

Fishin' for Misery

by

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Cast of Characters

<u>MAX</u> :	30
<u>JANICE</u> :	23
<u>NICKY</u> :	29

Place
Bar

Time
Day

Setting: The play takes place inside a small bar in Los Angeles. The place is dark and dingy. An old wooden bar counter, wooden stools, and a poor attempt at a Mexican fiesta styled appearance, which fails horribly and instead comes off as a try hard attempt at excitement, when in reality this place is one of the most depressing and cheap tiny bars in the surrounding neighborhood. One wonders how it's still operating business.

At Rise: The play opens up with Max talking to Janice at a bar counter. Janice is obviously not interested and Max tries to come off more successful than he actually is. Nicky (Max's friend) watches them from the opposite side of the bar.

MAX: I've been coming here for years.

JANICE: Really?

MAX: My favorite joint.

JANICE: Oh.

MAX: I live nearby, that's why and the people are real friendly, like family.

JANICE: I get it.

MAX: Jersey, huh?

JANICE: Yeah.

MAX: Never been. Whereabouts?

JANICE: You wouldn't know if you never been.

MAX: You like Cali?

JANICE: It's okay.

MAX: Been here all my life.

JANICE: So you must like it.

MAX: It's home.

JANICE: Yeah.

MAX: What brings you to Los Angeles?

JANICE: I like to make music.

MAX: You're an artist, cool.

JANICE: Yeah.

MAX: What kind of music you make?

JANICE: All kinds.

MAX: But what genre or style or---

JANICE: All kinds. I don't have a genre or anything.

MAX: I feel you.

JANICE: What about you?

MAX: I'm a director, a filmmaker.

JANICE: Really?

MAX: Yep.

JANICE: Done anything recently?

MAX: I did a feature and some shorts and---

JANICE: You successful at it?

MAX: Financially?

JANICE: What does success mean to you?

MAX: Well, I'm...I do okay at it.

JANICE: Is it what you love to do?

MAX: It is.

JANICE: What are you working on now?

MAX: Just been writing scripts, trying to get them picked up.

JANICE: Picked up...any luck?

MAX: There's some interest, hopefully something hits soon.

JANICE: Well, I wish you luck, I have to go now, my friend is outside.

MAX: No doubt.

JANICE: Later...

JANICE leaves.

NICKY comes over.

NICKY: How'd that go?

MAX: Dude, she was totally uninterested.

NICKY: You tried.

MAX: She saw right through me man.

NICKY: I told you to be confident.

MAX: Confident with what? I'm a fucking loser.

NICKY: According to who?

MAX: Me. Life. Society.

NICKY: Damn.

MAX: It's true man.

NICKY: It's true if that shit lives in your mind.

MAX: Where else is it supposed to live?

NICKY: Nowhere. Quit thinking like a turd.

MAX: I am a turd.

NICKY: If that's what you believe to be true, that's what will be true.

MAX: Oh, come on, look at me, same bullshit different day.

NICKY: I tried to tell you.

MAX: What? Tell me what?

NICKY: Tell you that you need to turn shit up.

MAX: HOW?

NICKY: You don't hustle enough.

MAX: No?

NICKY: No, you don't.

MAX: You know what? I don't want to hear anymore. I came to have a drink and have peace of mind. That's all I want.

NICKY: Good luck with that.

MAX: How do you do it?

NICKY: Do what?

MAX: How do you live each day of your life the way that you do? Everything is so casual, easy. You don't stress over nothing. I've never seen you worry about a damn thing and look at yourself, you're a moron. You have no career, no money, no prospects...how do you even get by? Whenever I see you it's always easy street. I've never seen you drop a bead of sweat on anything Nicky. Don't you wanna be something in your life?

MAX (cont'd): Don't you? Don't you want to amount to something more than some dunce that dwells in the valley? ...I didn't mean to diss...I'm just upset, okay? It's my own b.s. Has nothing to do with you. Hanging out with you and all makes me feel like I'm like you and you're a, oh man, do you follow me or what? I feel like I'm in Loserville! We come to the same joint every time to have beers and talk the same shit and see the same...we're friends with Leonard the singing homeless man for goodness sakes. We're on a first name basis. Other than you he's my closest contact in this town. He's come over my apartment for random sleepovers. And is that a good idea? Am I going insane? What's going on? I think I'm losing my mind man...I need to smoke up, we should smoke up, tell me you have some greenery. My head's gonna, I'm gonna tear my fucking head off my shoulders and throw it down one of the bowling lanes across the street and go out on a strike. I'm buggin'...do you have any?

NICKY: I don't really feel like sharing now bro.

MAX: I wasn't...come on now Nicky, Nicky I'm sorry, I'm sorry...I was rude as fuck.

NICKY: You shouldn't make fun of homeless people.

MAX: I wasn't making fun.

NICKY: Your tone. You took a funny tone when you mentioned Leonard and Leonard's my boy.

MAX: Leonard's your boy?

NICKY: Yeah.

MAX: The same Leonard who robbed you for a hundred bucks?

NICKY: I forgave him.

MAX: Am I the only person left alive on this planet that sees any truth?

NICKY: Dude, relax, you're getting all fired up over nothing.

MAX: Let's smoke up!

NICKY: Shhh. I got some shit. Chill.

MAX: Having a panic attack.

NICKY: Nah.

MAX: I am. I think something's wrong with me.

NICKY: You're just going through a miserable moment. It'll pass.

MAX: Everything's flashing by.

NICKY: Sit back down. Come on. Down your beer. I'll get you another. We'll think of a different joint to hang out (to bartender) Charles? Two more please.

MAX downs his beer.

Better?

MAX: Trying to catch my breath.

NICKY: Let the beer take effect. You're fine bud. Bad day. No biggie. It happens.

MAX: Bad fucking day...yeah...I'm in the shit, feeling the shit...

NICKY: I learned not to give a fuck, bro.

MAX: HOW? How do you do that? How are you so chilled out all the time?

NICKY: I don't know.

THE BARTENDER places two beers on counter.

Thanks Charles.

(to Max) Drink up, bud. It'll take away the pain.

MAX: Is this it? Is this all it's ever gonna be for me man? I'm nothing. Been trying to get my script off the ground for five whole years. Five! What have I done with my life?

NICKY: Have you written anything else?

MAX: I have but nothing as good as The Fish Takes The Cheese man. It's brilliant.

NICKY: Change the title and send it back out.

MAX: That's like me asking you to change your face Nicky. The title is everything.

NICKY: Can I ask you something?

MAX: Go for it.

NICKY: What does The Fish Takes The Cheese even mean, bro?

MAX: The fish is the sneaky character in the film and the cheese represents the money and so the fish swindles the money.

NICKY: It's a comedy, right?

MAX: It's not a fucking comedy man! How many times...? The movie is a dark crime thriller.

NICKY: Sounds like one of those stupid comedy type films or something.

MAX: I'm trying to be original, do something different, alright? That's my problem, no one ever understands me. If they took the time, they would see just how good my shit really is. We smoking weed or what man? I'm about to explode!

NICKY: Let's finish our drinks and go to my garage. I got you.

MAX downs his beer.

MAX: Let's go.

NICKY: Shit man, alright...I don't know though, that movie, something about that title is botherin' me, I don't think anyone is gonna read the script Max, with a title like that...

MAX: What's bothering you about it? Come on, Nicky, it's a fucking title!

NICKY: Yeh but, if someone sent me a script with that title, i'm not so sure i'm gonna read it like...

MAX: Alright...let's get out of here...I mean, maybe you're right Nicky, maybe you got a point.

NICKY downs his beer. NICKY puts money on counter, waves to CHARLES the BARTENDER who waves back.

NICKY and MAX exit the bar.

END OF PLAY