

A Million Things At Once

by

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Cast of Characters

<u>CARMELA</u> :	40's
<u>LARRY</u> :	40's
<u>RICHIE</u> (voice):	18

Place
House

Time
Day

2.

Setting: The play takes place inside a large suburban home in Long Island. It's modern, big and bright.

At Rise: The play opens up with Carmela thinking she is talking to her husband Larry, when Larry enters the kitchen from the basement.

CARMELA: Larry, when you gonna rake them leaves? The whole lawn looks like a bed of yellow roses...ain't that beautiful, maybe you shouldn't run out to clean that up just yet. Wait till they turn brown and crusty, then rake them up into small piles. Larry?

LARRY: What's up?

CARMELA: Where were you? I was talking to myself.

LARRY: Downstairs fixing the hose to the wash machine.

CARMELA: Did you fix it?

LARRY: Just needed to get tightened, came loose. Bought a whole new hose for nothing. Should have looked first.

CARMELA: It was loose all this time?

LARRY: Why we had water all over the basement.

CARMELA: I can't believe that. That's that moron who came here and didn't do the right job in the first place.

LARRY: Who? Billy?

CARMELA: Whatever his name is, moron.

LARRY: Oh, leave him alone. He saved us hundreds.

CARMELA: Hundreds and almost cost us hundreds more.

LARRY: I'm handy. That's why I took a look and it's no big deal, so relax.

CARMELA: For three days I did nothing but kill myself mopping up the basement, drying the rug, it was a disaster. Don't tell me to relax.

LARRY: It's over and done with.

CARMELA: You should tell him.

LARRY: Tell him what?

CARMELA: Tell him that he didn't do the right job.

LARRY: Will you let it go?

CARMELA: I'll tell him. Next time I see him. Sure you'll call him to do another half-ass job on this house.

LARRY: All you wanna do is argue.

CARMELA: I want things done right!

LARRY: Accidents happen.

CARMELA: They shouldn't happen. Not after we pay him good money.

LARRY: You made your point. You wanna go on the whole damn day about it?

CARMELA: You're always trying to nickel and dime and in the end it ends up costing us.

LARRY: You're determined to give me a heart attack today, right?

CARMELA: You're too young for a heart attack.

LARRY: That's not true.

CARMELA: Make better decisions.

LARRY: You're the one who was happy to hire Billy.

CARMELA: Cause I felt bad for him. He was going on about his daughter and how his wife left him for another woman and he's a complete mess. The least we could do is hire him and give him a few dollars, (working herself up) but I expect such good will to be respected and not taken for granted. We hired him to paint the garage. Look what happened there. The whole front door came off. How does that even happen if he's painting? There was no reason for him to touch the door. Saying he needed to move it to make room. Make room, my ass. A tractor trailer could have fit in between the wall and the door. Plenty of room to paint. Cost us money we didn't have. Makes me wonder if he didn't do that deliberately, since we hired him to put in a brand new door anyway. Every other month he's here fixing up something and doesn't leave without breaking the next thing for him to fix...(tenderly) I mean, I met his daughter Emily and she's a sweetheart. Good kid. My heart goes out to her and he is a good father, loves her to pieces, so there's that...(directly) I just don't like when anyone makes me feel like they're taking advantage, even if it's for the well of their own family or what have you. I get it. I do. I come from nothing and I picked up on his situation immediately, but still, I'm no fool and although I have a heart I don't have room in it for con artists.

LARRY has been looking inside the refrigerator.

LARRY: What happened to all the iced tea I made this morning?

CARMELA: Ask your son.

LARRY: He couldn't have drank all of it.

CARMELA: That's him and his friends, upstairs.

LARRY: Unbelievable.

CARMELA: Just make more.

LARRY: Do I have a choice? No consideration.

CARMELA: I was gonna make it for you but you got to it first.

LARRY: And he has to take out the trash.

CARMELA: Which reminds me. You gotta rake the leaves.

LARRY: Our son is gonna help me this time.

CARMELA: When his friends leave.

LARRY: No, now. I want his friends out.

CARMELA: It's Saturday, relax.

LARRY: Now you want me to relax? But when I ask you, I have to hear your speech. God forbid I get bothered.

CARMELA: Cause you get bothered over stupid shit.

LARRY: I'm downstairs fussing with the washing machine, trying to figure out what the hell is wrong with it, why it's spitting out water and in the back of my mind I can't wait to drink down some ice cold tea.

CARMELA: Are you about to have your manbaby moment?

LARRY: I wanted my iced tea!

CARMELA: When it comes to your food you act like a caveman. Do you hear yourself?

LARRY: Doesn't matter. He should know better.

CARMELA: It's there so he takes it. Do you really imagine our son would take a moment to make a fresh pot of iced-tea?

LARRY: No, I don't.

CARMELA: There you have it.

LARRY: But he should.

CARMELA: We're lucky he passed his driving test and got his license by some miracle.

LARRY finishes making a new batch of iced tea. He drinks.

LARRY: Ahh! That's good. A bit sweet but good.

SUDDENLY a loud bang and laughter is heard coming from above.

I'm gonna kill this kid. The whole house is coming down!

LARRY walks to the foot of the stairs.

RICHIE!!! What the hell are you doing up there?

RICHIE (o.s): We're just wrestling.

LARRY: Stop wrestling and come down here. We have to rake the leaves.

LARRY walks back into the kitchen.

Animals. The whole house shook.

CARMELA: That's your son.

LARRY: It's your son too.

CARMELA: Not when he acts like that. He gets that shit from you.

Feet are heard thundering down the stairs.

RICHIE (o.s) Dad, we'll be outside!

Front door is heard slamming.

LARRY: What do I do? Do I kill him? What do I do with this kid?

CARMELA: He's six foot five and eighteen years old. A giant puppy. You need to raise him is what you need to do.

LARRY: There's no raising him. He don't listen.

LARRY finishes his iced-tea and tosses it in the sink.

CARMELA: Go. I'll do the washing up.

LARRY: Gonna have a talk with him when his friends are gone.

CARMELA: And say what?

LARRY: I want him to start thinking more in his life.

CARMELA: Good luck with that. I've tried.

LARRY: We can't give up.

CARMELA: Try. What can I say?

LARRY: If we don't set the example for him, who will?

CARMELA: I know Larry. You think you're the only one who tries? You're gone all day long. I spend way more time with Richie than you. It's no use. I talk to him, he'll be good for a day or two at best and then he'll do something that makes me wonder if young men like him were sent here from an evil alien species.

LARRY: He does seem out there.

CARMELA: Absolutely.

LARRY: I'll talk to him.

CARMELA: Give it a shot, but one talk isn't going to solve anything. Richie needs constant work or else forget it.

LARRY: I know, I know.

CARMELA: He is a good boy, just a little, I don't know, he's not as with it as he should be.

LARRY: I can't give him more brains.

CARMELA: No, you can't.

LARRY: I'm hoping by talking with him more often about life and things, he'll start to come around.

CARMELA: Problem is, they've got you working all day and night in that damned job and you don't have much time for him...and I'm busy running around, handling a million things at once, all while trying to transition my business online and I haven't got a minute to myself, let alone him! What's the boy gonna do? Same as what we did Larry, end up figuring out things too late in life. We figured them out alright but look at how long it took us! And look how we're still working now and we can't even raise him right! God, there were so many hopes I had for him, when he was born, I thought of all the things I would have done for him, get him involved in music, have him take guitar lessons, have him join the tennis club and be a proud member of it. Million things but just never enough, always something we gotta do to keep things together, so we don't go under.

LARRY: You know Ela, it might have taken us time but I wouldn't have taken one day back of struggle. I know you feel just the same, you wouldn't have taken back one day.

LARRY (cont'd): That's what makes me appreciate life, its beautiful struggle and Ritchie will be taught that, too. I ain't gonna be the kind of father who makes it easy on the boy, cause the moment you feel like you've got it all or that everything was put right in front of you so you don't have to figure out their place, that's when you lose something and I don't ever want to do that to him. Let him learn about life the way we did, let the boy make his mistakes, not too many but just enough, that's the least we can do.

LARRY exits through front door.

END OF PLAY