

Dirty Laundry

by

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Cast of Characters

<u>DUSTIN</u> :	37
<u>RACHEL</u> :	35
<u>MOTHER</u> :	60's

Place
Long Beach

Time
6:30PM

2.

Setting: A large home overlooking the oceanside in Long Beach, Long Island.

At Rise: We hear the voice of DUSTIN, which comes off sounding like he's encased inside a glass box. RACHEL enters shortly after closely followed by her MOTHER.

Stage is black.

We hear the voice of DUSTIN,
but we don't see him. His voice
sounds as though he were far away.

DUSTIN: Rachel, Rachel please, you've kept me in the dog house long
enough. I want to come out! Please! Let me out!

Lights quickly rise as RACHEL enters.
She carries a miniature sized dollhouse.

MOTHER follows closely behind EMILY.

RACHEL speaks to the doll house.

RACHEL: Dustin, that's enough out of you. I already told you you're
not coming out until after dinner's ready.

DUSTIN'S voice comes from within
the doll house.

DUSTIN: But I still need to shower.

RACHEL sets the doll house on the
kitchen countertop.

RACHEL (with authority): You can shower after you've eaten.

DUSTIN (pleading): Please, let me out!

RACHEL: Oh, look at him Mother, how cute he becomes when he's
begging.

MOTHER peers into the doll house.

MOTHER: Eh!

RACHEL begins preparing a salad.

MOTHER sits and has a cigarette.

MOTHER: This morning I woke up in my house all alone. Which is
normal. I always wake up in my home alone. Your father usually leaves
on the coffee pot for me...most mornings...after I have my spill, I'll do
some chores. Today was laundry day. I pushed the laundry bag down the
stairs, watched it tumble down gracefully to the very bottom. A few
socks and panties slipped out...I stared at those items on the floor
for a moment and then something came over me. An impulse.

MOTHER (cont'd): Something pushing me. I went down to the base of the stairs and poured all the laundry onto the floor into a pile. I walked back up the stairs a few steps and jumped face first into the pile of clothes. It was a perfect landing and so I started burying my face deep into the dirty clothes and inhaled the dirty scent from the clothes and I was lost in an ocean of blue, swimming through the clothes sinking deeper and deeper into the depths of my laughter... until finally, turning myself over I began to cry. Enormous burst of tears running down my cheeks. I was blind with passion...my tummy began to hurt, my jaw became stiff, my eyes began to sting...but, I couldn't stop crying. I was a broken fire hydrant floating in my own urine, oozing and flowing, releasing without thinking to be free, alive, warm again...I didn't care...I refused to stop crying. I refused! I would not get up from the floor! ...I started to scream, not for the attention, but I needed to break the cancer inside my being. (making a fist) I let out a hell of a scream for all the devils of this world...your father came in the room, face all dirty from his beloved garden, a growing stare of shock and concern on his face...he finally noticed me. Yes, he did. I stood up, anxious to see what he'd say, but nothing came of it. I looked at him and he turned his back on me... I heard the door slam shut and I received a chill, but I didn't allow myself to remain frozen, no, no, I grabbed hold of my dirty laundry and I stuffed all my, my...I stuffed all my—all in that bag. All back in that bag...

RACHEL: Well, I think it's good to sometimes release whatever it is that we are feeling, if what we are feeling is too much.

MOTHER: How was your day?

RACHEL: My day! Oh, same ole same ole. And you?

MOTHER: I just told you how my fucking day was.

RACHEL: Fantastic! How's father?

MOTHER: He had a haircut.

RACHEL: Did he?

MOTHER: Yes, he did.

RACHEL: He's bald as a cucumber.

MOTHER: Not your father, your brother, Wallace.

RACHEL: Wallace.

MOTHER: Have you spoken to him?

RACHEL: No.

MOTHER: His wife died.

RACHEL: Really? When?

MOTHER: Just last week.

RACHEL: Terrible.

MOTHER: Drowned.

RACHEL: Horrible.

MOTHER: You should call him, send him condolences.

RACHEL: You know I can't do that.

MOTHER: Yes, I know.

RACHEL: Do you want cucumber in your salad, mother?

MOTHER: Okay. You have any olives?

RACHEL: Of course.

MOTHER: I hope I drop dead soon, too.

RACHEL: Mother, you shouldn't say such things.

MOTHER: Sick of this life. Same ole same ole. It's like reliving the same rotten day with looser skin. Your father never takes me anywhere. We never go out, except in the back garden. He's in love with his garden. Can't ever seem to pull him away. Always focused on his garden. I don't think your father has touched me sexually in the past decade, maybe longer. Feels longer. I asked him once, I said, "Did you bury your dick in the garden?" I was so frustrated. He just shrugged his shoulders and went back out in the garden. And I shouted after him, "Hope you find it!" Forgive me, it's not like me to speak like that, you know that, but your father is a real treat and I am so---Wallace lost his wife.

RACHEL: I know mother, you've said.

MOTHER: Are you going to call him?

RACHEL: I already told you that I won't.

MOTHER: Shame you two. You were both so close growing up and now---

RACHEL: It's not my fault he's never showed any interest in my life. I have this home, this gorgeous home, four beautiful children and a husband who appears magnificent on the outside, we have fancy cars, a boat, jet skis, we are part of the social club during the summer, our kids attend camp, we attend

RACHEL (cont'd): private cocktail parties with the Stevensons and the Duares and the Harrison's and the Du Ponts. Really, really elaborate gatherings. We go to Vermont just about every single weekend and do all sorts of sporting activities. But what can he show? What exactly does he HAVE? Did him and his now dead wife breed? Did they breed, Mother? No, they didn't...that is how different we are to them. I have a grand life and Wallace is just a poor struggling artist who is going nowhere with *his* life and it's not my problem.

MOTHER: But that's your brother, dear.

RACHEL: Well, mother we are related in blood, but not in mind.

MOTHER: I see.

RACHEL checks the stove. She speaks to the dollhouse on the counter.

RACHEL (to DUSTIN): Dinner's almost ready darling.

DUSTIN: Piss off!

RACHEL (to MOTHER): I would have had Edna do the cooking this evening but she's fallen ill with coronavirus. I'm sure we're all infected by now anyway and are going to die, so you will soon get your wish.

MOTHER: Coronavirus?

RACHEL: Yes.

MOTHER: I don't want coronavirus. Why did you invite me over if you have coronavirus?

RACHEL: Mother, stop being so difficult. We're all going to die sooner or later.

MOTHER: What kind of coronavirus is this?

RACHEL: The kind that you die from.

MOTHER: I see.

RACHEL: The salad is done. (relieved) Ahhh!

MOTHER: I need to get laid before I die.

RACHEL: Mother!

MOTHER: If I don't have sex before I die, I'm gonna die.

RACHEL: Do you want me to talk to father?

MOTHER: He buried it ten years ago! Ever since there's been a strange tree growing next to the shed. I bet that's where he buried it. The strangest tree bearing fruit that I have ever seen.

RACHEL: Glass of wine?

MOTHER: Okay.

RACHEL pours two glasses of wine.

RACHEL (to DUSTIN): You can come out now dear.

DUSTIN enters the stage. He is dripping with sweat and out of breath.

DUSTIN stares at RACHEL.

Glass of wine?

DUSTIN: No.

RACHEL: Say hi to Mother?

DUSTIN: Hello, Mother.

MOTHER: Hello, Dustin, you look a mess.

DUSTIN: I am a mess.

MOTHER: Tidy yourself up before dinner.

DUSTIN: Thank you.

DUSTIN leaves.

RACHEL: Good wine.

MOTHER: Sure is.

RACHEL: I know Wallace is the older child and by right he is the rightful heir, but who will get the house in Florida and the house in Long Island when you and father die?

MOTHER: You and the children.

RACHEL: Not Wallace?

MOTHER: Of course not. What makes you think he'd get anything?

RACHEL: He's your oldest son.

MOTHER: Can't you see I am a twisted bitch?

RACHEL: I do, sometimes, not all of the time, only some of the time.

MOTHER: That's if I outlast your father. If he outlasts me, then Wallace will get everything.

RACHEL: Right.

MOTHER: That's just the way things go I guess.

RACHEL: We'll have to wait and see.

RACHEL takes food out of the oven. She pulls out a diaper on a tray.

MOTHER: Wow!

RACHEL: You don't think I overcooked it?

MOTHER: Not in a million, looks divine.

RACHEL: Wonderful!

RACHEL pours gravy over the diaper.

How's that for a little flavor?

MOTHER: Fabulous dear.

RACHEL: Have a seat at the table Mother, I'll call the children.

MOTHER sits at the table.

Children, dinner's on the table! Dustin, dinner's ready. (to herself) Okay.

RACHEL sits at the head of the table. She turns as if her kids have joined them at the table.

Now, now, easy, easy. Take your seats calmly and deliberately children. I will have none of it. (beat) Good. That's better. I want to see manners at this table. Obedience. Without manners you can't get very far in life. Manners, being polite, those are true qualities to uphold not only with strangers, but amongst one another, your family. Family values, they are everything, without them, we lose sight of what matters most. Isn't that right mother?

MOTHER: Correct.

RACHEL: Mind your manners. Live openly and warmly. Treat one another with love. Have respect. Discipline. Protect one another's heart. This is the key to unlocking happiness, joy and good spirit.

RACHEL (cont'd): This way you don't continue being little demons. Running around my mind for days without end. Grandmother is too sick to watch you and give me rest. Oh, do I need my rest. (to children) Don't touch your food! Wait for your father. We eat together as a family unit...no plastic plates, beautiful, elaborate plates, fancy plates, for our dedicated family..forever.

END OF PLAY