleep schedule, though.

**TAYLOR**

And you'll hear her complain about it so much that you'll hate it too.

**KIM**

Speaking of, do we know when this train wreck -- I mean-- *yard sale* will be over? I'm counting down the minutes until I can go to bed again.

**CLARE**

Well, I told Ray to put eight o'clock on Craigslist and on the local buy sell trade, but you know how yard sale fanatics are. It's a wonder they're not all over us now.

**ELSBETH**

Well I hope we have a decent turnout after all this trouble.

**CLARE**

Is this your first yard sale, Elsbeth?

**ELSBETH**

And last.

**CLARE**

You might be surprised; yard sales can be fun! You always meet a lot of really *neat* people.

**TAYLOR**

We had one at our old house and it was not what we expected.

**KIM**

You remember that woman who used our bathroom and tried to steal your mothers dentures?

**TAYLOR**

Yes. They were still bubbling in Polident.

**KIM**

Your mom almost had to fight that lady for them.

**TAYLOR**

At least mom couldn't have bitten her. You don't leave anything lying around that you don't want to sell.

**ELSBETH**

*[Sarcastically]* Now I'm feeling better.

**TAYLOR**

Oh Elle, it won't be bad. You'll see -- it'll be over in no time!

**KIM**

Just keep your dentures in your mouth.

**ELSBETH**

Taylor, would you like some help putting out your things?

**TAYLOR**

Oh that would be sweet of you, Elle. Hey, what time is your party tonight?

*[ELSBETH shoots her a look.]*

**CLARE**

Oh, a party! Isn't that nice.

**ELSBETH**

It's not so much a party as a... get-together. You know, the partners, some clients, and *[quietly]* Kim and Taylor. It's at six thirty.

**CLARE**

Well, Ray and me don't get to many parties. I'm so busy, and Ray would rather be on the couch, and now that he's hurt, well....

**TAYLOR**

*[Changing the subject]* What happened to Ray?

**CLARE**

It was Barney, that stupid dog of ours. He grabbed Ray's sandwich while he was checkin' his oil, so Ray went chasin' him around the garage and Ray cracked his shin on the trailer hitch on the back of his truck.

**ELSBETH**

That sounds terrible. Was he hurt bad?

**CLARE**

He broke his shin bone clean, and then he laid there for an hour waiting for me to get home. It's a wonder that dog's still alive.

**TAYLOR**

Ow! That's terrible Clare, how's he getting around?

**CLARE**

With a whole lot of pain and even more whinin'. If anyone comes within a mile of that leg, he throws a fit and screams to high heaven, swearin that those bones are twistin' around in there. The doctor says that his leg is immobilized but Ray doesn't agree; he swears they got it set wrong.



**ELSBETH**

And he's coming out here today? Wouldn't it be better if he stayed at home?

**CLARE**

Oh, he wouldn't miss out on this for the world. A chance to sit in the middle of his junk while strangers come to pick through it? Are you kidding? For Ray it's like he's King for a Day.

*[MITCH enters left with a garment bag full of dresses and two lawn chairs. ELSBETH takes the chairs and sets them up stage right. He crosses to the center stage pipe rack, hangs the bag and unzips it.]*

**MITCH**

Any customers yet?

**ELSBETH**

Where have you been?

**MITCH**

I had to make a quick phone call, and wouldn't you know it? I think I left the phone back home. *[Starts to leave.]*

**ELSBETH**

Yes, but then you'd have no reason to go back home. Bring it back with you after your next escape.

**MITCH**

I've always said you should have been the attorney; you have a talent for going for the kill.

**TAYLOR**

That, or an assassin.

**MITCH**

Don't give her any ideas.

**KIM**

What all are you two selling, Mitch?

**MITCH**

Oh, most of this *loot* belongs to my lovely wife. Most of what I buy, I need.

**ELSBETH**

Like you needed the BMW?

**MITCH**

Now Elle, you know I bought that car for its safety features.

**ELSBETH**

Sure, to prevent a mid-life crisis?

**MITCH**

Kim, my wife has more outfits than Macy's. All of these dresses were sold by custom designers at outrageous prices. If only those designers could see their wares being offered at such a classy venue.

**CLARE**

Mitch you talk so pretty. Like a poet or something.

**ELSBETH**

Or *something* is right. I got good use out of all of these outfits.

**MITCH**

Let's take this dress for instance [*reaches for a dazzling blue dress*]. How many times have you worn this?

**ELSBETH**

I don't know how many times, Mitch. What difference does it make?

**MITCH**

I'm willing to bet that you've never worn it, and also that it cost five hundred and seventy six dollars. On sale.

**ELSBETH**

Why are doing this? How do you know exactly how much it cost?

**MITCH**

Because the price tag is still attached! Tell me -- do the cool kids wear the price-tag *on* the garment these days?

**ELSBETH**

[*Becoming angry*] Why do you wait until we're in public to transform yourself into a tool?

**MITCH**

I was merely making a point, darling.

**ELSBETH**

No! You were stabbing me with it, as usual. What would you have me wear -- a T-shirt and cut offs?

*[She turns to see CLARE wearing a T-shirt and cut offs. The group grows suddenly silent.]*

**CLARE**

Well, Mitch, you have a very pretty wife. She has to keep up her appearance. You can't put a price-tag on beauty.

If we could afford it, I'd wear nice clothes too.

**TAYLOR**

Of course you would Clare.

*[From off right, we hear RAY's voice for the first time.]*

**RAY**

Clare, get your fat butt over here and help me!

*[EVERYONE looks at CLARE.]*

**ELSBETH**

*[Pause]* I'm sorry about what I said Clare. I didn't mean --

**CLARE**

Oh it was nothing, Elsbeth. I'd better help Ray.

*[CLARE exits right.]*

**MITCH**

As usual, your *mouth* has somehow managed to start us out on the wrong foot. I don't know how you enunciate so well with your foot in there.

**ELSBETH**

Don't start on one of your self righteous tirades, Mitch. everyone knows how you feel about *them*.

**MITCH**

Yes, but unlike you, Elle, I'm more expert at keeping my feelings from becoming public knowledge.

**ELSBETH**

Like you did about the dress, Mitch? Oh. I forgot. You're only discreet when it *matters*.

**KIM**

*[Breaking in]* Mitch! You were going to tell me what you two are selling.

*[Before MITCH can answer, the sound of RAY screaming in pain is heard off right.]*

**RAY**

Oww, watch it! Do you have to hit every stinkin bump, Clare?! You're killing me. It's twistin'! Oh man, it's twistin'!

*[CLARE enters right, pushing RAY in a wheelchair. He is more an event than a human. His damaged appendage is propped straight out and secured with duct tape and improvised trusses. On his lap is a television and a box with nearly every snack item known to exist, including pork rinds. He has four sixths of a six pack swinging from his left hand and is holding his wounded right leg with the other.]*

**RAY**

Watch it Clare -- don't bump the table!

**CLARE**

You're O.K. Ray; I'm not going to crash you into anything. I'll park you right over here.

*[She parks him in the down right corner of the group.]*

**RAY**

Set up my TV and go back and get the rest of my stuff and my cooler. *[CLARE reaches for the television.]* Watch it! Oh jeez, that hurts. *[CLARE pauses.]* Go ahead and get the stupid thing off me, Clare! I'm dyin' here! Ow, ow, careful! Watch the leg!

**MITCH**

Can I help you with that?

**CLARE**

No it's better if I do it.... How's that, Ray?

**RAY**

I'm alive. *[Points forward]* Set it right there and put it on a box or something.

*[MITCH grabs a box. CLARE complies and, upon doing so, realizes that there is no electrical outlet.]*

**CLARE**

Ray! *[Holds up the cord.]*

**RAY**

Don't just stand there, go back to the house and round up all the extension cords you can find and hook me up.

**CLARE**

But Ray, people will start getting here soon.

**RAY**

I'll block 'em with my chair when they *rush* to your paintings.

**CLARE**

Just sell them at the prices marked, don't let them talk you down. And my Angel ain't for sale.

**RAY**

Alrighty hon, just go... Wait! Where's my ice pack?

**CLARE**

Right in here.

*[CLARE reaches into the snack box and extracts a zip-lock bag containing two ice cubes. She sheepishly looks at him, then slowly and delicately places it on RAY's leg. Everyone watches with fascination, especially RAY. CLARE finishes with a smile. RAY looks at her for a moment.]*

**RAY**

Burr! *[Everyone laughs until RAY shoots them an angry look.]* You call that an ice pack?

**CLARE**

Well, that's all there was.

**RAY**

There are *two* ice cubes in that bag.

**CLARE**

Well, you never refill the ice-trays, honey. I did the best I --

**RAY**

I can't even reach the freezer! I sure didn't leave 'em empty.

**CLARE**

I'm sorry, Ray.

**RAY**

Just go to the house and get my stuff, and while you're at it, bring me two aspirins. No honey, just bring me one

aspirin. I wouldn't want the ice pack to feel bad.

*[CLARE, looking angry, exits right.]*

**RAY**

Ya'll see what I have to put up with?

**ELSBETH**

So you're the *infamous* Ray.

**RAY**

What's that supposed to mean?

**ELSBETH**

Nothing at all. It's just that your wife has told us a little bit about you.

**RAY**

What'd she tell ya?

**ELSBETH**

Just nice things, and about your accident.

**RAY**

I thought I was gonna die there for a while but the docs pulled me through. Did she tell you how long I had to wait

before she came home?

**TAYLOR**

Yes, a whole hour. It sounded terrible.

**KIM**

Guess you won't be working in the yard for a while.

**RAY**

Oh no. Say, that reminds me about your weed whacker. I was clearing out the weeds under the rabbit hutches when a opossum came up out of there and charged me. He hissed once and I cracked him on the skull. On the third swat, the whole end broke off. Now I ask you, what kind of weed whacker can't handle a crazy opossum?

**KIM**

Was this before or after you broke your leg?

**RAY**

I sure as heck wasn't out here trimming weeds like this, *Sherlock*. Hey, maybe your house insurance will cover it.

**MITCH**

Yes, Kim, perhaps you have a opossum clause.

*[RAY looks at him, but before he can say anything, CLARE returns, looking exasperated.]*

**CLARE**

Ray, I already told you that we ran out of aspirin yesterday and that Bill's Gas and Bait was closed after I got off work.

**RAY**

Well that's just great. I've told you to tell that gosh-durn school that you've been gettin' out too late.

**CLARE**

You know we need the hours, Ray! If you just asked Jack to do it like I asked--

**RAY**

And get that boy off his bum for five minutes? Like that'll ever happen.

**ELSBETH**

*[Quietly, away from the fray]* Taylor, it just occurred to me that we don't have any change or bags for the customers. What say you and I get out of here for a *precious* minute as they hash this out, before the fun *really* starts?

**TAYLOR**

Sounds like a plan to me, I could *really* go for a cappuccino.

**KIM**

*[Loudly]* So you're just going to desert your post?

**TAYLOR**

I wouldn't say that we're--

**RAY**

*[Interrupting]* Where ya'll off to?

**ELSBETH**

Oh, we just have to run and get cash and extra bags since *someone* forgot last night *[glares at MITCH, who cowers from its power]*.

**CLARE**

That sounds like a fun little trip! I could grab Ray's aspirin while we're there.

**ELSBETH**

*[With dread]* Oh, I really don't know if there's room in my Infiniti... Mitch has so much paperwork in the back--

**TAYLOR**

And besides, we could pick up the aspirin for you.

**RAY**

I think what they're saying is your fat butt won't fit in on their little date, Clare.

**ELSBETH**

Oh no, not at all! I'm just, I'm just saying that--

**TAYLOR**

*[With the save]* Here, we can take my Suburu. That way everyone can fit.

**RAY**

Sounds like a plan. Clare, before you leave, wake up Jack and tell 'em to bring me my extension cords and weed whacker. While you're back there, go ahead and get the money you need out of my coin sock in the back room.

**TAYLOR**

*[Cringing]* No - that's okay, I got her.

**CLARE**

Aw, thank you, Taylor! I'll send Jack a text, Ray.

**TAYLOR**

It's not a problem. After all - we're all in this sale together!

*[TAYLOR, CLARE, and ELSBETH exit left. ELSBETH and RAY share a dirty look as they leave.]*

**KIM**

*[Looking at the group]* Looks like it's now us. Have you met Mitch, Ray?



**RAY**

No, I guess he's managed to avoid me so far. There's no avoidin' me today though, huh, Mitch?

**MITCH**

*[Picking up a water bottle and taking a drink]* Oh, I wouldn't say I've been *avoiding* you, Ray.

**RAY**

You live in the *mansion* of the col-de-sac, don't you? It looks like that house in *Gone With the Wind*; must a cost a fortune.

**MITCH**

It was cheaper than you might think.

**RAY**

How does a guy even afford a house like that? Wait, lemme guess. With the way you talk about yourself, I'm guessing a guy like you wanted to call himself a Doctor.

**MITCH**

Hardly -- I'm an attorney, Ray.

**RAY**

Ah, almost the same thing, except you get to the ambulance *before* the doctors. No wonder he has such a ritzy house.

**MITCH**

I assure you that I'm not in the practice of chasing ambulances or any other first responders.

**RAY**

I shoulda guessed, if that ain't lawyer talk I don't know what is.

**MITCH**

Why? Because I use correct grammar? I apologize if that's offensive to a man of your stature.

**RAY**

"A man of my stature." How can he even hear us from that high horse he rides, Kim?

**KIM**

Don't get me in the middle of this, Ray.

**MITCH**

However you feel about attorneys is not my concern.

**RAY**

All I was sayin' is that ya talk pretty snooty.

**MITCH**

*[Sarcastically]* My apologies. I forgot how merely speaking in complete sentences could be so upsetting.

**RAY**

Merely? What kind of word is "merely", I mean for a *man* to be usin'?

*[MITCH sets down his water bottle on the table quite loudly at this, growing frustrated.]*

**KIM**

He doesn't mean anything by it, Mitch.

**MITCH**

Look, Ray -- let's forget about my vocation for the moment, can we?

**RAY**

I suppose, Mitch, as long as you don't use that lawyer talk on me again. It makes me feel like I'm on trial.

**MITCH**

Deal.

**RAY**

It's for the best, anyways. Besides, *[looks around - makes sure the coast is clear]* you know what the only thing that chafes me about this sale?

**KIM**

What's that?

**RAY**

Well, it's bad enough to be with your spouse durin' the week, but having to be with them on the weekend, too?

Well that's just depressing. Now that it's just us, we can talk about whatever we want to.

**KIM**

Yeah..

*[MITCH takes a drink of water, KIM looks at her feet, and RAY sits quietly. All with nothing to talk about.]*

---

*[ELSBETH and TAYLOR are both in the front seats of TAYLOR's Suburu. Both are clad in shades and talking with a purpose, while CLARE looks on from the back seat.]*

**ELSBETH**

Oh, you should have seen how disappointed Mitch was when the judge made him re-file the Peterson case. It's why we missed the last weekend on Aspen's slopes this year.

**TAYLOR**

That's terrible. I can't imagine how upset he must have been. Did you end up going without him?

*[CLARE is silent through this conversation and doesn't have much to contribute, but is looking on from the back with puppy dog eyes.]*

**ELSBETH**

Nah, the firm needed all hands on deck and that included me. And besides, I wouldn't have wanted to go without him.

**TAYLOR**

Doesn't he go with his co-workers?

**ELSBETH**

Yeah, I mean, he wouldn't have minded if I went alone. But like I said, I just wanted to be sure I was there for him and the firm.

**TAYLOR**

Have you gone alone before?

*[ELSBETH is silent here, but Clare jumps in.]*

**CLARE**

We went snowboarding at the sand dunes once. Jack gave Bonnie an old snowboard that was broken at the center, she had no idea. You should have seen her face plant - Jack and Ray laughed all the way home!

**ELSBETH**

Charming... Oh thank goodness, we're here! I can't remember a time I needed coffee more.

*[TAYLOR rolls her window down.]*

**TAYLOR**

I'll take a Medio caramel-mocha cappuccino with fat free foam at the top, a single cherry, and two shots of espresso. Frozen if the machine's up, iced if it isn't. What do you want, Elsbeth?

**ELSBETH**

The usual. I'll take a Masivo iced skinny hazelnut upside down macchiato, sugar free syrup, extra shot of espresso, light ice, and with a cup of fat free whip cream on the side.

**TAYLOR**

What do you want, Clare?

**CLARE**

Uh... Do they have just black coffee here?

**TAYLOR**

*[Confused at the question]* Uh... Do you have black coffee here?

**STARBUCKS BARISTA**

Uh... Just regular coffee?

**TAYLOR**

Yeah.

**STARBUCKS BARISTA**

Sure, it's \$3.00 for a medio.

**TAYLOR**

That's all? Add it to the order.

**CLARE**

Do you think the spouses want anything?

**TAYLOR**

Nah, Kim swears by her energy drinks.

**ELSBETH**

And Mitch is attached at the hip to his Keurig. Besides, they snooze they lose.

**CLARE**

I wonder what they're all talking about? I'm so happy they finally have a chance to hit it off.

---

*[Scene cuts back to Ray, Kim & Mitch, who are completely silent and looking to the ground as two customers are rooting around.]*

---

*[Scene cuts back to Elsbeth, Taylor and Clare.]*

**ELSBETH**

So how are things on your end, Taylor?

**TAYLOR**

Really good. The contractors finally finished renovations down at the shelter. We're finally going to have the space we've needed for years! Schools are already wanting to schedule field trips with us.

**ELSBETH**

Oh my. Mixing kids with adoptable puppies and kittens is dangerous. I don't know how you don't manage to adopt them all. Speaking of the contractors, I'm surprised you didn't get our firm involved with the deal they were trying to spin you.

**TAYLOR**

No, ma'am! You better believe this was going to be handled by me, myself, and I. Now we only need someone to paint the paw prints we're looking for in the interior.

**CLARE**

*[Excited]* You need a painter?

*[ELSBETH and TAYLOR exchange panicked looks at this, but are saved by the COFFEE SHOP EMPLOYEE.]*

**STARBUCKS BARISTA**

Here you all are!

*[The ladies accept their drinks, and TAYLOR takes the opportunity to change the subject.]*

**TAYLOR**

So, Clare, do you paint full time or is that more of a hobby?

**CLARE**

I'm a server at the Front Range cafe in the mornings, and then I have a night shift down at the elementary school.

**TAYLOR**

Oh wow, I didn't realize you had two jobs. I can't imagine how hard that must be.

**CLARE**

It's hard. The work has really messed up my back and my feet feel like I'm walking on broken glass. I try to focus on the little things. I was so happy I could get off from both to be here today!

**TAYLOR**

With luck the weather will cooperate; I hear there's a chance for storms later.

**CLARE**

That's what one of my bosses told me, but with good luck it should all miss us.

**ELSBETH**

Well, it must feel good to help support the family.

**CLARE**

Help? Heck I *support* the family, since Ray hurt his back.

**ELSBETH**

He can't work at all?

**CLARE**

He *says* he can't, but he seems to work on every car that manages to drag itself into the driveway.

**TAYLOR**

I admire you, Clare. It can't be easy.

**ELSBETH**

If you'll pardon my saying it, Clare, but if I were you, I'd tell my husband to get off his lazy butt and go back to work.

**CLARE**

Oh, I don't know. Ray's a good man. He has a soft side. He listens to me. When there's not a game on, that is.

**ELSBETH**

I have to admit, even Mitch isn't immune to that. Put him in front of a football game and he reverts into a caveman.

**CLARE**

Really? He seems so.. so dignified. I wouldn't expect that.

**ELSBETH**

He has quirky hobbies. It's not only football. Don't tell anyone I told you, but you wouldn't believe his collection of star wars action figures and antique watches.

**CLARE**

Watches? I actually found a beaten up old pocket watch in the parking lot of the Four Kings bar last night. Maybe

Mitch would be interested?

**ELSBETH**

Oh honey, was that the beaten up old thing I saw at the yard sale? You're not actually *selling* that thing to someone are you?

**CLARE**

Oh no, Ray wouldn't do that. He's a fair guy.

---

*[Scene cuts back to the yard sale. A customer is holding the rickety pocket watch, while MITCH is watching feverishly from behind.]*

**MITCH**

Ray, this man wants to know if you'll take fifty-cents for your five dollar watch.

**RAY**

*[Looks up to the watch, and waxes poetic]* My pappy gave me that watch. Honestly, I shouldn't be sellin' it. It went with him all over Vietnam.

**CUSTOMER ONE**

*[Looking skeptical]* Are you sure it's even vintage? Looks like it could be a re-production.

**MITCH**

It's a Waltham. By the looks of things, it would have been manufactured around the mid-1930's. *[Pauses. Realizes everyone is looking at him, and turns scarlet]* I think, anyways.

**RAY**

See? There you go, but if \$5 is too much for my father's prized watch, I can--

**COSTUMER ONE**

No, \$5 is fine! I'll take it.

**RAY**

All right, I guess, but you better take care of it!

**COSTUMER ONE**

I will. Does it work?

**RAY**

I could never bring myself to wind it. Daddy wound it last.

*[COSTUMER ONE pays RAY and scurries off with his find.]*

**KIM**

How could you sell your father's watch?

**RAY**

What -- *that* watch? I found it in the parking lot at the Four Kings bar. I dropped my keys, bent down, and there it was.

**MITCH**

You lied.

**RAY**



I also made five green American dollars - and who's to say my daddy didn't lose it there?

**MITCH**

You tell tales like an attorney.

**RAY**

*[With appreciation]* Thank you, and thank *you* for the save. You must be great in the courtroom, guessing on the year it was made and what not.

**MITCH**

*[Now looking at RAY with new eyes]* Uh, yeah, don't mention it, Ray. So, I've been meaning to ask, what is it that *you* do, when you're not selling high quality watches, that is.

**RAY**

Well, I've done a lot of things. I drove a truck for a while, then I worked construction for a few years, till I hurt my back. Boy I coulda used you then; I might have a house like yours by now. Anyway, Clare and I opened a bait shop for a couple of months, but lately I've been working on starting my own business out of my home.

**KIM**

I didn't know you were doing that, Ray.

**RAY**

Well it's sorta a recent event Kim. I been brainstorming and I think I've come up with a sure thing.

**MITCH**

What's that Ray?

**RAY**

Oh I'm sure you'd like that -- I tell you my idea and you steal it and make a million for yourself.

**MITCH**

I wouldn't dream of stealing your idea Ray; I'm pretty busy at the firm. Besides, you have the inside track.

**RAY**

I don't know. I've had a lot of good ideas over the years and had 'em stolen before I could use 'em.

**MITCH**

Like what?

**RAY**

Oh I don't know, a lot, like ... well you know that clapper thing?

**KIM**

Yeah.

**RAY**

I had that idea a long time before it was on TV. See, one night I was sitting in my easy chair almost asleep, when all the sudden the station I was watchin' went off for the night. I was *real* comfortable but that hissin' noise made it almost impossible to sleep. I managed to get to sleep anyway, but not before thinking that there should be some way to turn things off without getting up out of your chair.

**MITCH**

They call it a remote control.

**RAY**

They didn't have 'em then. Everyone had to turn their TVs off by hand.

*[All three share a moment of horror.]*

**KIM**

I guess you *were* ahead of your time. So what's your new big idea?

**RAY**

Not so fast, that was the first time it happened. It happened again a coupla years ago. You know that club that's 'sposed to lock your steering wheel? It protects your car from being stolen.

**MITCH**

Yes, I've thought about getting one for my beemer.

*[RAY and KIM look at MITCH; he realizes his over-enthusiasm and melts.]*

**RAY**

Well, you'd a liked my idea a lot better, with my invention there ain't *no way* anyone could steal your car.

**KIM**

Was it like “The Club”?

**RAY**

No. It was a lot better. I thought of it when I first got ol’ blue. Ya see, she came without a steerin’ wheel, took me almost a year to find one to fit her. I drove her anyway, though.

**MITCH**

Without a steering wheel? .. How?

**RAY**

Vice grips son, vice grips. I just hooked ‘em up to the bolts.

**KIM**

Wasn’t that a little dangerous?

**RAY**

Ah, no. You can trust a good pair of vice grips; they hold like crazy. Ain’t no way they’d ever come off... well, unless you squeeze that little release mechanism on the handle.

**KIM**

Wow! That’s crazy.

**RAY**

Crazy like a fox. I’d probably still be usin’ ‘em today if it hadn’t been for Clare.

**MITCH**

Made you get a steering wheel huh?

**RAY**

She don’t *make* me do anything. It was her crash that forced me to take action on the vice grip issue.

**KIM**

Clare crashed Old Blue?

**RAY**

Well she was all excited 'bout gettin' her license, so I let her use blue for the drivin' test. Well, the officer in the passenger seat noticed right away that my steerin' wasn't up to specs. He probably wouldn't let her use blue, but his son was on our boy's little league team, so he said he'd overlook it.

**MITCH**

She steered with vice grips?

**RAY**

She was doin real fine, too, up to that part where you go through the cones. Never understood what good that part did anyway. Well, with all that turning back 'n forth, something was bound to happen, and sure enough, on the last cone, she hit the release mechanism and that's all she wrote.

**KIM**

All she wrote?

**RAY**

That man screamed so loud I could hear him from where I was standin'! I could see Clare flailing her arms around. I never felt so helpless. I couldn't move, I was laughin' so hard.

**MITCH**

Laughing?

**RAY**

You had to be there. They were screamin' and flailin' and ol' blue was pickin' up speed, I thought they'd never stop.

**MITCH**

Well?

**RAY**

Well, when blue came through the side of the DMV, that long line disappeared real fast, and them people didn't come out in no single file neither.

**MITCH**

I'm guessing Clare flunked the test?

**RAY**

Heck no! They said it wasn't her fault and there was no *good* reason why she had to come back. The guy with her lost his job though, along with a couple 'a teeth.

**MITCH**

Ray, was your thief-stopping idea vice grips or a DMV building?

**RAY**

Inspiration always visits me at strange times, but when those grips came loose... I thought of it. The detachable steerin' wheel. After seein' what happened to Clare without one, I know no crook's gonna get too far.

**KIM**

Unless he has some vice grips.

*[Silence.]*

**RAY**

*[Saddened]* Hum. I hadn't thought of that.

**MITCH**

So what's your current idea, Ray?

**RAY**

Okay, I'll tell you, but you better keep this under your hats. *[Looks around]* I have an idea for a new "app".

**KIM**

Like on iOS or Android?

**RAY**

No, I mean on phones and what not. My son has always had these fancy app things that let him download the internet on his phone.

**KIM**

Rrrright... So what's your "app" idea?

**RAY**

Me and Clare were in the Flea Market a while back; Clare was looking for knick knacks for our family reunion. This was before the broken shin, and thank god; otherwise, I don't think I'd be here. Anyway, Clare and I had Tito's Tacos earlier that day. They were having their 50 cent Taco Tuesday.

**KIM**

Didn't that place fail a health inspection?

**MITCH**

A few. The firm was involved with one of those cases.

**RAY**

Hey, I'm tellin' the story here! The tacos are only half the point. So anyways, I'm sitting in the flea market. And it hits me.

**KIM**

It hits you?

**RAY**

Oh yeah. The feeling that's hit all the regulars of Tito's Tacos at least a half dozen times. My stomach started grumblin', my legs started shakin', and I knew I needed a bathroom and it was gonna be a photo finish. Unfortunately, the Flea Market bathroom doors were locked up when I got there. How was I s'pposed to know they were for customers only? Anywho, I find myself in full clinch and limp in my way to the gas station across the street. And when I got there, the toilet paper roll was empty, the toilet seat was filthy, and the situation ended up costing me two good socks. *[MITCH and KIM shutter at this.]* It was a nightmare that'd send shivers down anyone's spine.

**MITCH**

I try to avoid mingling in public restrooms.

**RAY**

That's the beauty of it, dudes. This will change your public restroom experience forever.

**KIM**

*[Surprised]* I think I see where you are going with this, Ray. I actually think it is a good idea.

**RAY**

Hold your horses! I haven't even told you the name. Let me introduce you to "Welp".

**KIM & MITCH**

*[In unison]* "Welp?"

**RAY**

"Welp." This application will let you "check in" when you're in a public restroom, and offer rewards to those restroom warriors who visit ones the most. My son has an app like it on his phone for concerts and other shindigs, but imagine this, instead of feeling crummy after a bad restroom experience, you can now earn badges, rewards and medals for your trouble. I wanted to name it "Game of Thrones", but that was, uh, taken.

**MITCH**

I'm speechless.

**KIM**

This was not at all what I was thinking.

**RAY**

Not the nostradamus you thought, huh? Don't just sit there, compadres; tell me what you think! I know you're just kicking yourselves cause you didn't think of it first.

**MITCH**

*[Pause.]*

It's truly a novel idea, Ray. I don't think anyone has thought of it yet.

**RAY**

That's why I got to move fast, before anyone else does. Now you both better keep this quiet.

**KIM**

Why not make an app that tells people where *clean* restrooms are? Wouldn't that make people happier than an imaginary badge?

*[Long pause.]*

**RAY**

You ain't seein' the spirit of the thing, Kim! It's all in the name, "Welp". You're in a sticky spot already, and this app lets you make the best of it. Besides, with the right names, these badges could be hot commodities - so far "Head Honcho" and "Boss of the Banyo" have been swirlin' around in my head as potential badge titles.

**MITCH**

Yeah, who wouldn't want to put one of those titles on their resume?

**RAY**

I can count on ya'll keeping' this under wraps, right?

**KIM**

It will not be easy Ray, *[looks at MITCH]* but you can count on us.

**RAY**

If you want to get in on the ground floor, I'm looking for investment money.

**KIM**

I think you'd be wise to keep this yours, Ray.

**MITCH**

Yes, Ray, I don't think anyone else sees this vision quite as clearly as you do.

**RAY**

You're probably right. It won't be easy, but with faith and hard work, Welp could really be great.

**MITCH**

That's a dream we all share, Ray, and we'll follow it, *wherever* it leads.

**RAY**

Thanks for helping me flush this out dudes.

**KIM**

Hey, Ray, what ever happened to Old Blue? I mean, after the accident.

**RAY**

Still got her. See that set of tires over there?

**MITCH**

You mean the set of *three*?



**RAY**

Them's the ones! I had Clare drag 'em over after she got off from her second job. That whole line was recalled and I didn't get 'em back to Sears in time. One of 'em blew out the night me and Clare left for Branson. See, we was drivin' Old Blue in a rainstorm and doin' next to ninety when the left front one went.

**MITCH**

You get hurt?

**RAY**

No, but Clare broke her nose on the dash; she looked like a raccoon for two weeks. My knee broke the ashtray and I bent the steerin' wheel, but all in all that tree suffered more than Old Blue.

**MITCH**

Colorful name.

**RAY**

She used to be blue. The insurance painted her back and I went with yellow to change my luck. Never could bring myself to call her Old Yeller, though.

**MITCH**

No matter the color, your truck is truly legendary, Ray.

*[From off left, CLARE, TAYLOR, and ELSBETH enter, carrying two bags full of groceries and their coffees.]*

**KIM**

Hey, look -- it's the bags.

**MITCH**

And their \$10 coffees.

**ELSBETH**

Watch it, Neanderthals. So, did you all bond in our absence?

**MITCH**

Ray has been regaling us with stories of Old Blue.

**ELSBETH**

I don't even want to know what Old Blue is.

**RAY**

He's not blue anymore -- he's yella.

**ELSBETH**

Does that mean his condition is worsening?

**RAY**

Nope, he's better than ever!

**ELSBETH**

It sounds like they've bonded. Kim, will you put this change in the cash box and make a note that the box owes us  
fifty dollars? *[hands her the cash]*

**RAY**

Fifty bucks! That's more than we're gonna make all day!

**ELSBETH**

Speak for yourself, Ray. We're offering some premium merchandise. I expect to make at least a thousand dollars  
today.

**RAY**

Woo wee! What kind of stuff are you guys sellin'?

**MITCH**

We're selling our old computer and my golf clubs, among other things.

**RAY**

What kind of computer? I could use a high-end computer to make my app.

**ELSBETH**

Ray, you sly dog! What kind of app are you making?

**MITCH**

I'll, uh, tell you about it later, Elle.

**RAY**

Don't tell her too much.. remember the steering wheel.

**MITCH**

Don't worry, Ray, this is definitely just our thing.

**ELSBETH**

*[Hands MITCH a box]* Mitch, can you price these things? This is the only box I didn't get to last night.

**MITCH**

Sure, honey. What do I mark them with?

**ELSBETH**

There's a pen and tape in the box.

**MITCH**

Okay. Uh, how should I price these?

**ELSBETH**

Price 'em wherever you want, except my Foreman grill. I want at *least* a dollar for that.

**RAY**

I'll help ya, Mitch.

**MITCH.**

I appreciate it, Ray. *[Moves a lawn chair and sits beside RAY.]* Well, let's see, how much for this CD? *[Looks at*

*ELSBETH.]*

**ELSBETH**

Don't look at me; I've done my work.

*[She and TAYLOR go through her dresses.]*

**RAY**

Let me see that, Mitch. I'm a yard sale pricing expert. *[MITCH hands the disc to RAY.]* The CD isn't scratched, that increases the value. On the other hand, it's that Justin Bieber, so we better make a free box.

**CLARE**

Hey, Jack really liked the Biebs!

**RAY**

I ain't too sure he'd be wanting you to admit that publicly. Every kid goes through phases, and he might not want that on his record.

**CLARE**

Like you and Barry Manilow?

*[Everyone looks at RAY with widened eyes. This is the first time RAY has been rattled all day.]*

**RAY**

That's *exactly* what I mean, Bonnie Clare, and I wouldn't say any more if I were you, Miss *Boys 2 Men*.

**CLARE**

I have no shame.

**TAYLOR**

I think everyone goes through phases. Kim, why don't you tell everyone about the four station home gym you never finished putting together. You know, the Muscle Master 3000?

**KIM**

Don't blame me. I pulled a muscle ripping open the box.

**TAYLOR**

Oh, is *that* it? I don't think your parts liked the way Muscle Master made 'em feel.

**KIM**

Speaking of, here are all your unopened Pilate DVD's. I think it was a box set. 4 payments of 19.99, now sold here for \$5.

**TAYLOR**

Fair point. Neither of us like to work out.

*[JACK enters from off left, stringing a coil of various extension cords and carrying a blue weed eater with a price tag announcing: "\$10.00, works." He leans the weed eater against the picnic table.]*

**RAY**

It's about time -- I coulda wheeled my way to the stadium by now. I guess I should count my lucky stars you was here before sundown.

**JACK**

Mornin', Dad. I had some trouble roundin' up enough cords to reach out here.

**RAY**

Did you look in my tool box?

**JACK**

Aw, the tool box? [Snaps his fingers] I didn't think to look. First I checked the fridge, ate a mayonnaise sandwich, then I took a nap, and when I still couldn't find it--

**RAY**

Did you listen to Justin Bieber and have a think?

**JACK**

*[Confused]* Wh-What?

**RAY**

Everyone, this is my pride and joy, Jack. Jack, say hey.

**JACK**

Uh, hey everyone --

**ALL**

Hey, Jack.

**JACK**

Yeah, Dad. I checked the gosh darn toolbox. You only had two in there. I had to steal the ones powering the window units.

**RAY**

I got ten plugged into that outlet in the living room. You didn't unplug my battery charger, did you?

**JACK**

No. One of your cords had a nick in it. We might tape it up before plugging it in.

**RAY**

Aw, it'll be fine! That's the one I was usin' when that opossum attacked me.

**MITCH**

Are you sure it's a good idea to use it with the grass being wet?

**RAY**

It'll be okay. I don't think it's cut all the way through.

*[JACK plugs the television into the cord while others look on.]*

**JACK**

Alright, simmer down, pops, it's showtime!

*[He turns on the television but nothing happens.]*

**KIM**

Must be a mime show.

**RAY**

Well, that's real nice, son, you spend an hour roundin' up cords and I still can't watch baseball.

**JACK**

I plugged 'em all in. Maybe it's your sketchy TV!

**RAY**

*[Angry]* Nothin's wrong with my TV. One of the cords musta came unplugged, and you know what, since you're so worried, how about you tape up that little nick. There's a roll of electrical tape in my toolbox.

**ELSBETH**

Mitch, I'll take over the pricing for you. Why don't you give Jack a hand. He could use another set of eyes.

**MITCH**

Sure, love, that's a great idea.

*[MITCH picks up the cord and begins following it. MITCH and JACK exit left.]*

**RAY**

Now there's a team if I ever saw one. Jack, don't get him hurt, he's a lawyer, and we can't afford no lawsuit.

**ELSBETH**

Actually, Mitch used to be quite handy with tools when we were first married. I guess he was trying to impress me then. He won't go near a hammer these days. He says it's more cost effective to hire others out.

**RAY**

Sounds to me like money's turned him into a wimp.

**ELSBETH**

Now watch it, Ray. Mitch was a big lacrosse player in college. He'd surprise you.

*[The television comes on loudly.]*

**RAY**

All right! He must be tougher than he looks!

**MITCH**

*[From offstage - being electrocuted]* Ahh! Unplug it! Unplug it!

*[The television goes off.]*

**ELSBETH**

Oh no!

**RAY**

He found the nick.

*[ELSBETH runs off left, followed by CLARE and KIM.]*

**TAYLOR**

You think he's all right?

**RAY**

Sure, it's only one hundred and ten volts. Heck, I took twice that much when I was installin' Clare's dryer.

**TAYLOR**

Were you hurt?

**RAY**

Scorched my fingertips and my hand shook all by itself for a while. Oh yeah, and I peed the bed after it happened.

**TAYLOR**

That is odd. I never heard of anything like that. How long did that go on for?

**RAY**

Still happens from time to time. All those volts musta affected my bladder. I bet *real* electricians wear those bladder control pads all the time.

**TAYLOR**

Maybe so.

**RAY**

[*Looking off right.*] Hey, he's gonna be alright. She's got 'em on his feet. [*Both of their heads go down.*] ...Uh oh, he's back down.

**TAYLOR**

He looks a little shaky.

**RAY**

Sure, volts ain't always our friends. Say, remind me what did they call Kim back in your country?

**TAYLOR**

I've always been Kim

**RAY**

Nah, nah. That ain't it. She use to spell like Kimchi or somethin like that?

**TAYLOR**

And this matters... why?

**RAY**

Because leavin out the chi doesn't warn people how spicy her people can be! (RAY releases a full bellied laugh, while Taylor rolls her eyes)

**TAYLOR**

Her people? [starts to get angry then lets it go]

**RAY**

Wait a minute. How did you and Kim even meet, anywho?

**TAYLOR**

We both worked on the medical staff for the U.S. Army. We met in Afghanistan.



**RAY**

No joke? I had no idea.

**TAYLOR**

*[Changing the subject]* Are you still coaching baseball?

**RAY**

Where have you been hidin'? I stopped coaching Jack's team after he quit last year. You know he was a real fine pitcher, the best pitcher in the league, till he blew out his shoulder.

**TAYLOR**

That's a shame; he couldn't have played another position?

**RAY**

He's as stubborn as a mule. He said if he couldn't pitch, he wouldn't play ball at all. He's a real whiner sometimes.

Ah! My leg is throbbing. Clare still hasn't given me my aspirin.

**TAYLOR**

At least Jack knows what he wants.

**RAY**

Ah, he doesn't have a clue. I keep telling him to take auto mechanics in school but he says he's not sure he's ready to commit to a career yet. If he thinks he's gonna live with us till he's thirty, he's got another thing coming.

*[MITCH and the OTHERS enter stage left. MITCH has a makeshift bandage on his left hand.]*

**RAY**

Glad to see you made it. Cord zapped ya, huh?

**MITCH**

I thought I was going to die, I couldn't let go of it. Thank God the power went off.

**RAY**

You probably flipped a breaker. Do any damage to your hand?

**MITCH**

My fingertips were blackened and my hand keeps trembling.

**RAY**

Just wait till tonight.

**ELSBETH**

What do you mean?

**TAYLOR**

Don't worry about it.

**ELSBETH**

This isn't funny, Ray. Mitch could have been killed.

**MITCH**

Honey, I'm alright.

**ELSBETH**

You're lucky that's all, that *defective* cord could have electrocuted you.

**RAY**

Not enough volts to kill a *man*. I'm just glad it wasn't my pride and joy that got the juice. Son, I thought I told you  
not to get him hurt!

**JACK**

Any of us could have been hurt, Dad.

**ELSBETH**

Honey, do you want to go to the hospital?

**MITCH**

I'm fine, Elle, just relax.

**KIM**

Look out; customers at three o'clock.

**MITCH**

Elle, I didn't get a chance to finish pricing those things.

*(ELSBETH hurries to comply as a WIFE and her HUSBAND enter stage right and look around. The HUSBAND  
looks the golf clubs over as the WIFE roams around, stopping at the box MITCH is pricing.)*

**WIFE**

Can I look in that box?

**KIM**

I'm still putting prices on these things, but if you want to have a look, go ahead.

**RAY**

Justin Bieber is free.

**WIFE**

I love these things. Do they really work like on TV?

**TAYLOR**

I never tried it. I hate those things. Those commercials drive me crazy around Christmas time.

**ALL**

*[As WIFE lifts the item.]* Ch, Ch, Ch, Chia!

**WIFE**

Ooh, is this one of those fertility statues? *[Puts down the Chia pet, pulls up a statue of the Korean god Maitreya.]*

**TAYLOR**

I do not know. I don't even know *where* we got it.

**CLARE**

I do. Ray and I gave it to you as a housewarming gift.

**RAY**

Yeah! Thought you'd be one to recognize one of your supreme beings.

*[Silence]*

**KIM**

No, this looks like something from a cartoon. You're thinking of Vishnu.

**RAY**

Veshnu?

**KIM**

Vishnu...you think I'm Hindu?...Vishnu!

**MITCH**

Gesundheit!

*[RAY and the COSTUMERS all laugh, while Kim stays silent.]*

**TAYLOR**

Well, I don't want sell something that *you* gave us as a gift.

**RAY**

Nah, sell the thing for a dollar, Taylor. We only paid *twenty* bucks for it.

**CLARE**

Walgreens had 'em on sale.

**TAYLOR**

Here, give it to me.

**WIFE**

I think you people should figure out what is and isn't for sale before you put the sign up... come on, Steve! They don't have anything good here.

*[HUSBAND tears himself away from the golf clubs. WIFE kicks the three family sale sign down as they exit right.]*

**ELSBETH**

*[Fixing the sign]* Another happy customer.

**RAY**

Clare, bring me that weed whacker.

*[CLARE carries it to him.]*

**KIM**

That looks like my broken weed eater, except mine was green.

**RAY**

It wasn't actually broke. See, it's just a little bent. I figured you'd rather buy a new one than have the bent one back.

**ELSBETH**

You were just going to keep it? I can't believe that. You had to know that it was only a matter of time before Kim  
saw you using it.

**RAY**

She wouldn't have recognized it -- I painted it blue.

**JACK**

Are you kidding me, Dad?

**CLARE**

I'm so embarrassed.

*[JACK and CLARE exit left.]*

**TAYLOR**

Blue?

**KIM**

That's mine?

**RAY**

Your own "old blue". I figured since Taylor got all sentimental about the fake Vishnu, the least I could do was give  
you back your old weed whacker.

**TAYLOR**

This is a nice display of neighborly love.

**ELSBETH**

Remind me not to loan him anything of ours.

**RAY**

I wouldn't ask to borrow anything *you* own.

**ELSBETH**

But you'd borrow from Kim.

**RAY**

She's different; she's a friend.

**ELSBETH**

And *because* she's a friend, you steal from *her* exclusively?

**RAY**

Hey, I didn't steal anything! The thing was broke. I didn't think she'd want it back.

**ELSBETH**

You were going to sell it right under her nose!

**RAY**

I don't see where it's any of *your* business. This thing is between me and Kim. Ain't that right, Kim?

**KIM**

It's not a big deal, Elle. He's giving it back, and with a new coat of paint.

**MITCH**

Yes, Elle, let it go.

**ELSBETH**

Fine, it's your *blue* weed trimmer. I guess it's none of my business.

**MITCH**

*[Changing the subject]* Hey, Kim, would you like to see my game room?

**KIM**

Game room? When did this happen?

**MITCH**

We finished it last weekend.

**ELSBETH**

You talk as if you drove that last nail, darling, when the most you did was to try to open a can of paint.

**MITCH**

Ray and the crew are here to look over the place. Let's go take a look.

**KIM**

Sounds good to me! Is that alright, Taylor?

**TAYLOR**

Live it up. Just be back here before it gets busy.

**MITCH**

We'll be back in flash. Okay, Elle?

**ELSBETH**

Sure, you all go play. *[Deviously - as they're leaving]* Are you taking Ray?

**RAY**

You'd trust *me* in your house?

**MITCH**

Ray? *[Reluctantly]* You don't want to go, do you, Ray?

**RAY**

You think I want to stay here when I can't even watch the game.

**MITCH**

I just thought that... You know, with your injury...

**RAY**

If one of you push, I'll be just fine. Kim, what do ya say?

**KIM**

Sure, Ray.

**RAY**

Now go easy, watch the leg.

*[KIM maneuvers RAY expertly through the obstacle course and the men exit right.]*

**ELSBETH**

*[Under her breath]* Just don't *loan* him anything.

**RAY**

*[From offstage]* I heard that! ...Watch it! Watch the bumps... It's twistin'! It's twistin'! I'm losin' my ice pack!

**ELSBETH**

Thank God, I thought they'd never leave. Did you notice how I forced them to take Ray?

**TAYLOR**

Did you see the look on Mitch's face?

**ELSBETH**

I savored it thoroughly.

**TAYLOR**

Did you see those shorts Ray had on?

**ELSBETH**

I bet he's had them on since he broke his leg.

**TAYLOR**

I think he's had them on since we moved in.

**ELSBETH**

He always wears them when he washes that truck of his, which he seems to do three times a week. If only he

*bathed* as much.

**TAYLOR**

Have you seen the way his belly hangs over? And all that hair!

**ELSBETH**

Those shorts and that trailer are etched in my memory. And don't even get me started on Ray's barbecues. The trash that ends up in our yard needs a rescue team to clean out. I can't wait to move out of here.

**TAYLOR**

You're moving? Since when? You just built a game room!

*[Unseen by ELSBETH, CLARE enters up right, carrying a box of clothes.]*

**ELSBETH**

Now if we could just find a way to hide that hideous trailer and those boats until we sell.

*[TAYLOR sees CLARE and is caught in the middle as ELSBETH goes on.]*

**ELSBETH**

I can't get over it; I love our house I don't want to sell, but that trailer makes us all look like the Clampetts. Every morning I look out the window and just hope that place is gone. It's junk, everywhere you look! Cars, boats...



They've got living room furniture on the porch! The developer had a contract. Ray had to sell. How did he get away with staying?

*[Silence.]*

**CLARE**

*[Hurt]* Ray never signed... he kept putting it off, then the property value went up and they never could decide on a price.

**ELSBETH**

*[Embarrassed]* Oh, Clare, we didn't see you there...

**TAYLOR**

I'm sorry, Clare.

**CLARE**

It's all right, I didn't mean to eavesdrop. I guess I knew everyone felt this way... It's nice to finally have it out in the open.

**ELSBETH**

I'm truly sorry, Clare. You seem like a nice person, but you've got to know that Ray and his junk don't exactly contribute to the suburban setting.

**CLARE**

I know. I know what Ray can seem like. I've been living with his "junk" for 30 years, but he's a good man. He's rough around the edges, but he's always been good to me.

**ELSBETH**

Were you just going to stay forever? I don't mean this to hurt you, Clare, but your mobile home is a little out of context here now.

**CLARE**

This land was the only thing Ray's daddy left him. He was gonna start a trailer park, but then that developer showed up and it was like we'd won the lottery.

**ELSBETH**

You could have used the money to buy a nice house somewhere else.

**CLARE**

I know, but we've been here as long as anywhere and it's been so nice to finally live in a nice neighborhood. I thought if I could get to know you all, that someday we'd be friends. If you're going to sell your nice houses on our account, I'll talk Ray into moving.

**TAYLOR**

Clare, I don't want you to sell your house.

**CLARE**

That's the beauty of a mobile home girls, we don't have to sell it. We'll just take it with us ...wherever we go.

**ELSBETH.**

*[Looking off right]* Get to your posts, ladies; we've got a carload of customers.

*[ELSBETH sits at the cash box. CLARE half-heartedly arranges her paintings as TAYLOR stacks the bags. The delegation approaches from stage left and swarms the place, picking over the lot. The group includes two children and two women, Harley Davidson enthusiasts. This is evident because both women are wearing black leather pants and jackets, and one woman has the company logo on her buttocks. The logo-wearer eyes Elsbeth's computer.]*

**RONDA**

*[Roughly]* How much for this computer?

**ELSBETH**

It's priced.

**NASAN**

Mom, can I have this game?

**RONDA**

Hold on a minute, Nasan! You've got to be kidding on this price, lady.

**ELSBETH**

Why, what does it say?

**RONDA**

It says *seven hundred dollars*.

**ELSBETH**

*[Singsong]* That's right.

**RONDA**

This is a *yard* sale, lady. That price is way too high.

**ELSBETH**

Why do you say that? How much did you pay for your motorcycle?

**RONDA**

What?

**ELSBETH**

It says "Harley Davidson" on your rear; I assumed you owned one.

**RONDA**

Well you *assumed* wrong.

**ELSBETH**

Look, *lady*, this isn't your typical dumpster dive on Craigslist. It's a 27-inch Apple Desktop with 5K Retina Display.

**NASAN**

Mom, can I get it?

**RONDA**

No! Now you go to the car before I whoop your butt good.

*[NASAN exits with a slumped head.]*

**ELSBETH**

That's really no way to speak to a child. Perhaps what you need is a book on parenting.

**RONDA**

You've got a smart mouth, lady, and someone needs to smack you in it!

**ELSBETH**

What?

*[CLARE and TAYLOR have been watching and come forward as the conflict heats up, as does the woman's companion, WOMAN TWO.]*

**RONDA**

I'm gonna kick your butt right now.

**WOMAN TWO**

Come on, let's go, Ronda. She's not worth it.

**RONDA**

No, I'm gonna show Miss *Superior* here what a slap feels like. You ever had a slap in your smart mouth?

**ELSBETH**

*[Still not taking Ronda seriously]* I don't think you need to resort to violence at nine o'clock in the morning. I know -- why don't you go home, get liquored up, and then hop on your Harley and come back and kick my buttocks this afternoon?

*[RONDA lunges forward as the WOMAN TWO moves to intervene. RONDA manages to slap ELSBETH once in the face before CLARE tackles RONDA, pulling her hair. TAYLOR wedges herself between the participants and the WOMAN TWO. The remaining child, CHILD TWO, shouts from ringside.]*

**CHILD TWO**

Kick her butt, mom! Tear her face off!

**CLARE**

*[Grabs the angel painting and starts hitting RONDA with it.]* Get off her! I said get off her now! Get out of here, now!

**RONDA**

You hit me with that one more time and you're next!

*[WOMAN TWO pulls RONDA up and starts dragging her off.]*

**WOMAN TWO**

Come on Ronda, this is stupid. You're gonna be back in lockup!.

*[The women and child move to hustle off stage left, but something stops RONDA in her tracks.]*

**RONDA**

Wait a minute -- is that Old Blue?

**WOMAN TWO**

Old blue?

**RONDA**

That yellow truck over there! This is Ray's place.

**ELSBETH**

You've got to be kidding me.

**RONDA**

*[To ELSBETH]* I'll be back, and I'm gonna kick your pretty face in.

**ELSBETH**

*[Shaken]* I can't wait.

**CHILD TWO**

You're toast, lady!

*[RONDA, WOMAN TWO, and CHILD TWO exit.]*

**ELSBETH**

Do we have an ice-pack?

**CLARE**

Are you alright, honey?

**ELSBETH**

*[Holding her right eye]* Yes, I think so, Clare, thanks to you.

**CLARE**

*[Still holding the painting]* Thanks to my angel. I told you she watches over me.

**ELSBETH**

I wish she'd been watching over *me*.

**CLARE**

She was! That's why that awful woman left.

**ELSBETH**

Coupled with the fact that you beat her with the angel.

**TAYLOR**

Talk about being touched by an angel.

**ELSBETH**

How does she know Ray, Clare?

**CLARE**

Ray rebuilt her carburetor last winter and has done odd jobs for her since. She's a repo agent for a big bank in Wichita. She's very good at what she does and loves stealing back cars in the dead of night.

**ELSBETH**

I believe it.

**CLARE**

She didn't have to do it when she took back the Camaro we got Jack, though. Ray just drove it over to her and handed her the keys.

**ELSBETH**

*[Pause.]* Did she threaten to strike him, too?

**CLARE**

I don't think so; they seem to hit it off.

**ELSBETH**

Why am I not surprised?... Sorry, Clare.

*[Pulls a compact out of her purse and looks at her eye.]*

**TAYLOR**

You should press charges, Elle. It sounds like she has it coming.

**ELSBETH**

I just might. I have a few friends at the firm who owe us a favor, and Ronda sounds like she has it coming.

**CLARE**

I don't think that's a good idea... Ronda doesn't have much to lose.

*[The two remaining shoppers, a gentleman, MAN ONE, and his son, BOY ONE, come forward with various items.]*

*They wait at the table in front of the cash box. ELSBETH returns to her seat to wait on them.]*

**ELSBETH**

Will this be all?

**MAN ONE**

Yes, thanks. Are you okay?

**ELSBETH**

I'm fine, thanks. Just a little misunderstanding.

**MAN ONE**

Well, you've got some good oldies here! *[Holds up a stack of 8-tracks]* ...and he's got a puzzle, and these shorts. I

hope we don't have to fight for them.

**ELSBETH**

Money's fine. Let's see, it looks like 10 cents each for the tapes, fifty cents for the puzzle, and a quarter for the shorts. It all comes to a dollar thirty five.

**MAN ONE**

That's quite a bargain for these classics.

**TAYLOR**

Do you still have an 8-track player?

**MAN ONE**

Are you kidding? I wouldn't get rid of it for the world! The way the song stops and you hear that "clunk, clunk" and it starts again makes it so authentic.

**ELSBETH**

It was definitely a *transition* technology.

**MAN ONE**

It still plays good music, though.

*[MAN ONE hands ELSBETH two dollars. ELSBETH makes change and bags the goods.]*

**MAN ONE**

Thanks a lot. You know, it's lucky we were driving by. I didn't see this advertised.

**CLARE**

Really? Ray said he called it in and put it on Craigslist.

**MAN ONE**

I didn't see it, and we *never* miss a sale. *[To his son]* Say thank you.

**BOY ONE**

Thank you.

**ELSBETH**

You're very welcome.

**MAN ONE**

Come on, Joey.

*[MAN ONE and BOY ONE exit left as the women straighten up the gone-through items.]*

**TAYLOR**

What a cute little boy.

**ELSBETH**

Yes, he was. It's nice to have customers with manners. Hey, look you two; let's not tell the spouses about my little scuffle, okay?

**CLARE**

Little scuffle? But why, Elsbeth? I think Ray should know what kind of people he does business with.

**ELSBETH**

If you don't mind, Clare, I'd rather we didn't.

**CLARE**

Okay, Elsbeth, I think I understand. Is Grace going to join us today?

**ELSBETH**

Eventually. She has been studying diligently for her finals. She's determined to keep her GPA at a 4.0. I wouldn't be surprised if she sleeps in a bit.

**CLARE**



That reminds me of my Bonnie. I have never seen so much coffee in our house like I did when she finished high school.

**TAYLOR**

Did she end up in a good school?

**CLARE**

She attends CCC, the community college down the road. I am so proud of her. She's the first in our family to attend school. What school is Grace going to go to, Elle?

**ELSBETH**

[slightly deflated] She settled for KU.

**TAYLOR**

Wow. Congratulations!

**ELSBETH**

Mitch was disappointed. Instead of following him to Princeton, she settled for a school here. What is Jack planning on for next year, Clare?

**CLARE**

I worry he's taken after his Daddy there. He seemed to dream his way through school and I worry his plan was to live with us for the next ten years. Ray says he's going to kick him out at the end of the school year no matter what.

**TAYLOR**

I know he'll figure something out before graduation.

**CLARE**

If he doesn't start figurin' soon, there won't be any graduation. It might already be too late. He did real fine his freshman year. [*Bragging*] He had a "C" average. Then he just stopped carin' for a while. He's trying to catch up now, but I'm afraid he's waited too long. I didn't want him to hafta work as hard as I do.

**ELSBETH**

But if he doesn't concentrate on finishing school, he's not going to have much of a future.

**CLARE**

Maybe *you* could tell him that. He never seems to listen to me. You're so lucky to have a girl like Grace; she's so smart.

**ELSBETH**

You know, I could ask Grace if she could tutorm your son through finals. I can't guarantee anything now, but she might be willing to help out.

**CLARE**

Don't you know? Grace has been tutoring Jack for the last few weeks.

**ELSBETH**

[*Amazed*] She has? Funny she hasn't mentioned it to me...

**TAYLOR**

[*Relieved*] Look, customers! And no black leather on any of them.

**ELSBETH**

If you ladies don't mind, I'm going to get some ice on this eye before I develop a shiner.

**TAYLOR**

Of course not, Elle; take all the time you need.

**CLARE**

Go, honey.

[*Two elderly ladies, ELDERLY LADY ONE and ELDERLY LADY TWO, enter stage right and browse as CLARE and TAYLOR talk.*]

**CLARE**

Do you think Elle's gonna be alright?

**TAYLOR**

Oh yeah, if you want to know the truth, I think she enjoyed the adventure.

**CLARE**

But a woman like Elle, so ladylike and proper, that was an awful thing to happen. Do you think she was upset about Grace helping Jack?

**TAYLOR**

I'm not sure, but she's tougher than she looks, Clare. Believe it or not, Elle had quite a different upbringing to the life she lives now.

**CLARE**

What do you mean?

**TAYLOR**

Well, and this is between you and me, before Mitch, Elle was married to a terrible man. He would drink and become abusive. Anyway, she got tired of that life and all of his trash, so she left him.

**CLARE**

Good for her.

**TAYLOR**

He stalked her for two years. He nearly wrecked her self confidence.

**CLARE**

How'd she get away from him?

**TAYLOR**

He passed away, *drunk* in a car crash. It's a miracle he didn't kill anyone else.

**CLARE**

That's terrible -- poor girl. So how did she meet Mitch?

**TAYLOR**

Mitch was her divorce attorney, she was feeling lost during the divorce and he was there for her.

**ELDERLY WOMAN ONE**

So you're saying that meeting this Mitch fella was the best thing that could have happened to her?

**TAYLOR**

*[Surprised by the eavesdropping.]* Well, I--

**ELDERLY WOMAN TWO**

That's nice. No one should be alone. When my Frankie died, I found comfort in the arms of the lawn man.

**TAYLOR**

Can we help you ladies?

**WOMAN ONE**

Of course, we didn't mean to spy.

**WOMAN TWO**

Who's doing the paintings?

**CLARE**

I am! Been working on this collection for years.

**WOMAN TWO**

Well, I sure do like 'em. They remind me of Bob Ross's work. I can practically see his face in this one.

**CLARE**

That's a portrait of him.

**WOMAN TWO**

Oh, of course it is. I love your work, honey, but I'm afraid I can't afford one right now. I'll keep you in mind, though.

My husband's birthday is coming up. I just might buy him one, if he lives that long, the old coot *[Laughs]*. Come

on, Nina, the Uber's waiting.

**TAYLOR**

*[As ELDERLY WOMAN ONE and ELDERLY WOMAN TWO exit stage right]* Nice to meet you!

**CLARE**

Browsers. The enemy of the modern artist.

**TAYLOR**

How many paintings *have* you sold, Clare?

**CLARE**

Well, I haven't made what you might call my "first" sale, yet. I've given them away, mostly. I just donated one to the Braille reading room at the library. They said they might take a couple more.

**TAYLOR**

That's got to be great. I mean, the exposure. Once the people see... [long pause] It's gotta help.

**CLARE**

Do me a favor, honey; take a look at this one. *[Holds a painting up in front of TAYLOR.]* What do you think?

**TAYLOR**

Well... it's striking. I like it.

**CLARE**

But how does it make you *feel*?

**TAYLOR**

*[Pauses and takes a long, discerning look.]* There's a lot of... blue.

**CLARE**

You're getting it. *[Getting excited]* Oh good, go on!

**TAYLOR**

Well, the mountains are beautiful... and there are a lot of trees...

**CLARE**

I hate to see a tree all alone. You know, Bob Ross *never* left a tree alone. He always gave them a little friend.

Sometimes I get started and I just can't stop!

**TAYLOR**

*[Looking at the painting]* That little *deer* looks --

**CLARE**

*[Curtly]* *Wolf*, honey.

**TAYLOR**

Wolf! Yes, what did I say? Deer? It's *clearly* a wolf. I have *got* to get these contacts checked.

**CLARE**

It's the lighting. The glare can make it hard to see.

**TAYLOR**

Yeah, that's probably it.

**CLARE**

You seem to understand my work, Taylor, and the thought of one of *my* paintings hanging on your wall would make me so happy.

**TAYLOR**

*[Half-heartedly]* Oh, me too...

**CLARE**

Just don't tell Ray. He said if I don't show a profit soon, I've got to quit painting and help him on his Game of Thrones project.

**TAYLOR**

Game of Thrones project?

**CLARE**

I think it's called "Welp" now. But honey, believe me, you don't want to know.

**TAYLOR**

I believe you.

*[ELSBETH enters left, wearing dark sunglasses and a hat.]*

**ELSBETH**

How's business, gals?

**TAYLOR**

Not doin' much.

**CLARE**

Mostly browsers.

**TAYLOR**

How's the eye?

**ELSBETH**

I just covered it up with some concealer. It's a little swollen.

**TAYLOR**

You look fine.

**CLARE**

Did you see the spouses when you were inside?

**ELSBETH**

Oh yeah. When I left them they were drooling over Mitch's billiard table.

**TAYLOR**

What is it about them and games?

[Two women enter right and looks through the inventory.]

**CLARE**

Ray can sit for hours, glued to that tube, watching football. He just sits there and barks at me to bring him more beer and pork rinds.

**ELSBETH**

Pork rinds?

**TAYLOR**

Oh, you know, those snack things.

**CLARE**

Ray loves 'em; he can sit there and eat a whole bag.

**ELSBETH**

What are they made of?

**TAYLOR**

Pork?

**CLARE**

Rinds.

**TAYLOR**

It's funny. Kim hadn't ever watched a TV until she was 10 years old, but turn on Netflix or put soccer in front of her, and she'll disappear for weeks.

**ELSBETH**

Sounds like all our spouses try to hide the fact that they'll never grow up, but sports show that they're still children.

**CLARE**

Or cars.

**TAYLOR**

Or Netflix.

**CLARE**

Or boats.

**TAYLOR**

Or racing.

**CLARE**

Don't forget pork rinds.

**ELSBETH**

And secretaries..

*[CLARE and TAYLOR look at her.]*

What? [Pause.] I'm not talking about *Mitch*. I'm talking about spouses in *general*. You know, how they say bosses are attracted to their secretaries.

**TAYLOR**

But you're Mitch's secretary.

**ELSBETH**

You'd better believe it.

*[JACK enters right and is holding something in his outstretched hand.]*

**JACK**

Mom, do you know where Dad is? The alarm went off for his meds.

**CLARE**

Oh, honey, I'm so happy you came down. Elle, would it be okay if I went into your home and gave these to him?

**ELSBETH**

Sure. Knock yourself out.

**CLARE**

Jack, could you help the two gals looking at our things over there? I think they might have a question.

**JACK**

Sure.



*[CLARE exits left, JACK moves upstage to help the gals, and ELSBETH brings TAYLOR backstage.]*

**ELSBETH**

*[Gestures at Jack]* Did you know that Grace was tutoring *him*?!

**TAYLOR**

I've seen Grace walking over to their house after school a time or two.

**ELSBETH**

Seriously? You *need* to tell me these things, Tay.

**TAYLOR**

I didn't think it was any big deal; she was always carrying a pile of books. It was obvious what she was doing.

**ELSBETH**

And what was that?

**TAYLOR**

*Tutoring.* Elsbeth, relax. I don't know what you're getting upset about.

**ELSBETH**

I trust Grace, I do. It's just that I've invested everything I have in making sure she has a bright future. I get a little nervous when it comes to dating. Especially when we're talking about the offspring of the junkman in the red shorts.

**TAYLOR**

I wouldn't worry. Those two are as opposite as they come.

**ELSBETH**

You know what they say about opposites... I'm just being silly. You're right, Taylor, I'm going to give myself an ulcer before she goes off to college.

**TAYLOR**

Don't worry, Elle; let's just concentrate on getting this sale over with.

**ELSBETH**

By the look of things, *[touches her cheek]* this will be one of the biggest challenges of my life. I can't believe I'm part of a *yard* sale. This idea of yours better work.

*[The CUSTOMERS have completed their purchases and JACK joins the others.]*

**JACK**

Well, Taylor, you made a dollar seventy five, and Elle, you made three dollars on those black shoes of yours. Ma struck out on her paintings, though.

**ELSBETH**

Oh, I'm sure she'll sell some. They're beautiful!

**JACK**

Are they?

*[Taylor giggles at this.]*

**ELSBETH**

[Embarrassed and surprised to be called out by JACK] Of course. Yeah... if you're into that sort of.. style.

----

## **ACT ONE: SCENE TWO**

*[Scene goes to the billiard room. KIM and MITCH are deep into a game, while RAY receives a call on his phone.]*

**RAY**

Can one of you wheel me into another room? I'm getting a business call.

**MITCH**

*[With scorn]* A business call? Are you getting nibbles for "Welp"?

**RAY**

No, for another project. These happen pretty often, believe it or not.

**MITCH**

Feel free to wheel him into the laundry area, Kim.

*[KIM looks at MITCH at this, but complies.]*

*[The phone rings again and RAY, now alone, answers on the second ring.]*

**RONDA**

You're lucky you answered.

**RAY**

So are you, Ronda. You know how hard it is for me to get some alone time in this chair?

**RONDA**

We have a problem, Ray.

**RAY**

I told ya I didn't feel too good about your carburetor I worked on. There's only so much I can do with a Quadrajunk.

**RONDA**

It ain't about business. I swung by your yard sale earlier.

**RAY**

Now look, I thought you gave me that ol' car battery I was sellin', but it's possible I misunderstood.

**RONDA**

It ain't about that either. Boy, you were right about those neighbors of yours, Ray. That blonde has quite a mouth.

**RAY**

Oh boy. That'd be Elsbeth. Did she say something to you?

**RONDA**

She did, and I gave her a black eye for it. And with your blessing, I'm gonna come back and make sure the hussy's learned her lesson.

**RAY**

Aw, she don't know any better.

**RONDA**

You might be surprised. She strikes me as a gal who's been around the block.

**RAY**

That's all P's and Q's, Ronda. Now, there ain't a reason to do any of this. Think of your kids. You can't have something else on your record.

**RONDA**

She wouldn't even know what'd hit her. It'd be a shame if that Mini Cooper she drives turned up in a pond.

**RAY**

She drives an Infiniti

**RONDA**

Of course she does

**RAY**

And that ain't gonna happen.

**RONDA**

I need you to convince me not to.

**RAY**

[*Gulps*] What do you have in mind?

**RONDA**

You have a set of pristine tires that still have visible tread. Give those to me and we'll call it even.

**RAY**

Aw, Ronda. Not the tires.

**RONDA**

It's those or the hussy's Infiniti.

**RAY**

Well, I only have three. Is that gonna be a problem?

**RONDA**

It will be, but it ain't mine.

**RAY**

I'll figure somethin' out.

**RONDA**

I'm surprised at you, Ray. Seems like you're gettin soft.

**RAY**

I ain't soft. I just don't want trouble for you, is all. Just pick them up when everyone's gone. I don't want you attractin' attention.

**RONDA**

Don't worry, I don't want anyone to know about this. You might be goin' soft, but I'm not - it'd be bad for my reputation.

**RAY**

Ronda, I don't think my neighbors run with your crowd.

**RONDA**

No, theirs would be even worse. I guarantee you one of those snobs has a ritzy high dollar lawyer who'd go after me if they could. I've repo'd a few rides from those folks. You'd throw them out the window after lookin' at 'em.

**RAY**

You might be surprised.

**RONDA**

I'll be by around midnight. Have the tires ready then.

**RAY**

Deal.

*[CLARE enters from behind with Ray's medicine and a glass of water.]*

**RAY**

Clare! What brings you to this palace?

**CLARE**

Jack brought your medicine by. You forgot to bring it with you this morning.

**RAY**

*[Taking the medicine]* That's a good boy.

**CLARE**

What was that about?

**RAY**

Aw, just business. How's the sale?

**CLARE**

It's... It's... [*Holds silent for a moment, then bursts into tears*]

**RAY**

Aw, Clare. What's eating you?

**CLARE**

You were right. I don't know why I ever thought these people were going to like me. I'm *trash* compared to them.

**RAY**

There, there. You ain't trash, Clare. I won't let you call yourself that. The truth is... well, the truth is I'd be nothing without you.

**CLARE**

Ray, don't say that.

**RAY**

We both know it's true. I don't know how you do it, workin' two jobs and providin' like you do. Once these people see who you really are, they're gonna love you, they really are.

**CLARE**

Oh Ray, you big softy.

[*The two embrace.*]

**RAY**

Alright, that's enough of that. Let's go back out and have a great sale.

----

[*In the billiard room, MITCH is taking a shot at the pool table.*]

**MITCH**

You're too kind to him.

**KIM**

I'm too kind to him?

**MITCH**

The man tried to steal and profit off your weed-eater. You're letting him push you around and smiling while he does it.

**KIM**

These people don't bother me. I guess I believe there's more to life than losing sleep over a weed whacker.

**MITCH**

The goal of this thing is to convince *these people* to move away.

**KIM**

Yeah, well, only one person has bothered me today, and it wasn't Ray.

*[MITCH gives KIM a confused glance as RAY and CLARE re-enter the billiard room.]*

**RAY**

All ready to head back? I'm sure the crew is struggling without us.

**MITCH**

*[Still looking at Kim]* Sure... I imagine they're overwhelmed by the rush. Ready, Kim?

**KIM**

*[Leering at Mitch]* Sure.

---

### **ACT ONE: SCENE THREE**

*[ELSBETH and TAYLOR are sitting at the yardsale, while JACK gives the hard sell on his Mom's paintings from behind.]*

**TAYLOR**

He's quite the people person. Thanks to him, our little sale is picking up steam.

**ELSBETH**

If only he were here when Ronda's gang was.

**TAYLOR**

How's the eye?

**ELSBETH**

Still throbbing. But when I was inside, I was sure to grab more than an ice pack.

**TAYLOR**

Yeah?

**ELSBETH**

*[Flashing a business card]* This is a friend of Mitch's who works with the DA. And he owes us *both* a favor.

**TAYLOR**

I don't know if this is a good idea. Clare made it sound like Ronda would be best left alone.

**ELSBETH**

*[Dialing]* How Clare and Ronda's *bestie* Ray would handle this is not my concern. The real world has been shielded from all of them, and today is the day that changes.

*[ELSBETH puts the phone to her ear]*

Yes, Clive? I need to call in a favor.

—

*[CLARE, RAY, KIM and MITCH are walking back from Mitch's home and are heard off right as they enter. MITCH is pushing RAY back to the sale.]*

**RAY**

Mitch, that room is a slice of heaven. I think I could live there for the rest of my life. Ow! Watch the leg!

**MITCH**

Sorry, Ray. You know, you can build your own, after you launch Welp.

**RAY**

I want your blueprints.

*[The gang is approaching the sale, and ELSBETH is heard in the distance.]*

**ELSBETH**

*[On phone]* Yes, thank you very much. *[Hangs up.]*

**TAYLOR**

So did you loafers have a good time?



**KIM**

I know what I want for my birthday.

**TAYLOR**

Let me guess -- pork rinds?

**KIM**

What?

**ELSBETH**

You all missed out on a pretty good rush of business. Your son is quite the salesman.

**RAY**

*[Looks at Jack]* He's a grifter, alright.

**JACK**

Love you too, Dad.

**MITCH**

Did we actually make some money? Hey, Elle, what's with the glasses? Embarrassed to be seen with our junk?

**ELSBETH**

We've only made five dollars so far, but we've met the *niciest* people.

**RAY**

Well we better sell all this junk soon. The weather channel says severe weather's headed this way.

**TAYLOR**

You think it'll really hit us? There's not a cloud in the sky.

**RAY**

You know Kansas weather, if you don't like it, wait a minute.

**CLARE**

It'll change.

**RAY**

Clare, why don't you run over to the house and get my tarps, in case it does rain, and take our lazy son with you.

If we're gonna suffer, he's going to suffer with us.

**ELSBETH**

First law of parenthood.

**RAY**

That's right.

**CLARE**

*[Reluctantly]* I guess I could... you wanna come with us, Taylor? I'd love to show you my garden. My zucchinis are huge.

**TAYLOR**

Sure, Clare. I'd much rather cover up all this stuff than take it all back home.

**KIM**

We'll probably need some rope or bun-gee cables, too.

**RAY**

Back 'a my truck, Clare.

**CLARE**

Gotcha.

*[CLARE, JACK, and TAYLOR exit right.]*

**ELSBETH**

*[Eying Ray's shorts]* Those are interesting shorts, Ray. How long have you had them?

**RAY**

I noticed you were starin' at 'em. They're my favorite pair, too. I wear 'em when I wash my truck or when I'm out workin' in the yard.

**ELSBETH**

Yes, I think I've seen you in them.

**MITCH**

So they sort of stuck in your mind, did they?

*[Elsbeth is not amused.]*

**RAY**

Well, Mitch, since it seems your wife is smitten with these shorts, I guess I'll tell ya. I think I got them at the Wal-Mark.

**MITCH**

I appreciate that, Ray. Elle, are you getting this down? There's a pencil in that box over there.

**ELSBETH**

Not funny... What I was noticing, Ray, was that they look as if you've had them on for a while.

**RAY**

You don't miss much, Ellie. As a matter of fact, I've been wearin' em since I broke my leg. It hurts too bad to try to take 'em off. Now, don't get me wrong, they're comfortable. It's just that after a week or two, they start riding up something awful.

*[Others wince.]*

**KIM**

*[Changing subject]* What about that thunderstorm last week?

**RAY**

Heck of a blow, I tell ya. Our trailer was rockin' and no one came a knockin'.

**ELSBETH**

You wouldn't believe what it did to our pool. The wind took the cover off and blew all kinds of junk into the water.

By the way, Ray, are you missing a pink lawn flamingo?

**RAY**

Yes I am! And I want it back. It's part of a ten piece set.

**MITCH**

I noticed you had a bunch of them. Sometimes it looks like a flock of them landed in your yard to feed.

**RAY**

That's the look I was goin' for, and I want that bird back.

**ELSBETH**

I'm afraid Mitch has already painted it blue.

**RAY**

What?

**ELSBETH**

Well it's little leg was bent and Mitch didn't think you'd want it back.

**RAY**

Oh that's *real* funny.

**MITCH**

Ever get scared living in that trailer during storms, Ray? I mean it must be hard living in a trailer in Kansas.

**RAY**

Well, Mitch, I kinda figure, when it's my time to go, it won't matter where I'm at -- I'm gonna get it.

**KIM**

You know, Ray, you're welcome over to our place when it storms.

*[MITCH gives KIM a look at this.]*

**RAY**

It means more to Clare than me and Jack. She gets nervous every time the wind blows. I appreciate the offer, though, Kim. I swear, the last storm put a foot of water in the shed.

**ELSBETH**

Did you wade through it in those awful shorts?

*[MITCH elbows her.]*

**RAY**

Can't stop thinkin' about the shorts, huh Elle?

*[She grimaces.]*

Well, you better cut it out before Clare gets back; she gets *real* jealous.

**MITCH**

Now, Ray, Elsbeth was only trying to help.

**RAY**

Okay, if you say so. But you've *got* to get some red shorts of your own...soon.

*[Another group of customers, MOTHER, CHILD #1 approaches from stage left. While one of her children look around, their mother goes straight to the computer.]*

**MOTHER**

*[After a moment]* I need a computer real bad. Seven hundred dollars, huh? It seems a little high. Can you tell me a little about it?

**ELSBETH**

It's mine. I can tell you that only a year ago I paid a lot more for it.

**MOTHER**

Okay.

**ELSBETH**

All the software goes with it and that's a laserjet printer.

**MOTHER**

Why are you selling it?

**ELSBETH**

We simply needed a computer with more RAM and my husband got a deal to upgrade.

**MOTHER**

It seems like a good deal, but it's a little more than I have to spend. Would you take any less?

**MITCH**

Make us a offer.

**ELSBETH**

Wait a minute, Mitch, I think it's fairly priced.

**RAY**

Oh come on, Ellie, cut the woman a break. Can't you see she's got kids to feed?

**ELSBETH**

Ray, I really don't think this is any of your --

**MOTHER**

I'd give you three hundred dollars for it.

**RAY**

That sounds good.

**ELSBETH**

Not to me.

**CHILD #1**

I can put my allowance toward it too, Mom! I have \$39 saved up.

**MITCH**

Now there's a future entrepreneur. \$339 sounds good to me.

**ELSBETH**

But Mitch, it's --

**MITCH**

Come on, Elle...

**RAY**

Yeah, give 'er a "severe weather" special.

**ELSBETH**

*[Pause.]*

I guess three thirty nine is all right, but you're getting a heck of a bargain.

**MOTHER**

Well thank you, that's why I shop at yard sales. Will you take a check?

**ELSBETH**

Oh, I don't know. I'd feel better if you paid with cash.

**MOTHER**

It's Sunday. I can't get to the bank until tomorrow.

**RAY**

Why don't you fire up that fancy computer and do a credit check on the woman?

**ELSBETH**

*[Ignoring Ray]* Why don't you give me your name and address and I'll drop it by your house tomorrow afternoon?

Do you live here in town?

**MOTHER**

Yes, that sounds fine. It will give me time to tell my husband about it. Come on, Spencer. Thank you very much.

*[After she leaves the information, MOTHER and her brood exit left.]*

**RAY**

Well that was *real* kind of you, Ellie.

**ELSBETH**

It was rude of you to interfere with *my* transaction.

**RAY**

Hey, I wasn't interferin'! It's just hard to sit by and see rich people get richer, while the poor get the shaft.

**ELSBETH**

I don't know what you're talking about. That computer was worth every penny of its *original* price.

**RAY**

It might have been fair, but what's fair isn't always what's right.

**ELSBETH**

Well, let's make a deal. I won't tell you how to sell your... your... *[looking around]* television, and you stop plea  
bargaining on behalf of my customers.

**RAY**

The TV's not for sale.

*[GRACE enters right, looking sleepy.]*

**MITCH**

Hey, look who's up.

**KIM**

Late night, Grace?

**GRACE**

I was studying late. I've got finals next week. Excuse my frumpy sweats, but I figured I couldn't under-dress for *this*.

**ELSBETH**

I'm proud of you for working so hard on your studies, honey, but you really do need your sleep.

**GRACE**

I know, Mom, as soon as finals are over.

**ELSBETH**

Well, honey, I'm glad you're up. I'm going to need you to take a shift while I get my hair done.

**MITCH**

You've got a hair appointment *today*? That's suspiciously convenient.

**ELSBETH**

It was the only time Rene could do me. He's coming in *especially* for me.

**MITCH**

Heaven forbid I stand between you and the *fabulous* Rene.

**ELSBETH**

*[Looking at her watch]* Look, people, I'll be back in one hour. Oh, Grace, I sold my computer!

**GRACE**

I guess it wasn't priced too high.

**RAY**

It was. Your mom's lucky I helped her negotiate.

**GRACE**

What?

**ELSBETH**

Oh nothing, honey. Tata, everyone. Rene awaits!

*[ELSBETH exits left.]*

**GRACE**

What should I do, Dad?



**MITCH**

Why don't you watch the cash box, hon?

**RAY**

And keep your eye on the do-dads.

**GRACE**

*[Counting the cash]* There's almost nothing in here.

**RAY**

Hey, Kim, want to do me a little favor?

**KIM**

Sure, Ray, what do you need?

**RAY**

I've been sittin' here lookin' at them tires of mine, and I think they'd sell quicker if I had four.

**KIM**

What can I do about that?

**RAY**

Over at the south end of my trailer, inside the dog pen, there's a fifteen-inch radial with some decent tread on it.

**MITCH**

If it's a good tire, what's it doing in the dog pen?

**RAY**

Barney likes to have something to chew on. He took a liking to the old thing and I didn't have the heart to take it away from 'em.

**KIM**

Your dog's not going to bite me when I try to get the tire, is he?

**RAY**

He ain't chewed on it for a while now. I threw him in an old mannequin I found behind JC Penney's. Boy did he tear right into her!

**MITCH**

Good, then it's not as if he's ever bitten anything that resembles a human.

**KIM**

He's gonna bite me isn't he?

**RAY**

Not if you don't show any fear.

**MITCH**

Do you think that's such a good idea? I mean, can you guarantee the dog won't bite?

**RAY**

There're no guarantees in this life, Mitch.

**KIM**

What kind of answer is that?

**RAY**

Just stay clear of his *woman* and you'll be okay. At least the big pieces.

**KIM**

Pieces?

**RAY**

Come on. That old dog's hardly got any teeth left. Besides, I keep him fed, so he won't eat much.

**MITCH**

Has the animal been vaccinated?

**RAY**

He's clean; cleaner than you and me.

**MITCH**

Speak for yourself.

**GRACE**

Barney's okay, Dad. His bark is worse than his bite.

**MITCH**

You've been near that animal, Grace?

**GRACE**

Sure, Daddy, I see him every time I tutor Jack.

**MITCH**

You're tutoring Ray's boy? Does your mother know about this?

**GRACE**

I *think* she knows.

**MITCH**

Well, we'll talk about *that* later. In the meantime, you will stay clear of that dog from now on.

**GRACE**

Sure, Dad.

**RAY**

Well, what do ya say, Kim?

**KIM**

*[Pause.]*

Sure, Ray... Ray, is that tire even the same *size* as those others?

**RAY**

They're only off a size, but with any luck she won't notice for a while.

**KIM**

Who won't notice?

**RAY**

Don't worry 'bout it.

**MITCH**

That's a rather shabby way to treat someone, isn't it, Ray?

**RAY**

The way I see it, whoever gets 'em is lucky. That old tire will be the only one that hasn't been recalled. Don't

worry, Kim, you'll be back in a little bite. *[Snickers.]*

*[KIM looks at everyone as if he's going before a firing squad.]*

**MITCH**

Be careful, Kim.

**RAY**

Remember Kim, don't show any fear!

**KIM**

What do you mean by *showing* fear?

**RAY**

Like you're doin' now.

**KIM**

Oh... okay, I'm going.

*[KIM exits slowly as MITCH watches with concern.]*

**GRACE**

*[Looking at the sky]* Is it supposed to rain, Dad?

**MITCH**

My phone says we've got a storm front coming in.

**GRACE**

So what are we doing here?

**MITCH**

*[Looking at Ray]* That's a very good question.

**RAY**

I wonder what's keepin' everyone. I know those tarps are right there in front of the shed.

**MITCH**

How big *is* that shed of yours?

**RAY**

I don't know. I haven't seen the back of it for years. Got three boats and a van in there somewhere. I suppose it's about fifteen by twenty-five.

**MITCH**

And that was an original structure?

**RAY**

It was there when we moved the trailer in.

**MITCH**

Does it have a concrete floor?

**RAY**

Yeah, Mitch, why are you asking me all these questions about my shed? Ya thinking of building one?

**MITCH**

No, I was just wondering what your property taxes were like.

**RAY**

They go up every year, but I'm sure they're not as high as yours, with that *mansion* you live in.

**MITCH**

You ever think of selling?

**RAY**

*[Taking a long look at Mitch]* Why, Is Kim looking to build on?

**MITCH**

No, I don't think so, but I've got a friend at the firm who's looking to build a new house. If you were to sell, what would you ask for the place?

**RAY**

I haven't really thought about it, but I guess around... two hunert n' fifty thousan.

**MITCH**

That much? Is that for the trailer as well?

**RAY**

No, just the land. And my nice shed, of course.

*[Suddenly, from off left, the sound of a dog barking wildly is heard.]*

**KIM**

*[Offstage] Ray! He's bitin me! Ray! Down! Down! Ray!*

*[RAY starts to roll, but MITCH stops him.]*

**MITCH**

I'll go.

*[MITCH runs off left; RAY and GRACE are transfixed on the area of the trailer off right. After a moment, RAY shouts.]*

**RAY**

Don't show any fear!

**[BLACKOUT]**

---

**ACT TWO: SCENE ONE**

*[The shelter is darker now with occasional flashes of lightning. The yard sale items are covered with tarps. A laptop is sitting on top of one of the tarps. TAYLOR consoles KIM, who sits, looking angry with a bandaged arm. The dog is still barking off right. The group is assembled, minus ELSBETH and JACK. The group is seated in various positions and look defeated.]*

**KIM**

That evil dog... I swear his eyes were glowing red.

**RAY**

You must 'a showed fear. I told you not to. And his eyes are just blood shot.

**KIM**

I didn't *do* anything. I just went for the tire and he went crazy on me! *[Dramatically]* He made this low growl, so I froze. It was like a nightmare. Then he started to lunge at me and I'd already closed the gate, so the only place I could think to go was into his house.

**RAY**

Big mistake. He's real possessive of his house. *[Looking at Mitch]* Kinda like me.

**KIM**

I know. As soon as I crammed myself in there I knew it was a mistake. He had me trapped!

**TAYLOR**

I'm so sorry, Kim, I was too afraid to go in there.

*[JACK returns to the scene with the tire.]*

**JACK**

Here's your tire, Dad.

**RAY**

See! Did you show fear, Jack?

**JACK**

Uh, no. I've had him since I was 7.

**TAYLOR**

This whole thing is ridiculous. Kim shouldn't have been in there in the first place.

**MITCH**

I tried to tell you, Ray.

**RAY**

He usually don't go for the arm; he's kinda partial to the butt.

**TAYLOR**

You're a butt. What kind of man keeps a dangerous animal like that in a nice neighborhood?

**RAY**

I keep him locked up.

**KIM**

Why'd you send me in there, Ray? You knew he'd bite me.

**RAY**

I didn't *know* he'd bite you. I'm surprised he had it in him.

**KIM**

You sound like you're proud of him.

**RAY**

I ain't proud he bit ya. I'm just sayin' he stood his ground when his *home* was threatened.

**KIM**

[*Stoically*] I wasn't threatening his home.

**RAY**

You *were* in it, weren't you?

**KIM**

Not because I wanted to be.

**RAY**

Well, Barney didn't know that.

**MITCH**

Well, Ray, seeing as how he broke the skin, that vaccination issue has reared its ugly head again.

**RAY**

He barely scratched her arm.

**MITCH**

It doesn't matter how deep the wound is. If the skin was broken, Kim could be infected.

**RAY**

I told you, the dog was clean.

**MITCH**

Whether the dog is clean or not is no longer the issue. The issue now is whether or not the animal is carrying any diseases.

**KIM**

What! Good Lord, Ray, has the dog had his shots or not?

**RAY**

I don't believe these pansies! I told you the dog is clean. I don't see what the big deal is.

**CLARE**

He had his shots.



*[Group sigh of relief.]*

Two years ago.

**TAYLOR**

Two years! Clare, why doesn't he have his *current* shots?

**RAY**

We couldn't afford it.

**MITCH**

Well, pay now or pay later.

**RAY**

What's *that* supposed to mean?

**MITCH**

I'm just saying that you may be legally liable for Kim's injury.

**CLARE**

Oh my goodness.

**TAYLOR**

Now I don't think we need to --

**KIM**

Ray, I just want to have the dog checked out; he broke the skin!

**RAY**

Broke the skin? You'd think he tore your arm off, the way you're going on.

**MITCH**

I don't think we have to sort all this out right now. Why don't you take the animal to the vet Monday and have him checked out? He could have rabies, Ray!

**KIM**

Rabies?

**TAYLOR**

It's okay, Kim.

**KIM**

Sure it's okay for you, you don't have rabies!

**RAY**

No one has rabies!

**MITCH**

Can't you see? Kim's not going to be able to relax until you have the dog checked. Why are you resisting?

**RAY**

Because I can't afford it...

**GRACE**

They can't check Barney for rabies without killing him.

**JACK**

What?

**MITCH**

Grace, I think it's best if we discuss this *later*.

**RAY**

If you're talking about killing my dog, it's gonna be a lot later. Like never.

*[ELSBETH enters right, still wearing sunglasses. Her hair is immaculate.]*

**ELSBETH**

So, what's been going on?

*[Everyone looks at her.]*

What?

**MITCH**

Look, I think we'd be wise to collect our things and go home before it storms.

**TAYLOR**

It does seem like this whole day was never meant to be.

**ELSBETH**

Wait a second, Grace, have you met Jack? Jack is Ray and Clare's son.

**GRACE**

*[Putting on a face]* Oh, uh, hey, Jack? *[Extends hand.]*

**JACK**

Yeah, Jack. I'm Jack. And.. You are?"

**Grace**

Grace? How do you do?

**ELSBETH**

Oh, stop. The cat's out of the bag. I know all about your late night *escapades*.

**GRACE**

Oh please, Mom, I'm just his tutor.

**RAY**

Don't let that woman play games with you, son. I want to know whether you wussies are gonna kill our dog.

**ELSBETH**

What on *earth* is he talking about?

**RAY**

I'm not gonna let you guys sneak off to plan how you're gonna kill my dog and sue us into the poorhouse.

**MITCH**

Into the poorhouse? You're already there!

**TAYLOR**

Nobody *wants* to kill Barney. We've just got to make sure that Kim doesn't have rabies.

**RAY**

*[Looks at Jack]* Are you ever gonna stand up for yourself, son? *[Jack stays put beside Grace]* In case you don't know, Kim and that high ridin' Mitch are wanting to sue us and kill your dog.

**JACK**

I don't blame Kim or Mitch. If you had just waited til I got back we wouldn't have had a problem, but when *King*

*Ray* wants something, he wants it now.

**RAY**

What the - are you actually siding with that ambulance chaser?

**ELSBETH**

I won't have you talking to Mitch that way! I'm sure that you --

**RAY**

Now, missy, you may wear the pants in your house, but this here thing is between the *men*. Why don't you go home before the wind picks up and messes up your fancy hair.

**ELSBETH**

Why you--!

**MITCH**

Elle! I will handle this!

**ELSBETH**

You're going to stand here and let this white trash talk to you this way?

**KIM**

This whole thing is getting blown out of --

**RAY**

You're calling me white trash, you self-righteous snot! You've been looking down your *nose job* at my family since you moved in. I don't know where you come off sitting in judgment over me.

**ELSBETH**

Well at least *my* husband works. He doesn't sit around on his fat butt all day eating pork rinds and lowering property values by parking a run-down trailer in the middle of a beautiful neighborhood.

**RAY**

Now I knew that's what this was really all about. I'll have you know I had my house here, wheels and all, a long time before yours fell from heaven and long before this was a beautiful neighborhood.

**CLARE**

Honey, stop!

**RAY**

I'm gonna have my say!

**KIM**

This whole thing is about *my* arm. Let's just calm down.

**MITCH**

I'm going to have my say too, Ray! I didn't want to have this discussion but the can of worms is open. The developer had an understanding with you; you were to move when the last house was complete. You were offered more than enough for your land and that *hovel* you call a house. Why didn't you live up to that agreement?!

**RAY**

I'll tell you why--

**CLARE**

It was for me! Okay, I'm sorry! Ray *wanted* to leave, he was packing, and I begged him to stay. I wanted to live in a nice neighborhood for *once* in my life. [*Sobbing*] I am so sorry I caused all of this. I just thought that if you got to know us, everything would work out. I never dreamed this would happen. We'll leave as soon as we can sell our place.

**RAY**

I hope you're happy. You made her cry.

**JACK**

To be honest, none of this should surprise anyone.

**ELSBETH**

This was a great idea, Taylor; have a stupid sale so we can talk this buffoon into selling his dump. I told you it wouldn't work!

**TAYLOR**

Elle!

**CLARE**

[*Hurt*] Taylor?

**TAYLOR**

Clare, it's not like it sounds.

*[Silence.]*

Thanks a lot, Elle.

**MITCH**

You had to open your mouth.

**ELSBETH**

Someone had to say *something*! You all want them out as much as I do!

**MITCH**

Elle!

**ELSBETH**

You all sit around complaining about them, but not *one* of you has the nerve to tell them. Well, I do and I did!

**RAY**

You sure did!

**CLARE**

We're moving, okay? We're moving so everybody just *stop*!

**RAY**

The heck if we are! We're never moving! Do you all hear? I'm gonna get ten more boats and a hundred more lawn flamingos! And the next time it storms, I'll bring my whole family to your front door!

**ELSBETH**

You'd better not knock on our door! You'd better not set foot in our yard!

**MITCH**

No *we're* moving. We will not sit by and watch this neighborhood degenerate any further! So you can have as many boats and birds as you want! With your run down house here, it should be easy to sell ours. I'm sure the crack dealers will line up for a mile for a chance to buy it!

**GRACE**

[Upset] Why are you doing this, Dad? Why are you treating them like this? Why do you always have to be such a *snob*? I'm sick of it, and I'm sick of you!

**ELSBETH**

[Shocked] Honey?!

**MITCH**

Go home now! I'm surprised at your behavior.

[As all this goes on, the storm is getting more intense.]

**GRACE**

Well, I've got a surprise for you, "Mommy" and "Daddy". Jack and I are in love!

**JACK**

Is this really the time?

[Pause. Silence.]

**GRACE**

[Steps toward Jack and grabs his hand] It's past time, Jack! We've been dating for two months. Oh, yeah! I visit him every evening when you and mom *think* I'm studying. If you ever bothered to take a minute out of your "important" lives to check on me, you might have found out by now!

**ELSBETH**

I can't believe that you've been sneaking around!

**GRACE**

I didn't have to "sneak" around! You didn't even suspect anything! You've never noticed anything I've done.

**ELSBETH**

That's crazy! I have done *nothing* but worry over you for the last seventeen years.

**GRACE**

You haven't worried about me! You've worried about my future and how I look to your friends. You've had me worrying about my future for so long, I haven't had a life! It's all for you! Everything I've ever done has been for *you*!

**ELSBETH**

That's ridiculous.

**GRACE**

You don't know what love is! You don't know how to show love or compassion for anyone unless its

"cost-effective" to do so.

**MITCH**

And I suppose Ray and Clare do? I suppose it's a real loving environment inside that trailer.

**GRACE**

I've been inside that "trailer" enough to know that *their* family and friends spend time with each other; they live for today.

**ELSBETH**

That's because they have no future! They have nothing! You think that boy has anything to offer you? Half of nothing is nothing!

**GRACE**

Jack's given me a lot...

**MITCH**

[*Suspicious. Glares at Jack*] A lot of what?

**GRACE**

[Grabs Jack's hand and smiles at him] Love.

**MITCH**

Love? What have you been doing with that loser?!

**RAY**

Hey! I'm about to come up out of this chair and bust you one.

**JACK**

Then what are you waiting for? *Do it*, Dad! But if you do, that'd mean that leg of yours is just fine, huh?

**RAY & CLARE**

Jack?!



**JACK**

So you'll never do it, then. Cause then mom wouldn't have to service your every whim and you wouldn't be King anymore, huh?

**RAY**

Son, if my leg weren't broke so bad, you know I'd do what I could to help the family.

**JACK**

Oh, really? Because before that leg was broken, Mom was still workin' herself to death at two jobs to keep this family alive.

**ELSBETH**

My apologies, Grace. I can see what a loving environment we've *deprived* you of for so long.

**MITCH**

*[Points at Ray]* Take a long look, Grace. Because if this is what you want for your future, by all means--

**GRACE**

Oh shut up, Dad. Jack isn't Ray *[Looks at Ray]* No offense, Ray.

**RAY**

None taken.

**GRACE**

We volunteer together down in a classroom at the grade school. Jack was the one who introduced me to the program.

**RAY**

Wait, what?! You never told me you were doin' anything like that, son!

**JACK**

You never let me. If I didn't have a wrench or a leather ball in my hand, you didn't want to know about it.

**RAY**

*[To Clare]* Did you know about this?

**CLARE**

[*Innocently*] He didn't want you to know. Bonnie helped him get started with the program after he threw his arm out. He is so great with the kids.

**MITCH**

Well Grace, I hope he really is great with kids. Because staying home might be all he ever does when you try to start your own practice.

**GRACE**

Are you saying Jack being a good father would be a bad thing? Mom stayed home with me until I was sixteen.

You both have pushed me to find someone with a good career my entire life, but all I care about is finding someone who will make me happy.

**MITCH**

I'm done with this conversation. Go home, Grace, and wait in your room until we come back.

**JACK**

No. She's coming back to my place.

**MITCH**

Excuse me?

**GRACE**

You heard him. And if you come after me, I swear I'll elope with him tonight!

[*GRACE and JACK walk off stage left, defiant. ELSBETH starts after GRACE, but MITCH grabs her arm.*]

**MITCH**

Don't.

**ELSBETH**

[*Incredulously*] What?!

**MITCH**

It will just make things worse; give her a few minutes, honey.

**ELSBETH**

Kids! I can't believe her.

**RAY**

[*Sniffles*] I'm proud of em'. I've been wantin' Jack to stand up for himself his whole life, and he finally did to me!

**MITCH**

Ray, I'd appreciate it if you'd send Grace home before the storm hits.

**RAY**

Now everyone just cool down a minute. Jack and Grace ain't been up to nothin' but watchin' TV. Me and Clare have been there every time she's been over.

**ELSBETH**

It doesn't matter whether or not they're supervised. The fact is that we do not want our daughter seeing your son!

**RAY**

Why? You think Jack's not good enough?

**MITCH**

We didn't say that.

**ELSBETH**

No, he's not *nearly* good enough! Clare told us how he's doing in school. I haven't worked all these years to see our daughter run off with a high school *flunky*!

**KIM**

I've had enough of this. I'm out.

**TAYLOR**

Me too!

**RAY**

Clare, go home and get Jack and Grace and take 'em over to Kim's house.

**ELSBETH**

No, she is coming home with *us*, now!

**MITCH**

Kim's house should be fine.

**CLARE**

No! I don't want them anywhere near Kim or Taylor!

**RAY**

What?

**CLARE**

This whole day was a sham. I can't believe I took off work from both of my jobs to be here. How could you do this to us, Taylor?

**TAYLOR**

I'll tell you, and it has nothing to do with you. Kim and I want to start a family, and I do not want to raise that family with a neighbor who always asks us where the curry smell is coming from. I do not want my children ashamed of their own identity.

**RAY**

Oh come on - it's just a little teasin'.

**TAYLOR**

Teasing? You are the most insecure man I have ever met. You constantly make us feel guilty for a home we worked so hard to buy.

**RAY**

It ain't insecurity. I'd just like to see you last one week in our trailer.

**TAYLOR**

One week? I did not have a shower with running water until I was sixteen years old. Your home would be a mansion where Kim and I came from, and yet every time you bring up where we came from, you try to make us feel ashamed. [*Silence*]

**RAY**

I want to know what Kim thinks [Looks at KIM]. I know you ain't with her on this.

**KIM**

I wasn't, but now I am. You endangered me today out of pure selfishness--

**RAY**

It wasn't selfishness--

**KIM**

I wasn't finished. This is no longer an environment I want to raise my children in. You can stay, Ray. But if you stay, we go. A man like you will have no place in the lives of our children.

*[Alarms go off on several smartphones]*

**WEATHER MAN (VOICE OVER)**

The storm system once again has increased in intensity and the residents of the town of Hutchinson are urged to take cover. I repeat: a tornado has been spotted on the ground in the area between Hutchinson and Inman, Kansas, and is moving in a southerly direction. Stay tuned to...

**TAYLOR**

*[While shutting the laptop]* We'd better get out of here.

**MITCH**

Does it seem *still* to anyone?

**ELSBETH**

Totally still...and quiet, too.

**CLARE**

I'll get Jack and Grace and send them to Kim's.

**ELSBETH**

No.

**MITCH**

Elle, this is no time for petty--

*[RONDA returns and is holding a gun downstage left.]*

**ELSBETH**

Mitch, shut up! I'll handle this!

**RONDA**

No, you shut up!

*[ELSBETH turns to see RONDA, who is demonic in the lightning. The group gasps as the lights go out.]*

[Blackout]

**ACT 2: SCENE 2**

[Scene as before. Lightning, thunder, and Barney barking can be heard.]

**RONDA**

Go home, everyone! Parties over. [Motions to the stage right and gestures to ELSBETH] Not you! It's over for you,  
little hussy.

**RAY**

What are you doing, Ronda? I thought we's had an understandin'?

**ELSBETH**

You've been working with this awful woman?

**RONDA**

Shut your self-righteous pie-hole. Ray's a good man, and he tried to save you from all this by giving me his set of  
*tires.*

**ALL**

Oh.

**RONDA**

But tires ain't gonna cut it no more.

**MITCH**

What are you going to do?

**RONDA**

I don't know yet, but I'm sure I'll think of somethin'. You just shut your mouth!

**TAYLOR**

She's gonna kill us!

**KIM**

Who is this woman?

**TAYLOR**

She was here before. She hit Elle.

**KIM**

What?

**RONDA**

Everybody shut up.

**CLARE**

Why are you doin' this? You hit *her*, she didn't even.

**MITCH**

[*To Elle*] Why didn't you tell me?

**RAY**

We had a deal, Ronda. This wasn't how it was gonna shake down.

**RONDA**

Oh we had one, all right. That was until one of you's turned me in [*Gestures to Elle*]. I'm gonna lose everything.

It's over for me.

**TAYLOR**

But the storm! What about the storm? We're supposed to take shelter!

**RONDA**

Sure, the rest of you can go home. My problem is with queen bee [*Points at Elle*]. Call the cops, if you please, cause I have no plans to get out of this.

**MITCH**

Look, whatever happened, I'm sure we can--

**RONDA**

I told you to shut up! [*Points the gun at Mitch*] You didn't tell the *hero* here how you flapped your smart mouth at me? How you treated me like trash and she [*Points to Clare*] jumped in the middle of it?

**ELSBETH**

I'm sorry! All right? I'm sorry! Now let's just get to shelter before the tornado hits!

**KIM**

Please! This is crazy!

**RONDA**

*[Losing it]* Are you calling me crazy! Are you?! Cause if you are...

**RAY**

Ronda cool off. None of these folks are worth it. You're gonna be sent back to prison.

**MITCH**

*[Nervously]* Back?

**RONDA**

At least they'll have a good reason this time.

*[A tornado siren is heard offstage, and everyone looks upward.]*

I've been locked up for a lot of things, but this time it's gonna be worth it!

**TAYLOR**

We all need to take shelter.

**RONDA**

Come on princess, get over there! *[Motions left.]*

**MITCH**

What are you going to do?

**RAY**

If you was as tough as you think you are, you'd put down that gun and fight like a man.

**RONDA**

You don't look to me like you're ready for a fight, Ray.

**CLARE**

Ray?

**RAY**

It's all right Clare, I know what I'm doin'. Ronda, I've got a million dollar app idea that says Mitch can kick your butt good.

**RONDA**



[*Looking at Mitch*] You mean *him*? Ha! I could break him in half!

**ELSBETH**

Stop it, Ray.

**RAY**

I guess it's true that a woman just can't stand up to a *man*.

**RONDA**

There ain't no way that wimp could whip me.

**RAY**

That "wimp" is a karate expert. You're lucky he ain't killed you already.

**MITCH**

[*Nervously*] Ray...

**RONDA**

[*Tucking the gun in her pants*] Come on, Karate boy.

**MITCH**

I don't want to fight you.

**RONDA**

What? You won't fight for your woman? Ray, you picked a real stud here.

**RAY**

He's man enough to kick *your* butt.

**RONDA**

All right, all you guys just sit down.

[*MITCH starts to sit with everyone.*]

Not *you*! Get up, Grasshopper; let's see what you got!

**ELSBETH**

Be careful, honey!

**MITCH**

I... um. I would really rather not fight a woman.

**RAY**

You better change your mind real quick, or she's gonna make a fool outta ya!

**RONDA**

Come on!

*[The two slowly look each other over. They slowly circle looking for an advantage. Suddenly, MITCH lets out a high pitched hum and strikes a peculiar pose.]*

**RAY**

No, Mitch! Not the Dance of Death!

**RONDA**

What?

**RAY**

Oh yeah, I seen him use this on a guy at the Four Kings. Messed him up somethin' awful.

**RONDA**

Dance of Death, huh? I got a dance for ya!

*[RONDA swings suddenly, striking MITCH in the jaw, knocking him down.]*

**RAY**

Get up! Get up, Mitch!

*[To Ronda]* That was a lucky shot!

**RONDA**

Luck had nothin' to do with it!

*[MITCH jumps to his feet, angered.]*

**MITCH**

Alright... you asked for it. Come on!

**RONDA**

Why -- you gonna dance again?

*[ELSBETH starts to rise.]*

**RONDA**

*[Reaching for her gun]* Sit down!

**MITCH**

Sit down, Elle! I'll handle this.

*[RONDA and MITCH circle as before. RONDA swings and misses.]*

**RAY**

You got her now, boy!

*[RONDA swings again, MITCH blocks her and hits her hard in the face. RONDA stands, looking momentarily dazed. Suddenly her face becomes very angry. MITCH lets out a whimper.]*

**RONDA**

I'm gonna kill you!!

*[RONDA hits MITCH in the stomach, bending him over, followed by a kick to the face. MITCH falls to the ground.]*

**ELSBETH**

Honey!

**RONDA**

*[Pulling out her gun again]* Stay put! I guess he ain't much of a dancer. You really thought he could beat me, Ray?

**RAY**

No, but he mighta got lucky.

**RONDA**

*[Eyeing the mansions]* Now, all of you. Go home!

**KIM**

*[Stepping in front of Elle]* No, we're staying right here. If you're gonna hurt Elle, you'll have to hurt all of us.

**RONDA**

One last warning...

**MITCH**

I can't. I can't go without her.

**RAY**

And I can't move through this wet grass.

**RONDA**

Shut up! Shut up! Just let me think!

*[ELSBETH is crying now.]*

All right. The rest of you are going *now*, or I'm gonna shoot the queen, right here, right now!

**MITCH**

Please, Ronda, please let her come with us! I can give you money, our car, whatever you want!

**RONDA**

I don't want your money! I want you to get out before I shoot her!

*[RONDA shoots her gun in the air and everyone jumps, but remains where they are.]*

What is wrong with you people?! Everyone sit down now *[She fires again, and everyone complies]*.

*[Gesturing to ELSBETH]* Get over there. *[ELSBETH complies, separating from the group. RONDA gestures to everyone else.]* And I swear if *anyone* gets between me and Queen Bee, you'll never say another word.

**RAY**

Please don't hurt her, Ronda. She's my neighbor!

**RONDA**

Gosh darn it, Ray, you just stay out of this.

*[It is dark now except for the rain sounds and occasional flashes of lightning.]*

Why'd you do it, sweetie? What made you ruin my life?

**ELSBETH**

*[Sobbing]* I was just upset. You hurt me, and when I found out you were a repo agent, it just felt like you

de--deserv--

**RONDA**

*Deserved* it? I'll tell you this, Queenie. If you wanted justice, you went after the wrong person, because the bank will find someone else to do my dirty work next week. If your plan had worked out, maybe I wouldn't have been who repo'd your Infiniti after your hubby ran off with his secretary, but someone else woulda done it all the same.

**ELSBETH**

Ronda, I was wrong. I'm so very sorry that I turned you in, but my daughter is over in that trailer house and I've got to get her.

**RONDA**

She'll be better off than you are wherever she is!

**ELSBETH**

Please Ronda, my husband is an attorney-

**RONDA**

That explains it.

**ELSBETH**

But we can help you now. We will do whatever we can to help.

**RONDA**

You ain't gonna beg your way out of this, sweetheart. Honestly it ain't even because you turned me in. It's the way you talked to me like I'm *scum*. I've been takin' it from people like you my whole life.

**ELSBETH**

Your kids! What about them? They need a mommy Ronda!

**RONDA**

My kids?! Thanks to you I'm losin' 'em again anyway. Thanks to *you*, I'm going back on the inside, I'm losin' my job, and everything else, too. You are the last straw.

**RAY**

C'mon, Ronda, we can work something out.

**RONDA**

You don't know a thing, Ray. All I wanted was that lousy computer, so I could learn some new stuff and maybe get better job, but no, you had to be a--

**ELSBETH**

It's yours! Take it!

[*The shelter light flickers.*]

**RONDA**

It's too late for that now! You're gonna get what you deserve!

**ELSBETH**

You think I don't have problems, I do. I've had a hard life. My ex-husband was a jerk and a drunk! I've been to rock bottom. I promise there's a way out.

**RONDA**

[*Pause.*]

Well that's a *real* inspirational story. But you had no right treating me the way you did. Do you hear me? I'm gonna take care of your mouth right now!

[*RONDA starts to take aim.*]

**MITCH**

Ronda, stop! Please! I know the DA. I know every police officer in this town. We will drop whatever charges were pressed against you - whatever you need, I-

**RONDA**

(Enraged) I don't *need* anything from you. It's too late. CPS was sent to my house and, and.. (looks at ELSBETH) now I'm gettin' even,

**ELSBETH**

Wait! Wait! Please, Ronda, don't!

**RAY**

Don't kill her, Ronda. If you wanna get even with her, burn her house down.

**ELSBETH**

Don't help, Ray!

**RAY**

She's treated me like dirt, too! I'll admit she's a loudmouth and a snob, and she wants me out of this neighborhood as bad as you want to kill her, but it's just not right.

**RONDA**

This is the first thing that's felt right in a long time, and it sounds like I'm doin' you a favor, too. The only thing I had to live for was my kids, and now I'm losin' 'em. I sacrificed my whole life for 'em! I've worked two jobs for the last three years just so my husband could take all our money and run off with a waitress from the Four Kings.

**RAY**

Which one?...Sorry

**RONDA**

Doesn't matter. He's gone and in a couple days they're gonna take my kids and there is nothin' I can do. People been kickin' me down my whole life, and I've took it. Doctors, teachers, cops... and now you! But you're gonna be the last.

**ELSBETH**

If you do this, your kids will never see you again. You won't see them graduate or get married. You don't want to give all that up do you?...I love my daughter, kids are all we really leave in this world. Who's going to raise those kids of yours when you're gone? Is someone else going to love them the way you do?

Please, think about it.

**RAY**

Think about it, Ronda.

**ELSBETH**

I didn't know what you'd been through when I met you today. I would have never acted the way I did if I'd known.

*[RONDA lowers the gun slightly.]*

Why don't you give me the gun, Ronda...come on, honey.

**RONDA**

*[Slow and seething]* Don't call me "honey"! You don't care about me. All you care about is your lousy life. You've said all you're gonna say!

**RAY**

Ronda -- don't!

*[The lights flicker again, and ELSBETH and the gang rush RONDA just before the lights go out completely. In the dark, loud barking is heard.]*

**RAY**

Get 'er Barney, get 'er!

*[We hear the sound of a lunging dog. RONDA screams in pain followed by a gunshot.]*

### **ACT 2: Scene 3**

*[The lights come up to about dusk level, revealing the debris from the storm, including a pink lawn flamingo. Everyone is gathered around ELSBETH, who is petting a ragged dog. TAYLOR is wrapping cloth around ELSBETH's big toe.]*

**ELSBETH**

Good dog! Good doggy! You're a good boy.

**KIM**

I can't believe it.

*[Looking toward the houses stage right, the trailer is the only one left standing.]*

**MITCH**

We're lucky to be alive.

**ELSBETH**

No thanks to you, Mr. Black Belt!

**MITCH**

I did all I could, honey! She was an animal.

*[MITCH puts his hand on ELSBETH's shoulder, which she promptly removes.]*

**ELSBETH**

Well I almost died out here. But *Barney* was here for me, weren't you boy? *[Pets him briskly.]*

**RAY**

That was a stroke of brilliance for the kids to let him out like that.

**GRACE**



We called the police when we heard the gunshot, but Barney was chomping at the bit to get in there first.

**JACK**

I'm just happy he didn't go for Kim again.

**KIM**

Me too. He's *mostly* redeemed himself.

**GRACE**

He really is a good boy. I knew he'd know what to do.

**ELSBETH**

Thank you guys. I appreciate everything you did for me.

[*ELSBETH looks at MITCH, who cowers from the look's power.*]

**RAY**

Mitch did *try*, Elle. I wouldn't fight Ronda, at least not in front of anyone.

**MITCH**

I even landed a punch in there!

**GRACE**

I'm bummed I didn't see it.

**ELSBETH**

[*Conceding*] Yeah, that was pretty cool.

**TAYLOR**

How's your toe feel, Elle?

**ELSBETH**

What's left of it feels odd. It doesn't really hurt that much, it just stings a little.

**MITCH**

I'm so sorry, hon.

[*After a long pause, ELSBETH touches MITCH's hand.*]

**ELSBETH**

I'm keeping this [*Holds up the seat of Ronda's leather pants bearing the Harley Davidson logo*] as a souvenir of

my brush with death...I wonder where she went.

**RAY**

She ran off toward your house.

**TAYLOR**

You think she's inside?

**RAY**

Maybe.

**MITCH**

Wherever it landed, she can keep it.

**CLARE**

All of you guys are welcome to stay with us a while. We can put Jack on the couch and clear out Ray's motorcycle parts from the extra bedroom. Is that okay, guys?

**JACK**

For sure!

**RAY**

Sure, I guess so.

**ELSBETH**

I don't think that's necessary.

**RAY**

Oh you don't want to be in there with all that junk. You'd get grease all over you.

**ELSBETH**

No, as much as *Grace* would like that plan, I think we'll stay in a hotel.

**MITCH**

I can't believe the storm took both our houses and left the *trailer* standing.

**RAY**

Must have been looking for a challenge.

**MITCH**

But brick! It was a *brick* house!

**KIM**

So was ours.

**TAYLOR**

Suppose Ronda hadn't come; we'd all be in our houses now.

**ELSBETH**

And if you had listened to her, you'd all have been there, too. Thank you all for sticking with me.

**EVERYONE**

Yep.

**ELSBETH**

[*To Ray and Clare*] Our daughter is alive because of you.

**RAY**

I think Ronda is the one you have to thank.

**TAYLOR**

I can't believe this day.

**MITCH**

Just another day at the end of "Ray Road".

**ELSBETH**

I wonder how it got *that* name.

**RAY**

Oh, it was part of the deal.

**CLARE**

How about you guys? I suppose you won't be stayin' around with your homes gone and all.

**TAYLOR**

I'm not sure what we're going to do.

**KIM**

I don't want to think about it now.

**RAY**

Hey, about earlier...

**TAYLOR**

Oh Ray, I'm sorry for what I--

**RAY**

No. You were right to call me out.

**KIM AND TAYLOR**

What?

**RAY**

(RAY takes off his hat. Looks away from KIM and TAYLOR) Yeah, yeah. You both were. I respect ya'll for it. (RAY looks at them). Really. Believe it or not, Clare and I moved the heck away from our families so Jack could have a better life. I don't want ya to have to do the same cause of me. if you stay, I won't promise I won't screw up... but

I'll try not to.

**KIM**

We appreciate that, Ray.

**CLARE**

I told you all he had a soft side.

**RAY**

I wouldn't go that far.

**MITCH**

[To Kim] I'm sorry, too. I know I was a butt today.

**KIM**

All is forgiven. You know, I really do love this neighborhood.

**CLARE**

We'd sure miss having you around. After all this, I can't imagine never seeing you again.

**RAY**

I could. *[Pause]* A couple a minutes ago. You really torqued Ronda off.

**ELSBETH**

I think it was a matter of bad timing.

**RAY**

I told ya that computer was priced too high.

**MITCH**

I guess the party's off tonight.

*[ELSBETH laughs.]*

**CLARE**

You could have it at our house.

**MITCH**

It's too late, anyway, and under the circumstances, I don't think our guests would mind.

**RAY**

Ya'll should really consider the advantages of a *mobile* home.

**CLARE**

The new double-wides are very nice.

**MITCH**

I'm sure they're very nice, but I think we're going to want another site-built home.

**ELSBETH**

*[Remembering]* Oh honey, your new game room!

**MITCH**

I know. It's okay. At least my friends got to see it.

**RAY**

*[Solemnly]* I'll never forget it. It was truly a thing of beauty.

**TAYLOR**

Was your kitty in the house?

**MITCH**

No, he was at the groomer's.

**RAY**

Who -- Rene?

**ELSBETH**

Taylor, you had decorated so nicely. All that work -- gone. You must be so depressed.

**TAYLOR**

It was a lot of work. I spent two years getting it just right. But I'm just glad nobody was hurt.

**CLARE**

Well, I've got a surprise for you Taylor. [*Reaches under a tarp and pulls out a painting*] I know this one was your favorite: "Midnight Wolf". It can be your first new decorating item. You can plan your whole house around it!

**TAYLOR**

Clare...I don't know what to say.

**ELSBETH**

Well, *I'm* jealous.

**CLARE**

Don't worry, Elle. I've got something special for you. [*Reaches back under the tarp and pulls out another painting.*]

**ELSBETH**

[*Beginning to cry*] Oh Clare, your angel?

**CLARE**

No, honey, *your* angel. After this day, it's clear to me she wants to watch over you.

**ELSBETH**

[*Overcome*] Thank you, Clare. [*Crying*] After all those terrible things I said to you and Ray... can you ever forgive me?

**TAYLOR**

Me too, Clare. This whole day was my fault.

**CLARE**

Are you kidding? If we hadn't all gotten together, none of this would have happened.

**RAY**

Mitch would'na got shocked.

**TAYLOR**

Kim wouldn't have been mauled.

**MITCH**

Elle wouldn't have been shot.

**ELSBETH**

And most of us would be dead right now... and I wouldn't have this beautiful angel.

**MITCH**

Everything's going to be alright, honey.

**RAY**

So. You think you guys'll rebuild or move on?

**MITCH**

I can't speak for Kim and Taylor, but if Elle wants to stay, we will.

**ELSBETH**

I couldn't leave *Barney*.

**MITCH**

I'm not sure what we're going to do while they're rebuilding our house.

**ELSBETH**

How much does a mobile home cost, Ray?

**RAY**

Don't know. I haven't bought one in twenty years.

**MITCH**

I guess it's an option until our house is completed.

**ELSBETH**

It might be fun. Just imagine our first dinner party in the new *trailer* house.

**RAY**

There go the property values. If you do go with the double wide, you should consider skirting. It keeps the opossums out in the winter.

**MITCH**

I doubt we're actually going to live in a trailer that long, Ray.

**RAY**

With you guys bein' new to the mobile home experience, I guess I'll be nurse maidin' you along till you get up to speed. If you all need help cleanin' up, I know Clare will bust her butt for you. Can you get a coupla days off work, honey?

**ELSBETH**

That's really generous of you, Ray.

**RAY**

Hey, whatever I can do (Looks at JACK). But nah, when I'm outta this chair I'll help wherever I can.

**KIM**

We'll hold ya to it.

**RAY**

Hey, ain't ya'll worried about the storms?

**KIM**

After today, I like our odds.

[An ambulance can be heard in the distance.]

**GRACE**

There they are. I'm guessing they have their hands full.

**ELSBETH**

We'll see if there's anything they can do about this toe.



**RAY**

*[Looking on]* I guess we're gonna be busy a while.

**MITCH**

That's an understatement.

**RAY**

What with homes to rebuild and a potential weddin' to plan.

**ELSBETH**

*[Shocked]* Wedding?

**JACK**

We've only been dating two months, Dad

**CLARE**

Oh, it could be so beautiful!

**RAY**

We could have it right here in the park and have the reception in the gazebo down there.

*[RONDA enters from up right, ragged and holding the seat of her pants.]*

**GRACE**

*[Jokingly looks to Jack]* That *does* sound pretty nice.

**JACK**

*[Playing along]* I could see if the Dollar Store has any good rings.

**MITCH**

Now wait a minute!

**ELSBETH**

Mitch, shut up.

**RONDA**

No -- *you* shut up!

*[Everyone gasps and spins around to look at RONDA.]*

**RONDA**

Can somebody give me a ride home? I've got to check on my kids.

*[Everyone stares in amazement.]*

**BLACKOUT. CURTAIN.**

AFTER CREDITS

*[RAY is sitting in a nice living room beside CLARE, watching TV. A lot of people are over at what looks like a housewarming party. CLARE is dressed up in Elsbeth's old blue dress and excuses herself to go to the restroom, leaving RAY alone. RAY then sees an advertisement for an application called "Ooper", an app that lets you keep track of how often you use public restrooms, complete with badges and things of the like.]*

**RAY**

Everyone -- get in here! You ain't ever gonna believe this!!

***The End***