

THE FAMILY BUSINESS

Written and Directed by
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DELI MAN:Whatda fuck. Weahzz da fuckin' eggs? Wheahda fuck ah da fuckin' eggs? I fuckin' awdid fawteen fuckin' duzzin fuckin' eggs fa Friday. Whuts today? Fuckin' Friday. Wheahda fuck ahday? Fuck.

MRS.W:Excuse me. Could you take my order. I would like a bagel cut in half, lightly toasted, without butter or cream cheese and a large coffee, black, no sugar. Thank you.

DELI MAN:Whaddy-ya wan on da bagel?

MRS.W:Nothing, thank you. I want it lightly toasted, cut in half, with nothing on it.

DELI MAN: Ya wan I should cud it?

MRS.W:Yes, please, and then put it in the toaster.

DELI MAN:Buddah?

MRS.W:No. Don't put anything on it. Nothing on it.
Thank you.

DELI MAN:Ya wan sumptin' ta drink?

MRS.W:Yes please. I would like a large black coffee, no sugar.

DELI MAN:Reglah?

MRS.W:No. Black and no sugar.

DELI MAN:Sugar?

MRS.W:No, Nothing. I want nothing in it. Just plain black

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coffee. Thank you.

PAUL:Scene one: September. (PHONE RINGS) The phone rings. Annie regains consciousness.

ANNIE:Oh my God. What happened? What happened? I'm on the floor. I was in the kitchen. Oh, I fell. Oh my God. What is this wet? It's blood. From where am I bleeding? Oh my God I can't move. I can't get to the phone.

Oh my God.

PAUL:Scene two. (PHONE RINGS) The phone rings. Mrs. Wonder gets to work.

MRS.W:I'll answer it. Phil and Son, Inc., Mrs. W. speaking. No, I'm sorry, Phil is out of town. His son Paul is...

PAUL: ...not here

MRS.W:not here right now. Can I have Paul call you? You'll wait for Phil? Phil won't be back for some time. You'll wait for Phil. Thank you. You're bad Paul.

PAUL: They don't want to talk to me anyway.

MRS.W:You don't want to talk to them. I'm going to eat my breakfast.

PAUL: Mrs. Wonder does everything around here.

MRS.W:Oh, shut up Paul.

PAUL:She's done everything ever since I can remember.

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MRS.W:I only do my job. Did you have breakfast? Did you do any more work on that thing you're writing? Background: In his spare time Paul is writing a play, or a T.V. script, or a movie or something. What is it you're writing Paul?

PAUL:This, I'm writing this.

MRS.W:He's writing this. Wait a minute. We have to go further back. Seventy years ago Paul's grandfather Sol wanted to be a cantor but he became a plumber. A practical man. Then Paul's father, Phil wanted to be a song writer. Sol said "be practical" -- Phil became a plumber. Now Paul wants to be a playwright.

PAUL:But I'm a plumber.

MRS.W:But he's a plumber. (SEES LUNCH) Oh shit, I hate that place downstairs. I asked for black and a dry bagel and I got mud and butter. I never get what...

PAUL:(PHONE RINGS) The phone rings. I'm not here.

MRS.W: Phil and Son, Inc. Oh hello. Paul, it's Mrs. Nosey.

PAUL:Who?

MRS.W:Mrs. Nosey. Your aunt's neighbor. She sounds upset.

PAUL>Hello, Mrs. Nosey. This is Paul. (TO MRS. WONDER) She says something's wrong.

MRS.W:What's wrong?

PAUL:(TO PHONE) What's wrong? (TO MRS. WONDER) She can't get

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Annie on the phone.

MRS.W:Maybe she's in the bathroom.

PAUL:(TO PHONE) Maybe she's in the bathroom. (TO MRS.WONDER) She doesn't like that answer.

MRS.W:Maybe she could try again.

PAUL:(TO PHONE) Maybe you could try again...

MRS.W:And let you know what happens.

PAUL:And let me know what happens. Okay, goodbye.

(HANGS UP) She wants me to go to Annie's house.

(PHONE RINGS) The phone rings.

MRS.W: Phil and Son, In...no, I'm sorry Phil is not here.

PAUL: (PHONE RINGS) The phone rings.

MRS.W: Phil and So...no, Phil is not here.

PAUL:(PHONE RINGS) The phone rings.

MRS. W: Phil...oh, hello. Paul, it's her again.

PAUL: Tell her I...

MRS.W:He's on his way. (HANGS UP PHONE) Paul, take the keys.

PAUL: Call my roommate.

MRS.W:Paul, I know he's your boyfriend.

PAUL:Scene three: hailing a taxi. Oh no I can't sit in a taxi.

Scene three: The street. I think how good I am. I am just so amazingly good for doing this. For saying yes, I will go, I will save the day. I will rescue the old woman whose groceries I buy.

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MRS.W:Background: whenever Phil is out of town Paul does the grocery shopping for his great aunt.

PAUL:Is she dead? Is that what I want? How terrible I am.

MRS.W:He gets the list by phone, goes to her building, up to her floor, over to her door, rings her doorbell and he waits.

PAUL:I hate that part. Standing outside her door waiting for her to prove she's not dead, waiting for that old voice to call my name. Scene four: outside Annie's door.

MRS.W:This time you have the keys.You can open the door dear.

PAUL: I can't find the right key.

MRS.W:Oh, Paul.

PAUL:I'm looking for the key.

ANNIE:Paul?

PAUL:Yeah it's Paul. Are you okay? I'm looking for your key.

ANNIE:Paul? it's you?

PAUL:It's me auntie Annie. Talk to me auntie Annie. Let me know you're okay.

ANNIE:Talk? He wants me to talk. My name is Annie Kinsman. I am seventy eight years old and my husband is dead for forty years. Is this good? Who am I talking to?

PAUL: You're talking to me. I'm listening. Keep going.

ANNIE:I should keep on goin'...this is my house. I have one room for living, I have a too-small bathroom, and a

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little tiny kitchen. I pay three hundred dollars a month. I used to pay one hundred. Paul?

PAUL:Keep going sweetheart.

ANNIE:(LAUGHS) Sweetheart! (SHOUTS)I used to pay one hundred. I used to pay forty-five. And I - I'm diabetic, I can't have sugar, I can't have salt, I have high blood pressure. I used to give manicures for a living, now I have arthritis. I can't make no living.

PAUL:Tell what you Love.

ANNIE:What I love? I love my television programs, and I love my dirty papers.

PAUL: Which ones?

ANNIE:The Enquirer and the Star. And I love the T.V.Guide, it's my bible. But now I can't see the television so good and I can't read my papers anymore and I need a goddamn magnifying glass to read the goddamn T.V. Guide. And this morning something else went wrong.

PAUL: Scene five. (PHONE RINGS) The phone rings.

MRS.W:Phil and Son, Inc. Oh, hello Phil. No, no Paul is not here. I don't know, something about your Aunt, Aunt Annie. No, everything is under control. Yes, he's returning phone calls. No, I'm not covering for him. Well, okay, sometimes I do. I don't like messages to go unanswered. Phil don't put me in the middle. Talk

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to your own son. Just don't worry, I'll hold down the fort, I always have.

PAUL:Scene six: I didn't find the key yet. A little more talking. Just a little bit.

ANNIE:Just...okay. My husband was a blonde, a beautiful blonde blue-eyed man. Emanuel Kinsman. Manny. Manny. He was short, but he was big, but he had a good heart, but it wasn't a good heart. He spent nine months dying.

PAUL:After that.

ANNIE:After? Then I was a bookkeeper, then a manicurist, then I moved here. And now I fell down. Shit, Annie, you really did it this time. No more Paul. I can't talk no more. You talk.

PAUL:I find the key. Okay. Grow up Paul. Grow up right now. I push the door open. Scene seven: you know the silence in western movies right after the settler turns to the other settler and says... "Listen, the drums have stopped."

ANNIE: (PAUSE) Paul?

PAUL: That's me.

ANNIE: Watch out for the wires.

PAUL: I'm watching the wires.

ANNIE: Paul watch for the wires.

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PAUL: I'm watching the wires.

ANNIE: Paul, I'm okay. Don't be scared I'm okay.

Don't touch me.

PAUL: She's drenched in blood. (TO ANNIE) I'm not scared, I'm calling an ambulance.

ANNIE: No, call my doctor!

PAUL: Where's his number? (PHONE RINGS) The phone rings. Hello.

ANNIE: Paul the phone, it's ringing.

PAUL: It's your neighbor.

ANNIE: Who is it?

PAUL: Your neighbor.

ANNIE: Who?

PAUL: Mrs. Nosey!

ANNIE: Tell her I'm okay. Don't tell her about the blood.

PAUL: Yes...I think it's coming from her head. I've got to find the doctor. Goodbye. Okay, where's your doctor's number?

ANNIE: On the table.

PAUL: Where? Wait, do you want a towel?

ANNIE: Not a towel. You'll ruin a towel. Get me paper napkins.

PAUL: I've never seen so much blood.

ANNIE: Paul, this thing. (TUGS AT NECKERCHIEF)

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PAUL:Okay, It's a double knot. (TO AUDIENCE) I want you to understand this. Her whole head is covered in blood.

This thing is so bloody I can't see the pattern.

ANNIE:You could get it?

PAUL:I got it. Okay, now where's the doctor's number?

ANNIE:The table. In the checkbook. Paul? Do I have blood in my hair?

PAUL: Yes.

ANNIE: On my head?

PAUL:Yes, I think that's where it's coming from.

What checkbook?

ANNIE: Oh boy, I really did it this time.

PAUL:Don't worry. Just tell me what checkbook.

ANNIE:The blue one on the table.

PAUL: This blue checkbook?

ANNIE:No that's my old one. The other one. The dark blue checkbook with the rubber band.Under the takeout menus.

PAUL:The takeout menus.

ANNIE:Near the tissue boxes, near the cotton balls.

PAUL: The cotton balls.

ANNIE: Where the popcorn is.

PAUL:The popcorn, I see. This dark blue one?

ANNIE:I can't see. Hold it in the light. No that's my other

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telephone numbers. There's another blue one by my medicines, by the calendar, (by the Jewish calendar) by the boroleum...

PAUL: Wait! I think I need to say more about this apartment.

ANNIE: Paul what are you doing?

PAUL: I'm giving background.

ANNIE:Paul, honey, I'm laying on the floor. I'm covered in blood.

PAUL: How long have you had this place?

ANNIE: You're giving background or I'm giving background?

PAUL: How long?

ANNIE: Twenty-five years. What do I know?

PAUL:This place hasn't been painted or cleaned since then. She hasn't thrown anything away in twenty-five years.

ANNIE: What is he saying? What are you telling?

PAUL: I'm telling how long since you painted.

ANNIE: (POINTS TO BIN) Close that! The kitchen and the bathroom were painted this year.

PAUL: I forgot.

ANNIE:You talk but you don't hear what your mouth says. Are you finished telling my business?

PAUL:No. Let's talk about all the toilet paper, all the paper towels, all the paper napkins, all the piles of

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newspapers and the q-tips. Let's talk about cans of corn niblets, cans of tomato sauce, jars of jam, sacks of flour, boxes and boxes of Goodmans noodles, and the q-tips. Or how about bags of airline bags, plastic bags full of brown paper bags, brown paper bags full of plastic bags which are full of airline bags and cartons and cartons and cartons of q-tips? Let's talk about amounts Auntie Annie. (PHONE RINGS) The phone rings. Hello.

ANNIE: Who is it?

PAUL:Mrs. Wonder.

ANNIE: Who?

PAUL: Mrs. Wonder!

ANNIE: Don't tell about the blood.

PAUL:I can't talk now we're describing the apartment. (HANGS UP PHONE)

ANNIE: I have to buy when it's a sale, who wants to run out?

PAUL:What are you talking about? It's not like Philadelphia is going to stop making cream cheese.

ANNIE: Maybe you won't be able to come one week.

PAUL: I could disappear for a year!

ANNIE: If you don't wanna help me, you don't have to help me.

PAUL:Listen Mrs. Kinsman, I love you and I am happy to do what you need.

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ANNIE: You're not happy unless you make me cry. Let me tell you something, I don't like to come to nobody. You can walk out this door right now Mister.

PAUL: Forget it.

ANNIE: Okay.

PAUL: Okay.

ANNIE: Okay. Call the doctor.

PAUL: Hello, I'm calling for a patient of yours, Mrs. Kinsman. I'm her great nephew, I'm at her apartment, she's had an accident. Yes, okay, good bye.

ANNIE: So?

PAUL: They're going to page him.

ANNIE: Paul, the commode, it's full.

PAUL: Yes?

ANNIE: The ambulance men. It's okay?

PAUL: Okay, I'm going to empty it.

ANNIE: Paul...

PAUL: Here I go, right now, I'm going off to empty it.

ANNIE: Be careful.

PAUL: Okay. You keep talking while I'm in the bathroom. I want to hear you. Tell them about Uncle Manny. (EXITS)

ANNIE: Manny - Manny and me. We never had children. We really tried. In those days you didn't talk about those things. Everybody thought it was my fault. I went to

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doctors and doctors and doctors but they didn't find anything because it wasn't me it was him.

The doctors told him his count was low, he should save up, we should do it less often, but not him. I told him get away from me, but he wouldn't. I told him do it yourself. I told him go jazz yourself off Mister. But he couldn't keep his hands off me. He wanted me more than he wanted children. My sister's son is my child. My sister's son's son is my child. I call him my percentage percentage. Paul, tatellah, are you okay?

PAUL:Scene eight: in the bathroom. The commode is full of urine and toilet paper. I dump it in the bowl and flush. (PAUSE) The water rises. (PAUSE) The water keeps rising. (PAUSE) The water is not going down.

ANNIE: What are you doing?

PAUL:Cleaning up. Don't worry. I stick my hands in the bowl through the urine soaked wads of toilet paper. The water floods over the rim, the water pours on the floor....

ANNIE: Paul, everything's okay?

PAUL:Yes it's fine. You're in the other room covered in blood and I'm in piss up to my elbow.

ANNIE: Paul, the doctor's supposed to call back?

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PAUL:Yes, I'll call him in a minute if he doesn't call first.
I'm on my knees with clumps of toilet paper in each hand and I'm flushing with my elbows.

ANNIE: Paul, I think you should call again.

PAUL:Okay I'm coming. I'm covered in water, blood, and piss and I broke the fucking toilet. Scene nine: Hello, I called a minute ago, I'm Mrs. Kinsman's great nephew, yes, well I think she really needs to go to a hospital and I was wondering how long, oh, oh I see, okay, ambulance, goodbye.

ANNIE: So?

PAUL:They said I should call an ambulance and call the doctor back. I call the ambulance, I call Mrs. Wonder. Hello, yes, I called Mrs. Nosey. Yes, I called the doctor's office Yes, I called 911, now I'm calling you, then I'm going to call my roommate, then I'm going to call the doctor back. (HANGS UP, PHONE RINGS) The phone rings Hello, I was just going to call you. We're going to the hospital. I'll meet you there.

ANNIE: Who was that?

PAUL: The doctor.

ANNIE: Who?

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PAUL: The doctor.

ANNIE: Paul, over there is where I fell, go look at it.

PAUL: Okay.

ANNIE: What does it look like?

PAUL:It's a mess. There's lots of blood. (PHONE RINGS) The
Phone rings. Hello, what? Dad is that you?

ANNIE: Is there something sharp there?

PAUL: She says she doesn't remember falling.

ANNIE: Do you see a box?

PAUL: She says she doesn't remember what happened.

ANNIE:That's the iron, that's what did it, I knew I hit
something sharp. Is the box ruined? It's ruined.

PAUL: She's telling me everything that happened.

ANNIE: And the wall, it looks like I hit it? I hit it.

PAUL:She's asking me questions and telling me answers. How long
are you going to be away?

ANNIE: Paul, where's the ambulance?

PAUL: I have to hang up now. She looks funny.

ANNIE: I want to go to the hospital.

(OVERLAPPING DIALOGUE UNTIL SCENE 10)

PAUL:Hello, I called for an ambulance, yes twenty minutes ago,
yes, what's happening? I think she's going in to
shock, I don't know, where's the ambulance?

ANNIE: I want to go to the hospital. Where's the ambulance?

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PAUL: How far away? I should do what? I...

ANNIE: Oh my god. Oh my god.

PAUL:She's panting. No, she's not turning blue but her breathing is very...

ANNIE: Oh mama, where is the ambulance already? Oh God.

PAUL: She's weeping, can you hear her crying...

ANNIE: It hurts. It hurts me. Oh mama.

PAUL:Ten minutes? You want me to tell her ten goddamn minutes? She doesn't know what ten minutes means...

ANNIE:Where are they? Oh I need to be in the hospital. Get me to the hospital. Get me to the hospital.

PAUL:Scene ten: Yesterday at the office. (PHONE RINGS) The phone rings.

MRS.W:Phil and Son, Inc., Mrs. W speaking. No I'm sorry Phil is out of town, would you like to speak to...

PAUL: I'm not here.

MRS.W:Me? Okay, I'll tell Phil you called. How long are you going to pretend not to be here?

PAUL: How long before I get my name on the letterhead?

MRS.W:You're on the letterhead Paul. It says son.

PAUL:It says PHIL and son. How come it doesn't say father and son? How come it doesn't say father and PAUL, Inc.?

MRS.W: Who started this company honey?

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PAUL: His father.

MRS.W:And when his father started this company it was called Sol, Inc. It wasn't called Sol and Son for a long time and you got to be the son in Phil and Son very fast.

PAUL: Phil's son. Phil's son who works in Phil's company. Oh you must be Phil's son. I would know you anywhere. You're just like your father. Honey, look it's Phil's son. He looks just like Phil, you sound just like your father, and you dress like him, honey, look at this, he dresses just like Phil, and you talk like him, honey doesn't he talk just like Phil and isn't he the spitting image of Phil?

MRS.W: Do you think it was different for him? He was Sol's son.

PAUL: Scene eleven: In the ambulance.

ANNIE: Paul where are you?

PAUL: I'm right here next to you.

ANNIE: I'm cold.

PAUL:I'll cover you. (TO MRS.W) Mrs. Wonder, be the sound. I'm trying to pull up her covers. I'm trying to keep her from rolling off the stretcher. I'm trying very hard not to throw up.

ANNIE: You know, I'm always hot.

PAUL: I thought you were cold.

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ANNIE:My whole life I sweat. I'm always worried about sweating through my clothes. I used to be embarrassed even with Manny when we were dancing. When he put his hand on me. Now, feel me, I'm cold.

PAUL: You're hot, you're cold. Are you nervous?

ANNIE:I'm not afraid to be dead. I'm not afraid of dying. Don't you think I'm scared of dying. I'm scared of pain. I'm scared of not being my own boss. I'm scared of waiting to die.

PAUL:Ow. Scene twelve: later that day, back in the office.

(PAUL IS LOOKING AROUND)

MRS.W:Paul, what are you looking for?

PAUL:The tip of my pinky.

MRS.W: Your pinky?

PAUL:Not the whole thing, just the tip.

MRS.W: You lost it?

PAUL:I didn't lose it. You don't lose the tip of your pinky. I just don't have it.

MRS.W:Okay. Let's retrace your steps. Did you wake up with your pinky this morning?

PAUL:Yes, and I left the house with it.

MRS.W: And?

PAUL:I had breakfast with it, I took it to work, I had it in Annie's house, I had it in the ambulance. Wait a

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minute. (PAUSE) Scene thirteen: I check Annie's mailbox, check her apartment, collect her rent envelope, and spend close to forty-five minutes scouring fourteenth street for a house coat, not a house dress, they're not the same thing.

SALES:Can I help you with something?

PAUL:Yes, Mrs. Wonder could you play the sales person?

SALES:I am, Paul. Can I help you with something?

PAUL:The house coat should, Annie says, be made of polyester with snaps up the front (snaps, no buttons, no zipper) in a size forty-two.

SALES:I have aqua, lemon, or dusty pink with daisies, paisleys or dots and exxes. And I have these flowers. I bought one for myself.

PAUL: It has snaps. It's only half polyester.

SALES:It's half cotton.

PAUL:I can't find one hundred percent polyester. And it's not size forty-two. I can't find numbered sizes.

SALES:We carry small, medium, and large.

PAUL:Size forty-two is an extra-large.

SALES:We don't carry extra-large.

PAUL:Okay, I settle on the flowers.

SALES:Is that all?

PAUL:I know it's only a large and only half polyester but it

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does have snaps.

SALES:How are you paying?

PAUL:Cash. And a pleated yoke and flared sleeves. It looks roomier than an ordinary large. I hope it is.

SALES:Keep us in mind for your future home and nightwear needs.

Oh Paul, "Nightwear needs"?

PAUL:Scene fourteen: I enter room 916 of The Hospital for Joint Diseases. I look towards my aunt, who is in her bedside chair.

ANNIE: What happened to you?

PAUL:I spent all day doing her favors and I'm nasty. What happened to me when?

ANNIE: Anytime. He doesn't want to say he's a half hour late.

PAUL: What happened to me anytime?

ANNIE: Sure.

PAUL:Nothing, nothing ever happened to me anytime. You know, buying a house coat is not easy.

ANNIE: No? How come?

PAUL:First of all there aren't so many, and second of all they don't come in numbered sizes.

ANNIE: That's baloney, where'd you go?

PAUL: All over fourteenth street.

ANNIE: What about First Avenue?

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PAUL:There's nothing like that left on First Avenue. She hasn't been out of the house in ten years and all of a sudden she's an expert on where to buy a house coat.

ANNIE:So he's a half-hour late because there are no house coats on first Avenue. Bullshit. What time is it?

PAUL:Okay I'm late.

ANNIE: What size is it?

PAUL:Large, but it's a very large large. See it's pleated.

ANNIE:I can't see.

PAUL:I have to sell her on the god damn house coat.

ANNIE: I'll try it on.

PAUL: Thank you very much Queen Elizabeth.

ANNIE: It's good, it's very good. You spent a lot?

PAUL: \$8.00. Is that a lot? I took fifty.

ANNIE: See you're a good shopper.

PAUL: You want to go through your mail?

ANNIE: Yes.

MRS.W:Background: Her mail is always from Blue Cross Blue Shield and Medicare. It consists of notices that one of her doctors has submitted a bill and been paid something.

PAUL:We open each envelope, I read the contents, I put it back, I write the name of the doctor on the envelope in very big letters, so she'll be able to read it later.

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Dr. Piranha.

ANNIE: He got paid?

PAUL: Yes.

ANNIE: How much?

PAUL: Thirty-seven dollars and seventy-nine cents.

ANNIE: Good, write it on the envelope.

PAUL:She doesn't ask how much the bill was. This one was
\$790.00. Dr. Devour.

ANNIE: Who?

PAUL: I don't know, it says Dr. Devour care of this
hospital.

ANNIE:Oh. That's the psychiatrist.

PAUL:You had a psychiatrist?

ANNIE:They sent him. I didn't want him. He said why was I
depressed. I said, doctor, I am not depressed. I'm
just very tired. He said, but Mrs. Kinsman, fatigue
can be a symptom of depression. I said, let me tell
you something Mister Doctor, I told you I didn't need
you, I don't need you and I'm not going to need you.
I'm tired because last night the nurse gave me a
laxative and I was up all night with -- you should
pardon the expression -- the shits. Did you shit all
night doctor? How much did he get paid?

PAUL: \$26.74.

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ANNIE: Write it on the envelope.

PAUL: Look a check!

ANNIE: How much?

PAUL: \$47.79.

ANNIE: For what doctor?

PAUL: Paymore.

ANNIE: Who?

PAUL: Paymore. Andrew Paymore.

ANNIE: Never heard of him, where is he?

PAUL: 33rd Street.

ANNIE: I was never there.

PAUL: So what it's a check, don't complain.

ANNIE:But for me to get a check, Somebody had to pay him and I didn't pay him and you didn't pay him and I don't even know who the bastard is. They come in here and they say how are we today Mrs. Kinsman. How are we? Who the hell is we? Then the bastards send medicare a bill for a visit. I don't even know about it. I'm in the bed. I can't get up and lock the door. They walk in the hall out there and they say to each other how much did you make today? Why don't you drop in on that old broad Mrs. Kinsman. She's a gold mine. Her medicare number is...

BOTH:7773079G

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ANNIE: Say hello and boom, one two three, you could send in a bill.

PAUL: Is it time to go yet? I try to look interested but not encouraging.

ANNIE: They think I'm some crazy old lady. They send me shrinks I don't want. They go through my stools. They test my urine. They take blood and blood and blood.

PAUL: I nod.

ANNIE: I don't want to be anybody's guinea pig. I came here so I could walk again and that's it! There is nothing they can do, nothing they can tell me I don't know.

PAUL: I nod.

ANNIE: I used to tell your grandmother:

BOTH: All I need is the diploma on the wall, and with what I know, I would be a doctor.

ANNIE: Oh, that made her crazy.

PAUL: I nod.

ANNIE: Fifty years ago they were going to use insemination on me. Manny wouldn't let me get inseminated.

PAUL: I'm thinking of asking why not.

ANNIE: I told him, tell your goddamn mother to leave me alone.

PAUL: Wait a minute...

ANNIE: Tell her to stop asking me about babies, tell her it's your fault.

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PAUL:She got me. Why wouldn't Manny let you be inseminated?

ANNIE:He was afraid they wouldn't use his sperm. He didn't trust the doctors, and he was right, the hand is quicker than the eye.

PAUL: I nod.

ANNIE:That's why your father is my child. And you're my child too.

PAUL: I nod and she starts to cry, just a little.

ANNIE:I don't know what I am going to do when I see your father.

PAUL: I give her a tissue.

ANNIE: You want to go?

PAUL: I should.

ANNIE: I'll walk you to the door.

PAUL: (NUZZLES HER) You never walked me to the door before.

ANNIE: I'm making progress. (BITES HIS EAR OFF)

PAUL:Ow. Scene fifteen: in the office. Mrs. Wonder enters.

MRS.W:I hate that place downstairs. I ask for black and a dry bagel and I get mud and...you look weird.

PAUL:What?

MRS.W:Maybe it's your hair.

PAUL:What?

MRS.W:Where's your ear?

PAUL:What?

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MRS.W:(SHOUTING) Your ear honey. Where's your ear?

PAUL:Scene sixteen: Two months later.

MRS.W:Background.

PAUL:Subtext.

MRS.W:No dear, background.

PAUL:Whatever...I visit Annie four times a week at the hospital.

I pick up the mail from her building twice a week. I am now the co-signer on her checking account, I pay all her bills, I'm the bearer of all tidings to and from Annie to and from every member of this family including my father who still hasn't come home.

Where the hell is he?

MRS.W:I don't know Paul. He should be back soon.

PAUL:That's what you said last week and the week before that - when is soon?

MRS.W:I don't know Paul.

PAUL:I never found the tip of my pinky. The rest of my pinky and the finger next to it are both gone. I never found my left ear. I now listen through my right ear. My left shoulder blade gone. My left nipple gone.

Part of my cheek gone. As of yesterdays visit to Annie part of my nose is gone. It's gone folks. It's gone. My boyfriend is not happy. (TO MRS.W) Be my boyfriend.

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BFRND:I'm not happy. Paul, this is ruining our sex life. That old woman is eating you alive. You have to tell her to stop.

PAUL:Thanks. How do you tell an aged dependant relative to stop chewing up your parts? Scene seventeen: I arrive at the hospital for Annie's release hearing. It is scheduled for 10:20 A.M. and Annie has both pleaded and demanded that I be there on time. I arrive at 10:15.

MRS.W:I'm coming with you in case you need help.

PAUL:Thank God.

ANNIE:Thank God.

PAUL:Thank God what?

ANNIE:You're here. What time is it?

PAUL:Ten fifteen.

ANNIE:Good. Sit down. Wipe your face off. What time is it?

PAUL:Ten sixteen. You're nervous?

ANNIE:No no no no. No.

PAUL:Should I go see what's happening?

ANNIE:No, wait here. The doctor will come and get us. Paul, you know what to say at this thing?

PAUL:I'm hardly going to say anything.

ANNIE:Good. What time is it?

PAUL:Ten eighteen.

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ANNIE:Don't tell about the money.

PAUL:I'm not saying anything.

ANNIE:So, now the bastard doctor is late.

PAUL:It's only ten nineteen and I thought you liked her.

ANNIE:I like her when she's on time.

PAUL:The doctor arrives.

ANNIE>Hello doctor.

PAUL:Scene eighteen: At the hearing.

DOC:How are we, Mrs. Kinsman?

ANNIE:Very well thanks to you doctor.

PAUL:Auntie Annie must be afraid of this interview.

DOC:Now, Mrs. Kinsman...

ANNIE:Oh, doctor, have you met my great nephew?

PAUL:She thinks they have the power to keep her here.

ANNIE:He is my saviour.

PAUL:And her delivery boy.

DOC:So you'll be helping with her care?

PAUL:I have a job, I work full time.

DOC:Is there anyone else?

PAUL:There's my father, he has a job, he works full time, he
travels a lot.

DOC:What do you do?

ANNIE:He wants to be a play writer.

PAUL:Playwright, one word.

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ANNIE:Two words! No money!

DOC:(SMILES) How's the walking Mrs. Kinsman?

ANNIE:I take it one day at a time, doctor.

DOC:What about getting in and out of bed?

PAUL:Sometimes I can't get out of bed.

ANNIE:Oh doctor, thank God for the nurses. They help me.

PAUL:Oh doctor, all of a sudden she can hear!

ANNIE:I just want to say everyone has been very kind to me.

PAUL:Except the man who didn't bring the bedpan so (quote) "I
shit myself in revenge." Except the man who never
gave her white bread so (quote) "I personally called
the superintendent of dietary control."

Except the man who shut off her bedside phone, (quote) "I told
the bastards you forgot to leave me money, tatellah."
Except all the people who joined, therefore, through
all eternity, her ever growing litany...

ANNIE:Everybody, everybody. I won't forget nobody.

PAUL:...her shitlist of incompetent assholes. What about them
Auntie Snow Job?

ANNIE:I couldn't have come this far without all your help.

PAUL:What about my help. All my help. What about my daily,
daily, daily help? How come I'm not on Ricki Lake?
Today's show folks: the boy who did every damn thing

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he was supposed to do and couldn't shut up! Why am I so angry?

DOC:Now Mrs. Kinsman we would like to explain exactly what services are available to you upon your release.

ANNIE:Yes doctor. Thank you doctor. Paul - you'll remember?

PAUL:Yes.

DOC:For up to three months you will be visited two times a week for approximately forty-five minutes each time by a physical therapist. In addition, you will have a home health aide Monday through Friday for four hours a day generally in the morning. You can only receive the services of the home health aide for as long as you are under the care of the physical therapist. Termination of the physical therapy services will also cause the termination of visits from the home health aide.

A nurse will be sent to you everyday but Sunday, that means Monday through Saturday, to change the dressing on your rash for as long as that condition persists. You will also be supplied with a nurse, that is a second nurse, immediately following your release. You have two options regarding this second nurse. You may use her services for eight hours on the day of release or for four hours on the day of release and for four

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hours on the following day, that is the day after release. Is this clear Mrs. Kinsman?

ANNIE: Doctor I want to ask you about my wheel chair, my walker with wheels, my quad cane, my shoe inserts, my foam heel pads, my heels cups, my ace bandages, my elastic stockings and my medication.

PAUL: Doctor, I want to ask you about my Visa bill, why is it so high? How am I gonna pay it? What is all this shit I bought? Where am I going to put all this shit I bought? Did I buy any food? Why don't I buy any food? Should I use Visa for dinner. Should I have dinner? What should I have? Why am I a thirty year old loser going nowhere except to the stifling apartment of my seventy-eight year old great aunt? I'd like to know if there is some medication I can take to stop this old woman from being the most important thing in my life. Is there something I can take to stop her from eating me alive?!

DOC: Do you have any questions Mrs. Kinsman?

ANNIE: Paul?

PAUL: No.

DOC: I bet you're looking forward to going home.

ANNIE: Oh doctor, you have no idea.

PAUL: Scene nineteen: Getting ready.

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ANNIE:Paul, you can manage? Watch out. Be careful.

PAUL:Don't worry. I'll take care of everything.

MRS.W:Background: There are forty people in Paul's family.

PAUL:I only dealt with five.

MRS.W:His grandfather died last year, his grandmother died this year, his mother has been out of the house for twenty years, and his father has been out of town for three months.

PAUL:That leaves, God help me, Annie. Your grandpa dies, your grandma dies, they die. People die. That's life. It's okay. I'm sad. I'm really sad. But life goes on. Annie will die. No more shopping.

MRS.W:No more visits.

PAUL:No more accounting.

MRS.W:No more nothing.

PAUL:So?!

MRS.W:So?

PAUL:So fine! Annie will die. I won't forget her, I won't lose my memory.

MRS.W:You'll lose Annie's memory.

ANNIE:Tatellah, is my bag packed yet?

PAUL:Tatellah. You know what "tatellah" means? It means little father. Little Jew father. That's me. I'm a Jew. I am the third generation of Austrian, Polish, Jewish

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immigrants.

ANNIE:What about Russian?

PAUL:I was born here. I have a boyfriend instead of a wife.

ANNIE:I knew.

PAUL:I know. I shop at Bergdorf's instead of the Kosher butcher.

ANNIE:Manny took me to Bergdorf's, we got shoes. I still have those shoes. Where are those shoes?

MRS.W:So what are you saying Paul? That you love her?

PAUL:I don't know. She's my continuity, my blood connection, she's my pain in the ass, the last link to my history, I need my God damn history, I need her.

ANNIE:Let's get outta here before they do anything else to me.

PAUL:They're only trying to help.

ANNIE:They're all bastards. My mother used to say you can't trust anybody but Jews and the family.

PAUL:Do we need to take these foam things?

ANNIE:Yeah. And you can't trust Jews.

PAUL:Both of them?

ANNIE:Yeah. And you can't trust the family.

PAUL:What about me, Mrs. Kinsman?

ANNIE:You I love. Come here tatellah, let me give you a little bite.

PAUL:Act two, scene one: (PHONE RINGS) the phone rings.

MRS.W:Phil and Son, Inc. Oh, hello Phil. Paul, it's your

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father. He sounds wonderful. He wants to talk to you.

PAUL:I don't want to talk to him. Tell him I want him to come home, take care of his own Goddamn Aunt, put my name on the letterhead and never call me again.

MRS.W:Phil, can I call you back?

BLACKOUT