

BROTHERS

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This is a two-act play.

Act One: Denny and Kenny, age birth to 50.

Act Two: Denny and Kenny, age 61 to present.

Synopsis: Twin brothers are constantly in turmoil. Are they doomed to a life of struggle or will they find peace?

Characters

Denny and Kenny – twin brothers

Jenny – the mother

Manny – the father

Harry – the stepfather

Mister Berman – baseball coach

The Rabbi

Eileen, Agnes, Diane, Arlene, woman 1, woman 2 – the women

The Bouncer

The Bartender

The Waiter

Vern – the friend

Suzie – Frankie's daughter

This play is a work of fiction. References to actual places or organizations are for literary purposes only.

Act 1, Scene 1

Time: 1948

Place: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Setting: A hospital maternity ward. A woman named Jenny is resting in bed. She has just given birth to twins. She is holding one baby in either arm. Standing next to her is her husband, Manny. He has a worried look on his face. The babies are screaming.

JENNY

Well, Manny, we have two more sons. Aren't you happy?

MANNY

How am I going to support all of you?

JENNY

Aw, don't worry. You'll manage. Listen to the little darlings.

(Jenny places both babies next to each other on the bed. Suddenly one baby smacks the other on the face.)

JENNY

Naughty, Denny! That's no way to treat your twin brother Kenny.

MANNY

How will I tell them apart? They look exactly alike.

JENNY

Of course they do, silly! They're identical.

MANNY

(mumbles to himself)

Identical twins! Oh boy!

JENNY

What did you say?

MANNY

Oh, nothing.

JENNY

Well, I would appreciate it if you stop your daydreaming and figure out how we're going to manage.

(The babies continue to scream.)

MANNY

They sure are loud.

JENNY

Well, they're supposed to be loud. It shows that they're healthy.

MANNY

I got to get back to work.

(Manny reaches into his pocket and takes out a cigarette.)

JENNY

Smoking's not allowed in the hospital.

MANNY

I guess I'll go outside.

JENNY

I could use a smoke too but the doctor said that the smoke wouldn't be good for the babies.

MANNY

That's not what the tobacco companies say and they should know.

JENNY

(laughs)

Oh, Manny, you are so smart. What would I ever do without you?

(The babies continue to scream and start hitting each other.)

Aren't they darlings?

End of scene.

Act 1, Scene 2

Time: 1957, Denny and Kenny are nine years old.

Place: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Setting: A dugout in a little-league baseball park. A baseball game is in progress. Denny and Kenny are wearing baseball uniforms. They are sitting on a dugout bench with other boys who are on the team.

KENNY

Boy, do you stink! How could you drop that pop up? A girl could have caught that ball!

DENNY

(annoyed)

Oh, shut up, you idiot! Look who's talking! You're the worst player on this team. I don't know why dad even lets you play.

KENNY

(enraged)

Because I'm the best, dummy! You mess up everything!

DENNY

You're the best? How many hits you got?

KENNY

More than you!

DENNY

Well I got twelve hits already.

KENNY

You mean twelve foul balls. They don't count.

DENNY

They do count. I hit the ball, didn't I?

KENNY

Yeah, but they went foul.

DENNY

So what? Idiot.

KENNY

Who you calling idiot?

DENNY

You, that's who.

(Kenny punches Denny hard on the chest)

DENNY

Ow! That hurt!

(Denny is about to throw his glove at Kenny when a large man named Mister Berman intercedes. He is the coach of the team.)

BERMAN

What's going on here? Are you boys fighting again? Can't you boys be friends?

DENNY

He started it, Mister Berman.

KENNY

Did not! He's lying!

DENNY

I'm not lying! He hit me first!

BERMAN

(annoyed)

I don't care who started it but if this happens one more time, I'm going to call your mother and have you thrown off the team.

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DENNY

Now, look what you've done!

KENNY

It's YOUR fault.

BERMAN

Stop yelling at each other! I've had with the two of you. I'm calling your mother right now.

DENNY

Please don't!

KENNY

We'll be good!

BERMAN

That's what you keep saying but then you keep fighting. Like last inning when you (*points to Denny*) dropped that pop up and the next thing you two guys are screaming at each other on the field. What was that about? I thought your brother here (*points to Kenny*) was gonna smack you. Luckily some of the other boys stepped in to keep you apart. Anyway, I'll give you one more chance, okay? Now, no more fighting!

(Berman exits)

DENNY

What a jerk!

KENNY

(laughing)

He sure is. He can't get rid of us. We're the best players on the team!

DENNY

We sure are!

(Denny and Kenny start giggling.)

End of scene.

Act 1, Scene 3

Time: 1961. Denny and Kenny are thirteen years old.

Place: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Setting: A room in a synagogue. Denny and Kenny are wearing suits. Today they are scheduled for Bar Mitzvah. A man enters the room. He is the rabbi.

RABBI

Good luck!

(The rabbi shakes their hands)

DENNY

I still can't read that Hebrew stuff.

KENNY

But I can!

DENNY

That's BS!

RABBI

Calm down, boys. Don't worry about it.

(Enter Manny and Jenny.)

JENNY

So, how are my little geniuses doing?

DENNY

Okay, mom.

KENNY

Denny said a bad word!

MANNY

What did I say about saying bad words?

KENNY

You say them all the time, dad!

MANNY

That's different.

(to the Rabbi)

So are they ready?

RABBI

They should be commended for the work they've done.

DENNY

Why do we have to say this junk anyway?

JENNY

Denny, how can you say such a thing? And to think of all the money we spent to give you a good Jewish education! Kenny, say the Shemah.

KENNY

The what?

MANNY

The Shemah. Every Jew should know the Shemah.

DENNY

Ha! He doesn't know it! What an idiot!

(Kenny kicks Denny hard on the leg)

DENNY

Ow!

MANNY

Stop with the fighting. Can't you boys stop fighting?

KENNY

I would if he'd stop lying.

DENNY

You kick me one more time and I'm gonna beat your ass!

RABBI

Please! Today is a day for joy and celebration, not fighting. Let's just get this over with, okay?

(Denny and Kenny start giggling loudly.)

End of scene.

Act 1, Scene 4:

Time: 1966. Denny and Kenny are eighteen years old.

Place: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Setting: a bedroom in a house. Denny and Kenny are having a discussion.

DENNY

I can't wait to finish high school. School is a joke.

KENNY

Did you see Mrs. Katzman? Her blouse was unbuttoned!

DENNY

What a whore.

KENNY

They all are. *(pause)* We'll have a great time in college. I'm gonna join a fraternity and fuck girls!

DENNY

But all they do is give us a hard time.

KENNY

Nah. They're easy. All you gotta do is play the game right and you'll get laid.

DENNY

Well, I haven't heard from any schools yet.

(Kenny picks up an envelope.)

KENNY

It's from Franklin College.

(Kenny opens the envelope and removes and starts reading a letter.)

KENNY
(elated)

Wow! I was accepted by Franklin!

DENNY

Let me see that.

(Denny grabs the letter from Kenny's hand and is reading it. He then puts it down)

DENNY
(dejected)

Congratulations.

KENNY
(gloating)

I can't wait for the fall. I'll be getting laid before you know it!

DENNY

Aw, shut up.

KENNY
(surprised)

What's with you?

DENNY

How'd you manage to get admitted to Franklin? Your grades stink.

KENNY
(indignant)

No they don't and they're better than yours.

DENNY

All you do is goof off, and now you're going to college.

KENNY
(screams)

You're an idiot!

(Kenny punches Denny on the shoulder; Denny throws a pencil sharpener at Kenny which barely misses its target and goes crashing against the wall. Jenny enters the room.)

JENNY
You boys are fighting again?

KENNY
He started it!

DENNY
(simmering with anger)
Oh, shut your mouth.

JENNY
When your father comes home he's gonna hear about this.

DENNY
You mean our step-father.

JENNY
Show more respect.

KENNY
Respect HIM? He's not our father. As far as we're concerned, he can get lost.

JENNY
You know I've tried my best.

DENNY
Yeah, mom, we know. You couldn't help marrying a slug.

(Kenny starts laughing.)

JENNY

(angry)

What am I going to do with you two? Why can't you be like your older brother?

DENNY

(sarcastic)

Donnie, the fair-haired one, who can do no wrong.

JENNY

That's right. He's a doctor.

KENNY

And look where that landed him, in the Army.

JENNY

Your uncle was in the army in World War Two.

KENNY

A lot of good it did him. Now he's a recluse. Plus who cares what he did?

DENNY

Aw, shut up about Uncle Mike. You don't know what you're talking about.

KENNY

I do know what I'm talking about!

(Denny and Kenny throw punches at each other while Jenny stands back, helpless.)

JENNY

Please stop!

(Kenny and Denny continue to grapple with each other. A man named Harry enters the room; he is the step-father.)

HARRY

What the hell is going on here?

(Kenny and Denny stop fighting.)

KENNY

Nothing, Harry.

HARRY

I could hear you two guys a block away!

DENNY

So? What of it?

HARRY

This is my house and so you have to go by my rules.

KENNY

Is that the way things are, mom?

JENNY

Yes, it is.

KENNY

Well, I didn't break any rules; he did *(pointing to Denny)*

DENNY

(to Kenny)

You're such a creep.

HARRY

Enough of this fighting already. What's gonna be with the two of you?

KENNY

Guess what? I've been accepted to Franklin College!

(Kenny picks up the letter and hands it to Harry who glances at it.)

HARRY

Good job! (to Denny) And what about you?

DENNY

What about me?

HARRY

What are you gonna do after high school?

DENNY

I don't know.

JENNY

He'll figure something out.

HARRY

Like what? You expect me to support you forever? At least your brother has a plan; you have nothing, just wasting time.

DENNY

Aw, get off my case!

JENNY

Listen to your father.

DENNY

He's not my father!

HARRY

I've had it with your disrespect. I work hard to support all of you and what thanks do I get? Nothing. You two are just a couple of ingrates.

KENNY

Who asked you to support us?

JENNY

Stop talking to your father like that.

DENNY

HE'S NOT OUR FATHER!

HARRY

(to Denny)

That's it, young man.! I want you out of this house tomorrow.

JENNY

No!

HARRY

Don't you hear how they speak to me, especially him? *(points to Denny)*

JENNY

They don't mean anything by it!

DENNY

Save your breath, mom. I can't leave here fast enough. I'm joining the army!

JENNY

(shocked and alarmed)

What! You can get killed! *(to Harry)* Look what you've done!

HARRY

Me? I didn't tell him to join the army!

DENNY

Don't worry, Mom. It's time for me to leave.

(Jenny starts crying while Harry is scowling. Denny puts on his jacket and exits.)

JENNY

(runs to the door, still crying, and screams)

DENNY, COME BACK!

KENNY

(laughing)

Don't worry about him, mom. You'll always have me!

End of scene.

Act 1, Scene 5

Time: 1975. Denny and Kenny are twenty-seven years old.

Place: Downtown Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Setting: A singles' dance. The room is crowded, with loud disco music. Denny and Kenny are drinking. Kenny is visibly intoxicated.

KENNY

There's lots of girls here. If you play your cards right you can get laid out of this place.

DENNY

The problem is that you gotta play up to them even though they're just a bunch of skanks. When I was in the army I had no problem getting laid. They were waiting for us. No hassles! Here these women think they're something special.

KENNY

Stop griping. The army is in the past. You gotta be aggressive; you can't stop talking and you can't take no for an answer. And whatever you do, don't buy them drinks. Any guy that buys a woman a drink at a function is wasting his time and money and is nothing but a stupid schmuck who deserves to be taken.

DENNY

That's good advice but after having fucked a ton of whores, trying to get over on these dingdongs seems like a complete waste of time. But you wouldn't understand.

KENNY

What do you mean by that?

DENNY

You never served.

KENNY

So what? What did the army do for you anyway?

DENNY

It made me eligible for benefits, that's what. In fact, this guy I know told me that I may be eligible to collect a lot of money.

KENNY

Are you joking?

DENNY

No, I'm not joking.

KENNY

That's unbelievable!

DENNY

That's what this guy told me and he should know; he's collecting too.

KENNY

What's wrong with him?

DENNY

He told me has some mental problems.

KENNY

(shocked)

Really!? Maybe I should have joined up too!

DENNY

Why do you say that?

KENNY

Because to get out of the military I told the draft board I was a mental case, and now you're telling me this guy is collecting for the exact same reason I said I couldn't join. If I had known I could collect, I would have enlisted.

DENNY

Well, that's the way things work out, and besides, so what? We both wound up being substitute teachers, which has to be the crappiest white collar job on the planet.

KENNY

Yeah, it's a crappy job but at least we don't have to worry about being fired. I've been late twenty seven times already this year and all they do is give me warning letters. Last week they even called me into the assistant principal's office and told me that if I kept showing up late they would stop calling me. I gave them lip service just to get them off my case.

DENNY

Teaching is a joke anyway, completely pretentious. All they care about is preserving their jobs and making more money. And now here I am at this stupid singles function surrounded by floozies and twats who are playing hard to get.

KENNY

(pointing to a woman)

Hey, look at her!

DENNY

What about her? She looks like a dog.

KENNY

Says you. You're always trying to ruin things for me.

DENNY

I'm not ruining anything to you.

KENNY

Then, shut up. I'm gonna come on to her.

DENNY

Make sure you don't screw it up.

(Kenny goes over the woman. She is plain-looking, in her mid-30s and is holding a drink.)

KENNY

Hi. I just got in from Chicago and I need some advice.

WOMAN

Oh, you're from Chicago?

KENNY

Have you ever been there?

WOMAN

No.

KENNY

Well, it's a great place but I just moved to Philadelphia. What's your name?

WOMAN

Eileen, and yours?

KENNY

Kenny. *(pause)* You look very attractive.

EILEEN

Why, thank you. What do you do for a living?

KENNY

I'm a college professor.

EILEEN

Oh really? At which college?

KENNY

I just landed a professorship at Penn State.

EILEEN

Wow! Congratulations!

KENNY

Why, thank you.

(Kenny suddenly puts his arm around Eileen's shoulders. Eileen pulls away.)

EILEEN

You're coming on too fast.

KENNY

Well, I really like you, a lot.

EILEEN

And I like you too, but slow it down.

KENNY

Where do you work?

EILEEN

I work for the city as a secretary. Have you ever been married?

KENNY

Yeah, once. It didn't work out.

EILEEN

That's too bad. Any kids?

KENNY

Two, but they're with their mother in Chicago.

EILEEN

No wonder you left.

KENNY

That's right. It's a really sad story, which I like to tell you about when we get together.

EILEEN

When we get together?

KENNY

Sure. I think we're meant for each other. Where do you live?

EILEEN

In Norristown, with my parents. Are you Jewish?

KENNY

No, I'm not.

EILEEN

You look Jewish.

KENNY

Well, looks can be deceiving. Are you Jewish?

EILEEN

Yes, I am.

KENNY

Have you ever gone out with a non-Jewish man?

EILEEN

Once. He was nice.

So, what happened?
KENNY

He never called again.
EILEEN

What are you drinking?
KENNY

Seltzer.
EILEEN

Listen, let me have your number so I can give you a call.
KENNY

Okay.
EILEEN

(Eileen takes out a pen and a piece a paper and writes a number and gives the paper to Kenny.)

I'll give you a call and we'll get together.
KENNY

(Kenny tries to kiss Eileen but she pulls away again.)

Not so fast! I'm not that kind of girl.
EILEEN

What's the matter?
KENNY
(irritated)

You're coming on too strong.
EILEEN

KENNY

Coming on too strong? Are you joking?

EILEEN

No, I am not joking, and I don't like you grabbing me.

KENNY

(angry)

Fuck you, bitch!

(Eileen exits. A few moments later a large, burly man shows up. He is a bouncer.)

BOUNCER

Listen, pal, I gotta ask you to leave. We've been receiving a lot of complaints about you.

KENNY

I haven't done anything.

BOUNCER

I'm not here to argue with you. I'm asking you to leave now.

KENNY

Why should I leave?

BOUNCER

Because I'm telling you to leave; we don't want you here and if you don't leave now, I'm gonna throw you out! Get it! Now get out of here!

(Kenny doesn't move. The bouncer starts shoving Kenny toward the door.)

KENNY

Hey, what are you doing?

(Bouncer keeps shoving Kenny toward the door.)

KENNY

Okay! I'm leaving!

(Denny comes over.)

DENNY

What's going on?

BOUNCER

(speaking to Denny)

You're with this guy?

DENNY

Yeah.

BOUNCER

Well, you're out of here too and don't come back! Get it!

DENNY

I didn't do anything!

BOUNCER

I don't care. All night the two of you have been bothering women, so get out of here, now!

DENNY

It was HIM *(points to Kenny)* who's been hitting on women, not me.

BOUNCER

I said GET OUT OF HERE!

DENNY

(sarcastic, to Kenny)

Great job, Kenny.

KENNY

What did I do? I was just talking to women! This guy's being a jerk!

BOUNCER

Who are you calling a jerk?

DENNY

(to the Bouncer)

Take it easy; we're leaving.

(to Kenny)

Let's go!

(The Bouncer pushes Denny and Kenny onto the street.)

DENNY

This is the fourth place you've been thrown out of in the past month because of you.

KENNY

So what! I got three numbers. How'd you do?

DENNY

I got two numbers but they're both dogs. And numbers are a waste, anyway. If they don't leave with you then you've just wasted your time. And most of the time their numbers are fake.

KENNY

Well don't throw them away. Give them to me. I'll call them from the apartment.

DENNY

Yeah, all right. Hey, let's get something to eat.

(Kenny and Denny start giggling.)

End of scene.

Act 1, Scene 6

Time: A week later

Place: North Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Setting: Denny and Kenny's apartment.

KENNY

So when is she coming over?

DENNY

About 7:30. She wanted dinner but I told her that we should have drinks first and to come to the apartment.

KENNY

And she agreed?

DENNY

At first she hemmed and hawed and said no, but after I insisted, she said yes. You know how they are. She was really angling for a free dinner.

KENNY

Okay, so when she comes over I'll be downstairs. After you fuck her we'll do the switcheroo.

DENNY

Well, don't rush things, okay? If you play your cards right you'll get your sloppy seconds.

KENNY

Boy, are women whores, real sluts.

DENNY

Yeah, they think what they got is so special.

KENNY

Who cares? Just as long as you stick it in, that's what counts.

(The phone rings. Denny picks up the phone.)

Yeah. ... Okay, tell her to come up stairs.

(Denny hangs up the phone.)

DENNY

She's in the lobby. Okay, get out of here. Come back in an hour.

KENNY

An hour! Why so long?

DENNY

I'm gonna have to get her drunk, right?

KENNY

Well, don't fuck things up.

DENNY

I'm gonna ply her with booze and if she doesn't drink, I'll throw her out.

KENNY

Okay. I'll be outside at the bar.

(Kenny exits; a moment later there is knocking at the door. Denny opens the door. A woman is standing at the door. She is about thirty years old, casually attired; moderately attractive.)

DENNY

Why, hello Diane! Come on in!

DIANE

Why thank you!

(Diane enters the apartment.)

DENNY

Take a seat. Make yourself at home.

(Diane sits on a chair that's next to the couch.)

I'll make you a drink!

DIANE

I thought we were going out for dinner.

DENNY

We are, but first I thought it would nice to have a couple of drinks before we leave.

DIANE

(hesitant)

I don't know. I really don't drink.

DENNY

You don't?

DIANE

Well, actually I do like wine, but I don't drink the hard stuff.

DENNY

I don't have wine, but what I can do is make you a screw driver.

DIANE

Okay, but make sure it's weak.

DENNY

Don't worry about that. Leave that all up to me.

(Denny goes to the refrigerator and takes out a half-gallon bottle of vodka and a container of orange juice. He makes two drinks, screwdrivers, then hands Diane one of the drinks. Denny sits on the couch.)

DENNY

Cheers!

(Diane and Denny raise their glasses. Lenny gulps down half his drink)

DIANE

(sipping her drink)

My, this is strong! How much alcohol did you put in this drink?

DENNY

Not that much; just enough to give it some taste.

DIANE

Well, it's too strong for me.

DENNY

Then just sip on it. We're in no rush.

DIANE

What did you say you did for a living?

DENNY

I'm a college professor. I teach history.

DIANE

Oh, how interesting. How long have you been teaching?

DENNY

About five years.

DIANE

Have you ever been married?

DENNY

Yes, once, but it didn't work out.

DIANE

Oh, that's too bad. I was married once.

DENNY

Really? For how long?

DIANE

Three years.

DENNY

What happened?

DIANE

He was a real dud. All work and no play and he was bossy too. Anyway, he's out of my life now. What a relief.

(Diane continues to sip on the drink and is becoming intoxicated.)

DENNY

I know exactly what you mean. My wife wasn't a gem either and I'm glad I'm divorced so I can meet a foxy lady like you.

(Diane giggles. She continues to sip on her drink.)

DENNY

Looks like you're gonna need a refill.

DIANE

No. One drink is enough.

(Denny gets up goes to the kitchen and returns with the vodka bottle and orange juice. He pours more vodka and orange juice into Diane's glass.)

DENNY

There. As good as new!

DIANE

I'm feeling a little woozy.

DENNY

Don't worry about that. You know, I really like you.

(Denny reaches over and grabs Diane's hand.)

DIANE

My, you are fast.

(Diane giggles.)

DENNY

Well, when I'm with a quality lady like you, I can't help myself.

(Denny is now caressing Diane's arm.)

DIANE

Slow down, will you? Aren't we supposed to be going to dinner?

DENNY

We'll be going later. Right now I want to get to know you.

DIANE

(giddy)

What would you like to know?

DENNY

When's the last time you've slept with a man?

DIANE

It's been quite a while.

DENNY

That's surprising. I thought a fox like you would have men lining up around the block.

DIANE

What do you take me for, a slut?

(Denny starts pulling Diane to the couch.)

DIANE

(screams)

WHAT ARE YOU DOING? WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE GOING TO DINNER!

(Denny continues pulling Diane who is resisting.)

DENNY

C'mon baby, let's have some fun!

DIANE

NO!

(Lenny is becoming angry.)

DENNY

What's wrong? All I want to do is talk, that's all.

DIANE

No you don't. All you want to do is fuck. You said we'd have dinner.

(Diane is becoming hysterical. Denny lets go of her.)

DENNY

Get out of here, tramp! If you think I'd buy you dinner, you're out of your mind! *(sings)*

**If you think that we are dining,
then you are really dumb.
'Cause all I want from you, girl,
is to squirm under my thumb.**

**All I want to do, toots,
is to get you good and drunk,
then treat you like a dirty,
rotten little skunk.**

**Women are so nasty,
of which you are but one,
so stop complaining, girly,
and let me use my gun.**

**To fight me is so pointless,
and that is not just bunk,
so open up your gate, babe,
so I can be your hunk.**

DIANE
(screams)

You're disgusting!

(Diane is about to leave the apartment when Kenny enters.)

KENNY

Hi!

DIANE
(surprised and alarmed)

Who are YOU? Are you two twins?

(No reply)

I'm leaving now!

KENNY

Hey, what's the rush? I want to talk to you.

(Kenny grabs Diane around the waist. Diane begins to struggle.)

DIANE

LET GO OF ME!

DENNY

Let her leave. She's a waste of time.

KENNY

No! I want some action too.

DIANE
(screaming)

AAAAAAHHHHH!!!

KENNY

Shut up, will you?

(There's frantic knocking on the door.)

VOICE
(Off stage)

What's going on in there?

LENNY

Nothing. Everything's okay.

(to Kenny)

Let go of her before we get into trouble.

(Kenny releases Diane, who grabs her purse and runs out of the apartment.)

KENNY

What happened?

DENNY

I fucked her but then she wanted to have dinner and I said no and she started screaming.

KENNY

So you got laid again and you couldn't even leave me sloppy seconds?

DENNY

So what? If you wouldn't get yourself thrown out of bars all the time, then maybe you'd get some action too.

KENNY
(sarcastic)

Thanks for nothing.

DENNY

Oh, shut up.

KENNY

Make me!

DENNY

Maybe I will.

(Denny and Kenny glare at each other.)

Getting laid is hard work.

KENNY

It sure is. Do you have anymore numbers?

(Both start giggling.)

End of scene.

Act 1, Scene 7

Time: 1983. Denny and Kenny are thirty-five years old.

Place: Downtown Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Setting: A room in the city municipal building. Kenny is getting married.

DENNY

I still can't believe you're getting married.

KENNY

I can't take the singles scene anymore.

DENNY

Just because you've been thrown out of every singles bar and singles dance in New York doesn't mean you now have to get married.

KENNY

What can I tell you? If I continue being single I'm gonna get into trouble.

DENNY

Then all you have to do is control yourself better.

KENNY

The drinking is the worst part.

DENNY

Well, then you gotta control yourself better. Does Agnes know how crazy you were?

KENNY

I told her.

DENNY

But she never saw you in action.

KENNY

Around her I don't drink that much.

DENNY

Stop blaming the booze.

KENNY

It's true about the booze.

DENNY

I know. The problem is that without booze the ice is never broken.

KENNY

I know.

DENNY

So now you're gonna have to be sober?

KENNY

All I know is that I can't do anything to fuck up this marriage because if I go back to being single, it'll be curtains for me.

(Agnes enters the room.. She is in her early thirties, somewhat attractive; she is dressed in a white wedding dress.)

AGNES

What are you two boys talking about?

KENNY

Just things. Nothing much

DENNY

I was wondering if Kenny could stay off booze.

AGNES

If he knows what's good for him, he will.

DENNY

That's reassuring. (to Agnes): Don't you drink?

AGNES

Mostly wine.

DENNY

That's it? Wine?

AGNES

Yeah. What's wrong with drinking wine?

DENNY

(to Kenny)

How did you two ever link up? You detest wine drinking.

KENNY

What can I tell you? We all have to make compromises.

DENNY

For years you were telling me how you have to ply women with drinks, get them drunk, and all that stuff and now your own wife drinks wine.

AGNES

Wine is fine.

DENNY

Wine is a copout. It's a way for women to put off men without being totally obvious. I can't stand watching women sipping on their wine.

AGNES

Then don't watch.

KENNY

That's right. Don't watch.

DENNY

I can tell who's gonna be in charge in this relationship.

AGNES

Meaning what?

DENNY

Meaning that my brother is a hypocrite.

KENNY

I AM NOT! YOU'RE THE HYPOCRITE!

DENNY

Fuck you! You misled me.

KENNY

Just because I'm getting married doesn't mean you gotta ruin this for me too.

DENNY

Ha! Look at you

(to Agnes)

Do you know how many places this guy's been thrown out from?

AGNES

I know all about it.

KENNY

Look, Denny, I'm getting married and there's nothing you can do about that.

DENNY

(sarcastic)

I'm happy for you. Who wants to get married anyway?

AGNES

(to Denny)

Are you jealous?

DENNY
OF HIM? Of course not. Get married, stay single, what do I care?

KENNY
(irritated)
Could you do me a big favor and leave? I really don't want you here.

DENNY
Sure, I'll leave, and just for the record, marriage sucks. So there!

(Denny storms out of the room.)

KENNY
What a jerk.

AGNES
He sure is.

KENNY
I wish I had a drink.

AGNES
Me too.

(Kenny puts his hand inside his jacket pocket and takes out a half-pint of scotch, opens the bottle and takes a long gulp.)

KENNY
Aaaah! That was good.

AGNES
I'm glad you liked it because that's gonna be your last drink, mister. So put the bottle away.

(Kenny is silent. Then he opens up a window facing out to the street and screams)

KENNY
DENNY, COME BACK!

End of scene.

Act 1, Scene 8

Time: 1992. Denny and Kenny are forty-four years old.

Place: Downtown Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Setting: a bar. Denny and Kenny are having drinks.

DENNY

Does Agnes know that you're here?

KENNY

I told her I was meeting you after work.

DENNY

I finally passed the CPA exam.

KENNY

I can't stand teaching. It's horrible. It's crap.

DENNY

It pays money.

KENNY

That's easy for you to say. You got an accounting degree. Me? It's the same old crap. My assistant principal is on my case; he's such a brown nosing suck-up.

DENNY

I remember those days well. Same thing happened with me before I decided to quit.

KENNY

Just because I come in late doesn't mean I'm a bad teacher. Then they claim I have a bad attitude. They don't know what they're talking about.

DENNY

I've applied for a job with the city department of finance.

KENNY

Oh, really.

DENNY

Well, I gotta make a living some how.

KENNY

Have you been getting laid?

DENNY

I've had my share of the action. I wanted to do the switcheroo with you. How about you?

KENNY

Look, Denny, how about if we go to that singles' function next Friday? I gotta get laid.

DENNY

Yeah, let's go. *(pause)* Hey, what about if we order in a hooker?

KENNY

Now that's a good idea!

DENNY

Last week I had one over here and boy could she suck!

KENNY

But you know that fucking a hooker is not the same as getting a point.

DENNY

It's still fucking.

KENNY

But it's not the same. Anybody can pay for it. It's when the woman puts out because she wants to that makes it count.

DENNY

To me a hole is a hole.

KENNY

I got to do something about that crappy job of mine.

DENNY

Well, you keep talking about it but you don't do anything.

KENNY

It's the damn pay check. I'm paid just enough to keep me from quitting. It's disgusting. How come you're an accountant and I'm not? If you can do it, I can too.

DENNY

Go ahead and try, big shot. Who cares?

KENNY

You're always trying to stay one step ahead of me. You're disgusting.

DENNY

Don't blame me. Who told you to get married?

KENNY

Here we go with THAT again. I HAD too or otherwise I'd be dead by now.

DENNY

You are such a pussy-whipped wimp.

KENNY

No I'm not.

DENNY

Yes, you are. You come here, bitching about everything, you're not getting laid and you have to sneak around your wife. How does she put up with you?

(A phone rings from behind the bar. The bartender picks up the phone.)

BARTENDER

Hello. ... He's here.

(to Kenny)

It's for you.

(Bartender gives Kenny the phone)

By the way, I'm a not your secretary or answering service.

KENNY

(Talking on the phone)

Yes ... I'm with Frankie ... I'll be home as soon as possible ... stop yelling ... okay, bye.

(Kenny gives the phone to the bartender.)

BARTENDER

Wife's checking up on you?

KENNY

No. She just wanted to know when I'd be coming home.

BARTENDER

I'll tell you. If my wife did that with me, it would be war.

KENNY

Well I don't take guff from my wife.

BARTENDER

(laughing)

Oh yeah. Like I am supposed to believe that?

KENNY

Why don't you mind your own business?

BARTENDER

(stops laughing)

Watch you attitude, buddy. I'm just making small talk.

DENNY

What's going on?

KENNY

Nothing.

BARTENDER

Your brother here doesn't seem too happy.

DENNY

(to Kenny)

Will you stop your griping already?

KENNY

(angry)

Fuck you! Fuck you both!

BARTENDER

That's it! The both of you out of here NOW! Don't even pay for your last drinks.

DENNY

(to the Bartender)

He didn't mean anything by it.

BARTENDER

Well, I don't allow nasty talk at the bar, get it?

KENNY

I didn't say anything nasty. You were nasty.

BARTENDER

Listen, Kenny, I'm getting sick and tired of you, and if you open up your mouth at me one more time I'm gonna slam you so hard that you'll be seeing stars.

KENNY

But ...

DENNY
(to Bartender)

Keep your cool.

(to Kenny)

Just shut up!

BARTENDER

Tell that to your brother. I've already gotten complaints about him.

(Two women, both in their thirties and dressed in business attire, enter the scene and stand at the bar. They order drinks.)

WOMAN 1

Scotch and soda, please

WOMAN 2

I'll have a screwdriver.

KENNY

Hello ladies. How are things?

WOMAN 1

Leave us alone, creep.

WOMAN 2

Get lost, will you?

KENNY

Hey, I just want to make some friendly conversation.

WOMAN 1

Well, we don't want to talk to you,

DENNY

Listen, we're new in town and need some advice on where to stay.

WOMAN 2

Where you from?

DENNY
Muncie, Indiana.

WOMAN 1
Oh yeah? I'm from Fort Wayne. Small world. What high school did you go to?

DENNY
I forgot.

KENNY
(laughing)
He's a little drunk.

WOMAN 1
What's the matter? He has a memory problem?

WOMAN 2
You two guys are jerks. Now leave us alone. Bartender!

(Bartender comes over.)

BARTENDER
Yeah. What is it?

WOMAN 2
These two clowns are bothering us.

BARTENDER
(to Denny and Kenny)
That' it! I want you guys out of here NOW!

DENNY
We didn't do anything.

BARTENDER
Says you! Get out of here or I'm calling the cops.

KENNY

But we didn't do anything.

BARTENDER
(shouting)

I don't care! Out! ... Out!

(Kenny pours his drink on the counter.)

WOMAN 1 and 2
(screaming)

AAAAHHHHH! Disgusting! What slobs!

(The bartender comes from behind the bar and stands directly in front of Kenny and Denny. He is holding a baseball bat.)

BARTENDER

Leave NOW!

(Kenny and Denny are leaving.)

KENNY

(Turns around and yells)

Fuck you! Fuck all of you!

DENNY

And that goes double for me too.

(Kenny and Denny exit.)

End of scene.

Act 1, Scene 9

Time: 1998. Denny and Kenny are fifty years old.

Place: Downtown Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Setting: a bar. Denny and Kenny are dressed in business suits. They are drinking.

KENNY

I can't stand that commute from New Jersey. It's killing me!

DENNY

The girls in my office want a pay raise and health insurance coverage.

KENNY

I should have never given in to my wife. She wanted to move to New Jersey and now I got to do a two-hour commute. We were doing fine in Philly.

DENNY

I told you not to move but you wouldn't listen.

KENNY

Oh, be quiet. You're in no position to talk.

DENNY

You don't know squat about my situation.

KENNY

That's right, I don't. I didn't even know that you got married until I heard about it court.

DENNY

My wife is insane. She wants me to move into one of those high-priced dumps in near Broad Street.

KENNY

That's what happens when a woman starts throwing her pussy at you. You must have been desperate. How could you marry a woman with two ex-husbands and three kids?

DENNY

What can I say? These things happen.

KENNY

You're a moron. You let it happen because you wanted to get laid and she saw you as a soft touch.

DENNY

Just because you're a cpa now doesn't mean you can lecture me, okay?

KENNY

I should have never resigned from teaching.

DENNY

What do you mean? You couldn't stand it.

KENNY

I made a big mistake.

DENNY

I'm finally getting some cases. My connections in the finance department are beginning to pay off.

KENNY

Have you had any cases audited?

DENNY

Are you joking? No way! I only take the easiest cases. Any complex stuff I farm out.

KENNY

Do your clients ever complain about you farming out their cases?

DENNY

They couldn't care less. Most of them can hardly speak English. I had this one client, a guy from Yemen, who couldn't even read.

KENNY

Well, working for the city is no fun either. I'm assigned the worst garbage cases, and you know what? All my clients are skimming off the top.

DENNY

Really? Then how can you process their statements?

KENNY

My job is to process numbers, not to ask questions. By the way, I may have to move into one of your offices.

DENNY

What? Are you looking to freeload on me?

KENNY

I'll pay you.

DENNY

You bet you will. Why do you have to move?

KENNY

The office I'm renting is too small. I need more space.

DENNY

Well, I may be able to give you part of my conference room, but it's gonna cost you.

KENNY

Why do you always hassle me, always demanding money?

DENNY

It's you who's hassling me. I don't want you sharing office space with me. I got my own problems.

KENNY

That's right. They're your problems. Why you even married that woman is beyond me. When's the baby due?

DENNY

In May.

KENNY

So you'll be a father. Maybe we could all get together. Me, you, my wife, my daughter, your wife and your kid.

DENNY

Keep my wife out of the picture. She's driving me nuts. I want nothing to do with her.

KENNY

Are things going downhill that badly?

DENNY

Yes, they are.

KENNY

Well, maybe you just have to make the best of it.

DENNY

SHUT UP! You don't know what you're talking about. She's mentally deranged.

KENNY

I'm tired of you yelling at me.

DENNY

You're no angel either.

KENNY

Well, if you do break up, you know you're gonna have to pay.

DENNY

I don't need to hear this from you.

KENNY

They'll be child support and alimony. What a mess.

DENNY

What are you trying to do to me?

KENNY

I'm just trying to help.

DENNY

Did I ask for your help? You're the one coming to me for help.

KENNY

No I'm not. I'm happily married, which is more than I can say for you, that is, if you are married.

DENNY

If you're so happily married than how come you keep pestering me about going to singles dances?

KENNY

So what? I just want to get out and have some fun.

DENNY

Okay. So let's go to a singles' function and meet women.

KENNY

The problem is that I got to deal with the commute.

DENNY

All talk! That's all. You're just afraid of your wife.

KENNY

No I'm not.

DENNY

I know who wears the pants in your family, and it's not you.
By the way, I got a call from Donald. He finally decided to dump his wife.

KENNY

He's been talking about it long enough. Of course, she'll probably hit him
up for a ton of money.

DENNY

I don't think he cares about the money. He just wants out.

*(A woman enters the bar. She's in her forties, plain looking. She takes a
seat a few feet away from Denny and Kenny.)*

KENNY

Check her out.

DENNY

Aw, don't even bother. She looks like a dog.

KENNY

She's not bad looking. I'm gonna go over to her.

DENNY

Boy, you must be desperate.

(Kenny leaves Denny and goes over to the woman.)

KENNY

Hi. I couldn't help but notice you.

WOMAN

Thank you.

KENNY

Would you mind if I sat down?

WOMAN

Sure, why not.

(Kenny sits down.)

KENNY

What's your name?

WOMAN

Arlene.

KENNY

That's a nice name. I've always liked women with names like Arlene.

ARLENE

Why thank you again. That's so sweet of you to say that.

KENNY

Listen, I just want to let you know that I think you're the most attractive woman in this place.

ARLENE

Thank you again. (pause) What's your name?

KENNY

Barry.

ARLENE

That's a nice name too. Do you live around here?

KENNY

Right down the street. Would you like to see where I live?

ARLENE

Oh my, are you a fast worker. Maybe we can get to know each other a little better, like maybe you buying me a drink?

KENNY

I'd love to buy you a drink but not here.

ARLENE

Why not here? This seems like a nice place.

KENNY

Because I never buy a woman a drink at the place where I first meet her. I'm a little superstitious.

ARLENE

That sounds odd. Are you alright?

KENNY

I'm okay. Why do you ask?

ARLENE

You're beginning to sound strange.

KENNY
(frantic)

No! Everything's fine. How about if we go to the bar across the street?

ARLENE

I'm perfectly fine here. (pause) So, are you going to buy me a drink?

KENNY

Excuse me or a moment.

(Kenny rejoins Denny.)

DENNY

What's the matter? Struck out?

KENNY

She wants me to buy her a drink. You know that once you buy a woman a drink without them first putting out, they think you're a schmuck.

DENNY

Well, maybe that's what you are.

KENNY

Fuck you!

DENNY

What are you yelling at me for? Your problem is sitting at the other table.

KENNY

Well, there's no way I'm gonna buy that bitch a drink.

DENNY

Listen. Let me talk to her and see if I can smooth things over.

(Denny gets up and goes over to Arlene.)

DENNY

Hi!

ARLENE

What happened to Kenny?

DENNY

Something came up. *(pause)* Look, Kenny likes you a lot and wants to go out with you.

ARLENE

I like him too but he started sounding very strange.

DENNY

He gets that way when he meets a woman he likes.

ARLENE

Does he think I'm trying get him to buy me a free drink or something?

DENNY

No, not at all. He just sent me over here to let you know how he feels.

ARLENE

(becoming annoyed)

Why can't he buy me a drink?

DENNY

It's the way he is.

ARLENE

Then would YOU buy me a drink?

DENNY

Not in this place.

ARLENE

YOU TOO! What's wrong with you guys? Men are supposed to buy ladies drinks. What do you take me for?

DENNY

Okay, calm down, will you?

ARLENE

(getting angry)

Don't tell me to calm down. Get the hell away from my table!

(A waiter appears.)

WAITER

Anything wrong?

ARLENE

These guys (*she points to Kenny and Denny*) are bothering me. They both came over to my table uninvited and won't leave me alone.

WAITER

(to Denny)

Sir, will you please leave the lady alone?

DENNY

I didn't do anything.

WAITER

The lady says differently.

KENNY

(yells)

She nothing but a tramp!

(Arlene starts crying.)

WAITER

(to Kenny)

Please leave now!

DENNY

He didn't mean anything.

WAITER

I don't care. Just leave.

DENNY

Well, we haven't finished our drinks.

(Suddenly Arlene throws a glass of water at Denny which barely misses him. Pandemonium ensues as Denny and Kenny are running through the bar towards the door, overturning tables and chairs. At the door Kenny turns around.)

KENNY

Fuck you, lady!

ARLENE

Same to you, cheapskate!

End of scene.

Act 2, Scene 1:

Time: 2009. Denny and Kenny are sixty-one years old.

Place: North Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Setting: Denny and Kenny's apartment. Denny and Kenny are with an elderly man, Vern. All three are drinking heavily. Denny and Kenny have aged.

DENNY

Will you stop harassing my secretaries?

KENNY

I'm not harassing them. I'm just asking them to do some filing for me. That's all.

DENNY

Well, they work for me, not you, and don't forget that!

KENNY

I've been putting up with your crap for ten years.

DENNY

(angry)

It's me who's been putting up with YOUR crap! You make my office into a pigsty, you use my computer without permission, you never clean up after yourself, you are disgusting!

KENNY

I pay you enough money!

VERN

How much do you pay?

DENNY

Peanuts! How come you never refer any cases to me?

KENNY

Oh, so this is what it's about? You wanna use me to get cases?

DENNY

I don't need you for anything, okay!

VERN

C'mon fellas, calm down. Finish your drinks.

DENNY

(angry)

You're cheap, obnoxious, disgusting.

KENNY

Listen to you! I should have kept your ass in jail!

DENNY

I never hit you! That was a lie!

KENNY

The paperweight hit me right on the mouth and broke three of my teeth!
The dental work cost me five thousand dollars!

DENNY

Which I paid.

KENNY

Only after I threatened to sue you and report you to the police.

DENNY

If anybody needs to be reported to the police, it's you! Last week you had a whore up here!

VERN

Was she good?

KENNY

You wanted to fuck her too.

DENNY

So what?

VERN

Hey, was that the tramp that I saw leaving when I was coming in?

DENNY

That's right.

VERN

She wasn't bad looking. *(pause)* Remember, this Friday we'll be having a party here, so invite some people.

DENNY

Let me call Billy and the Bro.

VERN

Why don't you call them now?

(Denny takes out his cell phone and calls Billy.)

DENNY

Billy ... I'm here with Kenny and Vern ... why don't you come over for a drink?... you're not busy ... why don't you just come over?... okay, I'm sorry that I disrupted your class ... I AM sincere ... that's not true

(to Kenny and Vern)

Billy's saying that all I do is think about myself

(Kenny and Vern laugh)

... listen, why don't you come over and we can talk about all this

VERN

So, is he coming over?

DENNY

He told me to fuck off. Who needs him anyway?

VERN

Weren't you guys once good friends?

DENNY

Yeah. We used to pal around together back in the seventies and eighties. I even visited him in England. In fact, he even showed up to my graduation ceremony from accounting school.

VERN

That was nice of him. So what happened?

DENNY

I don't know. For some reason now he acts like he wants to avoid me. He's moody.

VERN

Did you do anything nasty to him?

DENNY

Well ...

VERN

Well, what? Out with it!

DENNY

Okay. About a year ago I needed some money fast to pay off some debts, so I asked Billy to loan me three thousand dollars.

VERN

(surprised)

Three thousand dollars!?

DENNY

Yeah, three thousand dollars. Are you hard of hearing or what?

Then what happened?
VERN

He loaned me the money.
DENNY

That was mistake.
KENNY

Oh, shut up!
DENNY
(to Kenny)

Go on.
VERN
(to Denny)

DENNY
Last week, Billy called and said he wanted his money and I told him I didn't have it, and that I couldn't repay him.

You stiffed Billy?
VERN

I guess I did; what of it?
DENNY

Yeah, what of it?
KENNY

VERN
What do you mean, "What of it?" You know the guy for how long ...

Thirty five years.
KENNY

VERN

... and this is how you treat the guy: by not repaying him?

DENNY

Yeah: so what? And besides, who cares? If he was stupid enough to lend me the money, he deserves to be stiffed. He can sue me if he wants.

VERN

If it were me you did that to, I would have kicked your ass so badly that you wouldn't be able to sit for a month. Then you could sue me!

KENNY

Denny should be sued.

DENNY

Aw, get off my case.

VERN

And now you're wondering why the guy wants nothing to do with you?

DENNY

We're still friends.

VERN

Are you kidding? After what you did to him? Some friend you are. Well I don't see Billy rushing over here, and I know he likes going to parties.

DENNY

Aw, he's just busting chops, that's all. He'll come around, and besides, I may pay him back, in my own good time.

VERN

You know, maybe it wasn't such a good idea calling him from that gay bar.

DENNY

Oh, who cares. We were just goofing.

VERN

Maybe he didn't take it that way.

KENNY

That's right. Who cares? Why don't we drop the subject.

VERN

What's the matter? Struck a raw nerve? Maybe you're feeling pangs of consciousness?

DENNY

Don't be an idiot.

VERN

You're the idiot. It's like you've gone out of your way to deliberately destroy a friendship. How about the time you fucked that woman Billy was going out with?

DENNY

It was nothing. She was a drunk, a tramp.

VERN

You told me that you, Billy, and Ernie were at this bar where Billy met this woman and started going out with her, but then later you fucked her and Billy wouldn't talk to you for three months, he was so pissed off.

DENNY

Hey, it takes two to tango, right? She wanted it too.

VERN

That's true, but you knew he liked her, cared about her, didn't you?

DENNY

How did I know?

VERN

You knew. Let me tell you something. That was one crappy thing that you did.

KENNY

Aw, stop being so judgmental.

VERN

(persisting)

Didn't you care about how Billy might feel if he found out that you fucked his girl?

DENNY

She was just a tramp.

VERN

Okay, now how did Billy find out that you had fucked her?

DENNY

I told him.

VERN

And how did he react?

DENNY

He was upset.

VERN

So you hurt your friend.

DENNY

I didn't hurt anyone. All I did was get laid.

VERN

Yeah, with somebody else's girl, and you ruined it for him. Wow, that's heavy. How would like it if he did that to you?

DENNY

Let him. Who cares anyway?

VERN

Okay, Denny, I can see that this is going nowhere. All I know is that you went out of your way to trash a perfectly fine friendship with Billy. How sick is that? I mean, you two guys used to hang out together all the time.

KENNY

So what's it to you?

VERN

Nothing. I'm just talking.

KENNY

Exactly. Just talk.

(Denny gets up, leaves the room, and soon returns with a large box.)

DENNY

Last week I got this package from Billy.

VERN

What did he send you?

DENNY

Baseball cards I sent him when he was living in England.

VERN

How many cards did you send him?

DENNY

About five thousand cards.

VERN

Wow, that's a lot of cards!

DENNY

He asked me to send them to him. He was into baseball memorabilia at the time and so I did him a favor and this is how he repays me; that's what I get for being a nice guy. *(pause)* Well, it was a long time ago. Boy, does time fly.

KENNY

Who cares?

DENNY
(to Kenny)

Fuck you!

KENNY

Who wants to hear about your baseball cards anyway?

VERN
(to Kenny)

I do, so you keep quiet!

DENNY

Now what am I supposed to do with all these cards?

KENNY

Throw them out or try to sell them.

VERN

Billy returned all those cards to you. Wow, he must really be disgusted with you. Have you asked him why he returned them?

DENNY

No, and besides, I couldn't care less.

VERN

I think you do care.

KENNY

All Denny cares about is squeezing more money out of me.

DENNY
(to Kenny)

Listen, if you keep talking like that, I'm throwing you out of the office, okay?

KENNY

Yeah? Just try it.

DENNY
(to Vern)

I've been putting up with his crap for ten years and I can't take it anymore.

VERN

So what do you plan to do about it?

DENNY

You watch.

KENNY
(indignant)

I've done absolutely nothing to you. You have no reason to get on your high horse with me.

DENNY

Oh, don't I? Because of you I didn't get laid last week when I had that bimbo over.

KENNY

What did I do?

DENNY

You barged in like a tank and the next thing she's taking off like a bandit.

KENNY

I thought you were finished.

VERN

Is this the same broad that I saw last week?

DENNY

No, a different broad.

VERN

How many broads do you guys bring up here?

(Kenny and Denny start laughing.)

VERN

And both of you guys are married, right?

KENNY

Look, it's just a way of blowing off steam.

DENNY

It's harmless fun. Nobody's the worse for it.

VERN

Well, I'm gonna be inviting some women over on Friday.

KENNY

Great! The more the better, just as long as they put out.

DENNY

How about sometime we go to a singles' dance?

KENNY

I might go for that.

VERN

You guys are something else.

KENNY

Look who's talking! You're married too.

VERN

Yeah, but I don't go to singles' dances.

DENNY

Get off your high horse, Kenny.

KENNY

Screw you!

DENNY

I'm planning to go to Europe to visit World War Two battle sites in France this summer.

(Kenny's cell phone rings. He answers it.)

KENNY

Hello ... I'll be right over ... good bye.

(Kenny hangs up.)

KENNY

I gotta meet a client.

VERN

You gotta go now?

DENNY

(to Vern)

How about if me and you go to Europe to see World War Two battle sites?

VERN

I'd love to go but I I can't. What about taking your wife and daughter?

DENNY

Nah.

VERN

That might be a great trip for your daughter. How old is she now?

DENNY

Twelve.

VERN

Perfect age!

(Kenny is putting on his jacket.)

KENNY

We all know why you want to go to Europe and it's NOT just to see World War Two battle sites.

DENNY

No, you're wrong.

KENNY

No, I'm not wrong! You wanna go to Europe to try to get laid. Admit it! Why don't you go to some tropical paradise instead?

DENNY

I had enough of those whores when I was in the war. They're disgusting. Any guy who goes overseas to fuck whores is an idiot.

KENNY

What about Cal?

DENNY

What about him?

KENNY

Is he still going traveling around the world fucking whores?

DENNY

That guy's sad. Every year he would go to poorest countries overseas to fuck the cheapest whores and then he'd come back and brag about it and say how great the women are over there and when you'd tell him that they're just whores, that they're putting on an act, he'd get pissed off and insist that the whores really liked him and that all women are whores anyway so what's the difference if you pay up front.

KENNY

Maybe he's got a point there. I mean, aren't women angling for money, one way or another?

DENNY

They are, but when you pay for it up front in cash, that's different.

VERN

How's it different?

DENNY

Look, it's no big accomplishment to go to a poor country and fuck women who are desperate for money and will fuck anybody to make a few bucks. But when a woman puts out without you having to pay upfront, that means she likes you and that you've gotten over on her, so there's the difference.

KENNY

Look, fellas, I gotta leave now.

VERN

Well, good luck with your case.

KENNY

Ugh! You know, all my clients are cheaters. The entire tax law is a sham. But it pays the bills.

VERN

I hope you don't say that to your fellow CPA's

KENNY

Are you joking? No way!

DENNY

After your move to DOWNTOWN, you'll be working to pay off that mortgage for the rest of your life.

KENNY

It's worth it. I don't have to deal with that horrible commute anymore.

VERN

You two guys are lucky that you still have this apartment.

DENNY

You wanna move in here?

VERN

I didn't say that. I'm just talking.

DENNY

Anyway, think about coming to Europe with me. It'll be an interesting trip.
(to Kenny) And remember, we have to have a talk tomorrow to settle things.

KENNY

Aw, get off my case already, will you?

(Kenny leaves, slamming the door.)

VERN

Want another drink?

DENNY

Why not?

(Vern gets up and pours a shot of whisky into a glass.)

End of scene.

Act 2, Scene 2

Time: The present.

Place: a room; location unknown.

The stage is bare. Denny and Kenny are standing at center stage facing the audience. They sing.

So now you know about us,
How we did live and fight.
We don't know why we did this,
But we thought it was right.

We shagged some lonely women
and dumped on good friends, too.
The reason why we did this
is something we ask you.

'Cause ever since we've been kids,
all we do is fight.
But whatever is the reason,
it brings us real delight.

But we are old and gray now;
the years have passed so fast,
and now we cannot figure
what happened in the past.

(Denny and Kenny become angry and defiant.)

KENNY

Aw, who cares what you people think?

KENNY

Go fly a kite!

(Denny and Kenny slowly turn and face each other.)

DENNY

(Slowly looks upward, stretches his arms and screams in anguish)
Is this what life is all about?

End of scene.

Act 2, Scene 3

Time: Night.

Place: Downingtown, Pennsylvania.

Setting: The living room in Kenny's apartment. Kenny and Agnes are conversing.

AGNES

What's wrong?

KENNY

Oh, it's Denny. He's still pestering me about money.

AGNES

What does he want now?

KENNY

I don't know what he wants.

AGNES

Then why are you upset?

KENNY

He's annoying me.

AGNES

Then why do you stay there?

KENNY

Because it's cheap.

AGNES

So you're willing to put up with Frankie's crap to save money?

KENNY

What do you want me to say?

AGNES

For as long as I can remember, you two guys have been bickering.

KENNY

Who's been bickering?

AGNES

You and Denny.

KENNY

We never bicker.

AGNES

Yes you do. You guys argue all the time.

KENNY

Arguing isn't the same as bickering.

AGNES

Stop mincing words with me.

KENNY

I'm not mincing words with you.

AGNES

(annoyed)

Oh, boy. Talking to you is like pulling teeth. *(pause)* Let's go out tomorrow.

KENNY

I may be working late tomorrow.

AGNES

Again?

KENNY

I'm getting a lot of referrals.

AGNES

Listen, I'm getting sick and tired of playing second-fiddle to your job.

KENNY

We gotta pay off the mortgage, remember?

AGNES

I'm working too, remember, so it's not all on you.

KENNY

What about Nadine's college loan? We gotta pay that off too.

AGNES

She's doing fine. She'll handle it.

KENNY

What do you mean, she'll handle it? She's working as a stock girl in a toy store. She doesn't have a dollar to her name. We took out a seventy-five thousand dollar loan to put our daughter through college and for what?

AGNES

At least she graduated.

KENNY

Yeah, with a BA in philosophy. (*sarcastic*) That's gonna get her a great job.

AGNES

Stop being so picky!

KENNY

Gimme a break!

AGNES

You know, Kenny, sometimes you can be such a pain in the butt. What are you complaining about? We have a great apartment, we're both working; Nadine graduated, you're doing what you want, yet you're still bitching.

KENNY

You don't understand.

AGNES

Don't tell me that. We've been married over twenty years.

KENNY

Ugh. It's my brother.

AGNES

Why are you changing the subject? You do that all the time.

KENNY

What do you want from me?

AGNES

To stop being evasive.

KENNY

What do mean by that?

AGNES

Stop pushing me away.

KENNY

I'm not pushing you away.

AGNES

Okay, then what's bugging you?

KENNY

Aw nothing. Forget it!

AGNES

This is exactly what I mean. *(pause)* By the way, I found some papers buried in the bottom of the closet. Were you trying to hide them?

KENNY

I have no idea what you are talking about.

AGNES

You don't? Let me show you what I found.

(Agnes exits the room and moments later returns holding a manila envelope.)

AGNES

Here's what I am talking about.

KENNY

Alright, let's see what you got.

(Agnes gives the envelope to Kenny who removes the contents of the envelope and places them on a table and begins examining them.)

Here's a picture of me and you on our honeymoon. We had a great time. And here's a picture of Nadine when she was a baby. She was a cute kid.

AGNES

And she still is.

KENNY

Yes, she is.

(Kenny picks up a letter)

KENNY

(surprised)

I was wondering what happened to this letter. Here, take a look at it.

(Kenny gives the letter to Agnes who reads it aloud.)

AGNES

To Kenny Melinsky. On behalf of the State Department of Education, I wish to thank you for the outstanding service you provided on behalf of your students which enabled them to achieve dramatic improvements in mathematics and science. Further, through your diligence and dedication, you established yourself as an outstanding role model for your peers and students. Congratulations and keep up the good work. Sincerely, E. Parker Jones, Principal, East Side High School. *(Agnes puts down the letter)*. Kenny, I am shocked. This is a tremendous honor. Why didn't you tell me about this?

KENNY

It was no big deal. I was just doing my job. I didn't even get a bonus.

AGNES

Well, I'm very proud of you and it's something you should be proud of too.

(Agnes gives Kenny a warm kiss.)

How about us going to bed now?

KENNY

You go ahead. I'll join you in a moment.

AGNES

Okay, but don't be long.

KENNY

I won't.

(Agnes exits.)

(Kenny picks up the phone and makes a call.)

KENNY

Nadine, this is your father. ... Everything's okay ... I just wanted to tell you that I'm proud of you and that you don't have to worry about paying off that student loan. ... That's right. I'm going to take care of everything. ... And I love you too ... good night.

(Kenny puts down the phone, gets up, and exits the stage.)

End of scene.

That'll be fun!

SUZIE

Let's see what's playing.

DENNY

(Denny picks up the newspaper. Looks at it for a few moments; then puts it down.)

When I was your age a movie ticket cost fifty cents. Can you believe it?

DENNY

That's all? Wow!

SUZIE

And going to a ball game cost a dollar and the bus cost fifteen cents. Now everything's different. *(pause)* Have you done your homework?

DENNY

Sure did! All of it!

SUZIE

Good! You gotta do your homework, otherwise you won't do well in school and I want to see you get all A's and B's.

DENNY

Okay, dad.

SUZIE

You're gonna do it, right?

DENNY

Sure thing!

SUZIE

DENNY

That's what I wanna hear.

SUZIE

Dad, how come you always come home so late?

DENNY

I'm busy at work.

SUZIE

I wish you'd come home earlier.

DENNY

What's the matter? You don't have enough to do? Play with your friends.

SUZIE

I do play with my friends. Lola wants me to sleep over at her house tomorrow. Can I go there?

DENNY

Yes, but only after you do your homework. *(pause)* Who's gonna be at Lola's?

SUZIE

Her parents.

DENNY

I'll call them tomorrow just to make sure everything is okay.

SUZIE

Okay, dad, but don't forget to call.

DENNY

Don't worry. I won't forget. Now why don't you go back to bed.

SUZIE

Okay, dad, goodnight!

(Suzie hugs Denny who kisses Suzie on the forehead.)

DENNY

Okay, now scoot!

(Suzie is leaving room. Then suddenly Denny says:)

Wait a minute, Suzie. Come over here. I want to show you some stuff.

(Suzie turns around and sits on the sofa next to Denny. Denny opens a drawer in a desk next to the sofa and takes out a box full of photographs and starts showing them to Suzie.)

Here's a picture of you when you were three years old.

SUZIE

That's really me?

DENNY

That's right. You were a cute baby. And here's a picture of me and Uncle Kenny at Connie Mack Stadium. I think that picture was taken in 1965. We used to go to a lot of baseball games when we were kids.

SUZIE

Did you and Uncle Kenny get along?

DENNY

Of course we did. ... Here's a picture of me, Uncle Kenny and Uncle Donald in California.

SUZIE

Dad, when will I meet Uncle Donald?

DENNY

Soon, I promise. ... Here's a picture of me and my friend Billy in France. We used to have a lot of fun together.

SUZIE

What happened to Billy?

DENNY

He still lives in Philadelphia but we don't get together anymore. *(pause)* There's me and Uncle Kenny when we were kids.

SUZIE

Wow! That's you and Uncle Kenny?

DENNY

That's right. I bet you couldn't even recognize us. ... Here's a picture of your grandparents. They died way before you were born. ... That's me in the army.

SUZIE

That's you?

DENNY

Yep, that's me with the rifle and here's my discharge paper from the army. You want to look at them?

(Suzie glances at the photograph and discharge paper.)

SUZIE

How come you had a rifle?

DENNY

Because I fought in a war and sometimes I had to shoot at other people. Let me show you this. *(Denny reaches into the box, takes out a small container and gives it to Suzie)* Open it up. *(Suzie opens up the container and takes out a medal.)*

SUZIE

What's this?

DENNY

It's a medal called a Bronze Star.

SUZIE

What's it for?

DENNY

Read the note that comes with the medal and you'll find out.

(Suzie reaches into the container and takes out a piece of paper which she unfolds and starts reading:)

SUZIE

This Bronze Star is awarded to Private First Class Denny Melinsky, Company A, Fourth battalion, Third infantry division, United States Army, for exceptional gallantry and bravery while under fire which saved the lives of eight American soldiers and directly contributed to the defeat of the enemy in the field.

(Suzie puts down the medal and the paper. She is impressed.)

Wow, you're a war hero! I can't wait to tell the kids in school!

DENNY

(chuckles)

I was just doing my job, that's all, and before I forget I have another surprise for you.

SUZIE

(More excited)

Another surprise?

DENNY

This summer, I'm gonna take you on a trip with me to Europe.

SUZIE

(Ecstatic)

Europe! Wow! I can't wait to go!

(Denny puts the photographs and medal back in the box and then places the box into the drawer.)

DENNY

Okay, now it's time for you to go to bed.

(Suzie gets up from the sofa and starts to leave. Then she stops and turns around.)

SUZIE

Dad, you wanna know something?

DENNY

What?

SUZIE

You're the greatest dad in the world.

DENNY

And you're the greatest daughter in the world.

(Suzie runs over to Denny, gives him a big hug and kiss and then runs out of the room. Denny is sitting, deep in thought.)

DENNY

(talking to himself)

You know, maybe I should give Billy a call.

(Denny picks up the phone and makes a call.)

DENNY

Hello, Billy ... this is Denny ... How are things?

End of Scene.

Act 2, Scene 5

Time: A few days later.

Place: Denny and Kenny's apartment

Setting: Denny and Kenny are sitting in the living room having drinks. They put down their drinks, stand up, and face the audience.

DENNY

Just in case you're wondering, I DID take Suzie to Europe.

KENNY

And I DID repay my daughter's student loan, which shows you that when we want to, we can be nice guys too.

DENNY

But don't get any wrong ideas. If you think we're chumps, you are sorely mistaken.

KENNY

That's right. Just try us, especially you women out there. If you think we'll be taking you out to dinner without getting something in return, you'll be in for a big surprise.

(Denny and Kenny face each other)

KENNY

How did Suzie like her trip?

DENNY

She loved it, especially the museums. It was a really great trip, better than what you did, paying off a measly student loan.

KENNY

What kind of crack is that? I helped out my daughter. All you did was take your daughter on a trip. Any putz could have done that!

DENNY

Who're you calling a putz?

KENNY

I'm calling YOU a putz! Whatcha gonna do about it?

DENNY

I'll show you!

(Denny punches Kenny squarely on the chest. Kenny responds by throwing a punch at Denny and soon they are rolling on the floor, brawling. Agnes and Suzie rush into the room.)

AGNES
(screams)
Stop fighting!

SUZIE
(screams)
Dad, please stop!

(Denny and Kenny continue fighting. As they grapple with each other, they're calling each other names.)

Idiot! ... Moron!...Schmuck!...Dickhead!...Cheapskate!...Putz!

AGNES and SUZIE
(screaming)

Stop! ... Stop! ... Stop!

(Denny and Kenny continue fighting, while Agnes and Suzie look on, helpless.)

End of scene.

Act 2, Scene 6

Time: Later.

Place: The same room.

Setting: Denny and Kenny are standing, facing the audience; Agnes and Suzie are in the background, sitting on chairs. Denny and Kenny speak directly to the audience.

KENNY

What did you expect, a miracle?

DENNY

Did you really expect us to change? Fighting, bitching, conniving ... this is how we live and nobody is ever gonna change us ... **NOBODY!**

KENNY

Sure we know better, and sure we've done some good things, but so what? We come first! If we hurt your feelings, we couldn't care less because if we don't do it to you, you'll do it to us.

AGNES and SUZIE

You're wrong! We love you!

DENNY

That's right, Kenny, you tell 'em! After all:

DENNY and KENNY

We're Denny and Kenny, and we are ... **BROTHERS!** HA, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha....!

(Denny and Kenny continue laughing. Suddenly from off-stage a shot is heard. Kenny grabs his stomach, staggers forward, and falls on the ground, dead. There is silence. Denny is stunned. Then from off stage comes the sound of a man laughing.)

VOICE (o.s.)

Who's laughing now?

The end.