

The Way Out

A full-length stage play

by

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SAMPLE

Contents

Cast of Characters.....	5
Setting	6
Scene 1	7
Scene 2	11
Scene 3	20
Scene 4	30
Scene 5	40
Scene 6	48
Scene 7	54
Scene 8	63
Scene 9	71
Scene 10	78
Scene 11	79

Cast of Characters

Bobby	47, entrepreneur
Allison	44, Bobby's adoptive sister
Hussein	52, businessman and jeweler of Afghani descent
Sue	64, Bobby's stakeholder
Poco	12, illegal Mexican alien
Squatter 1	
Squatter 2	
Squatter 3	
Squatter 4	
Squatter 5	

Setting

A vacant corner lot in Oakmont, Pennsylvania, on a Sunday in late November.

One-room basement container. A closed door downstage left is draped in a black curtain. A Batman insignia is affixed to it. A second closed door behind it leads to bathroom. Stage right is fitted up as an office with a computer and printer on a desk among orderly piles of papers. One window high up in right wall is heavily draped, but the curtains are pulled back. Upstage center a flight of steps rises to a hallway, with door to outside offstage right. To the left of the stairs is a freestanding coat stand with a coat and knapsack hanging from it. Behind is a buzzer and intercom to the front door and a sizeable wall mirror. To the right of the stairs is a covered waist-high clothing rack on wheels and a large trunk. Beyond is a ceiling-high sideboard. The room is filled with masses of wires and cords Tacked to the walls, pipes, a makeshift sink and outdated appliances fitted by an amateur. On a waist-high bookcase downstage right stands a steam iron. An ironing board leans up against wall next to it. The room doesn't look safe or hospitable.

Scene 1

Basement container. Allison sits at desk typing at computer, calls on cell phone.

Allison Hello, Gloria? Gloria McCorkle? This is Allison from Healthway Services. Allison. From Healthway Services. How are you today, Gloria? We would really appreciate your opinion on wellness living and how much you feel—Gloria? Gloria?

(disconnects) Thanks, Gloria, for a glorious beginning. Damn you.

(enters data into computer, makes call) Well, hi Gary. Gary Polowski?

I'm Allison from Healthway Services. How are you today, Gary?

We would really appreciate your opinion—What was that, Gary?

Get yourself a life. I said, get yourself a life. *(disconnects, enters data in*

computer, calls) Hello, Sally? Sally Creighton? May I speak to her

please? My business is with her. I will tell her when I speak to her.

(pause as Allison listens) You are an idiot, Ma'am.

Allison disconnects, enters data in computer. Figures gather outside, jabbering. Allison moves to window, watching.

Allison Oh, my God.

Allison takes pictures with cell phone, races up steps, exits. Commotion heard. Allison backs down steps. Squatter 1 enters.

Allison What are you doing? What do you want? You can't come down here. This is private. Stop. I said, you can't come down here. You're trespassing. This is my property. You have no right—Get out. Stop, I said.

Squatter 1 advances.

Allison *(putting chair between them)* This is break and entering.

Stay back. I said, go back. You're breaking the law. I'll report this.

(drops cell phone onto desk, grabs steam iron from shelf, moves behind desk)

You're threatening me. This is threatening me now. Don't come any closer. Stop. Move back. I'll do this. I will. I will defend myself. I don't care. Understand? I don't care. You are threatening me. I'll do this.

Squatter 1 advances, Allison holds up iron. Squatter 1 grabs cell phone, fiddles with it.

Allison Put that down. Put it down.

Squatter 1 (*tossing phone on desk*) You took pictures. You must ask.

Allison Not to prove you're fouling my property, I don't. That's a violation of Oakmont borough ordinances besides being unspeakably dirty.

Squatter 1 Cities are dirty.

Allison Our cities aren't dirty. Our cities are clean, clean, which is why you aren't allowed up there.

Squatter 1 Cities are dirty. You are here.

Allison That's completely different. I live here.

Squatter 1 We are here.

Allison You are not here. You are trespassing.

Squatter 1 You are trespassing.

Allison I am not trespassing.

Squatter 1 We are here.

Allison You are not here.

Squatter 1 To take pictures, you must ask.

Allison Did you ask if you could use my window well as a latrine?

Squatter 1 It is our right.

Allison It is not your right.

Squatter 1 We pay.

Allison For pissing in my window well you'd have to pay me. But that wouldn't even do it. Urinating in window wells is not allowed. Not in Oakmont, not in Pennsylvania, not in the whole country, no matter who you pay. And no one's allowed to live up there anyway. It's storage space. For boxes.

Squatter 1 (*touching computer keyboard*) You are here.

Allison (*raising iron*) Take your hands off that. Get your hands off. I'm telling you. Get back.

Allison slams iron down on desk. Squatter 1 jerks hands back.

Squatter 1 Yesterday.

Allison What about yesterday?

Squatter 1 You took pictures.

Allison So?

Squatter 1 Destroy them.

Allison Sorry.

Squatter 1 Destroy them, I said.

Allison Sorry, I said. They're gone.

Squatter 1 Gone?

Allison Streamed.

Squatter 1 Streamed?

Allison To the fire department, like the ones you thought you deleted just now. The chief wanted proof, the chief got proof. And not just today. And not just yesterday. You are on file.

Squatter 1 advances on her and puts his hand in his waistband.

Allison My god. No, god. No, god. Help. No.

Allison shoves iron at his chest to push him back, raises iron catching him on jaw as she turns to window and smashes window pane with iron. Squatter 1 falls back.

Allison (*up at window*) Mr. Hussein. Mr. Hussein. Help. Someone. Help. Please. Someone. Here. Mr. Hussein. Help. Help. (*facing him, brandishing iron, then falling back*) You're bleeding. Oh god. You're bleeding. That's blood.

Poco enters, hurries down steps carrying two-by-four. Squatter 1 turns, races past him, sucker-punches Poco. Poco slams him into clothing rack, which rolls to center stage.

Allison My window well is not a toilet. You cannot live in storage spaces. Our cities are clean. Clean. You are not here. You are not.

Squatter 1 exits. Poco exits wielding two-by-four.

Allison (*picking up phone, dialing*) Helen? May I speak to Leonard? He's not? Can you get him? When will he be back? I need that protection. Now. Yes, the vagrants. One of them threatened me. Just now. He was down here. Here. In my apartment. Can't they come now? Yes, very threatened. I can't. I don't have a car. I need it now. Please tell Leonard. You can? Thank you. Thank you. Good-bye. Helen, Helen. If he comes back sooner—Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Helen. Bye. (*hangs up*) Thank you. Thank you.