

TRAILER TRASH

A One-Act Play

by

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CHARACTERS

ROXANNE: 35 years old. Divorced five times, she struggles to pay her bills and hates her job of plopping veggies into little bowls at the cafeteria.

DORIS: 68 years old. A woman of high morals who's optimistic and happy even though she lives in a school bus.

HENRY SIKES: In his 40's. A wannabe ladies' man and manager of the 'Pleasant Acres Mobile Home Park'.

FRAN: In her 80's. Doris' friend who has a hard time hearing and seeing.

SETTING

All the scenes take place in Roxanne's mobile home in a small West Texas town.

Scene 1

SETTING:

The living room and kitchen area of ROXANNE'S mobile home in a small West Texas town. It's cluttered with clothes, beer cans, trash, etc. It appears that nothing has been put in its proper place for months. There's a ragged couch, scratched coffee table and a mismatched chair. In the kitchen there's a dirty refrigerator, stove and a small kitchen table.

AT RISE:

A hot summer evening in June. ROXANNE lies on the couch with her feet propped up. She's thirty-five years old, wears a green uniform and has a net around her hair. A persistent knock comes from the front door.

ROXANNE

It's open! (Pause) It's open!

(Picks up a beer can from the floor and
throws it at the door)

I SAID IT'S OPEN!

DORIS

(In her usual happy self, DORIS enters.
She's in her late 60's, plump, has gray
hair and wears a dress with tennis shoes.)

Did you say come in?

(ROXANNE covers her head with a pillow
and moans)

I found your note.

(Waves the note, then reads dryly)

Come over. Exclamation point. Exclamation point. Exclamation point.

ROXANNE

(Throws the pillow down and sits up)

Where have you been?

DORIS

(Ignores her)
Roxanne, look at this mess!
 (Finds a laundry basket and picks up clothes)

ROXANNE

Doris, don't you start on me!

DORIS

Well, someone needs to tell you this...

ROXANNE

Do we have to go through this *every time* you come over?

(Imitating)
"Roxanne, you're a slob! Roxanne, you're a pig! Roxanne, normal people don't live like this! Don't you care?" Well, here's my answer for you, Doris. No! I don't care! I like living this way! I like being a pig!

DORIS

And I'll never understand why.

ROXANNE

And you don't have to understand why because you don't live here!

DORIS

May I make a suggestion?

ROXANNE

No.

DORIS

At least you could respect your neighbors by cleaning up your yard. You know, Roxanne, it looks like a garbage truck came by and unloaded in your yard.

ROXANNE

Leave me alone.

DORIS

In fact, Sunday afternoon we could get started.

ROXANNE

We?

DORIS

I don't mind helping. And Fran's husband said he'd haul off all that junk outside.

ROXANNE

What? And throw away my stained recliner? But the neighborhood cats like to sleep there. And that old fridge is good for storing my tools. Not that I ever use them. And that toilet, well, you never know when you might need a spare one. And I could always plant some flowers in it, ya think?

DORIS

Plant flowers in the toilet?

ROXANNE

Sure, why not?

DORIS

I'd be embarrassed.

ROXANNE

(Laughs)

Me? What about *you*?

DORIS

At least my yard is clean.

ROXANNE

Who notices the yard with that...that thing out there you call a home!

DORIS

Roxanne, you're not being very nice.

ROXANNE

Oh, here we go! I'm not nice. I'm rude. My house is filthy. My yard's a dump ground. I drink too much. I cuss too much. 'Cept when you're around cause you get mad which gets on my nerves, so I try not to, but it still slips out. Let's see, what else? Oh...And I've been married...how many times? (Counts with her fingers as she calls out the names) Ray, Carl, Bobby, Karl, Keith...FIVE! Five times! So, I'd say I fit the profile!

DORIS

What profile?

ROXANNE

Trailer trash! Trailer trash deluxe! That's me!

DORIS

I don't think that's something to brag about.

ROXANNE

Doesn't bother me.

(Glaring at DORIS)

But you know what does bother me?

DORIS

(Ignoring her as she continues to pick up clothes)

There's just no excuse to be nasty like this.

ROXANNE

Yeah, yeah, yeah...

DORIS

I keep my home clean.

ROXANNE

(Laughing and pointing outside)

Please! That's not a home!

DORIS

Yes it is.

ROXANNE

News flash, Doris! A school bus is not a home!

DORIS

It is to me.

ROXANNE

It's a bus, Doris! A bus!

DORIS

I have that nice little kitchen with all my rooster decorations. And in the back is my little cot where I sleep. Yes, my bathtub may be an old cattle trough, but I don't mind. And I have plenty of privacy since Fran's husband boarded up all those windows. And at least I keep my home clean.

ROXANNE

So you have a sparkling clean bus to live in. Whop-tee-do!

DORIS

But still, there are days when I walk outside and forget my trailer's gone. Everything else is the same.

ROXANNE

Unfortunately.

DORIS

(Smiling)
Same little road...

ROXANNE

Same little *dirt* road.

DORIS

Same little playground equipment...

ROXANNE

Rusty shit no one plays on.

DORIS

Same little lots with their little fences...

ROXANNE

Stuffed full of weeds! And I'll never understand why they call it 'Pleasant Acres Mobile Home Park'. There's nothing pleasant about this place!

DORIS

Then all of a sudden it hits me. I see a rerun of all my belongings going up in smoke. Gone. And with no insurance, I was homeless. I'm just thankful that Fran's husband offered to bring me that abandoned school bus.

ROXANNE

I remember, Doris. That night before eating our leftovers you thanked the good Lord a good fifty times before saying A-men. My food was ice cold!

DORIS

And it all turned out just fine. The Salvation Army donated a cot, pillows, blankets, dishes, utensils... And you're the one who gave me that porta potty.

ROXANNE

Cause I got tired of seeing you squat behind that mesquite tree!

(Laughs)

Oh, what a sight!

DORIS

Roxanne, that's not very nice.

ROXANNE

Well, seeing your big old butt wasn't very nice, either!

DORIS

(Removing a blouse from the faucet)

Roxanne, how is it that you manage to litter your home with all these dirty clothes?

ROXANNE

Because I undress wherever I feel like it, Doris! In the bedroom, in the bathroom, in the living room...and yes, sometimes in the kitchen, too!

DORIS

(Picks up a pair of panties from the kitchen table)

I see that. You know, Roxanne, you could try putting your clothes in the hamper. That way you wouldn't have to walk on them, or...or eat on them. And Roxanne, honey, you never know who might drop by.

ROXANNE

Yes I do! It's either you or Henry Sikes, the manager of this stupid, weed-invested trailer park!

DORIS

(Waving the panties)

Well, what would Henry Sikes think?

ROXANNE

(Snatches them from her hand)

He'd probably think they were cute! Cuter than your big ole grandma panties!

DORIS

Oh, I meant to ask, do you want to go to church with me on Sunday?

ROXANNE

No.

DORIS

Roxanne, you complain about these dirt roads...well, you should concentrate on going to that city where the streets are made of gold.

ROXANNE

Stop it, Doris!

(DORIS sets the laundry basket down and begins collecting beer cans. When her hands are full she lifts her dress up to hold the cans as she searches for more.)

DORIS

Roxanne, the floor is not a trashcan.

ROXANNE

Leave me alone!

(Propping her feet up on the coffee table)

Oh, my feet...

DORIS

Hard day at the cafeteria?

ROXANNE

Why do you always ask me that same question?

(Mimics her)

Hard day at the cafeteria?

DORIS

What else do you want me to say?

ROXANNE

How about, "I feel sorry for you, Roxanne, you poor thing! You work so hard and have nothing to show for it!"

DORIS

I'm sorry.

ROXANNE

Oh, my feet! Look at them, Doris. Look at my ankles. They're swollen.

DORIS

(Goes to her feet, bends over and lightly touches them)

They stink.

ROXANNE

Well, you stink, Doris! What do you expect? All crunched up in shoes all day! I tell you what, I'm sick to death of serving little bowls of mashed potatoes and peas to people who can't make up their minds! Sometimes I want to get a spoonful of that creamy white glob and throw it in their faces! Strangers pointing and asking stupid questions all day. "What's that? And that? Are those potatoes real or instant?" And this is a killer! As if we keep food hidden in the kitchen! "Do you have any honey glazed carrots?" I just wanna say, "Do you see any freakin' honey glazed carrots?" But I smile and shake my head and say, "Sorry, Ma'am, not today." Oh! I hate my job! I hate it!

DORIS

I'm sorry.

(She finds a plastic sack for the cans and continues to search as if she were on an Easter egg hunt)

Remember when you used to drink all those diet sodas? And I said, "Roxanne, all those diet sodas aren't good for you."

ROXANNE

I gave them up, didn't I?

DORIS

(Drops a beer can into the sack)

Yes, you gave them up all right.

ROXANNE

And now you wish you'd kept your mouth shut, don't you? Because if you had, maybe I'd still be drinking those diet sodas!

DORIS

(Crushes and empty beer can in her hand)

Believe me, if you started eating ten packs of candy cigarettes a day, I wouldn't say a thing!

ROXANNE

Oh, yes you would! Because then you'd be griping about how my teeth were rotting away because of all the sugar!

DORIS

Well, that's true. Too much sugar...

ROXANNE

Doris, go away! Go home!

DORIS

Too much of anything is bad for you.

ROXANNE

Except money!

DORIS

No, that could be bad, too.

ROXANNE

Oh, please!

DORIS

Because then you might get greedy and start doing dumb things like cheating on your taxes and then you'd go to prison!

(ROXANNE screams into a pillow)

Too much of anything...

(Picks up another beer can)

I worry about you, Roxanne.

ROXANNE

Worry about yourself!

(Stands, removes the hair net, then puts her back to DORIS)

Unzip me.

DORIS

Are you going to undress in here? Because I just picked up all your clothes.

ROXANNE

Would you just unzip me?!

(DORIS unzips her dress. ROXANNE stomps off, then returns wearing a robe)

DORIS

(Holds up a stack of letters)

Junk mail?

ROXANNE

No, bills, but you can trash them.

DORIS

Why? Don't you need to pay them?

ROXANNE

Yes, I need to pay them. But they got lost in the mail.

DORIS

Roxanne, I don't think that would be right.

ROXANNE

Well, I don't think it'd be right to send them a hot check, either! Oh, I wish I'd win the lottery. Then life would be great!

DORIS

A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions. Luke 12:15.

ROXANNE

Stop that! Don't preach at me!

DORIS

Material things are not important.

ROXANNE

Wait! Wait! Let me finish this!

(Sweetly)

It's love, it's people, it's doing for others as we walk the righteous path. And someday, we shall all die and go to heaven.

DORIS

Well, I'm afraid we won't *all* go to heaven. Unless of course you turn from your wicked ways. Like this...

(She takes a few steps in one direction, then turns and goes the other way)

ROXANNE

Stop doing that! Do you hear me?

(Points to the door)

Why don't you just walk that direction! All the way to that stupid bus you call a home!

DORIS

Oh, Roxanne, sometimes I want to give up on you.

ROXANNE

Well, you should. I'm a lost cause.

DORIS

No, I don't believe that. I'll never give up on you. I love you, Roxanne.

ROXANNE

Doris, stop it!

DORIS

(Goes to the refrigerator and looks inside)

Any leftovers today?

ROXANNE

Right in front of your eyes! You know, you never did tell me where you were today.

DORIS

(Ignoring her, she takes a white sack from the fridge)

Yum! Fried chicken.

ROXANNE

So, where were you, Doris? Huh? Where were you?

DORIS

At the grocery store.

ROXANNE

And *who* drove you to the store?

DORIS

(Softly)

Fran.

ROXANNE

Doris, where are your brains?!

DORIS

I'm going to set the table for us.

ROXANNE

(Goes to her and grabs the sack away)

Doris! Why didn't you call me at work and tell me you needed to go to the store? I could've taken you when I got off work!

DORIS

Because I didn't want to bother you.

ROXANNE

Why not? You do it all the time!

DORIS

Listen, Fran made a special trip out here just to see if I needed a ride to town. What was I supposed to say?

ROXANNE

No! Doris, Fran Romero drives like a maniac! Her hands shake, her head shakes and her glasses are two inches thick! Over the curbs...oops didn't see that! Red light...oops, was that really red? Stop sign?...Oops! Did that mean I actually had to stop?

DORIS

Well, you know I can't drive. I have to depend on others to take me places. You're not always around. Taxi's cost money. And Fran Romero...well, she's a free ride.

ROXANNE

(Drops the sack on the kitchen table)

She's gonna give you a free ride to the grave!

(ROXANNE takes a beer from the fridge.

DORIS frowns at her, then bows her head to pray before eating. Ignoring the fact that she's praying):

I know, I know, I'm killing my brain cells. But why should I care? All I do is serve little bowls of peas! And I don't need many brain cells for that!

DORIS

A-men.

(ROXANNE sits down at the table and glares at her)

If you ever decide to go to college, you may need a few brain cells.

ROXANNE

(Grabs her beer and walks off)

It's too late for that.

DORIS

It's never too late to better yourself.

ROXANNE

Then why don't you take Driver's Education?

DORIS

What?

ROXANNE

You heard me!

DORIS

Because it's too...

ROXANNE

Late!

DORIS

Let's talk about something happy.

ROXANNE

Happy? Are you serious? This has been a terrible day!

DORIS

Well, I've had a happy day.

ROXANNE

Well, believe me, that's all about to change. Especially when you hear what I have to say.

DORIS

What?

ROXANNE

Remember? My note?

DORIS

Oh yeah. Exclamation point. Exclamation point. Exclamation point.

ROXANNE

Let's see... Do you want to hear the good news or the bad news first? Oh, wait! There is no good news! Only bad news!

DORIS

What's it about?

ROXANNE

You.

DORIS

Me?

ROXANNE

And I wish I wasn't the one who had to tell you, but Henry Sikes caught me coming home from work and dumped the dirty work on me. But, on the other hand, maybe I should be happy to tell you. Yes, I should be thrilled!

DORIS

What is it, Roxanne?

ROXANNE

Okay, here it is. You have to find a new place to live.

DORIS

(Confused)

But I have a place to live to live.

ROXANNE

(Pointing outside)
Doris, that's not a place!

DORIS

Yes it is.

ROXANNE

No it's not! An old school bus with missing seats and boarded up windows is not a home!

DORIS

But it's *my* home.

ROXANNE

I'm sorry, Doris, but Henry Sikes wants you out. 0-U-T!

DORIS

He can't force me to leave.

ROXANNE

Look, Henry was under the impression that your school bus was only temporary. He expected you to exchange it for a mobile home.

DORIS

I would if I could.

ROXANNE

Really, Doris, couldn't you? I've heard how you older folks are. You live like poor people, then when they die, TA-DA! Relatives discover they've inherited thousands of dollars.

DORIS

Roxanne, I assure you I do not have thousands of dollars. Right now I have exactly three hundred, twenty-seven dollars and fifty-two cents. So, you tell me, how am I supposed to exchange my bus for a trailer? Push it downtown and ask for a trade in?

ROXANNE

I don't know, but the manager of this tumbleweed haven said you have one week to leave. And if you're not gone after a week, he's gonna have the City haul your bus away.

DORIS

He can't do that. I still pay lot rent.

ROXANNE

Yes, he can. Everyone's been complaining and he's tired of dealing with it. I even heard they had a petition going around to force the issue. Of course, I wouldn't have signed it. I don't care one way or the other about it.

DORIS

A petition? But I never bother anyone.

ROXANNE

No, no one...except me!

DORIS

I always smile and wave and act friendly.
(She demonstrates)

ROXANNE

Sorry, Doris. But you have to leave. You need to call someone to come get you.

DORIS

But I don't have anyone to call.

ROXANNE

Well, you better think of something.

DORIS

(Smiles)

Oh, I'm not worried. Everything will work out.

ROXANNE

Doris, look at me! The City is hauling your bus away next week! They're hauling you away! You've got to do something! You've got to make plans!

(PAUSE)

And don't be looking at me!

DORIS

(Looks down)

I wasn't looking at you.

ROXANNE

Well, ya better look somewhere, then!

(PAUSE)

DORIS

(Looks heavenward)

He'll take care of me.

ROXANNE

Well good! Now I don't have to worry!

DORIS

(Moves toward the door)

You know, Roxanne, life's never fair. But all this doesn't matter. It's the end that counts. Then someday, ah, someday, I'll have a big mansion in the sky.

(Smiles)

ROXANNE

Well, good! Then I'll come for a visit! A very *long* visit!

BLACKOUT

End of Scene 1

Scene 2

AT RISE:

One week later. There's a light knock on the door. After a moment, HENRY SIKES opens the door, peeks inside and enters. HENRY, in his forties, thinks he's a lady's man, however, he's the last thing any lady would want. He stumbles across a pile of dirty clothes, then picks up ROXANNE'S bra and studies it. He holds it up to his chest as if to see if it would fit. As he is playing with her bra, it somehow gets twisted around his arms. After a moment, ROXANNE enters the room with a large towel wrapped around her.

ROXANNE

(Startled)

Henry Sikes! What do you think you're doing?!

HENRY

(As he jumps, he tries to let go of the bra, but it's too tangled around his arms)

You...you...you scared me!

ROXANNE

I scared *you*?!

HENRY

I knocked!

ROXANNE

And you heard me say come in?!

HENRY

Well, no...

ROXANNE

Come on in, Henry! I'm back here! In the bathtub!

(Sweetly)

Sure, that's right, just come on in! Don't mind me. You can sit on the pot and talk to me while I bathe. Is that all right with you?

(HENRY nods)

ROXANNE (cont.)

Oh, but would you mind turning your head a little to the side...SINCE I'M COMPLETELY NAKED!

HENRY

(Still struggling with the bra)

I was gonna leave a note.

ROXANNE

ON MY BRA?

(Fights to get it untangled from his arms)

HENRY

(Clearing his throat and composing himself)

I'm here about the lot rent.

ROXANNE

(Goes to the refrigerator for a beer)

I said it was coming!

HENRY

You said that last week.

ROXANNE

Look, Henry, I'm broke. Can't you give me another week? Oh, why do I even bother? You have no heart!

HENRY

That's not true.

ROXANNE

Yes it is! Because if you had a heart, you wouldn't be throwing Doris out on the streets today! Tell me, Henry, doesn't that bother you in the least? To know someone will be homeless because of you?

HENRY

Doris said she could stay here.

ROXANNE

She said *what*?

HENRY

She said she was staying here with you. Said you wouldn't mind.

ROXANNE

That Doris...why, she's a big fat liar!

HENRY

Well, I find that hard to believe.

ROXANNE

There's absolutely no way I'd let Miss-Goody-Two-Shoes stay here!

HENRY

Why not?

ROXANNE

Why not? Because I can't stand her, that's why not! Preaching at me, ordering me around, offering me unsolicited advice! She's not a nice person!

HENRY

I don't quite see it that way, but you know her better than I do.

ROXANNE

And Doris is so happy all the time! Happy, happy, happy! Why...it makes me mad!

HENRY

It sounds like you're the one with the problem, not Doris.

ROXANNE

Don't you twist things around on me, Henry Sikes!

HENRY

Well, I hope she finds a place.

ROXANNE

She can just go to one of those homeless shelters.

HENRY

I hear they're full.

ROXANNE

Not my problem.

HENRY

Speaking of problems...the lot rent was due five days ago.

ROXANNE

I know, Henry, I know. Can't you just give me another week? Please? I had to go to the dentist. I had to pay the electric. I had to make a car payment.

HENRY

It's not paid for?

ROXANNE

Not that it's any of *your* business, but no.

HENRY

But that's an '88 Camaro out there.

ROXANNE

And I'm making payments. Is that okay with *you*?

HENRY

I see. Well, Roxanne, I'm just the manager of this trailer park. When the owner comes by to look at the books, he doesn't like to hear excuses.

ROXANNE

Come on, Henry. I'm just asking for another week. Please?

HENRY

Look, I'm an understanding man, but it's my job to collect the lot rent on time. I understand you're doing the best you can. In fact, I've always admired you, Roxanne. You're a beautiful lady.

ROXANNE

Oh really?

HENRY

You may not know this, but I've always had a little bit of a crush on you. I've often thought how nice it'd be to just hold you.

ROXANNE

You want to hold me?

HENRY

Yes. Comfort you, love you...whatever you need.

ROXANNE

Oh, whatever I need?

HENRY

I mean, I have my needs, too. If you know what I mean.

ROXANNE

(Gives him a fake smile)

Are you saying...?

HENRY

(Smiles)

A favor for a favor?

ROXANNE

So, if I give you a present, you'll let me have another week?

HENRY

A present... I like the way you put that.

ROXANNE

So, what could I give you?

HENRY

Oh, I think you know...

(He picks a piece of lint from her towel)

ROXANNE

A present, huh?

(Steps away from him)

How about a beer? No? My half-eaten sack of candy? No?

HENRY

(Laughs)

Oh Roxanne, you're such a tease.

ROXANNE

My ceramic cat? No? My couch? No? My television? No? Well, I just don't know what!

HENRY

(Moves in and lightly touches her towel)

What color would you call this? Peach or apricot?

ROXANNE

Orange!

HENRY

Orange...

ROXANNE

What are you saying, Henry?

HENRY

I'm just saying that I like this towel.

ROXANNE

Henry! You want my towel?

(He smiles at her)

The towel that's covering my *naked* body? And if I give you this towel, you'll give me another week to pay my lot rent?

HENRY

Sounds like a deal to me.

ROXANNE

But what about your wife?

HENRY

My wife?

ROXANNE

Yes! Mrs. Sikes! Remember her? You don't think she'd mind?

HENRY

(Nervously)

No, I don't think...

ROXANNE

Well, maybe we should call her up!

HENRY

What?

(Humming a little song and carrying a suitcase in each hand, DORIS enters)

ROXANNE

SO WE CAN TELL HER WHAT A CHEATING PIECE OF SHIT YOU ARE!

DORIS

Roxanne!

HENRY

(Rushes to the door)

I want my money by tomorrow!

(Exits)

ROXANNE

(At the door)
Oh, you'll get your stinkin' money!
(To DORIS)
That is one dirty old man!

DORIS

Roxanne, I'm sure that's not true.

ROXANNE

Doris, he was playing with my bra!

DORIS

I told you to pick up your clothes.

ROXANNE

Doris, he wanted to...oh, never mind!

DORIS

(Dropping her luggage in the middle of the room)
Can I leave my bags here?

ROXANNE

NO!

DORIS

**"Share with God's people who need help. Bring strangers in need into your home."
 Romans 12:13**

ROXANNE

Stop that! You just stop that right now!
(Picks up her luggage and moves it to the door)

DORIS

Why are you in such a bad mood?

ROXANNE

I don't know, Doris. Maybe it's because Henry Sikes came over here demanding money! Then demanding...well, wanting...oh, just never mind! You wouldn't understand! And now I've got to figure out a way to pay my rent!

(Pause)

Uh...Doris, do you think I could borrow a hundred and fifty dollars?

DORIS

(Picking up ROXANNE'S clothes)

What for?

ROXANNE

My lot rent! I'm late.

DORIS

And you want to borrow a hundred and fifty from me?

ROXANNE

Oh, why am I asking you? You know, at this rate we'll be homeless together. Won't that be fun? Maybe we can have a slumber party on the streets and put curlers in each other's hair!

DORIS

I have a suggestion.

ROXANNE

What?

DORIS

Let me stay here and I'll pay the lot rent.

ROXANNE

What wonderful choices I have! Giving my body to Henry Sikes or living with you! Oh, what has happened to my life?

DORIS

If only you would listen to me. Roxanne, if you would come to church with me and join the Singles group, you might meet a nice man.

ROXANNE

Who says I want to meet a nice man?

DORIS

Do you really want to live alone for the rest of your life?

ROXANNE

Well actually, that sounds pretty good right now. HINT. HINT.

(DORIS takes out her Bible, sits on the couch and reads)

And *why* did you bring your luggage here?

DORIS

(Not looking up)

I had to pack.