A comedy in one act

FIRST TWO SCENES -- SAMPLE

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Revised September 1, 2023

Wheeler, Robert J. Harold and Maude and The Joy Of Missing Out. 2023. Published April 2023. http://wheelerscripts.com/. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390143-4-6.

Pippa's Pie Place. 2023. Published June 2023. http://wheelerscripts.com/. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390405-5-0.

The Two Timers. Written and produced 2022. Published May 2022. http://wheelerscripts.com/. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390405-3-6.

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The Babe. 2020. Published May 2022. http://wheelerscripts.com/. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390143-7-7.

The Treasure Seekers. 2020. Published May 2022. http://wheelerscripts.com/. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390405-2-9.

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Misadventures In Marriage. 2016. Published May 2022. http://wheelerscripts.com/. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390143-6-0.

The Last Stop. Written and produced 2016. Published May 2022. http://wheelerscripts.com/. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390405-4-3.

Oh Canada – Fast Forward. Written and produced 2015 as Good To The Very Last Droplet. Published May 2022. http://wheelerscripts.com/. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-7390405-0-5.

I'll Miss Me When I'm Gone. 1999. Published May 2022. http://wheelerscripts.com/. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390405-0-5.

Let There Be Angels. 1994. Published May 2022. http://wheelerscripts.com/. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390143-2-2.

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By Robert J. Wheeler

CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
TAYLOR SMITH	Husband of Jenna, programmer/bank loans officer	25-50	Male
JENNA SMITH	Wife of Taylor. Interior decorator	25-40	Female

FOUR ACTORS REQUIRED

SETTING

A Living room.

ACT 1, SCENE 1

LIGHTS UP ON:

Time: Late afternoon.

Place: Living room of Taylor and Jenna.

DC is a sofa.

DR is a small table with three letters.

A few bars of "Love Will Keep Us Together" plays.

TAYLOR SMITH (25), a sophisticate ENTERS through the DR opening dressed in an immaculate business suit with a gym bag.

Taylor drops the gym bag, takes the letters from the mail table.

TAYLOR (looking at mail, sung) Honey Bunny, I'm home.

JENNA (O.S. sung) Taylor, Sweetie.

TAYLOR (looking at mail, sung) Yes, Dearest.

JENNA (O.S.) Are you ready for your surprise?

A perplexed look from Taylor.

TAYLOR Dearest, if I'm ready, it won't be a surprise.

JENNA (O.S.) I've made you something wonderful!

JENNA SMITH (25), in casual attire with apron, RUSHES from the SL kitchen holding a smoking meatloaf pan with oven mitts (dry ice).

Taylor's surprised, throws the mail into the air as she charges toward him, causing him to back up.

JENNA (joyous, proud) Voila!

TAYLOR Whaaaaaaaaaaa . . .

Jenna backs him into the wall behind him.

aaaaaat?

Taylor looks down into the pan.

You made lava?!!!

JENNA (joyous, proud) No, silly, it's my very own Betty

Crocker meatloaf!

TAYLOR (dire, looking at the meat loaf) Jenna!!!

JENNA What, Sweetie?

TAYLOR (a dire cringe) It's on fire!

JENNA (oblivious) Oh.

Jenna blows on the meat loaf.

Better?

Stunned look from Taylor.

(joyous) The top's a little crispy, but you'll love the rest.

Taylor waves smoke away, squints to see her.

TAYLOR (tactful) It's, it's . . . I'm at a loss for words.

Jenna giggles, takes it as a compliment.

JENNA It's my first delicious meatloaf.

TAYLOR (trepidation) I've thought of a word.

JENNA Wonderful, spectacular, fabulous, amazing? Which one?

TAYLOR It's uh, ah . . . a four-letter word.

JENNA (joyous) Love has four letters.

TAYLOR (dread) That's not the . . .

JENNA (interrupting) Perfect! Love it is!

Jenna tries to kiss him, but smoke and the hot pan are in the way.

Taylor tries to dodge the hot pan, gets a finger or two burned.

They fumble around until she holds the meat loaf with one hand from the edge with one mitted hand, puts the other oven mitt on the letter table, the meatloaf pan on the mitt and the other mitt over the meatloaf.

They kiss.

Missed you.

Jenna grabs Taylor, bear hugs him hard, turns him facing DS.

Taylor's arms fly out, face shows he's breathless.

(joyous) Three months married, and it still feels new, fantastic.

Jenna releases the hug. Taylor gasps, out of breath and dazed but she does not notice.

Taylor?!

TAYLOR Yes, yes. (takes a breath) Fantastic . . . but dangerous.

JENNA How was your day, my Sweet?

Taylor gathers himself.

TAYLOR My day? Right, the day I had. My dear, your loans officer, computer and I.T. genius husband had an exceptional day at the bank.

JENNA (joyous) That's because . . .

Taylor twirls, swings his arms and gym bag around, spins.

Jenna poses model-like, expecting him to notice her.

TAYLOR The GDNP is above predicted. Mr. Dill says it's a dream time for bankers!

JENNA (annoyed) Your bank manager?!!

Jenna is miffed it's not her that's making him happy.

TAYLOR Yes! The economy is heating up!

Jenna takes an oven mitt without Taylor seeing, holds it behind her back.

JENNA (frustrated scream) Ahhhhhhha!

Taylor's stunned, stops spinning.

The economy?!

Taylor turns quickly toward the meat loaf.

TAYLOR (fearful) The lava loaf?!

Jenna whacks him with an oven mitt, throws the mitt over her head and back and holds her arms out to him.

JENNA Us!!!

TAYLOR (confused) Us? (sees what she means) Of course, us! Lovers! Definitely lovers, my Sweet.

Taylor hugs her.

JENNA It's Friday night!!

TAYLOR So?

Jenna ends the hug, pushes him back.

JENNA (excited) Did you get it?

Taylor shrugs.

T-a-a-a-y-lor! It's our plan! The bank's closed until Tuesday because it's the holiday weekend. You didn't forget?

TAYLOR Maybe I did, and maybe . . .

JENNA (joyous) You got it! I know you did! You're forgiven!

TAYLOR The things I do for love.

JENNA It's not like you're stealing anything.

Taylor gives her the gym bag and moves US.

Heavy.

Jenna holds it to her heart, dances with it DS.

TAYLOR A million dollars is a lot of paper.

Taylor relaxes on the sofa. (Playwright can provide stage money.)

JENNA It's got to be turning you on, right?

TAYLOR (macho) Jenna Darlin', your man, doesn't have an off switch.

JENNA More than normal?

Taylor moves to Jenna.

TAYLOR Having a million dollars of bank money in our love nest, does raise my blood pressure a tad.

JENNA What denominations?

TAYLOR Hundreds.

JENNA Wow, a bag of hundreds!

A few bars of "Money, Money, Money" plays. Jenna dances with the gym bag.

(enthused) Feel the power! You gotta feel it! You're sure the bank won't miss it?

Music stops, she stops dancing.

TAYLOR The safe can't be opened until eight a.m. Tuesday morning. I was the last one out tonight and I'll be the first one in Tuesday morning when I return the money, and no-one will be the wiser.

JENNA What about the cameras?

TAYLOR Mr. Dill wants to save money on hydro so has the cameras turned off before every holiday weekend.

Jenna puts the gym bag on the sofa, dances around.

JENNA I feel bad, like I've committed some horrible crime.

TAYLOR Jenna, it's borrowed money. You know the million needs to go back?

JENNA I was imagining. Don't you ever imagine?

TAYLOR I imagined us married.

JENNA (incredulous look with sarcasm) Right.

Jenna rushes to Taylor, hugs him.

What if we pretend it's Mafia money? Let's imagine dirty Mafia money.

TAYLOR Dirty Mafia money?

LIGHTS FADE AWAY AROUND THEM, TRANSITION TO ONLY ON THEM, THE SOFA.

JENNA Yeah. We walk the docks at night, the perilous waterfront! It's a deadly dark and dangerous night! We walk arm-in-arm on the grimy, dim, crime, and ratinfested docks.

Sour face from Taylor. Jenna pulls Taylor along.

Black water surges in. Just a few dingy dim lights to guide us. We go on because we're . . .

Jenna indicates she wants him to finish her sentence.

TAYLOR . . . mentally unstable?

JENNA In love!!! We love the smell of ocean, (takes deep breath) the sound of gulls.

TAYLOR Gulls at night?

Jenna grabs his shoulder.

JENNA Night gulls!

TAYLOR I've never seen . . .

JENNA They're night flyers, black, so they blend in . . . see?

TAYLOR No.

JENNA (not hearing him) Good. (enlivened) We're at the murky, churning water's edge, the edge of absolute darkness. Shots ring out ahead! It's a drug deal gone bad!

Jenna clicks her heels into the floor rapidly -- gunfire.

The unmistakable sound of automatic weapons, so we . . .

TAYLOR . . . run for cover.

JENNA Unafraid, we push on! Your shirt is soaked in sweat, muscles tight, swell, ripple. Muscles want to burst the shirt, so you rip it off.

Taylor takes off his jacket and tie, tries to tear off his shirt, but it won't tear, so settles for undoing the top two shirt buttons, throws his chest out, does a he-man pose. Jenna runs her hands over his upper body, pulls him along.

We keep moving, step over bullet-riddled bodies.

Sour face from Taylor. Jenna looks to the sofa.

We see it! A black, machined gunned limo peppered with bullet holes, engine still idling. On the hood is an open bag of drug money!

Jenna takes the gym bag, puts it on the sofa arm.

A million dollars, waiting for us to take. We grab it and . . .

Jenna indicates she wants him to finish her sentence.

TAYLOR . . . run like hell?

JENNA No! We push on! Two shots ring out . . .

Jenna bangs her heels on the floor twice.

. . . tear into the limo! You jump in front of me.

Jenna jumps behind him, hides.

My protector from harm, no matter how dangerous.

Taylor tries to move but she holds him there.

TAYLOR You're sure you're with me?

JENNA One of the bodies wasn't dead, shooting at us!

Jenna bangs her heels on the floor twice. Taylor ducks.

You grab an uzi from a dead hand!

Taylor has a confused look.

Machine gun!

Jenna makes his hand look like a gun, takes his arm, points it at an imaginary target.

Jenna rapid clicks her heels on the floor for the sound of automatic fire.

You took him down hard and for good.

Taylor throws and spits out the imaginary uzi.

TAYLOR We have the money?!!

JENNA Yes, yes! You pick the money and me up and . . .

Taylor picks up the gym bag, struggles to lift Jenna and position her over his shoulder. He is enthused as he has Jenna and the gym bag.

TAYLOR And?

JENNA Run to our mansion on the cliff and throw me on the bed.

Taylor runs around the sofa with Jenna over his shoulder, stops DC, dumps her on her onto the sofa.

TAYLOR Where we count it?

JENNA No!!! Scatter the whole mill on me!

Taylor opens the gym bag and dumps twenty bundles of money on Jenna from the gym bag.

Jenna's bombarded, startled, fights them off.

(sits up, surprised) I'd imagined loose bills. (overjoyed) We go to it on the cash. That's power! That's my man!

Taylor moves to jump on her, pulls back, looks closely at a bundle.

TAYLOR What about paper cuts?

Jenna sits up, holds two bundles.

JENNA We're not afraid! We take what we want! Love every moment of being fully alive!

TAYLOR Yes!!!

ALL LIGHTS UP

JENNA That's what we love. (looks to Taylor) What do you think?

TAYLOR Me? What do I think?

Taylor stands, paces, big build up.

I see, I see, (thinking) a very sexy . . . sensual . . . erotic . . . highly stimulating . . . three-day . . .

Jenna hangs expectantly overjoyed on his words "sexy . . . sensual . . . erotic . . . stimulating . . . three-day," then . . .

. . . interest free loan!

JENNA (disappointed) Taylor, think wild!

Taylor pauses to mentally calculate, walks around.

TAYLOR Jen, two days at five per cent interest on a mill, comes to around (pause while thinking) two hundred and seventy-three dollars and ninety-seven cents.

JENNA Compounded?

TAYLOR Before compounding! Isn't that wild?!!

JENNA (mocking) Whoopee. I'll work on what you see.

JENNA How much in each bundle?

TAYLOR (takes a bundle) This one's twenty-five thousand.

JENNA I've got goose bumps.

TAYLOR (smuq) I'm used to dealing with large amounts.

Jenna takes two bundles and juggles them.

JENNA My fifty-thousand-dollar act.

Taylor sits on the sofa, watching her.

TAYLOR Very nice. Can you get the hips going?

Jenna hip gyrates and juggles. Taylor applauds. Jenna uses the bundles like weights, pushes them over her head.

Taylor moves to her, kisses her. Jenna puts the bundles into the gym bag and closes it.

JENNA (enthused) We'll have my fabulous meatloaf after.

TAYLOR (dread) Torchered meatloaf.

JENNA (joyful) It's a Betty Crocker recipe, so it has to be delicious!

Jenna happily dances the gym bag into the bedroom.

(0.S.) Don't forget our dinner.

Taylor picks up the meatloaf pan with trepidation with an oven mitt, moves toward bedroom door.

TAYLOR What if it explodes?

JENNA (O.S.) Money doesn't explode.

TAYLOR No. The lava loaf!!!

Taylor EXITS into the bedroom.

LIGHTS OUT.

END OF ACT 1, SCENE 1

ACT 1, SCENE 2

LIGHTS FADE UP.

Time: Morning.

Place: Living room of Taylor and Jenna.

The sound of "YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE" plays.

Jenna ENTERS in an askew blonde pigtailed wig, checkerboard blouse, cut off blue jeans.

Jenna has the gym bag of money, dumps ten to twenty bundles of money from it onto the sofa then collapses beside it.

Taylor STAGGERS in from the bedroom wearing a robe and cowboy hat with a large "Sheriff Star" pinned to robe, crashes onto the sofa beside on the other side of the money.

JENNA (western accent) Billy-Bob-Tom-John, that was the best.

TAYLOR (western accent) Nelly Mae, I've been a wonderin' why does Billy-Bob-Tom-John, your fearless Quako County sheriff, have so many names?

JENNA It's cause o your Moma.

TAYLOR My Moma Daisy Mae?

JENNA She couldn't decide which beau she loved most, so ...

Jenna shrugs. Taylor has a confused look. She kisses him.

TAYLOR (western accent) That makes me one happy Quako County sheriff.

A phone RINGS. Taylor takes it from his pocket and answers it.

(into phone, western accent) Howdie pardner. You're talkin' to the big man his'self, Sheriff of Quako County. (pause) Who might you be? (pause) (as himself) Mr. Dill? Don't hang up.(pause) Yes, it's me, Taylor.

Really, it's me. If the computer crashed again, I'll be right down. Don't worry. I'll . . .

JENNA (eyes gleaming) Your boss! He knows!

TAYLOR (to Jenna) He can't know.

Jenna jumps up and down beside Taylor.

(into phone) Yes, Mr. Dill. (pause) Is anything, uhum, wrong? (pause) You sound upset. (pause) Sergeant Kelly called, told you to call the staff about a problem at the bank? (pause) Maybe it wasn't robbed. Maybe the money was borrowed, or could be an accounting glitch?

Jenna stops jumping. Taylor jumps up, paces the length of the sofa back and forth, listens into the phone for seven seconds.

(to Jenna) Crooks tunneled into the safe from the laundry next door!! The safe was entirely cleaned out!!

Taylor wavers, like his is about to pass out.

The bank's closed! It's a crime scene!

Taylor drops the phone, sits on the sofa.

The one million, three hundred and twenty-two thousand, four hundred, sixty-three dollars and thirty-two cents is, is, is gone!!

Taylor tries to stand, wavers, passes out onto the floor. Jenna picks up the phone, speaks into it.

JENNA Hello, Mr. Dill. It's Jenna, Taylor's wife. (pause)
Taylor's unconscious on the floor! (pause) That's
because Taylor loves money! (pause) Police? (pause)
They'll want to question us sometime today or tomorrow?
Fine.

Jenna gives a guilty look.

We've got nothing to hide.

Jenna hangs up, helps Taylor onto the sofa. He's groggy. She puts her wig and his cowboy hat on the sofa. TAYLOR Jen, I had a scary nightmare. The worst I've ever had.

Mr. Dill was hysterical on the phone, telling me . . .

Jenna slaps him gently on the face.

It wasn't a nightmare!

JENNA The bank was robbed last night while we were in heaven. And we've got most of the loot in front of us.

TAYLOR The bank?!

JENNA The cops will be dropping by. They'll want to question us about, you know, the robbery.

TAYLOR Probably think it's an inside job. We never stole anything, but . . .

JENNA . . . having the million makes us look, you know ... very much ... like ...

TAYLOR . . . crooks! I'll confess everything. Make a clean breast of it, take what's coming to me.

JENNA I'll miss my Billy-Bob-Tom-John.

TAYLOR When will the cops get here?

JENNA Mr. Dill said today or tomorrow.

TAYLOR I'll give up. They can take me away!

JENNA Probably in handcuffs.

TAYLOR I suppose so.

JENNA I'll miss you.

TAYLOR I'll get a minimum of ten years. You, maybe a month or two as an accessory.

JENNA We did it for our love.

TAYLOR For the best sex in my life!

JENNA Our lives.

TAYLOR Right.

JENNA You'd get ten hard years.

Taylor's horror stricken, turns away from her, DS.

TAYLOR (worried) Hard years?

JENNA Yes, ten hard years in a prison, surrounded by shiny, treacherous razor wire.

Taylor shivers.

TAYLOR (fathoms) Ten hard years and treacherous razor wire?

JENNA Livin' in a small cell with a filthy, never cleaned toilet.

Taylor cringes.

Then there's the cold cement walls.

TAYLOR (worried) Cold walls?

JENNA A window the size of a pizza box.

TAYLOR Extra-large?

JENNA Small. Tiny window with thick, rigid steel bars.

TAYLOR (extremely worried) No vitamin D!

JENNA A narrow, hard, lumpy cot to sleep on.

TAYLOR Sleepless nights, tossing and . . . (extremely worried) What about bed bugs?

JENNA Big, hairy, hungry prison bed bugs!

TAYLOR Ouch!

JENNA Tin cups and plates.

TAYLOR (winces, new idea) What about cutlery?

JENNA Plastic! Yes, it'd be plastic knives and forks.

A look of horror from Taylor.

It won't matter.

TAYLOR No?

JENNA You'll be getting corn beef hash. No steak for you!

TAYLOR Ahhhaaaa!

JENNA Think about something else.

TAYLOR What?

JENNA Working in the prison laundry.

TAYLOR (relieved) I like clean clothes.

JENNA Working in the steam laundry with big, rough deviants.

TAYLOR (worried) Laundry deviants?

Jenna turns away with a shrug and a "can't believe you said that look".

JENNA Something like that.

TAYLOR (extremely worried) You mean sexual de, de . . .

JENNA (happy) . . . viants?

TAYLOR (high pitched, squeaks it out) Yeah.

JENNA But you'd think our million-dollar sex was worth ten miserable, long years in prison, with the . . . you know . . . the . . . the . . .

TAYLOR . . . deviants?

SHIRLEY Yeah.

TAYLOR Nooco!

JENNA No?

TAYLOR I'd be doing hard time! Hard labor! Breaking rocks! Making license plates! The sweaty steam laundry.

JENNA Then there's the showers with the . . . you know.

TAYLOR Deviants?

JENNA Yeah.

TAYLOR I'll need a ton of wet wipes.

JENNA Taylor, listen. What's important?

TAYLOR Staying away from the deviants?!

JENNA No!

TAYLOR No?!!

JENNA Knowing we've got each other and tonight. (new idea) What if we don't confess?

TAYLOR Lie?

JENNA Don't lie. We could overlook telling them we've got the million. They won't ask if we borrowed the money.

They'll ask if we stole the money.

TAYLOR There'll be questions. A lot of questions.

JENNA Where were you on the night of the robbery? Did you rob the bank? Did you conspire with anyone to rob the bank? Taylor, we're borrowers, not thieves.

TAYLOR We don't look like tunnellers.

JENNA They'll search the place.

TAYLOR They need a warrant . . .

JENNA . . . and are coming here with it!

Stunned looks at each other.

Hide the money!

Jenna jumps on the sofa and bounces, hands in hair, thinking. Taylor throws the money into the gym bag, jumps up, runs in circles around the room. Five seconds elapses.

Jenna points into the kitchen.

The garbage can!

Jenna runs into the kitchen, comes out with the garbage can and two new plastic garbage bags.

She dumps the money from the gym bag onto the coffee table, takes the full plastic garbage bag from the garbage can and puts it into the gym bag.

She lines the garbage can with a new plastic bag, throws the money into the garbage can.

She takes the second new garbage bag and puts it over the money in the garbage can.

She throws a little garbage from the gym bag into the garbage bag that covers the money in the garbage can.

She zips up the gym bag and closes the lid on the garbage can, then flops on the sofa exhausted. Taylor plops down beside her.

Jenna talks like Nelly Mae and Taylor talks like Billy-Bob-Tom-John.

Jenna puts on her wig.

JENNA What happened to my Billy-Bob-Tom-John, my sheriff o Quako County, who'll stand up to cops, crooks or grizzly bears?!

Taylor puts on his cowboy hat.

TAYLOR County line's at the bedroom door.

JENNA So, we're not in Quako County anymore? We're in a different county?

TAYLOR Yup.

JENNA What county's that?

TAYLOR Terrified-out-of-my-mind County.

JENNA I noticed something about my Billy-Bob-Tom-John.

TAYLOR What's that?

JENNA With blood going to his lower region, my sheriff, my Billy-Bob-Tom-John, don't think so straight.

She unpins and takes his badge.

Sheriff Billy-Bob-Tom-John's goin' on vacation!

LIGHTS OUT

End of Act 1 Scene 2 - END OF SAMPLE