

FOLLOWING DOGS

a one act play

By Tim Garvin

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A one act play

PLAYERS: Jack and Marty, both in their late twenties to early forties. Jack is intense and driven. Marty is several years older and more laid back.

SCENE ONE

(A shabby, fairly barren apartment. At right is a stove, a sink, a counter top with a toaster, a table with three chairs. There are two doors, at the back and at the side. A few prints are tacked to the wall—flowers, landscapes, a painting or two. In the center of the stage are two chairs, one wellpadded, the other straight-backed and wooden. Beside the wellpadded chair is an end table. On the stove is a covered pan. Jack is in the kitchen, drying his hands on a dishtowel. He lifts the lid of the pan, bends to inspect the contents, replaces the lid fast, and jerks upright. He steps away, turns his head and gasps in a manner that indicates he has been holding his breath. There is a knock at the side door. Jack crosses and opens it, stares at Marty, leans against the jam, blocking the door with his arm.

Jack:

Hello, Marty.

Marty:

Hey, Jack. Thought I'd check you out.

Jack:

You caught me at a bad time.

Marty:

I did? Oh, no. Where's Marcia? Not home yet?

Jack:

Your sister's not feeling good. She stayed home today.

Marty:

(Irresistibly pushes past Jack, who reluctantly drops his arm.)

Oh? Where is she? In bed?

(Moves toward door on right.)

Jack:

(Following Marty into room.)

Don't wake her. I just peeked in there. She's sleeping.

Marty:

What? She got the flu? Or what?

Jack:

Could be.

Marty:

Flu?

Jack:

Yeah.

Marty:

What's she doing?

Jack:

She's sleeping, for Christ's sake.

Marty:

No, I mean how's she feel?

Jack:

Crappy, man.

Marty:

But how crappy?

Jack:

Really crappy, for Christ's sake!

Marty:

No, dumbass. I mean in what way crappy?

Jack:

She's throwing up...won't eat...and a fever.

Marty:

Sounds like the flu.

Jack:

You think?

(Beat.)

Shall we sit? I want to sit.

(Jack indicates the plush chair. Both sit, Marty in the comfortable chair.)

So what brings you to my abode?

Marty:

I'm visiting.

Jack:

You are?

Marty:

Yeah.

Jack:

Why are you doing that?

Marty:

I'm dropping by. I'm visiting.

Jack:

Your mother sent you, didn't she?

Marty:

My mother?

Jack:

I think I said your mother. I meant to say your mother.

Marty:

Okay, big deal. You got your phone jerked. She wants to see how you guys are getting along.

Jack:

(Jack gets to his feet, intense.)

Okay, man, go in there and check her out. And tiptoe, goddamnit. And don't give me any bullshit about you trust me. Because even if you do your mother doesn't, and she's going to ask you.

(Beat. Marty tries for righteous astonishment, finally relents with a shrug. Jack waves his hand tiredly and sits again.)

Jack:

Go ahead. Fuck it.

(Marty rises, crosses to the door on the right. He opens it, looks in, closes it.

Meanwhile, Jack rises and checks the pan on the stove again, holding his breath and gasping after he replaces the lid. They return to their chairs together.)

Jack:

Okay. We got that over with.

(Beat.)

Do I seem like a violent person, Marty?

Marty:

No.

Jack:

And I'm not. You know how these suspicions got into your mother's head? She saw me and Marcia horsing around one day—wrestling—and now all the time she asks Marcia if I get violent.

Marty:

Well, you can see how her mind is working. Your old man and all.

Jack:

But I am not my old man, am I?

Marty:

No, you are not.

Jack:

So what else?

Marty:

What else what? What's that smell?

Jack:

What else do you want? Is there something more that you want from me?

Marty:

C'mon, man. To hell with my brother-in-law, but not my friend, okay? I wanted to come for a visit anyway.

Jack:

What about my job. Aren't you interested in how I lost my job?

Marty:

I know how you lost your job. Marcia dropped by when you were out of town.

Jack:

She did?

Marty:

So what were you doing up at Attica?

Jack:

Marcia say I was at Attica?

Marty:

Is it a secret? I can't remember if she said it or not. You went upstate. How many people you know upstate? I figured you went by Attica.

Jack:

You did?

Marty:

Yeah. Visit your father...or what?

Jack:

No, I did not visit my father. There's other people I know in Attica than my father, who as you know I do not visit and have never visited and am never gonna visit.

Marty:

Okay, then.

Jack:

I had other business in Attica.

Marty:

You dealing again, Jack? Don't tell me that.

Jack:

No, I am not dealing. Are you a spy or my goddamn friend? Because I want the spies to leave, but my friends can stay.

Marty:

I'm definitely your friend, Jack.

Jack:

Because your mother is driving me crazy, Marty. And she drives Marcia crazy. Marcia has got herself stuck in the goddamn middle, and it's breaking her goddamn heart.

(Very excited.)

And I have never, in my entire goddamn life, in my whole stinking life! ever! touched a hair of Marcia's head—except in a loving way! Your mother has given me no chance. Fuck it though.

Marty:

She can be a bitch, Jack.

Jack:

Why do you say something like that? I would never say that about my own mother to please some asshole.

(Beat.)

All right, I'm going to accept you as a friend and not a spy. Because I don't think you're a spy. Tell your mother I am not dealing, though. Because I am not. I promised Marcia, neither a dealer nor a user be. I did lose my job, though, so that's bad. I got to get something started.

Marty:

You got fired, hunh?

Jack:

Yeah.

Marty:

What's that smell?

(Jack ignores this.)

So what did you do, tell them you were queer?

Jack:

(Smiles.)

Yeah, I told them I was queer.

Marty:

Why?

Jack:

To piss them off.

Marty:

You wanted to piss off the guys you work with?

Jack:

Yes, I did. Oh boy, those were friendly guys, Marty. Lots of bullshitting and chumming around. It doesn't mean a goddamn thing, of course. You know that, of course, if you ever take a real look. But it's irritating. You're on the job chumming around, and suddenly they're gone, and you have to finish the whole thing by yourself. That must be standard behavior for janitors. On my day off, they're supposed to do my section, but when I get back it looks like a shithole, and all the machinists think I'm a jerk. But when they're off, I do their section. If I don't, it's like declaring war. I don't want to work in a war zone. So I said, look, I want to be honest with you guys, because I feel like I'm hiding something from you. So the truth is I'm queer. I do everything queers do—with these hands and these lips. I hope we can still be friends. So as soon as I screwed up—I forgot to block off the compactor—something nobody does anyway—they fired me. But you know what? They didn't fire me because I was queer, which they didn't believe anyway, because one guy said, you're fucking with us, right? It just pissed them off that the new guy wouldn't put up with the shit. Big city rednecks, man. Shut up and get in line.

Marty:

Same all over.

Jack:

Same where you work?

Marty:

Sure.

Jack:

Tell them you're queer.

Marty:

Do I smell dogshit?

Jack:

(Sniffs.)

Maybe.

Marty:

Check your shoes.

(Looks at his soles.)

Not mine.

Jack:

Naw. My shoes are clean.

Marty:

So you been smelling dogshit as well? Because I wondered.

Jack:

Yeah, I smelled it.

Marty:

Because I thought my upper lip was turning to dogshit or something. So what, you guys get a dog?

Jack:

Naw.

Marty:

No? You couldn't afford the dog, you just got the dogshit?

Jack:

Yeah.

(Jack looks away.)

Marty:

I can see this is a touchy subject. Next guy smells dogshit I'm punching him out.

Jack:

The fact is, I have got some dogshit.

Marty:

What do you mean, you have some?

Jack:

I'm drying it out on the stove.

Marty:

You are?

Jack:

Yeah. I'm drying it out. Then I'm going to crumble it up.

Marty:

Okay. Maybe I can help.

Jack:

Really. I'm drying it out.

Marty:

You mind if I take a little peek?

Jack:

Go ahead.

(Marty crosses to stove.)

Jack:

Put the lid down fast

(Marty lifts the lid, peers into the pan. He lunges back, dropping the lid on the floor.)

Marty:

Jesus Christ, Jack! What are you doing? Jesus!
(He picks up the lid and replaces it at arms' length.)

Jack:

It's pretty powerful when you heat it up.

Marty:

(Crossing, sitting in his chair.)
What is this? You making pies for the guys at work?

Jack:

Naw.

Marty:

No?

Jack:

Naw.

Marty:

I give up.

Jack:

You'll never guess.

Marty:

I don't want to guess.

Jack:

Okay, I'll tell you. But you have to promise not to tell anyone else.

Marty:

All right.

Jack:

And especially your mother.

Marty:

All right.

Jack:

I don't give a damn what you think, Marty. Or what anyone else thinks. I just don't want any hassles about this, okay? You're going to be the only person that knows about this—besides Marcia and me. You walked in before I got my trip together, or you wouldn't know either. Because it's private. It's me and Marcia's thing.

Marty:

Oh, Jesus. Is this some kind of sex deal?

Jack:

It's not any sex deal! Yeah, we jump around in dogshit.

Marty:

Jack. You're kind of scaring me. Dried dogshit? What, you're sprinkling it on your food?

Jack:

Yes.

Marty:

C'mon...

Jack:

Are you ready to listen?

Marty:

Are you fucking eating dogshit?

Jack:

Just shut up and listen. And don't tell anyone. Okay, I was up at Attica, and I looked up an old friend of mine. Freddy Gaye. You know him?

Marty:

I heard of him.

Jack:

You probably heard he was bad, right?

Marty:

I heard it and I know it.

Jack:

Well, that's true. He's bad. So I looked up Freddy Gaye, just to say hello. Not to do any business or anything. But the guy's up for a long time. I thought, what the hell, say hello. I mean I was in the neighborhood.

Marty:

In the neighborhood of Attica.

Jack:

Right.

Marty:

All right. You were in the neighborhood.

Jack:

Look, I just don't feel like telling you my entire life history of last Saturday when I drove upstate for the day. Let it suffice to say I was in the neighborhood. And also, I was not looking for any kind of drugs.

Marty:

Back to dogshit.

Jack:

So Freddy Gaye tells me something that really impresses me.
(Waits for Marty to respond.)

Marty:

What does he tell you?

Jack:

He tells me the dudes in prison have got a system to clean you out and get you healthy.

Marty:

Dogshit.

Jack:

Right. A little dried dogshit once a day.

Marty:

Oh, man...

Jack:

Just listen. So look, they've got an article in their newspaper and everything. Freddy says it's a big success. Doctors are showing up at Attica and research is starting and the whole thing. It's even in the Bible.

Marty:

It's in the Bible.

Jack:

It's in the Old Testament somewhere. You won't find it in these modern Bibles. They took it out when they translated it. They did that a lot, you know. Took out anything they didn't like.

Marty:

So what do you do, eat a little dogshit every day?

Jack:

A teaspoon every day. I been on it three days. Marcia too.

Marty:

Are you feeding my sister dogshit, Jack?

Jack:

I'm not feeding it to her. She took it.

Marty:

You crazy fucker. She's been eating dogshit? No wonder she's sick.

Jack:

Listen to the theory of how this thing works.

Marty:

Jack, you can't convert me to dogshit.

Jack:

I'm not trying to convert you. I want you to understand. Look, you ever fast? I mean not eat for a while?

Marty:

No.

Jack:

Well, I did. And the thing behind fasting is that when you fast all the poisons in your body come out, and you get cleaned up. But first, you feel a little sick. You can get sick as hell. All that DDT comes out. And that's what makes you feel so good. Your body rises up against the poison and fights back. It's like exercise. When you exercise, you make the muscles think they got to be strong, because this guy is going to try to lift something heavy pretty soon, and we got to be ready. And they get stronger to be ready. And in fasting, the body gets stronger to throw out the poison. It's automatic. It's the natural response the body makes. So. Got all that?

Marty:

Yes.

Jack:

So you can see where this leads.

Marty:

To dogshit.

Jack:

Right. What is more poisonous than dogshit? More awful, stinking, scummy, horrible than dogshit! It's the perfect substance. It won't kill you, but it forces you to put up a hell of a fight, so you get strong!

Marty:

Well, I would fight if somebody was trying to feed me dogshit.

Jack:

Look, nobody's asking you to believe it. Just don't tell anyone. And you might try a little courtesy. I realize I'm eating dogshit. I naturally feel a little weird about it.

Marty:

I'm sorry if I offended your sensitive dogshit feelings.

Jack:

All right, take your shots. If I'm tough enough to eat dogshit, I'm tough enough.

Marty:

How does it taste?

Jack:

Can't taste it. I put it in milk shakes.

Marty:

Jack...

Jack:

Athletes do that. With additives and stuff. It don't hurt anything.

Marty:

I can see where it wouldn't hurt the dogshit, but it seems like it would really fuck up the ice cream. That's obviously why Marcia's sick. Has that occurred to you?

Jack:

I told you that's expected. For instance, I have a fever.

Marty:

(Feels Jack's brow.)

Christ, you could fry an egg.

Jack:

(He gets up and checks the dogshit pan on the stove. Retreats, gasping. Paces intently. When he speaks, he has gotten slightly excited.)

But look, Marty, you haven't considered the theory! I mean the theory is absofuckinglutely well-accepted by modern science.

Marty:

Absofuckinglutely?

Jack:

Absofuckinglutely. What's a vaccine? It's germs! They shoot you up with germs, and you have to get stronger because you have to fight them off.

Marty:

That's medicine. Dogshit is not medicine.

Jack:

You ever heard of herbal remedies? Ancient wisdom, Marty! Modern medicine is just getting into what was known by every man on the street in the old days.

(Hangs head.)
I do feel shitty though.

Marty:

(With sympathy:)
Maybe you should put the dogshit on hold for a while. And, listen, my sweet sister...

Jack:

Nobody made Marcia do this. This was her choice.

Marty:

Yeah, but she loves you, Jack, and so she'll do it for you. She wants to please you. But maybe the dogshit remedy is too hard for women. I mean it might work on tough bastards like they got at Attica, but Marcia maybe is too delicate.

Jack:

I already cut her off.

Marty:

You did? Because I was worried about her. Because I love her. And I was thinking maybe she should see a doctor.

Jack:

She's better. She doesn't have a fever any more. She only had one dose.

Marty:

(Beat. Smiles.)
You know, we were ignorant when we were growing up. We didn't know you could mix dogshit with ice cream for a refreshing and healthy beverage.

Jack:

I did. I had dogshit for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. I got a fever...
(Hangs his head.)

Marty:

(Marty hesitates, then decides against giving advice.)
So how's life other than the dogshit part? You looking for a job?

Jack:

I been down to employment. I got some day work. Painting apartments. Starts Monday.

Marty:

That's good.
(Beat.)
How's it going with Marcia?

Jack:

She's sick, man...

Marty:

No, I mean, how's it going, you know, between you?

Jack:

Between us?

Marty:

Yeah. How are you getting along? It's okay if it's none of my business.

Jack:

Marcia say we were not getting along?

Marty:

She mentioned there was some strain. So I thought, what the hell, I'm married, I know what that is. Let me go see does Jack have something on his mind.

Jack:

Your mother ask you to find out?

Marty:

No. Absolutely not. Marcia didn't tell this to Mother.

Jack:

Marcia ask you to come?

Marty:

I thought this up all on my own.

Jack:

So that's why you're here. I wondered.

Marty:

Well, that's it. And if you're thinking he's here just for Marcia, that's not true. I'm here because you're my pal.

Jack:

She wants a kid.

Marty:

Ah...

Jack:

Yep.

Marty:

And you don't want a kid.

Jack:

No, I do not. Eventually, sure. But you have to be very ready to have a kid. It's the easiest thing to screw a kid up.

Marty:

You guys aren't ready?

Jack:

Marcia's ready, that I don't dispute. She is ready with her loving heart to love a child, and it's a crying shame she's got me obstructing her. But that's the situation. I mean what if we had a kid, and I was pissed at him all the time because I was too selfish. Or I was ashamed of myself because I wasn't a good example. Think what that would do to the kid. So now you're thinking about me and my old man. Well, so am I. So I told her I would rather not have a kid, just not even be married, than put a human being through that.

Marty:

She heard that part about being married, Jack, and it broke her heart.

Jack:

She said that?

Marty:

She did. She said you threw a tomato at her.

Jack:

She said I threw a tomato at her! I did not! I threw a tomato at the wall.

Marty:

She thought you threw it at her.

Jack:

She tell your mother I threw a tomato at her?

Marty:

No, she told me.

Jack:

I would never throw a tomato at Marcia. But she was close by. The truth is—I'm admitting it to you—I knew that tomato would scare her. I suppose you think I'm a crap to do that to poor Marcia. Well, I am. I'm a crap. And you know what? I knew that little comment about being married that I threw in sideways—I knew that would break her heart. So I admit it. What a crap. And I should have a kid? I should have a kid and throw tomatoes at him? That's what she can't see. She has no understanding of my deep fears. But I still love her. I love her. Which is the great main important thing. People say, oh, if that person would only love me, and I think, what crap. The main thing is, not does that person love you, but do you love that person? Because that's the whole thing about life, to love someone else, and it's a fight—to love someone instead of hate them, which is more natural. And I love Marcia. And I'm fighting off my hatred, fighting it off!

Marty:

I'm sure she appreciates that.

Jack:

She should.

Marty:

You should tell her that. Not that you don't hate her, but...

Jack:

That I love her? I told her. She knows that.

Marty:

Yeah, but when did you last tell her? I'll give you some advice. Married rule number one: tell your wife you love her every day. They can't remember it for more than a day.

Jack:

That's good advice.

Marty:

All right, now I'm being so free with advice, I'm brave. Advice number two: I think you would make a fine father. Superb and excellent. For what it's worth.

Jack:

Thanks.

Marty:

For what it's worth.

Jack:

Okay.

Marty:

And just think, Jack, if you had a kid... How proud he'd be! If he got into drugs you could educate him out of that first hand. You dealt, you've done every drug, you know the evil drugs do! You've even done dogshit! Your kid would say, wow! And he'd go to school, and the other kids'd be saying, my dad's done this and my dad's done that, and your kid would say, yeah, well my dad's done dogshit! And they'd all say, wow, your dad must really be FUCKED!

(Marty reaches forward and puts his hands on Jack's lowered head while he laughs.)

Look, I got to go.

(Rises.)

Tell Marcia her sweet brother came by.

(Marty crosses to the side door. Jack rises and follows.)

Jack:

Thanks for stopping by. Maybe I'll feel better next time.

(Beat.)

Say, did you want a beer or something? I don't have any anyway.

Marty:

Thanks, I won't have one then.
(He opens the door.)

Jack:

How about a milk shake?

Marty:

(Marty points sternly at Jack.)
Don't ever do that to me. Take care of yourself, stupid. Take care of your wife.
You want one more piece of advice?

Jack:

What?

Marty:

Stop eating dogshit. I've never given anybody that advice before, but I think it's good advice.
(Smiles, touches Jack's shoulder.)
So long.

Jack:

So long.

(Marty leaves. Jack closes the door, crosses to the stove, where again he checks the pan. After replacing the lid, he turns his back to the cupboard and slowly slides down to a sitting position. Feels his forehead. Sighs. Curtain.)

SCENE TWO

(Jack is leaning against the counter, arms folded, head lowered on his chest, waiting for his toast to pop up from the toaster. Now and throughout the rest of the play, he is wearing a paint-splattered T-shirt. The apartment is considerably more disheveled. Clothes and papers litter the floor, dishes in the sink. Along the counter top there are several jars in a row, each partly filled with a dark substance. A knock at the side door. Jack does not move. Again a knock.)

Marty:

(From behind the door.)
Jack! It's Marty!

(Jack pushes away from the counter, unfolding his arms and raising his head, and slouches toward the door. Waits.)

Marty:

(Knocks again.)
Jack?

(Jack opens the door and Marty enters.)

Marty:
Hey, you're here.

Jack:
(Languidly pretending amazement as he feels his chest.)
You're right!

Marty:
How can you stand it in here?
(Waves arms through air.)

Jack:
I don't smell anything.

Marty:
No? Then me neither.
(Beat.)
I smell toast.

Jack:
Shit.
(Rushes across the room to the toaster and pops up a slice of toast. Begins to butter it.)
Want a piece of cinnamon toast?

Marty:
Okay.

(Marty looks around the apartment, picks a magazine up from the floor, glances at the cover, puts it on the end table. A beat. He picks up the magazine and tosses it back onto the floor. Jack puts another piece of bread in the toaster, sprinkles the first piece with cinnamon from a jar, slumps against the counter as before. Marty watches.)

Marty:
How's the fever?

Jack:
Fever's good.

Marty:
You should give it up. Marcia's going back to work.

Jack:

She feels better?

Marty:

She's fine. She went to work today.

Jack:

She went to work?

Marty:

Yeah. She thought she should go back to work.

Jack:

So she's feeling all right?

(The toast pops up and he butters it, then sprinkles it.)

Marty:

Yeah.

Jack:

(He places the two pieces of toast on a small plate and brings them over to Marty, who is standing by the chairs. Marty takes one. Jack takes the other, puts the plate on the end table.)

Sit down.

(Waves at the plush chair.)

Marty:

Thanks.

(Sees Jack begin to take hard chair.)

No man, you sit here. This is the comfortable chair. I always get this chair. You're sick.

Jack:

(Sits in the hard chair.)

I don't like that chair. That chair's a stranger to me. How's the toast?

Marty:

Great.

(Sits. Examines his toast.)

That was cinnamon you sprinkled on the toast, right?

Jack:

Half and half...

Marty:

C'mon...

Jack:

Cinnamon and sugar. What? You think I would slip you some dogshit?

(Grins.)

Marty:

Well, I'm going to trust you. All right?

(He positions the toast near his mouth. Jack watches without speaking.)

Marty:

Hey, I'm trusting you, all right?

Jack:

It doesn't seem like it.

Marty:

I will, goddamn it, when you tell me it's all right.

Jack:

Then it wouldn't be trust. Where's the trust if you require promises?

Marty:

(Lowers the toast.)

That's a very cold-blooded view of trust. You say to your friend, there may or may not be dogshit on the toast I gave you. Trust me and take a bite.

Jack:

I said there was no dogshit on it.

Marty:

But you grinned.

Jack:

That's where the trust comes in. If there's no grin, what's the use of trust?

Marty:

That's not a proper thing, Jack. Something's wrong with that.

Jack:

Eat your toast, Marty. There's no dogshit on it.

Marty:

All right, now, see—there may be dogshit on this toast, but I'm going to trust you. You have given me your assurance and I trust you.

(Takes a bite, spits it into his hand.)

Jesus!

Jack:

No!

(Leans forward to examine the toast.)

Marty:

Just kidding.

(Puts the bite back into his mouth.)

Jack:

Damn, I thought I got my jars mixed up. You want something to drink with that?

Marty:

Naw...unless you got some cat piss in the fridge.

Jack:

So. I'm asking right out. Marcia send me any messages?

Marty:

Not really. But she talks about you.

Jack:

What does she say?

Marty:

Stuff like, I love Jack but he eats dogshit.

Jack:

That's not why she left.

Marty:

No?

Jack:

No, there's always just one reason people do something, and without that reason they wouldn't do it. The rest of the reasons just come along for the ride.

Marty:

So what's the reason she left?

Jack:

Love lost the fight. That's the bottom line. She doesn't love me.

Marty:

You poor bastard, with your brains full of dogshit. Pardon me but that pisses me off.

Jack:

So I'm the source of all the unhappiness?

Marty:

Ah, Jack. I guess I think so.

Jack:

Well, I've heard that before. And you know what I say? I say everybody I ever met was unhappy before I got to them. And they're eating dogshit too, only they've eaten so much dogshit they can't taste it any more.

Marty:

Jack, don't be hard. I take back my hard words.

Jack:

Oh. Be soft. Okay.

Marty:

Yes, be soft you dumb motherfucker. Don't be this hardass who has to hurt people before he gets hurt. Who has to throw out shiteating grins so people won't trust him, and then he gets to hang back and say, see you don't trust me. Life has got enough real problems without your friends making up fake ones.

Jack:

(Gets up and paces, working his arms.)

Well, there it is, it's me again. Who would have thought it? Damn, it's just you again, Jack. You just don't understand, and why aren't you nice like everybody else? Be nice, be nice, and all this niceness makes you insane because it's all lies. It gets all over you! It sticks to you! You know it's bullshit, but it sticks, way down in your pores. Because, Marty, it's not me. That's one thing I do know. It ain't just Jack. It's everybody, it's this phony cheap greedy slick tricky life we all going! Just look around you for one instant. It makes you cringe the way this world is! Money is the perfect example. I could cry about this if I'm not careful. You go to your friends' houses, you play with their kids, you drink a beer, but does anyone ask you if you need money? Don't smile, don't laugh! Think about this! If people are so nice, so human and nice and thoughtful— except for Jack—where's the fucking money! What if I'm broke, which I often am! Nobody wants to know that. If everybody's so nice, we should have money taped all over us. Take what you need, friend. But instead we tuck it away in a little wallet and sit on it. And we're all friends? I can hardly stand to look at people sometimes because I know we're all keeping off the subject of money. I think Karl Marx saw just this thing about money, and it drove him crazy. That's what communism is—share the money. And we almost had a nuclear war about it, which shows you how fucking powerful this thing is. Think how awful it is to have to go around repressing something that huge, like we all have giant tumors on our necks that we have to ignore. I consider it a virtue that I don't ignore it. So, anyway, what this long speech leads to...

Marty:

(Smiling.)

No, wait a minute. I'm thinking about this money thing. I have to agree with you. It's sort of like sex, which is the other big tumor, only it's worse than sex. With sex, at least there's a standard pathway to fulfillment. You just lay on the charm, you do the monkey dance, and presto! She opens her lap. There should be that with money. Like you say, hey, Reggie, my man, you're really growing on me. I'm warming to you, and so naturally, in all honesty, the next thing that comes up to my mind, is do you have a little money for me?

(Laughs. Jack frowns.)

Jack:

It's not that I want anybody's fucking money! We got on this subject because you

were saying I'm the cause of all the unhappiness. Well, it might be me, but it's everybody else too. This is a dishonest, cruel world, which my example of money proves.