

A man in a lawyer-like suit stands at the side of the stage looking straight out. Not moving with a bland look on his face. He has a stack of papers in his hand.

JACK enters with a briefcase. JULIE is sitting at a table.

JACK

Well, it’s official now. I’m officially unemployed.

JULIE

I’ve been sitting here thinking.

JACK

Oh oh. I don’t like the tone of that.

JULIE

I think you lost your job on purpose, that’s what I think.

JACK

What?!

JULIE

You heard me. For the past two months you’d been going on and on about how you hate your job and you hate your job. I just think you--

JACK

You stop right there! I never liked advertising, it’s true, but if you think I would risk this family’s financial well-being by purposely--

JULIE

Benny will be here later. I wish you’d listen to him.

JACK

Benny? I don’t want to talk to your brother about job.

JULIE

He’s just trying to help.

JACK

I don’t want to be a house painter.

SHELBY enters.

SHELBY

Mom, Dad.

SHELBY starts to exit the other direction.

JACK

Shelby, wait.

SHELBY

(stops) What. (pause) Oh, no. You two are fighting.

JULIE

We’re not fighting.

SHELBY

Please. I know when you’re fighting. You’re fighting.

JACK

I just wanted to have a little family meeting--

SHELBY

(rolls her eyes and starts to exit) Some other time.

JACK

Things are going to change around here. Not for the better.

JULIE

You’re father lost his job.

JACK

I didn’t “lose” my job.

SHELBY

You two *are* fighting.

JACK

We’re not fighting. I’m going to get another job--

JULIE

House painting.

JACK

I’m not going to paint hous--

SHELBY

With Uncle Benny?

JULIE

Yes.

SHELBY

So that’s why he’s here.

JULIE

Benny’s here.

SHELBY

Yeah, that’s why I’m going to my room. He creeps me out. (exits)

JACK

I wish you wouldn’t cut me down in front of her.

BENNY enters.

BENNY

Hey Jack. Julie.

JACK

Hey Benny. Look I’m sorry you came all this way. I don’t know what Julie told you, but I’m not interested.

JULIE

Jack. Just listen.

BENNY

Hey, it’s none of my business. Just trying to help. I was over on this side of town anyway.

JACK

And I don’t mean any disrespect, but I just can’t see myself as a painter.

BENNY

What are you saying?

JACK

It’s now that-- aw, heck. I- I-- I just don’t like working in the outdoors.

JULIE

Jack. You need a job. We need a job.

JACK

I know that, and I’ll start searching as soon as--

JULIE

Jack. I’m pregnant.

JACK

Really? (turns to her momentarily concerned, then happy. They hug.)

BENNY

You gonna take that job?

JACK

Probably.

Actors freeze. SHELBY enters and all but the LAWYER turn, bow to the audience and exit. The LAWYER steps forward.

LAWYER

As per the author’s request, the scene that you have just viewed will now be performed again. Performed by, at the author’s request, cats.

Actors repeat their actions while wearing cat ears, and tails. They say “Meow” instead of their original lines. It’s not a direct translation of one “meow” for every word. Cats can sum up more information with less words than humans. So, sometimes a 20 word sentence can be said with 5 meows. Sometimes with 13 meows. Whatever makes the most sense, and is the most humorous. The same meanings should get across to the audience. Cat-like actions to be sure to include; crawling on table, playing with yarn, sniffing faces, chasing tail, licking paws, and a hairball. At the end, the Lawyer steps forward and reads.

LAWYER

As per the author’s request, the scene that you have just viewed will now be performed again. Performed by, at the author’s request, cats, a fish, and a squirrel in a box.

JACK enters as a cat and replay his role. SHELBY enters as a cat and does the same. The part of JULIE is now played by a goldfish in a fishbowl. Whenever it’s JULIE’s turn to say a line, all the other actors look at the fish and wait the amount of time it would take to say the line, then react as though the line was said. The role of BENNY is play by the same person who played BENNY before, but he’s carrying a box that has something scratching and moving in it. It should scurry and scratch around when his lines are said, the actor playing BENNY should remain impassive, his role is now that of a transportation device for the real actor.

LAWYER

As per the author’s request, the scene that you have just viewed will now be performed again. Performed by, at the author’s request, cats, a fish, a squirrel in a box, and Attila the Hun.

JACK enters as a cat. The actor playing SHELBY has been replaced by ATTILA THE HUN in full warrior gear. ATTILA yells and stabs JACK, killing him. ATTILA knocks over a chair and exits. Pause, BENNY looks in cautiously and enters with the squirrel in a box. ATTILA enters and stabs the actor who drops to the floor, carefully not to let the squirrel out, and die. ATTILA turns and sees the goldfish. He smiles and feeds the fish a small flake of food, and exits yelling. LAWYER exits stepping carefully over bodies.

Black out.