

RAW PROVOCATIVE HUMANE PLAYS

royalty-free plays from **The CRY HAVOC Company**

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OCCUPIED

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CHARACTERS

STEPHANIE, F. 30s

Quirky, attractive, on a mission

TELLER/REPRESENTATIVE/
SECURITY, M. or F. 30s or 40s

Been working at the same job for a long time

SETTING

B.O.P. Bank

TIME

The present

Notes:

Occupied was written for The CRY HAVOC Company's "Holiday Play" series, 2011.

The play had its world premiere, on the same night, in November of 2012, in Budapest, Hungary and Giessen, Germany, as part of The CRY HAVOC Company fifteen-year celebration where company members' plays were produced on every continent.

Occupied had its U.S. premier as part of *Sharon's Shorts* in May, 2013, in New York City. Joanna Strange was the director, Mia Ellis played "Stephanie" and Hend Ayoub played the "Teller/Representative/Security."

Teller/Representative/Security can be played by a man or woman but should be played by the same person.

Feel free to be creative about the money falling from above at the end of the play. In the New York production, Stephanie has two umbrellas and at the end of the play, she opened the second umbrella, which had "money" from inside fall down all around her.

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In blackout, the sounds of jingle bells and then the cock of a gun. Lights up to STEPHANIE, wearing a dress, heels, and a winter coat. She waves a “gun” in the air-- which is actually just her hand’s thumb and forefinger.

STEPHANIE Give me the mother frickin’ money!

Blackout. Lights up. Five minutes earlier. The sound of thunder and rain. Inside a modern bank. B.O.P. Bank. Air conditioning and lots of chrome. Stephanie enters the bank, closes her umbrella, places it in her bag, and approaches a BANK TELLER.

STEPHANIE *(polite and pleasant)* Hi, yes, I need to close this savings account and move the money over to our checking account. We didn’t realize that you all had been charging \$4 a month to keep this account. So, really, it’s become more of a givings account than a savings account.

The Teller shifts his gaze from the computer to Stephanie.

TELLER Okay, no problem. Money transferred from savings to checking. No more savings. Would you like a B.O.P. pen? Dog cookie? Stress apple?

STEPHANIE No. I would not like a Bank of the People stress apple.

TELLER Well, Merry Christmas and you-are-all-set and goodbye!

Stephanie walks away, turns around and--

STEPHANIE You know, I was just wondering—could I speak to someone about getting a refund—I don’t know how many months you’ve been taking off the \$4 a month, and we were never informed of--

TELLER I’m sorry. That’s not my department. You would need to speak to a representative.

STEPHANIE Oh, well, then--can I speak to a representative?

TELLER Sure, let me walk you over to a representative. We’re a little tight with it being Christmas Eve and all--

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The Teller walks Stephanie over to a table, puts on a jacket, and continues as the REPRESENTATIVE.

REPRESENTATIVE So how can I be of help to you today?

STEPHANIE Yes, we were unaware of your \$4 fee for our savings account.

Stephanie hands him her bank card. The Representative swipes the card and looks at his computer.

STEPHANIE When did we open this account, because we have been paying--

REPRESENTATIVE Let's see . . . hhhmmmm, four years ago and at that time, there was no fee as long as you maintained a balance of \$100. And two years ago, we changed the policy to \$250 and therefore, we started withdrawing \$4 a month from your account.

STEPHANIE Two years. Four dollars a month for twenty-four months. That's \$96. We've paid you \$96 for our "savings" account! I could have had take-out four times, or gone to the movies seven times. Seven times! (*She forces a smile.*) Oh, well, what's \$96 between friends, really? Especially since our refinance will be wrapped up any day now.

The Representative is reading the computer carefully.

REPRESENTATIVE Oh, you need to make sure to read the fine print.

STEPHANIE I'm sure that \$4 fee was hidden, buried deeply—

REPRESENTATIVE No, you were sent a letter. About the refinance.

STEPHANIE How is a letter "fine print"?

REPRESENTATIVE Oh, I just meant that you seem to be lacking in some information.

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STEPHANIE So inform me so I'll stop "lacking."

REPRESENTATIVE According to our records, you were denied a refinance—

STEPHANIE We were denied! What?

REPRESENTATIVE Because, one--your income to debt ratio demonstrates you can't afford the mortgage, and, two--your building has 55% owner occupancy versus the required 80% for co-ops. Would you like a special Santa B.O.P. lollipop on your way out?

STEPHANIE No—no!--unless I can use it to B.O.P. you on the head! Let's review. One—how can we not afford the lower rate when we've been paying the higher rate--and two—is this 80% thing a new rule? If so, you didn't tell us that before we did the appraisal, got the lawyer, paid your fees—are you seriously saying that we won't get this refinance?

The Representative pulls out a document and starts reading.

REPRESENTATIVE Customers have shared with us what matters most to them when choosing a bank, and given their feedback and the current environment, we took careful consideration when deciding to change certain fees, rules and regulations. With that, we modified peripheral fees that small groups pay, and we are educating the consumer on how to avoid the issues subsequent to—

STEPHANIE Educating? Is that what you call all of this? We are not satisfied, and we will not take this without a—

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REPRESENTATIVE Huh. You keep saying “we,” but it looks like you are the only one on this mortgage and on your checking account.

STEPHANIE (*overlapping*) We is none of your business, and what Raymond and I do--

REPRESENTATIVE If you want to add your husband or boyfriend to the--

STEPHANIE Fine, add him.

REPRESENTATIVE Okay, what’s his last name and social security number?

She looks around the room.

STEPHANIE Um, Raymond Feline, and he doesn’t have a social security number.

REPRESENTATIVE What?

STEPHANIE He’s a cat, okay? And everybody loves him.

REPRESENTATIVE Look, Mrs., I mean Miss, uh, Ms.—

He flips through his papers.

STEPHANIE People like you—you don’t know or care about anyone. There’s this man--in North Dakota--in a blizzard hunting for jobs with thousands of other people. He’s 63 and still fighting. He was

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overseas for the last five years working for the military, just got back from Iraq. He knew that a job – a good job that could provide security – might be available in the oilfields in North Dakota. So he hugged his wife, said goodbye and left to get a good-paying job. And he’s living in his car—in Mega-Mart. He says that one nice thing about living in a parking lot is that you can change your neighbors when you want. And I don’t want to go home and change my neighbors.

REPRESENTATIVE We read about hardships every day. It is a sad fact of our harsh--

STEPHANIE It is not just any hardship. He’s my father. Do you believe in the American Dream?

REPRESENTATIVE I’m sorry. I can’t help you. I actually had nothing to do with your refinance. Would you like to take a Bank of the People pen with you? Here, take ten.

STEPHANIE (*overlapping*) And what about the \$4 times twenty-four months?

REPRESENTATIVE If your account were open, I might be able to do something, but you don’t have a savings account.

STEPHANIE But I just closed the account—with the Teller—you were the Teller--right over there—like three minutes ago.

REPRESENTATIVE According to our records, you no longer have a savings account.

STEPHANIE There is no “we” in you crediting my account--you mother frickin’ a-hole turned B.O.P. Teller turned B.O.P. Representative!

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She raises her hand a la gun mode, and we are at the beginning of the play.

STEPHANIE Give me the mother frickin' money!

REPRESENTATIVE You realize that's just your hand, right.

STEPHANIE Give me my frickin' \$4!

REPRESENTATIVE If you don't calm down, I'll have to get security over here and have to ask you to leave.

STEPHANIE It's falling apart, you know—the American Dream, Christmas, Bank Accounts, relationships--And do you know who you would blame, like for all of it?

REPRESENTATIVE Who?

STEPHANIE The Jews.

REPRESENTATIVE What? Why?

STEPHANIE Why not . . . I wish I were Jewish. Or Buddhist. Or Zoroastrian.

REPRESENTATIVE Why?

STEPHANIE Because then I wouldn't be celebrating Christmas Eve with you. Raymond is Zoroastrian.

REPRESENTATIVE I'm sorry.

STEPHANIE It's okay. It's a good religion. He likes it.

REPRESENTATIVE No, I'm sorry that you're here—not that you're not welcome here, because you--

She looks at his hands. He's wearing a wedding band.

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STEPHANIE Married people like you say “I’m sorry” and “we” like it makes you deserve a refinance or a car or a big, decorated Christmas tree, or \$4, or a nice vacation to Isla Mujeres. Is that where you went on your honeymoon?

REPRESENTATIVE We couldn’t afford a honeymoon.

STEPHANIE Oh.

REPRESENTATIVE I don’t even know where Isla Mujeres is.

STEPHANIE Mexico. Do you have children?

REPRESENTATIVE Four.

STEPHANIE Wow. That’s like a whole litter.

REPRESENTATIVE Two sets of twins.

STEPHANIE Did you do that on purpose?

REPRESENTATIVE Are you asking me if my children were a mistake?

STEPHANIE No. Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE Modern medicine. I wouldn’t change it for anything. Even at 3:00 in the morning when one is sick and the other is screaming and we’re trying to keep the other two away from the sick one and the screaming one.

STEPHANIE I know what you mean. I have Raymond. He keeps me occupied . . . I did live with a man once. Before Raymond. It was a three month “in the meantime” relationship. We agreed to stay together until one of us found someone to really love. And then we had a big fight about how I wanted to have kids and he didn’t, and this was a seven-minute conversation, that he timed, because he was a frickin’ accountant. We stayed together for a few more weeks, and

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then I came home one day from work and he was gone.
Disappeared. Like my \$4. We never even broke up.

REPRESENTATIVE Why would you have a fight about having kids in a meaningless relationship?

STEPHANIE Yeah, I don't know. Never mind. Look, so, I hate to tell you this on Christmas Eve, but it's just not working out. I thought it'd be different with you, being the Bank of the People and all. But it's not. I have to break up with you.

REPRESENTATIVE Oh, well, that's--fine. There are plenty of banks. Plenty of places to put money. Um, so, where are you going to put your money?

STEPHANIE It's hard to decide. I have so much of it.

REPRESENTATIVE I'm sorry about your father in North Dakota. And the refinance. And the \$4. And the American Dream. I'm really sorry about that.

Money starts to trickle down over them from above. It stops both of them in their tracks. They look up. The money starts to fall more quickly. Stephanie reaches down. There is the sound of an alarm.

STEPHANIE My \$4!

SECURITY Security!

The Representative puts on a hat and picks up a security baton. He is now Security. Blackout. End of Play.

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