

Final Curtain

by

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Cast of Characters

FRANK : 50's
SISCO : 20's
RITA : 50's

Place
Dressing Room

Time
7:50PM

Setting: The play takes place inside Frank's dimly lit dressing room, inside an old rundown theatre ran by Rita. The dressing room is a strong reflection of what the theatre must be like, on its last legs, crumbling into nothingness. The years of greatness and success have now fallen by the wayside with only a shell left to remind those that lived it, what it was once like in its heyday.

At Rise: The play opens up with Frank sitting in front of a vanity, applying make-up to his face ten minutes before performing his solo act.

Frank talks to himself.

FRANK: There's the mirror...the make-up...this wooden vanity...*(he picks at the wooden vanity)*...you're a clown...who needs the make-up, it's all written across your face anyway...*(lifts his cheeks up with his hands and then lets his face drop)*...all there, old blue eyes...

SISCO: Hey Frank, you're on in ten.

FRANK: Alright. Sisco?

SISCO: Yo.

FRANK: How many we got out there tonight?

SISCO: Fifteen.

FRANK: No. What's the real numbers?

SISCO: We got two, but one don't look like they're gonna make it.

FRANK: Two people. What do you mean one won't make it?

SISCO: Coughing up a storm. Rita told me to ask them to leave if they don't stop hacking.

FRANK: Tell Rita that one person coughing in the audience is better than no one in the audience.

SISCO: But it's...non-stop coughing Frank.

FRANK: Non-stop? Maybe they're sick...and they still came out to see me...in this rain, it's raining outside, heavy.

SISCO: Ah, you know...the lady probably came in to get out of the rain...

FRANK: Oh, right, yeah...that's true.

SISCO: Oh yeah, I almost forgot, we lost the spotlight. No replacement until next week.

FRANK: What am I -

SISCO: Rita said to just stand stage left and the light is bright enough to take care of ya.

FRANK: Oh yeah?

SISCO: Best we could do.

FRANK: Anything else I should know?

SISCO: I'm gettin' married.

FRANK: You're what?

SISCO: Married, gettin' married.

FRANK: Oh. Well, congratulations.

SISCO: Carol.

FRANK: Carol, that's right. Wow, happy for you bud.

SISCO: I'd like you to be my best man.

FRANK: Me?

SISCO: Why not?

FRANK: Oh, no. No Sisco, you know I'm not best man material.

SISCO: All you gotta do is stand there.

FRANK: Nah, that best man, that marriage stuff ain't for me. Ask somebody else. I'm not the guy.

SISCO: I couldn't think of anyone better than you.

FRANK: I don't wanna sound harsh but...I can't. Let's leave it at that now.

SISCO: You're the only person I know, that's...it's okay, we'll figure something out.

FRANK: Don't you have any friends, Sisco?

SISCO: No.

RITA enters the dressing room.

RITA: Show's cancelled.

FRANK: Hi, Rita.

RITA: You hear me? Show's been cancelled.

FRANK: Why's that?

RITA: Got one person in the audience. Told you if we had another bum night, we're through. I can't produce another night for you Frank, I'm sorry. It's just not worth the time, money. I gotta have some blood in the place. Without it being empty like this, hardly any seats are filling...

FRANK: Yeah.

RITA: Tough luck, kid. Sisco, shut it down, least we could do is save on electricity. Do a sweep and lock the doors.

SISCO exits the dressing room.

FRANK: I thought we'd have a turn out.

RITA sits.

RITA: No turn out. Dead. Never seen it so dead. We've had bum nights before but this is, this takes it to an all new high.

FRANK: I remember a few times we had nobody show and then the following day it was packed.

RITA: It's different now Frank. The old tricks don't work anymore.

FRANK: What are you gonna do?

RITA: With what?

FRANK: You closing down?

RITA: No idea.

FRANK: ...We had a good run, no?

RITA: Yeah, yeah, we had some laughs.

FRANK: Had we known, right?

RITA: I've always known. Things don't last forever.

FRANK: I didn't know. I never imagined things changing. The only thing I was ever aware of was getting older, that I knew but I didn't see the change.

RITA: Started happening many years ago but you hang on, no one wants to ever let go of something that makes them so happy. I got comfortable. I can cry all day about the industry changing but at the end of the day, I have to take some responsibility for it. It's not like I evolved with the times, is it? I mean, I did try but I already knew the damage was done and the reversal of events was not gonna happen. I was only fooling myself all them years, watching each year slowly grind down to tonight...it's not so bad though...life moves on, we existed in our time and place and so will someone else and on and on...maybe that's what makes life a treasure, we get to share in our own little glimmer of light before the sun comes down on us. I think it was worth it. I wouldn't say it wasn't. Would you?

FRANK: No.

RITA: Who knows what's in store for this place. Lease expires soon. Time's up.

FRANK: I'm afraid.

RITA: You?

FRANK: Am I going to become one of those relics who lives in the past? Always remembering the old times, not living for the now...it's not like any other theatre is gonna be interested in me and my solo act. You were it...this place was it...

RITA: I know Frank. Believe me, i'm hurting...

FRANK: We did have some good times though, right? Remember that time Sisco fell asleep while fixing them stage lights? He made himself a hammock from all the tangled rope!

THEY both laugh.

RITA: That was terrific!

FRANK: What about when we received a food delivery that was supposed to be catered across the street and we stuffed our faces.

THEY both laugh.

RITA: We were bad.

FRANK: A lot of sweet spots in my memory.

RITA: Hey, you know Sisco is getting married right?

FRANK: He just told me.

RITA: And?

FRANK: What?

RITA: You gonna be his best man or what?

FRANK: Nah, no, that ain't for me.

RITA: But it's for him.

FRANK: Oh, come on, I can't get into any of that stuff.

RITA: Frank, without Sisco, we'd both be worse off.

FRANK: Yeah, I know.

RITA: He's a good friend. Loyal. He's never let me down once.

FRANK: So, why don't you be his best man?

RITA: He asked you.

FRANK: I'll pass it on to you then.

RITA: Frank...

FRANK: I have a thing with weddings, you know that.

RITA: But still.

FRANK: They don't, they give me anxiety.

RITA: Frank.

FRANK: Half my show is about my marriage to Linda.

RITA: This is about Sisco, not your marriage to Linda.

FRANK: (*Sighs.*)

RITA: He's always been there for you...you owe him in a way.

FRANK: Do I?

RITA: I think.

FRANK: Ah.

RITA: Do it for him...for me.

FRANK: When's the wedding?

RITA: Tomorrow.

FRANK: Tomorrow?! He tells me the night before the wedding??

RITA: Listen...it's not what you think.

FRANK: What is it then?

RITA: His soon to be is not well.

FRANK: No?

RITA: There's a chance she might not live out the year and...it's a big deal for you to be his best man in that.

FRANK: That adorable girlfriend of his he's always bringing around?

RITA: That's the one.

FRANK: She's sick?

RITA: (*Nods head.*)

FRANK: She never looked sick.

RITA: ...Will you do it?

FRANK: Do I have a choice?

RITA gets up and hugs FRANK. She kisses him on the cheek and rubs his face warmly.

RITA: I knew you'd do it. It's gonna mean a lot to him...

FRANK: I'll do it.

RITA: Thanks Frank. IF there was ever a way to end this whole thing of ours after all these years, you agreeing to be Sisco's best man is a poignant way to bring the curtain down. You're beautiful.

FRANK: Okay, okay.

RITA exits the dressing room.

FRANK talks to himself.

FRANK: There's the mirror...the make-up...this wooden vanity...(he picks at the wooden vanity)...you're a clown...who needs the make-up, it's all written across your face anyway...(lifts his cheeks up with his hands and then lets his face drop)...all there, old blue eyes...

END OF PLAY