

FOR THE MONEY

by
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SCENE 1

(Sal and Richard both in late sixties or early seventies are seated in chairs as lights come up. A desk & chair somewhere.)

SAL
I don't know.

RICHARD
You can't just say I don't know. You have to know. How do we get the money.

SAL
I get the money. Got it. And not while she's still alive.

RICHARD
When will she die?

SAL
I Don't know. As long as she's alive I don't get the money.

RICHARD
What if she spends it all before she dies?

SAL
Can't.

RICHARD
What do you mean, can't?

SAL
You know all this. I told you all this before, a hundred times.

RICHARD
I don't remember. Tell me again.

SAL
All right. The money, my grandfathers money is all mine but I can't touch it until the guardian, my step sister, dies.

RICHARD
My sister.

SAL
Your sister, my step sister. Whatever. She's in charge of the estate.

RICHARD
She's in charge?

SAL
Yes.

RICHARD
So she could waste it all on crap for herself if she's in charge?

SAL
She's not in charge of the money, stupid. She's in charge of the estate but she only gets enough money to take care of us. Until she dies.

RICHARD
That's when we get the money?

SAL
That's when I, get the money and the estate and a chance to live.

RICHARD
What about me? And what happens if you die first?

SAL
You wont believe this. I don't know. And if I'm dead I probably won't even care. What the hell difference does it make?

RICHARD
Don't you think you should find out. What the hell have you been waiting for all these years? If she gets everything when you die, what's to stop her from killing you first and keeping all the money for herself?

SAL
What do you mean killing me first?

RICHARD
Just what I said. If you kill her first, you get the money but maybe if she kills you first, she gets the money.

SAL
For one thing, you don't know that.

RICHARD
That's why I said maybe. You should read the will and then you would know.

SAL
For another thing, I'm not going to kill anybody.

RICHARD

If I was you I'd check. Just to make sure, cause she might find out and kill you first. And if she does she ain't gonna give me anything. So I have a vested interest in finding out.

SAL

She does hate you.

RICHARD

Hate is not a strong enough word.

SAL

I don't want to think about it now.

RICHARD

What are you thinking about?

SAL

Nothing. Not about the money, not about Sylvia.

RICHARD

Who's Sylvia? What money?

BLACKOUT

SCENE 2

(The two older men are replaced by same characters in their thirties.)

RICHARD

Well Sal you are a rich man now. You should be happy. I don't mean because grandfather died but still all things considered ---

SAL

Shut up Richard. You hated him and he hated you.

RICHARD

Like he thought the world of you.

SAL

He just hated me less than he hated you and he hated you more than he hated Sylvia.

RICHARD

Speaking of Sylvia, where the hell is she?

SAL

She went out. Said she isn't coming back until the reading of the will. If you ask me, I think she thinks she knows what's in it.

RICHARD

I bet you a thousand bucks she's wrong.

SAL

Don't be ridiculous.

RICHARD

How am I being ridiculous?

SAL

Two ways. Firstly. You won't know weather she's right or wrong because you can't possibly know what she's thinking. Nobody does. Secondly, you don't have a thousand dollars.

RICHARD

Not now.

SAL

Not ever if I know any thing about grandfather. And it so happens that I do. He hated everybody, especially after he blamed your father for my mother's death. And then to top it off after he allowed us to go on living here my father married your mother who brought Sylvia into the family along with her. Then the 'piece de resistance' they went and produced you. One medium sized very unhappy family. So once again I say. Not ever will you get any of grandfather's money, because of what happened.

RICHARD

That wasn't my fault. Jesus! It wasn't any body's fault.

SAL

Try explaining that to grandfather. Oops, sorry to late. Actually it was to late upon conception.

(Sylvia enters with attorney Peterson.)

RICHARD

Well lookie who's here and with the lawyer. Have you got the sacred manuscript?

SYLVIA

That is why he is here. Idiot.

RICHARD

I heard that.

SYLVIA

Yes. But do you understand it? Peter may we get on with it?

PETER

Certainly. Let's get right to it I really haven't got all day. After the reading we have to get down to the court house.

All right then. Down to business. SYLVIA
 Down to business. RICHARD
 Every one settle down. PETER
 Is this going to take long darling? SYLVIA
 I don't know, I haven't read it. PETER
 You haven't read it? SAL
 Shut up Sal. I was just thinking. RICHARD
 That's a laugh. Peter, continue. SYLVIA
 What happened to darling. SAL
 Show some respect or you'll be sorry. SYLVIA
 I'm already sorry. Sorry to be related to any of you. SAL
 Actually, you are only related to Sylvia. PETER
 For which I am eternally not grateful. SYLVIA
 Don't you mean ungrateful? SAL
 Maybe we should dispense with the reading and simply file it. All this bickering and vitriol is something I find distasteful. If you people want to read it you can go downtown and read it. PETER
 Don't be that way Pete old buddy. RICHARD
 Come Peter I may have to put up with these - these - these --- SYLVIA
 Morons? You wanted to say morons, didn't you? RICHARD
 Shut up Richard. Read the god damned thing Peter will you please. Enough of this bull. Just read the damned paper. SAL
 That's what I am trying to do. Unsuccessfully, I might add. PETER
 Sylvia, you got yourself an unsuccessful lawyer. RICHARD
 How did you know that. SAL
 They're both belligerent fools. Lets get away from here. SYLVIA
 After we've filed the papers a copy will be available at my office. We will mail you a condensed copy of the will. PETER
 Condensed for the dense. Come along Peter. SYLVIA
 (*Peter and Sylvia exit.*)
 I guess we showed them. RICHARD

BLACKOUT

SCENE 3

(The two older men in their chairs.)

We should have killed her when she showed up with that lawyer. You should have known something bad was going to happen. RICHARD
 What are you talking about? SAL

RICHARD
I'm talking about Sylvia. I had a bad feeling when she showed up with that lawyer fellow on her arm. What was his name?
SAL
What are you talking about and who the hell is Sylvia.
RICHARD
My sister? The bitch who stole the money.
SAL
Oh, her. I thought she died.
RICHARD
Died? You killed her. But it was way too late.
SAL
I never killed anybody. At least I don't remember killing any one. Why would I kill her?
RICHARD
For the money. You killed her for the money.
SAL
The grandfather money. That's it. Now I remember. This house this wonderful old house and - and grandfather yes I remember now. I hated that old bastard. But how do you know all this?
RICHARD
I'm Richard. Your your half brother. I remember, his name was Peter, Peter something --
SAL
Who's Peter? You were married to Sylvia? I don't remember having a brother-in-law. I seem to forget a lot of things but I wouldn't forget a brother-in-law. What did you say your name was?
RICHARD
Never mind.
SAL
What were we talking about Richie?
RICHARD
Don't call me Richie. I told you before don't call me Richie.
SAL
Richie! Richie! Richie! I would call you rich but you're not.
RICHARD
Stop. Stop. I hate it when you do that. You murderer.
(Two men in white uniforms enter.)
FRED
Here we are. The inner sanctum. Looks like they're at it again.
GLENN
What? Who are they, why aren't they with the other residents?
FRED
One of them, Sal Respity, he's the one screaming Richie. He used to own this place, actually he almost owned it or so the story goes but that was a long time ago.
SAL
Hey what are you guys doing in my house?
FRED
Hi, Mister Respity. How are you today *(To Glenn)* They're related. Half brothers.
GLENN
So they used to own this place.
FRED
Only Mister Sal and maybe he did own it for a while.
GLENN
What was it a hotel?
RICHARD
It was our home stupid.
GLENN
This whole place was a house once? You two guys lived here?
SAL
Of course we lived here it's our home. Who are these people?
GLENN
What happened?
FRED
It's a long story and you'll hear it a hundred times before you're done. Come on we have to get these two up to bed.
GLENN
Are they always like this? I mean confused.
FRED
Not all the time but we sometimes have a little fun with them.

GLENN
 Like how?

FRED
 Well when they argue and cant remember what they just said, sometimes we make up some shit and feed it to them.

GLENN
 Doesn't that really mess them up?

FRED
 Who knows, but it kills time and sometimes it gets very interesting. Like when we hint that one of them killed their sister. Come on let's get them up stairs.
(They all exit and Sylvia enters with Peter in tow.)

PETER
 Well now that's settled. Welcome to your new home. Of course it's not in your name but that doesn't matter now does it?

SYLVIA
 We can take the master suite.

PETER
 I had better not move in right away. It might raise suspicions.

SYLVIA
 Don't be silly. I'm the executrix am I not Mister Lawyer. Mister Peter, lawyer person?

PETER
 Yes you are Miss Sylvia, gorgeous executrix person.
(They embrace, and kiss.)

PETER (CONT'D)
 Of course you know that I can't stay every night.

SYLVIA
 Right now there are other things on the table for discussion.

PETER
 Yes, yes. Down to business. You will have full control of the estate. There are certain restrictions. To wit.

SYLVIA
 I simply love it when you talk lawyerly.

PETER
 Pay attention. *(Sylvia cuddles close and nuzzles him.)* Not that kind of attention. At least not now. You are restricted in the amount of money or assets you can use for your own benefit.

SYLVIA
 Darling?

PETER
 Yes dear.

SYLVIA
 No, I meant 'Not that kind of attention darling'.

PETER
 What? Oh! Yes I see, darling. Back to business.

SYLVIA
 Off to bed?

PETER
 We have to do this. *(He pushes her away, gently.)* Listen to me darling. I do love you but we must get to these matters.

SYLVIA
 If we must.

PETER
 Here is what will happen. Sal will receive a letter informing him that you control the purse strings and all his reasonable needs will be met. You on the other hand are restricted to half of the personal expenditures allowable for his needs.

SYLVIA
 Why that means. What does that mean?

PETER
 That you are going to be very careful. At least for a while.

SYLVIA
 How long is a while?

PETER
 I have to get my hands on the assets of the estate.

SYLVIA
 What assets? It's an estate.

PETER
 Yes, it's an estate. But your grandfather's estate encompasses more than this property alone. There are other instruments.

SYLVIA
 Instruments. What sort of instruments? Fun ones I hope.

PETER
 Not those sort of instruments. Annuities, Stocks, other properties, investments that sort of thing.

SYLVIA
 This is boring. Can't you take care of all that tomorrow or when we get back from our trip?

PETER
 It has to be done before we leave. Do you remember the shares I bought? The thousands of certificates of Enron that I bought for practically nothing.

SYLVIA
 Because that's what they were worth. Let's go upstairs. And tomorrow you can write me a letter to explain it all.

PETER
 I have a plan on how to use them to our advantage.

SYLVIA
 That's very nice.

PETER
 You have no idea. As executrix and with my help we magically move most of the assets to appear as if Mister Respite had reinvested his holding into Enron. We keep the money that would have gone into buying Enron stock.

SYLVIA
 Why would he have done that?

PETER
 It will not have been worthless on the date of the transactions. All I have to do is alter a few documents.

SYLVIA
 Won't someone notice?

PETER
 Eventually. We will be out of the country by the time any one does.

SYLVIA
 Where shall we go?

PETER
 Some where without extradition. Some place safe.

SAL
 And we take all the money with us?

PETER
 Not all of it.

SAL
 Why not?

PETER
 We have to leave enough money behind to run the estate for a while and not arouse suspicion until after we have cleared out.
(A kiss and an embrace.)

SYLVIA
 It's going to be fun isn't it Peter?

PETER
 More than you know.
(And they exit.)

BLACKOUT

SCENE 4

(Young Sal & Richard enter. Richard is reading a letter aloud as they enter.)

RICHARD
 "and as executrix of the estate" What the hell is an executrix?

SAL
 The feminine form of executor.

RICHARD
 Shouldn't it be executoress? Any way "as executrix of the estate shall be responsible for managing the trust fund for Salvatore Respite assuring that the allotted monthly allowance is not exceeded." You get everything and I get nothing?

SAL
 I told you to expect that. Didn't I? After all he hated you the most.

RICHARD
 I think Sylvia was screwing him.

SAL
 He wasn't the only one.

RICHARD
 Well now I'm getting screwed. You didn't get screwed did you?

SAL

Not by Sylvia. Not yet any way.

RICHARD

Of course not. She's your sister.

SAL

She's your sister not my sister.

RICHARD

I don't get it.

SAL

That's right! You do however get screwed. You get screwed by your sister while every one else is screwing your sister. That's kind of funny don't you think.

RICHARD

Think what? Well it doesn't matter what I think now, does it?

SAL

Didn't the letter state that you get to live here? What the hell more do you want.

RICHARD

I was his grandson too.

SAL

You and I are related, half brothers. You were not related to my grand father. The fact that you get anything at all is a mystery given what I know about him. He always held my mother responsible for my fathers death.

RICHARD

He thought she killed him? I never knew that.

SAL

No, he didn't think she killed him only that she was somehow responsible for the accident.

RICHARD

How could he think a thing like that?

SAL

Don't know and don't care. Read the rest of the letter.

RICHARD

Here read it yourself. *(He tosses the letter at Sal and exits.)*

SAL

Read it myself? *(Yelling after Richard.)* You have outlived your usefulness. Read it myself! We'll just see about that. *(He walks over to phone and dials.)* Hello Carla. It's Sal. Could you possibly do me a favor? I know. It won't happen again, I promise. Actually we are not speaking to each other, although I don't think he is aware if it yet. It doesn't matter. I can always lock him in his room. Oh, sure. I've done it before even when grandfather was alive.

Of course he did. Grandfather always believed me and would rail at Richard and tell him to stop making up stories. Any way, can you come by tomorrow?

(Sylvia enters.)

SAL (CONT'D)

Got to go now. *(Pause.)* How did you guess? Tomorrow then. Bye. *(He hangs up.)*

SYLVIA

Hi honey. Who were you talking to?

SAL

Nobody.

SYLVIA

Did you ever notice that people say that when they don't want you to know who they were talking to? Why can't people say it's none of your business. Just be honest about it.

SAL

OK. It is none of your business, to who I was speaking.

SYLVIA

To whom were you speaking?

SAL

Still, not your business.

SYLVIA

I was correcting your English.

SAL

Thank you.

SYLVIA

I hope your we speaking to someone about adult education. You really need to brush up on proper grammar.

SAL

I think I've had quite enough education for one lifetime.

SYLVIA

Education? Six years and three universities. Every body knows that you minored in girls and booze while your actual major was waiting for grandfather to die.

SAL

That is what I majored in. You are right, and it has been my life, both vocation and avocation. Until now that is. So what can I do for you? What do you want, Sylvia.

(She puts her arm around his shoulder.) Stop. That approach hasn't worked since I was a teenager.

SYLVIA

Remarkable the way time flies and memories are altered. There was a time as I recall. *(She continues to hold him.)*

SAL

What do you think you recall? That you flaunted your wares around this place until a shy seventeen year old took the bait?

SYLVIA

Shy? Shy my ass. You used the power which you knew you possessed to take advantage of me. If only grandfather had known the truth.

SAL

Not to worry, he certainly knew the truth. He was the one who told me about you. How he watched you measure him, searching for an opening as he measured your every move. How he knew that you would do anything if you thought you could benefit from it. How he ---

(She releases her grip on him and backs away.)

SYLVIA

You dirty little underhanded scheming bastard, son-of-a-bitch, lying manipulating something or other ---

SAL

There there, calm down.

SYLVIA

All these years you knew about me and that old man? I, I, never.

SAL

Of course you did. But that's water over the dam or under the bridge. It was fun for a while.

SYLVIA

It was wasn't it? What happened to us back then?

SAL

There was no us back then. Grandfather was doing you. I was doing you. All the while he and I knew that you thought you were doing us. I don't know about grandfather but I got bored. There were so many other worlds to conquer. I never did thank you for all those things I learned from you.

(She exits hurriedly. He shouts after her.)

SAL (CONT'D)

I'm still using some of them. That was wonderful. Grandfather would have loved it. I wonder if I should tell Richard.

BLACKOUT

SCENE 5

(Sylvia and Peter enter and X to the desk.)

PETER

Are you sure?

SYLVIA

I checked. Sal's car is not in the garage.

PETER

Everything has been prepared. Once you sign these documents, I will execute the sales. The phony paperwork and the Enron certificates are already in the mail to the probate court. That should give us enough time to get out of the country.

SYLVIA

I'm worried about Richard?

PETER

Why? You never cared about him before now. Not becoming sentimental are you?

SYLVIA

Don't be silly. It's just that he might somehow figure the whole thing out. Accidently of course.

PETER

He's a dolt. No imagination no ambition.

SYLVIA

Wait! What if Richard took the car?

PETER

Just put the letter in the drawer and let's get out of here.

BLACKOUT

SCENE 6

(The two older men are in the room.)

RICHARD

That fellow Glenn said to tell you that they know who killed her.

SAL

Who killed who?

RICHARD
Whom! It's who killed whom. I've been waiting years for that.

SAL
What in hell are you talking about?

RICHARD
English. I'm talking about grammar. You and her were always correcting my grammar. This time I corrected yours.

SAL
At a time like this you've become English professor. What about the killing?

RICHARD
Oh, that. What about it?

SAL
You just now said ---

RICHARD
Wait a minute. Let me see now. *(Pause.)* Got it. That fellow Glenn said that they know who killed her.

SAL
Her? Who is her?

RICHARD
Sylvia, that's whom? *(Again laughter.)*

SAL
That thief, who cares. Wait one minute, I thought she and that lawyer ran off with the money. How did Glenn know about it?

RICHARD
I told him.

SAL
Now is when you should be laughing. This is very funny stuff. You told him that I killed Sylvia? That is very funny. I mean very, very funny. Ironically, it is.

RICHARD
I know you did. And stop pretending that you don't know what I'm talking about.

SAL
You know do you? How did I do it?

RICHARD
Don't know how you did it. You probably killed both of them. I don't really care about that. I only care about the money.

SAL
What money you old fart. There isn't any money. We are both living here because I made a deal to let us live here when I sold the house to the senior citizen people.

RICHARD
Now you're a senior citizen, still living here. You see I know that you have been spending that money on yourself. You started right after everybody including the police decided that Sylvia and her boyfriend stole the money and ran away with it. When you saw that the coast was clear you started spending the money on yourself. Very quietly. Nobody knows where you went for months at a time. I didn't know but I knew you had the money and the only way you could have gotten your hands on the what those two embezzled was by killing them and taking it.

SAL
What do you want?

RICHARD
Not being a greedy person, I'd settle for a share.

SAL
Blackmail? I don't think so. First of all you have no proof. And second of all, screw you.

RICHARD
I tried to be nice, handle this in a civil manner but as usual, in the end you turn out to be the same greedy son-of-a-bitch you always were. Apple not fall to far from tree.

SAL
I hate to repeat myself but here goes. Screw you. *(He gets up to leave.)* And tomorrow I want your ass out of here.

RICHARD
I know where the money is.

SAL
What did you say?

RICHARD
I know where the money is.
(Sal is startled. For a moment.)

SAL
Let's see now. What are my options? What are you going to do tell the police? Tell me what are my options.

RICHARD
Well the way I see it.

SAL

The way you see it? I don't think so. Off the top of my head I see two. Number one, I can call your bluff. Or number two and I think I prefer this one. I can move the money and let you scream wee, wee, wee all the way home. Which by the way will be somewhere else.

RICHARD

Sorry wrong numbers. Both of them. The fact is that when I discovered where you stashed your stash, which took a lot of painstaking investigating, I took the liberty of moving it. Now what, genius?

SAL

Give me a minute.

RICHARD

Take two.

SAL

Let's suppose that I call the police and tell them that I have suspected you all along of having pulled off this scheme to steal the money. Then what?

RICHARD

I guess I have no choice. We can share the money.

SAL

It's my money. I earned it.

RICHARD

This is where we let the cops in and replay your confession. You look surprised. Don't be. I didn't call the cops, just wanted you to admit it. And I wanted to see that expression on your face, yeah, that's the one, before I kill you. (*He produces a gun.*)

SAL

You idiot. You'll never get away with it.

RICHARD

Probably not. I imagine that the investigation and trial might take a long time what with delays and this and that motion but now I can afford a really good lawyer. Can you recommend any?
(*He shoots Sal.*)

THE END