



BAIT AND SWITCH

By Bill Roddey

A SMITH SCRIPT

This script is protected by copyright laws.
No performance of this script – IN ANY MEDIA – may be undertaken without payment of the
appropriate fee and obtaining a licence.

For further information, please contact SMITH SCRIPTS at info@smithscripts.co.uk

BAIT AND SWITCH

BAIT AND SWITCH

A One Act Play

By Bill Roddey

\

BAIT & SWITCH

CHARACTERS

POPS-Man in his late 60's in a bathrobe

GRADY- A 30 year old man in jeans and a sweatshirt carrying a badminton racket

SYNOPSIS-During the pandemic Pops lives alone until taken hostage by a desperate thief Grady, who breaks into his home demanding money and canned goods. But all is not as it seems as the play progresses and the tables are turned, then turned again, along with a religious tutorial.

1

An empty stage with a table, a cell phone on it plus a pen and pad and two chairs on each side of the stage. SFX a toilet flushing and from stage left Pops appears and sits down at the table. He picks up the pad and dials a number on the phone.

POPS

Hello there...ah what's your name? Kahlid. Is that with a C or a K? Oh with a silent P. OK, Kahlid I'm sorry I missed your call. I had to go to the bathroom. What did you...What? You're from the CDC, the Center for Disease Control...Why would you be...What? Say again...My health insurance CANCELLED?...And what? You can restart it. (Considering) Well, you seem like a nice boy. Where are you calling from? Karachi? That's in yes, of course, India. Are you married? No.... I know my health insurance is crucial...Do you have any kids? No, well plenty of time for that. Your mother must be very proud that you're working for such a prestigious agency as the CDB...Sorry, CDC. That's sounds like a very....My insurance...Yes, of course I need it, but I'm on Medicare and don't really.... (Confused) Hell, hello, hello Kahlid. Hell-Oh are you there...Ah OK, I'll call back later when you're not so busy.

(Pops hangs up his phone and stares off into space disappointed that the call ended. Suddenly Grady rushes in from stage right, holding a badminton racket in one hand and a plate in the other.)

GRADY

Hey old man. I'm your new neighbor...You have any money I can borrow? I'm between paychecks and..ah...well What the hell! GIVE ME ALL YOUR MONEY! NOW!

POPS

Welcome to the neighborhood? My name is Ernest...but everybody calls me Pops. Did you move into the Tinwhistle's house. They were such a nice couple, except on the weekends when they partied like it was 1969. The Mrs. threw him out almost every Sunday morning, but he kept bouncing back like a red rubber ball. But they were in lust, so she let him back into her bed, where she made wild chimp screams like she was being killed, instead of being thrilled. The wife told my wife this..The cops came once, but all she had on was a smile. They left after shaking Mr. Tinwhistle's hand.

GRADY

What? Are you deaf or what?

POPS

(Adjusts his hearing aid ear) Or what. My hearing aid distorts all loud noises. Once I mistook a tornado for a train crossing. They say a tornado sounds like a train coming. It does and, thank God, it swerved at the last minute... All I lost was a headlight... It fogged up my glasses though.

2

GRADY

Huh? OK, give me all your money NOW!

POPS

Oh..Ohhhh... you want money?

GRADY

Yes, all your money and some ah...canned goods to go. (Softly) Or I'll bash your head in with this tennis racket.

(He waves the racket around wildly and drops the plate in his hand.)

POPS

Bad timing there, man. My social security comes the third Wednesday of the month. And that's tomorrow. But if you're collecting canned goods for the food bank check the kitchen. I don't have much, but I'm always willing to share for someone worse off than me. (Thinking) Ah, that's a badminton racket not a tennis racket there. A tennis line drive would probably break it in two. But a shuttle cock would just flutter by.

GRADY

Huh? Whatever. You know...OK, so you're like married and...

POPS

Widower. My dear Gracie died about three years ago. She caught the cancer and it ate her up like a coyote ravages a chicken. At the end she was all spinal cord, elbows and knees. She got so bad I could barely stand to visit her in hospice. She didn't look like my Gracie anymore... But I did. I was there till death did us part...I wake up every day, EVERY DAY, with a hole in my heart that... that never never heals.

GRADY

(Dismissive) Well, it is what it is... So you.. ah you must have some of your wife's jewelry in a drawer somewhere that I could...ah hock.

POPS

I did buy her a pair of diamond earrings once. (Laughs) I always told people that I bought them for her because it was Wednesday. No other reason...But actually, I'd heard on the radio that all diamonds were half off on Wednesday. She'd always wanted a diamond. So I gave her one. And it made her sooo happy.

GRADY

Sounds good. So get them. Like for me, now.

POPS

Ah, what?

3

GRADY

I want them...The diamond earrings. Old man. I want them.

POPS

You WANT them?

GRADY

Yes. NOW!

POPS

Well, you're gonna have to exhume the body 'cause they're buried with her. I felt she should have them with her for her last journey out of this life...The diamond earrings are six sparkling feet under.

GRADY

Damn! You...you have any more valuables? Like in a small safe. Look granddad, I know you old farts love your secret safes under the bed or behind your clothes in a closet.

POPS

Gracie always took care of that. She used to say that I'd never divorce her because I wouldn't know where anything was without her. She once pointed out that she put everything where it should be. That's feminine logic for you that no mere man could fight.

GRADY

Any...any ah antiques around?

POPS

Only me...Besides what we bought brand new in the 70's for the house I'm still using. The wear and tear on both of us was considerable though. But we couldn't update our body parts like you renovate a kitchen.

GRADY

Whatever...You'd be surprised what old junk goes for on Craigslist that turns you old dudes on...You know, like with your old toys, comic books and shit.

POPS

I not only don't know Craig, I never knew he had a list. Is he on the Net that my Net Set grandchildren are always hunched over, gazing at their phones in irrelevancy and wonder?

GRADY

You got grand kids?

POPS

That's Pops...and you are?

GRADY

What the???