

Venomous Impulse

by

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Cast of Characters

RELOYA:

19

DAD:

50

Place

Suburban Home/Kitchen

Time

11:00 PM/Thursday

2.

Setting: A recently renovated kitchen with elegant marble countertops and wonderfully bright cabinets to match the modern décor.

At Rise: Dad stoically sits while drinking from a glass of red wine. His daughter Reloya repeatedly motions from sitting to tidying up the kitchen and back throughout the course of the play.

RELOYA: There are days that go by when I feel happy to be alive, the world seems perfect and everyone I know I can't imagine not caring about.

Then there are other days, dark days, that I try to run away from, days that try to suffocate me...when I'm in that place, I hate everyone, the slightest thing will set me off...I get depressed, motionless and nothing strong enough could ever bring me out from it...

It's like someone entrapped me in a net and although I can see and hear everything, it's the way I see and hear everything that shifts into an ugly experience because I feel trapped inside myself...

I mean, how can I break out from myself? (beat) I'm stuck inside this skin. If I could exit this body, this mind, I would but I can't, I'm held captive, forever.

DAD: That's a terrible way to live.

RELOYA: It's the only way that I know.

DAD: You expect all that to explain why you poured coffee, hot coffee, all over your sister?

RELOYA: I didn't want to do it.

DAD: But you did.

RELOYA: When I tossed the coffee at her, it was as if I was watching someone take over my body.

DAD: Maybe you're possessed.

RELOYA: Maybe, I am.

DAD: ...You're not possessed. You don't know how to manage your emotions. You've been like this since you were a child. Everything in extremes, nothing ever regulated. I imagined by now, with all your life experience, you'd reach a point in your life that would allow you to have better control over yourself. These impulses... (sighs)...such venomous impulses you have...I wish I knew where they stemmed from...I almost wish you were possessed, it would give me the excuse to grab you and shake that rotten demon out from your existence.

...No, no this whole family has gone rotten...I do, I do, I do for everybody and where is the love that is supposed to fill this home when I enter it? Where?!

DAD (cont'd) One would think you were given nothing, that you come from low-life trash to behave in the manner in which you behave.

No, no...

(pause.)

If you haven't changed by now, I don't know where we go from here.

(beat)

Haven't we tried everything? Haven't we? (chuckles) I feel like we've played every position on the chessboard, millions and millions of wasted scenarios all leading up to the same result each time, a losing game.

RELOYA: Why are you always so negative?

DAD: It's the same ending, isn't it?

RELOYA: Maybe if you weren't always so doubtful about things, we'd all be in a better situation.

DAD: Doubtful? Ha ha, you give me no sense of joy, doubtful is the only thing left I can cling to.

RELOYA: I am always blamed for everything and anything that goes wrong in this house, it's always MY fault. It's never your fault or mom's fault or Charice's fault, ONLY MINE.

DAD: You are the one who consistently causes the greatest disruption in our lives.

RELOYA: When do you ever take responsibility for your own actions?

DAD: Don't try to turn this all around on me, Reloya, I am much too clever for such simple tactics.

RELOYA: It's true!

DAD: What is true is that your sister is lucky to still be wearing her beautiful face. Imagine what would have happened had she turned around just as you tossed your piping hot cup of coffee on her? Can you imagine the physical damage you may have caused her? Don't you even have the slightest remorse for your disgraceful action?

RELOYA: I profusely apologized to that girl.

DAD: That girl, right, that girl, you mean your SISTER?

RELOYA: I apologized to her as soon as it happened.

DAD: Always too quick to apologize Reloya, never taking proper account of the seriousness of what you do, which is why you constantly repeat such vulgar actions.

RELOYA: I said I was sorry, we talked, why isn't that good enough?

DAD: Because things aren't right between the two of you. They aren't right with any of us.

I've given this entire story years of thought and made the discovery that all this time it's been YOU. Charice isn't perfect and neither am I or your mother, but the darkness, this danger that comes over all of us stems from the root of you.

As your father, what do you expect me to do?

RELOYA: Do about what?

DAD: You! What do you expect me to do about you, Reloya?

RELOYA: What do you mean?

DAD: I mean that it's time for you to go.

RELOYA: Where?

DAD: It's time for you to find your own apartment and leave this home. You are nineteen years old. There are teenagers younger than you who go off to college and dorm. I want you out of this house for good.

RELOYA: How do you expect me---

DAD: I am going to pay all of your expenses. It won't be anything new for me regardless, I want you set up in an apartment while you continue going to school, I want you to be independent and---

RELOYA: So you think paying me off to get rid of me is the solution?

DAD: I'm not paying you off---

RELOYA: Of course you are! You are throwing money at the problem, instead of facing the problem.

DAD: You are the problem and I've faced you your whole life and it's gotten us nowhere. You've been to therapy, you've received medication, I've sent you on holidays, the list goes on and I'm sick of it. You need to be on your own in order to stop this constant disruption in our lives.

RELOYA: You're a disgrace!

DAD: I am your father and you will not speak to me that way!!

(pause.)

I've already made arrangements for you.

RELOYA: What arrangements?

DAD: A friend of mine has a property that has a guest house and I want you to live there. It isn't far, just a few miles from here but far enough for you to stop causing mayhem.

RELOYA: I will not move.

DAD: Excuse me?

RELOYA: There is no way I'm leaving this house.

DAD: This Friday.

RELOYA: No.

DAD: This Friday. Gather your things, pack, whatever it is you need to do to get yourself together...this is what I want done no later than Friday.

RELOYA: How can you kick me out like this?

DAD: You will be cared for...I'm not throwing you to the wolves but it's time for you to live freely on your own merits.

RELOYA: And when am I allowed to come home?

DAD: Never.

RELOYA: Never?

DAD: Never.

RELOYA: So, I can't ever step foot in this house again?

DAD: Perhaps on holidays, things like that but I don't wish to see you.

RELOYA: And what does Mom say?

DAD: She agreed. Believe me, we spoke at length about all of this...this isn't something that simply appeared out of thin air...it's been on our minds for quite some time.

RELOYA: You're all crazy.

DAD: Maybe so, but at least we will be crazy without you in the mix.

RELOYA: What if I need something and have to come back here?

DAD: Don't play games with me, this isn't a game, this is final and I am dead serious about it. I've already paid my friend a month in advance with the intention of you arriving there----

RELOYA: Which friend?

DAD: Paul.

RELOYA: Paul Gregory?!

DAD: The very one.

RELOYA: Paul is weird and insane.

DAD: Paul is a loyal, hardworking friend.

RELOYA: So, Paul will be the one spying on me and creeping me out?

DAD: You won't ever see Paul, unless you knock on his door, which you won't, so there. You will have complete freedom and independence. No one will ever bother you, you come and go as you please.

RELOYA: ...Fine.

DAD: Friday.

RELOYA: ...Fine.

(DAD gets up and exits the kitchen)

END OF PLAY