

# ***The Face of a Great Actress***

*by*

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Cast of Characters

AMBER : 30's  
CODY : 30's  
CRISSIE : 3

Place  
Apartment

Time  
Morning

2.

Setting: The play takes place inside a spacious suburban home in Long Island, New York. The center stage is the living room. Stage left is the front entrance with a small hallway. Stage left of living room is the kitchen with a door leading out to a backyard.

At Rise: The play opens with Cody on the living room floor with his daughter Crissie. Amber looks on at them from the kitchen.

AMBER: You can't keep babying her.

CODY: Why not?

AMBER: She needs to toughen up. Lately all she does is cry over everything.

CODY: She's three years old.

AMBER: So?

CODY: She's a child.

AMBER: We need to give her a stronger foundation.

CODY: Love is a strong enough foundation.

AMBER: No, you are babying her. She cries for her doll, you run and get it for her and it's two feet from where she's sitting. Let her get it herself. Don't cater to her that way.

CODY: I'm sitting right beside her and we're playing.

AMBER: She's going to become a spoiled brat that always gets her way and will have meltdowns if she doesn't. Is that what you want to deal with as she gets older?

CODY: Why are you always criticizing me about how I am with our daughter?

AMBER: Because she's daddy's little girl.

CODY: And what's wrong with that?

AMBER: I just told you, Cody.

CODY: You want to give me a complex over my relationship with my own daughter?

AMBER: Wise up.

CODY: Don't tell me to wise up.

AMBER: When she hits her teenage years you could deal with her. When she sneaks out at night to go meet up with boys or whoever, you can deal with all that because I won't have nothing to do with it.

CODY: What are you going on about? She's three years old!

AMBER: And one day she'll be thirteen smoking cigarettes and doing drugs.

CODY: Because I show her love.

AMBER: Because you spoil her rotten. She has more stuffed dolls than I've ever seen. We could open up a toy store at this point Cody. All she needs to do is point and you buy it for her. How is that setting a good example? I am yet to see you say no to her. Instead you let me do all the dirty work. She has her fits with me when I want her to go to bed, when I want her to take a nap, when I want her to eat. She's getting worse all on account that you give her everything. So when I tell her no, she goes head to head with me and she's only three years old! You are building a monster and you don't even realize it.

Learn to tell her no. Let her stew in her own mess. One day when things get rough for her and we're not around, what is she going to do then? Who will she depend on? She needs to have backbone. She needs to depend on herself. Or else she'll never amount to anything in this life. She'll always be looking for the easy way out or just become some lazy, whiny person who moans about every little insignificant thing...can't stand people like that.

Please, don't make my daughter become anything less than what she can be. I want her strong, fierce, determined...I want her to do things on her own so she can learn to live in this world, it'll eat her alive if she doesn't.

CODY: ...You need to eat.

AMBER: No.

CODY: That's it. You're getting off this fast.

AMBER: I have three more days left.

CODY: It's been seven days and you look pale.

AMBER: I don't care.

CODY: This isn't healthy Amber.

AMBER: It's stress. I shouldn't have to tell you these things.

CODY: I think you are making a mountain out of a mole hill.

AMBER: Bad things could start out as mole hills.

CODY: Give it a rest. Giving me a headache.

AMBER: Is that your go to?

CODY: I have the beginning of throbbing temples. If you stop now, there's a chance it won't get worse.

AMBER: Bullshit.

CODY: I'm not lying.

*Baby cries.*

AMBER: Oh, there she goes. As soon as we raise our voices she starts to cry. Let her cry.

CODY: What if something's wrong?

AMBER: Nothing is wrong with her Cody. Just look at her. The face of a great actress.

CODY: This isn't what I want.

AMBER: Then stop babying her.

CODY: It's a Sunday morning and I work all week busting my ass and all I want on the weekends is my family. I don't want to argue over things that I believe are exaggerated and even if your point is accurate, you don't have to beat it home. You can make a simple statement and I'll get the message.

AMBER: You don't get the message.

CODY: I'm not stupid.

AMBER: I make a clear statement and you question me.

CODY: Cause I'm trying to make sure I understand what's bothering you.

AMBER: Do you get me now?

CODY: I get you but I don't agree with you. Not completely.

AMBER: Give her a bottle.

CODY: I thought you said to let her stew in her own mess.

AMBER: She's crying because she's hungry and it's her nap time. Finally. Thank God.

*Cody takes out a milk bottle from the refrigerator.*

*Cody heats up a milk bottle in the microwave.*

CODY: Sure that's why she's crying.

AMBER: Go ask her.

CODY: Crissie, Crissie sweetheart, why are you crying honey?

AMBER: I was joking. *(to herself)* He's actually asking her.

CODY: She wants her ba ba.

*Microwave beeps.*

*Cody takes milk bottle out from microwave  
and gives it to Crissie.*

*Amber lights a cigarette. Opens the kitchen  
window.*

CODY: What are you doing?

AMBER: What does it look like?

CODY: You gave up smoking.

AMBER: I did. And now I'm back on it.

CODY: Smoke outside.

AMBER: No.

CODY: I don't want Crissie breathing in smoke.

AMBER: Chill, I'm by the window.

CODY: I can smell the smoke Amber.

AMBER: One cigarette won't kill her.

CODY: What the hell is wrong with you? I said go outside. You're pissing me off now.

AMBER: I don't want to smoke outside! It's freezing outside.

CODY: What is your problem? You've been having a go at me all damn week! And now you're smoking after everything we went through to get you to quit.

AMBER: Everything I went through, ME, what I went through to quit.

CODY: I paid for all your sessions.

AMBER: So, what?

*Cody walks away. He goes in the fridge  
and takes out a beer.*

*He downs it.*

*Cody takes out another beer and sits on the couch. He looks over at Crissie and takes the small blanket off the couch and puts it over his daughter.*

*Cody drinks his beer and puts on the TV.*

*Amber looks over at him and then back out the window.*

*Amber finishes her cigarette and closes the window.*

*Amber puts on the kettle and sits in a chair.*

CODY: I'm not gonna go on this way Am.

AMBER: (ignoring him)

CODY: You know...I'm a good man to you, our daughter...I hold my end up.

AMBER: And I'm not?

CODY: You are, but all this drama...can't stand it. I want to be happy with my family. I look forward to the weekends. It's what I live for...eh, whatever.

AMBER: Pam called me the other day. Said she wants to go away with me. Said she wants to go to Mexico.

CODY: Why?

AMBER: To get away.

CODY: To get away from what?

AMBER: Life.

CODY: Your life is so bad?

AMBER: I need a break.

CODY: So do I.

AMBER: So make arrangements.

CODY: I don't want to make arrangements.

AMBER: Don't you need to go somewhere, take a breather and live your life?



CODY: What the fuck are you talking about? This is my life! You wanna go off with Pam cause life is so difficult, then go. Leave me here with Crissie. I don't give a damn anymore. And what are you talking to that air head Pamela for anyway? She has nothing to live for. No job, no lover, no money, just drifting in the wind...all she does is drink and grow. That's her function.

AMBER: Don't be so mean.

CODY: You have a purpose. You have me, your daughter and you have your own career.

AMBER: What career?!

CODY: Graphic design.

AMBER: Oh, fuck that!

CODY: You told me Bill said that as soon as you're ready to return back to work, you can go back. Why don't you?

AMBER: That was when I was pregnant. It's way too late.

CODY: Why didn't you go back?

AMBER: I don't know.

CODY: Call Bill up and tell him you want to get back to work. He'll take you in a heartbeat. He's called here fifty times asking for you to return. What are you waiting for?

AMBER: It doesn't make me happy.

CODY: Oh, stop. You love design. You're great at design.

AMBER: I'm alright.

CODY: You are talented at design.

AMBER: Doesn't mean I love it.

CODY: You've always loved it.

AMBER: I hate it.

CODY: Amber, you're driving me crazy.

AMBER: I think I fell out of love with it.

CODY: Really?

AMBER: I think so.

CODY: How does that happen?

AMBER: The thought of going back to the office is daunting.

CODY: If it's a question of travel, I bet Bill will let you work remotely. You can do everything from your own home office. I'll build one out for you.

AMBER: With what room? We're already tight on space as it is.

CODY: No, we have that corner in the bedroom we can convert into an office space for you. It will be awesome. With Crissie going to daycare and everything, you will have more time to get back into the groove of things. Part time, bring in some extra money, feel good about yourself again...that's what you need, not this trip to Mexico bullshit with the most depressing person on the planet...you need structure, you need passion, you've covered yourself up into thinking you don't love design anymore, but that's only your mind playing tricks on you. Once Bill gives you a project, all your creative juices will start flowing again and I bet you will feel like a new person.

AMBER: It's a lot worrying about Crissie day in and day out. I've forgotten who I am.

CODY: I'm sorry.

*Cody gets up and sits beside Amber at the table.*

Listen, I'll buy you a dope graphic design desk. Anything you want, I'll get you all the filing boxes and cabinets, whatever you need, all the tools you need, software programs, whatever it takes for you to feel good about yourself again. You have so much in you honey.

AMBER: Bill won't take me back.

CODY: Sure he will.

AMBER: He told me the position has been filled.

CODY: When did he say that?

AMBER: A little over a month ago.

CODY: Wait, you asked to go back to work?

AMBER: (nods)

CODY: He said no?

AMBER: (nods)

CODY: Okay. That's no biggie. You can freelance. Which, honestly, now that I think about it, it's probably even better that way.

AMBER: No.

CODY: You make your own hours, work with your own clients. It's the same thing except you're your own boss.

AMBER: I don't know how to get clients.

CODY: Yeah, there's those freelance websites you told me about a while ago. Remember? You put your portfolio up and it will speak for itself. They'll be calling you. Name your own price and you'll be working in no time.

AMBER: I have to think about it.

CODY: Amber, just do it. You need it. And if you find out in two or three months that it's not making you happy, drop the whole thing and we'll think of something else, but at least you tried.

*Amber hugs Cody.*

And I won't pamper our little actress, who's passed out, as much. Okay?

*Amber laughs.*

*Cody laughs.*

**END OF PLAY**