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PREVIEW: LOVING JESSE - A TRAGIC COMEDY IN ONE ACT

By

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Cast of Characters

MEL
JESSE

Synopsis

A man hopes the unusual behavior of his wife is just a passing phase but begins to realize a real problem is brewing.

Act I

Scene 1

TIME: Rainy morning.

SCENE: A kitchen with a table and two chairs. An umbrella leans against a door at stage right center.

LIGHTS: Up. AT RISE: JESSE mature, sits at the table wearing a robe and slippers holding a pencil, concentrating on a newspaper. MEL wearing pants, shirt and tie ENTERS.

(Jesse removes a section of the newspaper holding it up for Mel. He takes it from Her and sits at the table, opens the newspaper and glances at Jesse.)

MEL

Morning, Jesse?

JESSE

Musical instrument with wooden bars. Nine letters.

MEL

Xylophone.

JESSE

Fits.

MEL

(Returns to the newspaper.)

No bowling Wednesday. Eddie broke his wrist so we have to find a replacement.

JESSE

Submersible craft ... nine letters? (Thinks.) Submarine! (Writes.) What about Wednesday?

MEL

My bowling night.

JESSE

Today is Tuesday.

MEL

I know, but there's no bowling tomorrow night.

JESSE

(Confused.)

But tomorrow is your bowling night.

(Mel puts the newspaper down and stands.)

MEL

Okay. I have to get going or I'll be late for work.

JESSE

Pick up a half gallon of milk on your way home from bowling.

MEL

No, Jesse, tomorrow night is --

JESSE

(Interrupts.)

Some pretzels too.

MEL

Big sticks, little sticks, curly, soft, hard?

JESSE

Small curly.

MEL

Small curly pretzels you remember but not what I said about bowling.

JESSE

Bowling? Tonight? Then get the milk and pretzels after.

MEL

(Frustrated.)

Okay, so, a big bag of small curly pretzels and we can wash them down with what kind of milk?

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JESSE

Come to Momma, Butch ... that's a good boy. Daddy's taking you out to pee. Make sure he has time to one and two, Mel.

(Jesse holds out Her empty hand. Mel pretends to takes hold of a leash and steps to the door. He opens the umbrella, the door EXITING, closing the door behind.)

Scene 2

TIME: Evening.

SCENE: Kitchen.

LIGHTS: Up.

AT RISE: Jesse is dressed casually looking into a glass bowl on the table.

(Mel ENTERS with a bag, leaves the umbrella by the door, the bag on the table and sits.)

JESSE

You didn't wear your galoshes. They're still in the closet.

MEL

I was running late standing in the rain while Butch did his business. The only thing I caught was Hell for being late. What're you doing?

JESSE

Feeding the fish. Got them today.

MEL

(Shocked.)

From the same magic store where you got Butch?

JESSE

Butch doesn't look well. I think his food is not agreeing with his tummy.

MEL

Maybe he caught a sniffle doing his business this morning.

JESSE

We should bring him to a vet.

MEL

Vet? No, Jesse. That's not a good idea.

JESSE

Are you jealous I'm concerned for him?

MEL

Seriously?

JESSE

Dinner in ten minutes.

MEL

(Confused.)

What? Okay ... what's for dinner?

JESSE

Steak.

(Mel looks toward a stove.)

MEL

Looks like a nice T-Bone where is it?

JESSE

With rice.

MEL

Jesse ... there is nothing in or on the stove.

JESSE

Brown rice, Mel.

MEL

Brown, white, pink ... where is it?

JESSE

(Looks at floor.)

You're such a brave little boy, Butch. Yes, you are! Mommy's gonna get your tummy all better.

MEL

I don't think he's the sick one.

JESSE

I'll take him to the vet myself!

(Jesse angrily steps to the door, waits for Butch to leave then She EXITS.)

MEL

(Shakes his head concerned.)

If she comes home with a cat I'll kill myself.

(The door OPENS. Jesse steps in slowly returning wearily to the table.)

JESSE

Mel. I... I'm sorry. I know I've been a burden. Something's changing up here. (Taps head.) I guess I'm too proud, or too scared to admit it.

MEL

Afraid of what, sweetheart? I hope not me?

JESSE

God, no. You're a caring, loving husband. It's just ... well, haven't you noticed my delusional episodes lately? They're becoming more frequent.

MEL

To be honest, I am concerned. Have you seen a Doctor?

JESSE

No, but now is the time. Right now.

(Mel leads Her to the door.)

JESSE

Don't forget to feed the fish, Mel.

(Mel shakes his head, closing the door behind them.)

LIGHTS: Down.

FINAL CURTAIN.



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