

The Marley Show

a one-act play by Dean Hurley and Mike Mariano
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Scene 1:

(The play opens in the living room of MOE MARLEY's house. SLIM, MOE's bitter, sarcastic friend, is sitting on the couch reading a newspaper. MOE calls from offstage.)

MOE:

Hey, Slim! Have you seen my tie?

(SLIM notices the tie sticking out from under the cushion. He pulls the tie out, holds it up, then throws the tie on the ground.)

SLIM:

No.

(MOE walks in from stage left.)

MOE:

(Frustrated:)

Well, that's just great. This is a special ceremony and I'm missing my only black tie!

(SLIM pulls out a yellow tie and a large black marker.)

SLIM:

(Sarcastically:)

Color your heart out.

MOE:

(Shaking his head, annoyed:)

Slimmmmm!

SLIM:

It's your funeral.

MOE:

No, actually it's my Aunt Edna's wake.

SLIM:

(Raises an eyebrow:)

And you're taking....Rachel with you?

MOE:

(Slaps on aftershave:)

Yes. I think this is it. The big night. The night I ask Rachel to be my wife.

SLIM:

(Sarcastically:)

And what better place to propose than a relative's wake.

(MOE gives SLIM an irritated look.)

MOE:

Granted it's not the most appropriate of places, but it's the only time this week that I'll be free and I feel I should strike while the iron's hot.

(MOE turns his back to the audience looking for his tie revealing a large iron burn on the back of his shirt.)

SLIM:

(Sarcastically:)

I see you're good at that.

MOE:

(Turning back around:)

Besides, if you think about it, it's kind of romantic, a wedding proposal at a wake, the irony, it's just like that movie.

SLIM:

Four Weddings and a Funeral?

MOE:

No, Pet Cemetery.

(They pause and look at each other, puzzled.)

SLIM:

Of course.

(As MOE says:)

MOE:

That can't be right.

(They look at each other puzzled once more.)

MOE: (cont.)

At any rate, Aunt Edna's wake is a perfect place to propose. It's all part of the plan.

SLIM:

And what the hell might that be, Mr. Savoir faire, if you'll pardon my French.

MOE:

Well, it just so happens that I'm going to propose with the very same ring that my Aunt Edna received forty years ago. It'll be tradition.

SLIM:

It'll be creepy.

MOE:

Oh, by the way, Slim, the bank called.

SLIM:

(Not looking up from paper:)
They would.

MOE:

They said you were writing bad checks again.

SLIM:

(Looking up:)
Bad checks, huh? Well, they can take their bad checks and stick them up their...

(Doorbell rings, interrupting SLIM. MOE walks over to the front door and opens it. Enter RACHEL, MOE's girlfriend. SLIM continues reading the paper, ignoring her.)

MOE:

(Happily:)
Rachel!

RACHEL:

(Happily:)
Moe!

(They hug.)

I've missed you these past few days.

MOE:

Me, too.

SLIM:

(From behind paper:)
I haven't.

(MOE gives SLIM an evil stare, exposing his iron burn to RACHEL.)

RACHEL:

Oh, no, dearest, you have a horrible iron burn on the back of your shirt.

(MOE attempts to see the burn, turning in circles like a dog chasing its tail.)

MOE:

I do?

(RACHEL stops his spinning.)

Oh, great!

(He thinks, then holds up his hand and says:)

Not to worry, I'll be wearing my jacket over my shirt...

(He trails off as he picks up the jacket, exposing yet another iron burn.)

SLIM:

(Sarcastically:)
You have quite the talent.

MOE:

(Annoyed:)
That is the last time I let Bill iron.

(Sighs:)

I guess I'll have to find another jacket.

SLIM:

(Sarcastically:)
How 'bout the one with the ruffles and sequins?

MOE:

(Sarcastically:)

I'll look for it. Why don't the two of you get better acquainted while I go change?

(MOE exits stage left. RACHEL sits on the recliner next to SLIM. SLIM throws down his newspaper as a coo-coo clock begins to tick. There is a long pause; both just stare at each other.)

SLIM:

So, you date Moe.

RACHEL:

Yes, I've been dating him for over a year now.

SLIM:

(Bored:)

Oh.

(There is another pause and both just sit there. Clock continues to tick.)

RACHEL:

It's strange, Moe never really mentioned you before.

SLIM:

That's because he's an egotistical narcissist.

RACHEL:

A what?

SLIM:

Look it up.

(An uncomfortable silence follows. The clock continues to tick.)

What do you do?

RACHEL:

Well, I can juggle plates while singing "It's a Long Way to Tipperary."

(RACHEL chuckles at her own joke. SLIM just stares. RACHEL stops.)

SLIM:

I was asking what your job was.

RACHEL:

(Uncomfortably:)

I know I just...it was a joke.

SLIM:

Oh.

RACHEL:

(Apprehensively:)

Anyway, I've just signed on with Chemical.

SLIM:

(Suspiciously:)

You're a drug dealer?

RACHEL:

(Quickly:)

No! Chemical Bank!

SLIM:

I hate banks!

(Coo-coo clock strikes.)

RACHEL:

(Incredulously:)

You hate what?

SLIM:

Banks. The service stinks, the lines are too long and they always have interest in your accounts.

(Pause.)

RACHEL:

(Nervously, she gets up.)

OK. If you don't mind, I'm going to go to the kitchen...

SLIM:

At least one of us can.

RACHEL:

(Stopping:)

What do you mean?

SLIM:

(He motions to his legs, pretending to be invalid.)
You know what I mean. I guess you're one of those sickos that take pleasure in deriding the physically handicapped.

RACHEL:

(Going over to him:)
Oh! I'm sorry!

(As she nears SLIM, he somersaults off the couch, gets up, and does a dance step.)

SLIM:

(Looking at his legs in mock surprise:)
It's a miracle!

RACHEL:

(Horrorified by the display:)
You're a monster!

(Beat.)

SLIM:

Are you wearing that to the wake?

RACHEL:

(Defensively:)
What's wrong with it?

SLIM:

It's old. My grandmother wouldn't wear that.

RACHEL:

(Becoming annoyed:)
I think it calls up memories of a... a simpler time.

SLIM:

Yeah, the Civil War. Moe won't be able to tell which one's the corpse.

(RACHEL rises.)

RACHEL:

(Furious:)
How dare you! I can't take this abuse any longer! Tell Moe I'll meet him at the funeral home!

(RACHEL storms out the front door, slamming it behind her.)

SLIM:

Talk about a short fuse.

(SLIM picks up a dictionary and begins reading. MOE enters from stage left.)

MOE:

Where's Rachel?

SLIM:

(Not looking up:)
She left.

MOE:

Without me? Are you serious?!

SLIM:

(In sarcastic reference to RACHEL's absence:)
No, I'm joking.

MOE:

Why would she do that?!

SLIM:

You can't trust those bank people.

MOE:

(Exasperated:)
Were you talking about your loathing of banks again?

SLIM:

Among other things.

MOE:

Slimmmmm!

(MOE looks at the ground and sighs. He spots something.)

There's my tie.

(He sighs again.)

I guess I'll have to go to the wake alone now.

(MOE turns around and begins putting on his tie revealing another iron burn on the back of his new jacket. SLIM shakes his head. Still putting on the tie, MOE opens the front door, begins to walk out, stops, and walks back in.)

MOE: (cont.)

Bill is still out with my car?

SLIM:

You know how the roads can be.

(There is the sound of screeching tires and a crash. SLIM and MOE run towards the front door as BILL bursts in.)

BILL:

(Hysterically:)

I can't believe it! I just can't believe it! How could I be so stupid?! I'm so unreliable!!

(He begins pounding his head on the table.)

Duh! Duh! Duh!

MOE:

(Concerned:)

What happened?

(BILL looks up from table.)

BILL:

(Hysterically:)

What happened?! What happened?! You wanna know what happened?! That stupid cat from next door happened to saunter across the road just as I was driving past. I crashed trying to let it cross to the other side!!

SLIM:

That reminds me of a little joke.

(He begins to chuckle to himself. MOE and BILL stare. SLIM suddenly stops and returns to normal.)

You were saying?

BILL:

(Trying to contain himself:)

What kind of people let their cats roam around the streets just begging to be made road pizza?

(Doorbell rings. MOE answers the front door. Enter EVA ORKANSCHARKERFICKENKRAUT, the German temptress.)

EVA:

(Venomously:)

Where is de dummkopf who tried to kill my cat?!

BILL:

(Furious:)

Kill your cat?! Kill your cat?! I think you got your story mixed up there, Mrs. Orkan Skunkin Sauerkraut!

EVA:

(Equally furious:)

Zat's Orkanscharkerfickenkraut you dimvit!

(Calmer:)

Eva Orkanscharkerfickenkraut.

MOE:

(Timidly:)

Hey, about my car....

BILL:

(Interrupting angrily:)

I was driving the car like any other human being when your el gato jumped out in front of it and now the car is totaled!

MOE:

It's totaled?!

BILL:

Well, there's no chance anyone could drive it now. Unless you want to take the telephone pole in its side with you around town.

MOE:

(Exasperated:)

How could you total my car?!

BILL:

(Angry:)

You're blaming me? You're blaming me?! Blame her!

(He points at EVA.)

Her and that little rat of a feline who decided to hinder
my locomotion!

SLIM:

(Sarcastically:)

You're just a regular Funk n' Wagnall.

MOE:

Watch your language!

(SLIM holds up his Funk and Wagnall dictionary.)

SLIM:

I was.

EVA:

(Cooling down:)

De damage done to my little Heidrich may not be as
physical as de damage done to de car, but de damage is
plain on de inside.

SLIM:

(Sarcastically:)

Let's rip her open and find out.

MOE:

(Ignoring SLIM:)

I'm sorry, but I still have no car to get to the wake.

(EVA walks up to MOE, looking him over.)

EVA:

(Seductively:)

I could give you a ride.

MOE:

That's really a nice offer, but I couldn't impose.

(EVA moves closer. MOE says, reluctantly:)

Well, OK....

(MOE begins to move away.)

MOE: (cont.)

Let me get my tie on.

EVA:

(Seductively:)

Let me help.

(She begins to move towards MOE. He runs offstage with EVA in pursuit. After both have left, BILL turns to SLIM and slaps him on the back.)

BILL:

So, Moe's not gonna be here tonight, huh? I guess that just leaves you and me for the big...

(He claps his hands and extends them.)

Scrabble tournament!

(BILL holds the pose for a minute. SLIM gives an evil laugh.)

SLIM:

Do you really think you're a match for my verbosity?

BILL:

Oh, I can match your verbosity with ferocity!

SLIM:

Really, you're filled with pomposity!

BILL:

Ah, but my words come with velocity! Your game is a monstrosity! Your words contain no viscosity!

SLIM:

Well you suck... ity...

BILL:

Anyway, keep studying that dictionary, because you're gonna need it later tonight! I'll be back!

(BILL strides out the front door. MOE runs in adjusting his belt with EVA close behind. His tie is still not tied.)

MOE:

Eva, I have to thank you for your generosity... but I'm sure my belt is buckled just fine.

EVA:

I just wanted to make sure. Are ve ready to leave?

MOE:

I'm ready to depart for the departed.

(He chuckles and stops when EVA and SLIM give him an icy stare.)

Let's just go.

(Exit MOE and EVA.)

(Blackout.)

(End of Scene 1.)

Scene 2:

(The scene opens in EVA'S car. EVA is driving and MOE is in the passenger's seat. The car should simply be the front and back seats of a normal car. A screen projector or moving lights could possibly be added to simulate driving. EVA should mime motions of driving the entire time.)

EVA:

It is always sad when a loved one passes away.

MOE:

That's true.

(Pause:)

Ah, Orkansh... Orkanshark... Eva. That's an interesting name. Where are you from?

EVA:

Jersey City.

MOE:

(Puzzled:)
Originally?

EVA:

Oh, no. I lived the first nine years of my life in Bunterheim, Germany.

MOE:

Ah, what side of the road do they drive on in Germany?

EVA:

De right, why?

MOE:

(Nervously:)
It's the same here.

EVA:

Oh.

(EVA mimes turning the wheel.)

Forgive me. I find it zo hard to drive vith zo many...

(She glances seductively at MOE.)

EVA: (cont.)

...distractions.

MOE:

(Visibly uncomfortable:)

It's very nice of you to drive me, Eva.

EVA:

No problem. I'm sure this vake means alot to you.

MOE:

Yeah, and thanks to Bill totaling my car, I'm going to be late.

EVA:

How long did you know her?

MOE:

Well, the car's about two years old...

EVA:

(Interrupting:)

No, I meant Aunt Edna.

MOE:

Oh, Edna? I never saw her much, only on holidays and family gatherings. I really don't know much about her except what I heard from my mother. It seems that the only people that knew her were my mother, Uncle Mel: Edna's husband, and our Cousin Katherine, who isn't really related to my family in any way. Regardless, I know my mother wouldn't want me to miss this.

EVA:

I'm sure.

(There is a pause.)

It must be hard dealing with a spastic catkiller und an overly sarcastic dictionary reader.

MOE:

Naa, it works. We've been buddies since college - part of the same fraternity.

EVA:

(Hopefully:)
Phi Beta Kappa?

MOE:

(Embarrassed:)
No, I Felta Thigh.

EVA:

Appropriate name.

(EVA inches her hand over, attempting to feel MOE'S thigh. MOE turns and peers out the side window trying to look behind.)

MOE:

Did that sign just say Canadian border, ten miles?

EVA:

(Nervously:)
Uh...ve are taking de shortcut.

(MOE accepts this. There is a meow from the back seat. MOE turns and looks into the back seat.)

MOE:

Oh, I see you brought your cat along.

EVA:

Ja. My Heidrich is a sensitive animal. Loneliness comes quickly to him, zo I bring him vith me ver ever I go.

(MOE reaches to the unseen cat.)

MOE:

Hello, kitty.

(There is a loud screech and a hiss, MOE jerks his hand out from behind the seat and holds it like it is injured.)

Owww! That cat bit me!

EVA:

He is nervous around strangers, especially...men.

(MOE looks at his injured hand.)

MOE:

Gee, this is bleeding a little bit. Do you have a Band-Aid?

EVA:

Try de first aid kit under de seat.

(MOE pulls the first aid kit from under the seat and opens it.)

MOE:

OK, let's see here...

(He pulls out pepper spray.)

Pepper spray?

(EVA glances over.)

EVA:

Yes, I keep it there to protect myself from any unvanted attacks. So far, I haven't had any.

MOE:

That's good, no attacks.

EVA:

No, I said, no "unvanted" attacks.

(MOE puts the pepper spray to the side and continues looking through the first aid kit. He pulls out a piece of lingerie and raises his eyebrows. EVA glances over.)

Oh, that's for...special occasions.

(He pulls out another piece.)

Office parties.

(He pulls out another.)

New Year's.

(He pulls out another.)

Bar Mitzvahs.

(He pulls out another.)

EVA: (cont.)

Presidential elections.

(He pulls out another.)

Flash floods.

(MOE pulls out a pair of men's cotton briefs. EVA is embarrassed.)

Vell, I don't know how they got in there.

(MOE searches a bit more.)

MOE:

Gee, Eva, is there anything in here used for first aid?

(MOE continues to search through first aid kit. He pulls out a bottle of wine. EVA glances over.)

EVA:

Zhat is to numb de pain.

(MOE pulls out two wine glasses. EVA makes another move.)

Would you like a spritzer?

MOE:

Spritz who? Oh, the wine. No, thanks.

EVA:

Vell, I would like one.

MOE:

(Worriedly:)

Aren't there laws about drinking and...driving?

EVA:

(Sternly:)

Spritz me!

(MOE hastily complies and hands the glass over to EVA.)

I don't like to drive when I'm tense.

(MOE nervously looks from the glass to EVA to the oncoming traffic. A truck horn blows past as MOE watches increasingly panicked. EVA has still not taken a sip.)

MOE:

Eva, I think you've had enough.

EVA:

But, de glass is still full.

(MOE grabs the glass out of EVA'S hand and downs the contents.)

MOE:

No, it's not.

(MOE's face slowly contorts into pain. He holds his temples and moans.)

I'm gonna regret that.

(He looks at his hand.)

And my hand's still bleeding.

(MOE resumes searching in the first aid kit. He pulls out a chocolate bar and holds it up questionably.)

EVA:

(Glancing over:)

They say chocolate is an "aphrodisiac".

MOE:

(Nervously:)

Well, I don't know how that applies to me. I don't have an Afro.

(MOE chuckles nervously. Aside:)

Oh, my God.

(To EVA:)

There doesn't seem to be a Band-Aid. Do you have a handkerchief or something?

EVA:

Of course.

(EVA seductively pulls a handkerchief from her brassiere and hands it to MOE. HE fumbles with it, trying to quell the bleeding.)

No, no, you must apply pressure.

(EVA grabs MOE'S hand with the handkerchief and holds tightly.)

MOE:

(Nervously trying to change the subject:)
Y-You certainly have a nice car, Eva.

EVA:

It is a piece of American crap. I long for a car with German craftsmanship - Volkswagen, Mercedes Benz.

(Sadly remembering the past:)

Oh, those ver the days - skiing trips to de Alps, boat trips on de Rhine, car trips to de Bodensee. Ach, vhat a vonderful life. Und de Fussball, oh, how I remember zhat.

(MOE manages to get out of EVA'S grip.)

MOE:

Foose?

EVA:

Soccer.

MOE:

You played soccer?

EVA:

In my prepubescent years, I vas a star Fussball player, then came zhat last big game, de National Youth Fussball Championship. We vere tied - one to one, I vas de goalie. De opposing team had a breakaway. Down the field they came, number 34 had de ball, she lines up, she shoots...

(EVA pauses and stares into space.)

MOE:

You caught it?

EVA:

(Depressed:)

I froze. The ball flew right by.

(She sighs.)

De other team left vith trophies, ve got rings vith two karats of cubic Zirconium. I could no longer play, I was an outcast, a failure...I still am.

MOE:

(Resting a hand on EVA'S shoulder:)

You shouldn't say that, Eva.

(EVA turns to him seductively.)

EVA:

I shouldn't?

MOE:

(Nervously:)

No, you're pretty and nice and....pretty nice.

(EVA puts her arm around MOE.)

EVA:

(Seductively:)

Zhat vas de sweetest zhing anyone ever said to me.

(MOE looks extremely uncomfortable.)

MOE:

(Nervously trying to change the subject:)

Uh, the road, Eva?

(EVA grabs the wheel with one hand, but pulls MOE closer with the other.)

It's really getting hot in here.

EVA:

Vhy don't you...take off your coat?

(MOE tries to take his coat off but EVA's arm is in the way. After making this obvious, EVA reluctantly removes her arm. MOE takes off his coat and throws it into the back seat. There is a loud screech of a cat.)

EVA: (cont.)

My Heidrich!!

(She lets go of the wheel and turns around to help her cat. Horns start blowing and cars screech on their brakes. MOE, terrified, leans over and grabs the wheel. EVA attempts to sit down and sits on MOE. She jumps back up as MOE gets out of the way and she sits back down and resumes driving, breathlessly. The horns and screeching tires stop.)

Oh, Moe, you saved me, my car, my cat. What ever can I do to repay you?

MOE:

Oh, I think you've done enough...

(MOE looks at EVA, still recovering from the near fatal experience.)

EVA:

(Whispering seductively:)

I have a confession to make, Moe Marley.

(MOE has moved close to his side of the car.)

MOE:

(Extremely nervous:)

Y-Yes, Eva?

EVA:

I love you! I've always loved you!!

(MOE is now crammed against his door and looks extremely nervous.)

MOE:

(Desperately trying to change the subject:)

That's great, Eva. Anyway...

EVA:

I want you, Moe!

(EVA lets go of the wheel and lunges at MOE who tries to cram himself farther away from EVA. Car horns begin blaring and tires screeching. The car door suddenly opens and MOE tumbles out. He screams which fades away as the lights go down.)

(Blackout.)

(End of Scene 2.)

Scene 3:

(The scene opens in a bar. The entire bar is set up right of center, and lights remain down on the other side of the stage. The BARTENDER, a woman roughly the same age as MOE, is cleaning glasses. MOE lies unconscious on the bar, and a man sits on a stool with his drink resting on MOE's chest. His name is DEL, and he has a Brooklyn-ese accent. As the scene begins, he and the BARTENDER are arguing.)

DEL:

No, no; I'm telling you! There was a 1957 New York Times article that outlined the whole thing. Dr. Charles Mason of the Greenbaum Institute made it very clear that overhand was the correct way to hang your toilet paper!

BARTENDER:

Oh, don't give me that. What can scientific tests prove about "moon tape" etiquette? I've been hanging it underhand in the bathroom for 7 years-plus and no one's complained - until now.

DEL:

Well it's a very sensitive subject!

(He lifts his drink from MOE's body, takes a sip, and slams it back down. This causes MOE to stir.)

It takes a lot to speak up against the way people operate their lavatories.

BARTENDER:

Aw, don't give me that...

(MOE moans and lifts his head. But DEL, getting in the BARTENDER's face, slams him back down.)

DEL:

Listen, I have connections! I can get Mr. Whipple on the phone in fifteen minutes-

BARTENDER:

Wait! Look, he's awake!

(DEL backs away as MOE shakes his head and sits up. Groggy, he rolls off behind the bar, crashing to the ground. DEL winces. MOE stands.)

MOE:

(Woozy:)
Wha- Where am I?

BARTENDER:

You're in my bar.

DEL:

Are you OK?

MOE:

I think so; I don't know...

DEL:

Well, don't worry, cause we called an ambulance.

(He turns to the BARTENDER.)

Right?

BARTENDER:

I didn't call an ambulance. I thought you did.

(DEL pauses.)

DEL:

Uh...

(He points at MOE's forehead.)

Well, I'm sure that swelling will go down by itself...
Anyway, I'm Del Lacuso. That's my tractor that's double
parked outside.

MOE:

Tractor? Oh, you're a farmer?

DEL:

Yeah, but my real passion is online trading.

(MOE and the BARTENDER stop and stare.)

DEL: (cont.)

Uh, anyway, what were you doing lying on the side of the road?

MOE:

(Sighing:)

Uh, you really don't want to hear it. It's a long story, and it involves the Germans. Basically, my girlfriend got upset with my best friend, my next door neighbor made a pass at me, and I still haven't gotten to my dead aunt's wake.

DEL:

I know exactly what you're feeling.

BARTENDER:

(Mutters:)

Here we go again...

MOE:

You do? How?

DEL:

Think about it. What do all three of your problems have in common?

MOE:

Pet Cemetery?

DEL:

I hope not.

MOE:

What, then?

DEL:

Women!

BARTENDER:

(Still unconvinced:)

Women!

MOE:

Women?

DEL:

Women! Your girlfriend, your neighbor, your aunt:
They're the cause of your problems, you said so yourself.

BARTENDER:

Oh please...

DEL:

Hey, hear me out!

(He turns back to MOE.)

Look, we found you on the side of the road. Alone!
Where was your girlfriend then?! Do you know where she
probably is right now?

*(The doorbell rings. Lights go down. Lights come up on
stage left, which is set up as MOE's living room. BILL
and SLIM are playing Scrabble.)*

SLIM:

Bill, get the door.

BILL:

I am in the middle of my turn here, if you don't mind!
It requires the utmost concentration. You get it!

SLIM:

(Monotone:)

Get the door. Get the door. Get the door. Get the
door. Get the-

BILL:

(Exploding:)

All right! Geez!

*(He goes to center stage and ushers RACHEL in from the
darkness.)*

RACHEL:

Hello.

(Beat:)

BILL:

Rachel! Look, Slim! It's... Rachel!

(SLIM stands and BILL inches over to him and whispers.)

BILL: (cont.)

That's Moe's girlfriend, right?

SLIM:

Right.

BILL:

So we shouldn't upset her, right?

SLIM:

(Careless:)

I don't know.

BILL:

(Loud and deliberate:)

Soooo, Rachel, what brings you to the Marley household?

RACHEL:

Well, I felt sort of guilty for running out like that...

(She looks warily at SLIM.)

Is Moe back from the funeral home?

BILL:

Nah, he and Eva aren't back yet.

RACHEL:

Eva? Who's Eva?

BILL:

Uhhhh... Eva's...

SLIM:

Eva's his new broad.

BILL:

Yeah, Eva's his new...

(He catches himself.)

No she's not! Eva lives next door, so she offered Moe a ride. The relationship doesn't go any further than that.

SLIM:

You can go pretty far in a '74 Pinto.

RACHEL:

(Checking her watch:)

Moe should be back by now. I guess I'll just wait here until he gets back.

BILL:

Uh, OK... I guess our Scrabble game will go on rain delay.

(BILL and RACHEL laugh too cutely. SLIM rolls his eyes and the lights go down. As the lights come up on the bar, DEL finishes his speech.)

DEL:

...And if all that doesn't convince you about women, just remember: They're the ones who hang toilet paper in the improper underhand fashion!

(MOE looks out, changed.)

MOE:

I never thought about it like that. You know, I was going to propose to Rachel today, but now it seems that I've got a lot thinking to do.

DEL:

I thought you would.

MOE:

You're right; Rachel probably doesn't care where I am or what I'm doing. Women really are too much trouble.

(He looks at the BARTENDER.)

Uh, present company excepted.

BARTENDER:

Now, I just have to interrupt again, and tell you how wrong you are.

MOE:

Wait, take my Aunt Edna, for example. She never spoke much with any of the family, even on holidays. She never gave me a chance to find out who she is. Then she dies and I'm supposed to go to her funeral. The only time she ever gave to me was after she couldn't say anything to me anymore!

BARTENDER:

(Sarcastically:)

That's horrible! I can't believe your aunt would be so thoughtless as to die.

DEL:

Exactly!

(He pauses.)

Oh, you're being sarcastic.

BARTENDER:

Maybe you fellas can suspend your own deaths, but the rest of us can't. A death is a loss, not only for the deceased, but also for everyone around them! I don't blame you for being angry, but be angry with the circumstances, not your aunt.

DEL:

Well, that's fine. I see the truth in that, but what about Eva?

BARTENDER:

Eva? Who's Eva?

MOE:

Eva's my next door neighbor and she's insane! Lately, I've noticed that she's been coming on to me.

BARTENDER:

I'd think you would be flattered.

MOE:

Not exactly. Eva is obsessive, fanatical, and dangerous. She almost got me killed today!

BARTENDER:

(Sarcastically:)
Sounds like a typical woman.

DEL:

Yeah!

(DEL thinks for a moment.)

Was that sarcasm again?

BARTENDER:

(To MOE:)
I think that it only takes a little bit of common sense to figure out that not all women are psychopaths.

MOE:

Excluding all those living near me.

BARTENDER:

And I suppose all the men you know are sane?

MOE:

Certainly!

(MOE then notices DEL, who is entertaining himself by sucking water into a straw, pinching the top, trapping the water in it, lifting it up, then letting the water pour back into his glass, chuckling to himself.)

Well...not like Eva is!

BARTENDER:

(Becoming disinterested:)
I see...

(The BARTENDER goes back to polishing glasses. MOE turns to her.)

MOE:

I've noticed something. You've been lumping the people I have problems with into broad categories, like "neighbors" and "dead people", but how about Rachel, the woman I was going to marry? You don't marry more than one person do you?

(DEL and the BARTENDER look at each other thoughtfully.)

MOE: (cont.)

More than one person at a time?

(DEL and the BARTENDER continue to look thoughtful.)

Legally?

(DEL and the BARTENDER shake their heads in negation.)

My girlfriend isn't just a neighbor or a friend, she's the woman I would have married! That's all off now; she didn't know how to deal with my friends. And there lies my main problem with women: they overreact! Whether it's a reclusive aunt, a temptress neighbor, or an unforgiving wife, they take things to the extreme, and I'm not going to let them take me with them!

(DEL places a hand on MOE'S shoulder.)

DEL:

(Sniffling:)

That was beautiful.

(DEL bursts into tears. After a few seconds, he gains control of himself and takes a deep breath.)

I really think we had a moment here. Oh no, I'm gonna cry again. Excuse me.

(DEL hurriedly exits, stage left. MOE and the BARTENDER look after him.)

BARTENDER:

(To MOE:)

I'm guessing his problems with women are...unique.

MOE:

Yeah.

(MOE swigs DEL's drink and the lights fade. Lights up on MOE's living room. RACHEL, BILL, and SLIM sit the same as before. BILL takes a drink from his juice box which emits a loud empty sound.)

SLIM:

Hey Hoover, would you shut up?

(BILL stops. RACHEL clears her throat nervously.)

SLIM: (cont.)

What?

RACHEL:

(Nervously:)

Oh, nothing...nothing.

(An uncomfortable silence follows.)

BILL:

So, anyone know how to play rummy?

SLIM:

(Annoyed:)

No.

BILL:

OK...

(Uncomfortable silence.)

SLIM:

So, Rachel, what do you do at this bank?

(RACHEL looks warily at SLIM.)

RACHEL:

Well, I work with the customers...

SLIM:

Stupid.

RACHEL:

...cash the checks...

SLIM:

Stupid.

RACHEL:

(Increasingly agitated:)

...introduce clients...

SLIM:

Stupid.

RACHEL:

(More agitated:)
...handle loans...

SLIM:

Stupid.

RACHEL:

(More agitated:)
...supervise the drive-through...

SLIM:

Stupid.

RACHEL:

(Standing up, extremely agitated:)
...and anything else that needs to be done!

SLIM:

Sounds like a real crappy job!

RACHEL:

All right; that's it! I'm not taking this any longer!

(Offstage, a toilet flushes. DEL walks on from stage left drying his hands with a paper towel. RACHEL, BILL, and SLIM all stare. DEL nearly reaches center stage, but stops. Confused, he does a double take. He stares back at the three and slowly backs away. As he crosses center stage, the lights go down on the living room and go up on the bar. DEL reaches his seat and sits. Bewildered, he looks at the BARTENDER.)

DEL:

I really don't like the underhand toilet paper...

BARTENDER:

Yeah, shut up. Anyway Moe, from what I've seen, some women treat men good, some women treat men bad. There isn't any partiality either way.

DEL:

That's not how I've seen it.

(DEL begins eating beer nuts from a bowl on the bar.)

BARTENDER:

Then you must know a lot of good men. Most have to deal with the same amount of bad people from both genders. Only yesterday a guy walked in here and, for no reason, spits right in the beer nuts.

(DEL, who is still eating the nuts, begins choking and spitting.)

Just like that...

(DEL continues hacking. MOE sighs.)

Moe, it's really not a gender thing. If you realize that, you'll see the people in your life for who they are, and for what they mean to you. If not...

(She shrugs.)

I wish you luck come Valentine's Day.

MOE:

(Triggering a memory:)

Valentine's Day... Rachel had to spend the whole day working at the bank, so I went to visit.

(He smiles.)

I kept going through the drive-through, sending her little love notes through the pneumatic tubes. Then when she got off work, we roller-skated straight across town to the finest restaurant. It was heaven.

BARTENDER:

Do you really want to give that up?

MOE:

(Sighs:)

Not anymore. You're right. I'm in love.

(MOE stands and turns to the audience.)

I'm in love with the girl I love! Come on, Del!

(He drags DEL to his feet and begins to go off stage right.)

MOE: (cont.)

I'm going home to Rachel to tell her that I'm never leaving her again!

(They exit as the lights change to MOE's living room. RACHEL stands as before.)

RACHEL:

That's it! As long as you two are here, I'm never coming here again!

(She hustles off. SLIM blows a raspberry.)

(Blackout.)

(End of Scene 3.)

Scene 4:

(The scene opens back at MOE's house. SLIM and BILL are deeply involved in their Scrabble game. BILL places down his tiles.)

BILL:

(Smugly:)
"Quotidian."

(A pause.)

It's a word. Or do you need to look it up, Slim?

SLIM:

No, no; I trust you.

BILL:

And that neatly puts me in the lead as we draw to the end of the game! I hope you're not a sore loser.

SLIM:

Oh, I don't think you'll ever know...

(SLIM counts off his tiles as he puts them on the board.)

One, two, three, four, five, six... And that's a triple letter score and a triple word score... Looks like I'm now in the lead!

BILL:

Wait just a minute!

(BILL looms over the word.)

B - O - S - O - M - I - C. "Bosomic?" ("*BOOZ-mic*")

SLIM:

That's what I put.

BILL:

Bosomic?! That's not even a word!

SLIM:

(Quoting from memory:)
"Bosomic. Of or pertaining to the female bosom."

BILL:

Let me see that!

(BILL rips through the dictionary.)

Slim, there is no word in here called bosomic. There is a "bosom" and a "bosomy," but no bosom-ic!

SLIM:

Bill, it's a standard modifier.

BILL:

No! No, the modifier of "bosom" is just "bosom!" That's how it's always been!

SLIM:

Times change...

BILL:

Slim, that's not a word! That's why they called that TV show "Bosom Buddies!"

(SLIM just stares. The doorbell rings. BILL answers it and lets EVA in.)

EVA:

Oh, mein Gott!

BILL:

Well, if it isn't Miss Orkansha...kajagoogoo! Or shall I say... Eva?

EVA:

Say what you want, I have important news!

BILL:

What?!

SLIM:

(Looking at BILL's pieces:)
Tell us all about it...

EVA:

I was driving to the wake with Moe, when, well, he sort of fell out of the car.

BILL:

He what?!

EVA:

He fell out of the car.

BILL:

And you didn't stop? You didn't stop?!

EVA:

Oh, I know, I know! I feel so horrible!

BILL:

Well you should; he could be dead!

EVA:

I know! I can't believe I left him behind. It's given me such an awful feeling, an emptiness right in my bosomic area.

BILL:

(Shocked:)

B- what?!

SLIM:

(Standing up:)

Ah ha!

BILL:

No!

EVA:

What?

SLIM:

(To EVA:)

Say it again!

EVA:

Bosomic?

SLIM:

Yes!

BILL:

No!

SLIM:

That's proof!

BILL:

No it's not! You can't trust her; she's European!

EVA:

Oh, I'm zo confused...

BILL:

(Glaring:)

I'll say!

SLIM:

Bill, what was that you were saying about sore losers?

(BILL fumes at SLIM.)

BILL:

(Containing himself:)

I'm so glad you can be happy about Scrabble when Moe may be dead! Eva, do you know where you last saw him?

EVA:

It vas somewhere on Route 45, I think.

BILL:

Well that should be easy. There's mostly just flat farmland out there. We can spot him easily from the road.

SLIM:

Unless he's dead.

BILL:

(Shaking his head:)

You're like a cold shower, aren't you? Look, why don't you and Eva go right now and look for Moe? I'm gonna call up a few people I know in farm country.

SLIM:

(With a smirk:)

Like that chick Prunella Bovine from the personal ads?

BILL:

(Annoyed:)

Would you shut up?! She was a very nice girl, things just didn't work out. Geez!

(BILL storms into the kitchen. SLIM turns to EVA.)

SLIM:

Bill spooked the chickens.

(He chuckles. He looks back at EVA, but she shows no response. He frowns.)

BILL:

(From offstage:)

But Prunella, I love you!

(There is a pause.)

No, don't hang up...duhhh!!

(BILL reenters. He stops and stares at EVA and SLIM.)

You two are still here? Hurry! Go and find Moe!

SLIM:

(Walking toward the door, EVA follows:)

All right, all right...

(He goes to open the door, but MOE and DEL walk onstage. SLIM stops, then turns and walks away.)

I love my work...

EVA:

Moe!

BILL:

Moe! Moe, you're alive! Are you all right?

MOE:

I'm fine, I'm fine, thank you, Bill.

BILL:

Thrown out of a car... I can't imagine how that felt...

MOE:

Well, I kinda just blacked out- then I woke up in a bar, and-

SLIM:

(Interrupting:)

I can imagine how that felt.

(BILL is fed up and hits SLIM. They engage in a mild slapping match.)

MOE:

But let me introduce Del Lacuso; he was kind enough to drive me home. Del, this is Bill and Slim...

(They break up their fight and shake with DEL.)

BILL:

(Clarifying:)

I'm Bill.

DEL:

Likewise.

MOE:

(Noticing EVA:)

Eva!

(Uneasy:)

You're here...

EVA:

Oh, Moe, you don't know how terrible I feel! If there is any way I can make it up to you-

(For once, EVA's generosity is perfectly innocent, and she extends a hand to MOE. MOE instinctively jerks away.)

MOE:

(Interrupting:)

No, no Eva... I'm fine, I-

(He rubs his neck and pulls a few leaves out of his jacket and shirt.)

MOE: (cont.)

I really should change, though... I'll be right back.

(MOE exits left. SLIM and BILL begin to clean up the Scrabble game. DEL walks to EVA.)

DEL:

That guy's a real trooper.

EVA:

Oh, I know...

DEL:

Yeah, he took a nasty spill, and he just keeps going.

EVA:

Yes, I never thought zhat someone could fall out my passenger side door... again...

DEL:

I'm actually one of the lucky ones. I've fallen out of moving vehicles before, but 5 miles an hour on a tractor doesn't hurt that much.

(He taps his head.)

I still got it!

EVA:

You said tractor?

DEL:

Yeah, I work on a farm. I like it out there... Working the land with my hands... It gives me a sense of pride. Something I can feel bosomically.

(DEL strikes his chest. BILL drops the Scrabble box behind them.)

BILL:

(Ready to explode:)

B- Geez!

(He looks at SLIM, then exhales. He sighs, takes money out of his pocket, and gives it to SLIM.)

SLIM:

Thank you.

(SLIM and BILL exit left with the Scrabble board. DEL looks back at EVA.)

DEL:

Ah, anyway, that's me. Farming. Just me, the land, and my cat Snowbeam.

EVA:

(Surprised:)
Cat?

DEL:

Yeah, I love the little thing...

EVA:

Oh, I love cats, too...

(She stares longingly at DEL as he stares out into space, fondly. EVA grows more entranced the more DEL describes.)

DEL:

I just can't help it. I never considered myself a cat person until I found her by the porch. I looked into those sweet, marble eyes, that face full of love, and her soft fur, and I just-

(EVA, enraptured, grabs DEL and kisses him passionately. SLIM and BILL reenter.)

BILL:

(Upon seeing the two, he gags.)
Oh geez...

(He re-exits. DEL and EVA break apart.)

DEL:

(Bewildered:)
Oh wow...

EVA:

So... want to go next door and... talk about cats?

DEL:

(Still dumbfounded, but approving:)
Meow.

(They link arms and exit right. BILL returns.)

BILL:

(To SLIM:)

Well, in spite of all the horrors I've seen tonight, I'm glad we at least got Moe back in one piece.

(He sits and exhales.)

Now, I just want to sit down, wallow in my Scrabble misery, and relax.

(MOE walks in.)

MOE:

Say, did Rachel call at all?

(BILL and SLIM look at each other.)

BILL:

(Tentatively:)

Well, ah, Rachel... yeah... The thing is that... well, she came here, actually... but she didn't, well...

(MOE glares at him. BILL gives up and motions to SLIM.)

It's his fault!

(MOE glares at SLIM.)

SLIM:

I hate banks.

(MOE exhales.)

MOE:

She's gone, isn't she?

(BILL nods.)

Great...

(He shakes his head and continues.)

MOE: (cont.)

I don't know what it is about the two of you that makes people run out of the room, but it's making me sick! You know, over the course of this evening, I've managed to raise some interesting questions about my life. Who am I? Where am I going?

BILL:

(Concerned:)

Moe, you didn't tell us you had amnesia!

MOE:

(Ignoring BILL:)

Only one thing was certain. Tonight was the night that I had to make sense of the mess I call my life. That's right; a mess! Tonight was just the culmination of all the weird events that have happened to me. Do you know- do you know the only time I feel normal?

SLIM:

(Sarcastically:)

After a tall glass of prune juice?

MOE:

(Ignoring SLIM:)

When I'm with Rachel! Rachel wasn't a psychotic, or a corpse, or a farmer. She made my life worth living, and it took so much to help me realize how much she really means to me!

(MOE points to the front door.)

Now, she'll never walk through that door again!

(RACHEL walks in from the kitchen, behind MOE. BILL coughs and points to RACHEL. MOE spins around, overjoyed.)

Rachel!

RACHEL:

(Equally overjoyed:)

Moe!

(They run towards each other, hug and begin to walk off stage left.)

MOE:

Rachel, I have something to ask you...

(They exit.)

BILL:

Well, I was a little worried for a minute, there. I almost thought that Moe was going to give up on life. But I'm glad it all worked out.

(He smiles.)

It's heartwarming, actually.

SLIM:

(Underwhelmed:)

Yeah, pass the Kleenex...

(The phone rings. BILL picks it up.)

BILL:

Hello?

(He hands the phone to SLIM.)

It's for you...

SLIM:

(In phone:)

What?

PHONE VOICE:

Mr. Slim Pickett?

SLIM:

Yeah?

PHONE VOICE:

This is the bank.

SLIM:

Oh, crap.

(Blackout.)

THE END