

## AMERICAN ORGANIC

The green room cum dressing room occupies the whole stage. It contains one table, some chairs, two worse-for-wear suitcases, a garbage can, a basket of *Salesman* props, and other bric-a-brac as might be found backstage in a typical community theater. A telephone and an intercom speaker sit on the table. They are covered by LINDA's costumes. To one side is the dressing room containing a smaller table and a clothes rack on which hang an assortment of male and female costumes. On the wall is a poster advertising "Death of a Salesman - \$10."

There are three exits/entrances:

- Open passage to Salesman stage with sign 'STAGE'
- Open passage with sign 'EXIT to 4th St.'  
(Referred to as STREET in the script)
- Door with sign 'Rest Room. UNISEX'

ACT ONESCENE ONE

LIGHTS UP on LINDA arranging her costume accessories on the table. She is 50+, slight, prim, and proper. She has many and varied costume accessories often choosing highly unlikely accessory combinations for her next *Salesman* scene. Gradually through the play her costuming becomes more and more bizarre till in the end she is dressed for a role in a play of her own imagining.

CHARLEY ENTERS at a run from STREET and throws his a briefcase onto the table

LINDA

Good evening, Charley.

CHARLEY

I'm not here, Linda.

(Hangs up hat and EXITS still running to REST ROOM)

WILLY

(ENTERING from STREET, 50+ wearing a shabby suit)

Where is he? The bank came through, Linda. We're going into... veg'able wholesaling.

LINDA

Veg-e-ta-ble.

WILLY

(EXITS to STAGE)

CHARLEY! YOUR PROBLEMS ARE OVER!

CHARLEY

(ENTERS from REST ROOM)

I'll be in my car till curtain.

(EXITS to STREET with briefcase)

WILLY  
 (ENTERING from STAGE, notices  
 briefcase is missing)  
 He's in here.  
 (EXITS to REST ROOM)

CHARLEY  
 (ENTERING from STREET)  
 I'll have to face him sooner or later.

CHARLEY places briefcase on table as toilet  
 flushes. CHARLEY covers briefcase with some of  
 LINDA's costumes and rushes out to STAGE as  
 WILLY ENTERS from REST ROOM and sees  
 rearranged costumes

WILLY  
 Don't you have enough costumes to play with.

LINDA  
 No. I don't have any to spare.

WILLY  
 (Uncovers briefcase)  
 He is here.

LINDA  
 Who?

WILLY  
 Charley.

LINDA  
 Are you looking for Charley.

WILLY  
 Yeeeee.  
 (Moves to dressing room)

LINDA  
 (Utterly confused)  
 He's here... somewhere.

CHARLEY  
 (RUNNING in from STAGE )  
 I'll be in my car till curtain.  
 (EXITS to STREET with briefcase)

WILLY  
 (MOVING IN from dressing room)  
 The bank jumped on it. Soon as I told them Charley was coming  
 in. I gotta get the drawings. He's going to love this.

LINDA  
 But he's so settled in his ways.

WILLY  
 Nobody's settled.

WILLY heads for STREET as CHARLEY ENTERS from  
 STAGE. They cross

CHARLEY  
 Evening, Willy.

WILLY  
 Evening, Charley.  
 (EXITS to STREET)

CHARLEY  
 I'm not letting this deal out of my sight till it's delivered  
 and signed. Ever been to Mexico, Linda, and I heard that.  
 Settled in my ways, heh?

LINDA  
 Did you speak to Willy?

CHARLEY  
 He's upset.

LINDA  
 And it's not just last night.

CHARLEY  
 He wants to set up his own company.

LINDA

You and he are going into business?

CHARLEY

Willy can go where he likes. I am going into retirement. Got a speech prepared.

LINDA

You heard him last night on stage, going on and on about how he did not need sun nor rain, how his vegetables were coming from abroad. I don't know what the audience made of it. Dotty MacLeish said she never realized that Willy Loman secretly imported his vegetables. I do hope it goes well tonight.

CHARLEY

It's the last show. What can go wrong that hasn't already?

LINDA

Shirley said he got fired.

CHARLEY

Laid off.

LINDA

You could do nothing?

CHARLEY

They passed me over for promotion. Said I wasn't aggressive enough.

LINDA

But you were his manager.

CHARLEY

He got a good package. I saw to that. (PAUSE) It was out of my hands. Willy's the guy companies lay off when they get skittish. If only he was... pleasant.

LINDA

Pleasant? Willy?

CHARLEY

Yes. Pleasant. Calm. Friendly. That's all you need these days. Good's not good enough. Willy's good but he's not pleasant. These days you have to... maintain a pleasant exterior. Like today I'm in the office. (Picks up imaginary phone and in syrupy sales tones) *Angelica! How are you? And how is the CEO...? Good, and Mrs. Wantage...? Good... Fine thank you. About the project... He's leaving tonight? The convention, of course. I can get our proposal to him if... It's got some new figures. If he wants to take it along, call me at home and I'll drive it over to the airport. What flight? Four-one-three. Midnight. Got that. You call me now if he want to take it along... Otherwise see you Monday. Bye.* (Hangs up) And if I can't be pleasant, I pretend.

LINDA

Did she call?

CHARLEY

No, Linda, you don't understand. It's all a game. I offer, they decline. They'll get my proposal next week when it's finished.

BECKY MAE ENTERS from STAGE. Thirties, leggy and top heavy, she is a possessor of large appetites which she does nothing to suppress. She spends much of her on-stage time mincing between entrances and exits. Perhaps she pops gum. She wears a radio headphone-mic. Now she places a *Salesman* prop on the table

BECKY MAE

Twenty-five minutes. Is Willy Winkie here yet? I need this table. (To LINDA) PROPS!

LINDA

Becky Mae, I--

BECKY MAE

No more questions. PROPS!  
(EXITING to STAGE)

CHARLEY

Hang in there, Linda. We'll get through this with a little dignity.

LINDA

You will talk to Willy, won't you?

CHARLEY

Wantage will close next week and I can pay off that second mortgage on the house. Yes, sir. I'm booking tickets tomorrow. And don't you tell Doris. I'm even getting a ticket for her kooky sister Zoë who's coming out from New York. They don't know but we're all going to check out a condo. In Florida.

LINDA

But Doris hates travelling. She said she would never leave her friends here.

SOUND: Dog barking in the distance, growing rapidly nearer. A door opens and the bark gets instantly louder

LINDA (cont'd)

(soto voce)

Howard.

CHARLEY

DON'T BRING THAT MUTT IN HERE!

LINDA takes a prop from the table and scurries off through STAGE. HOWARD ENTERS from STREET holding a bag, a script, and a brown paper bag, which he places on the table. There is a noticeable tear in his trousers. He is young and displays much nervous energy. Throughout the show he works on his lines at every available moment. Now he checks the phone to make sure it is working. He takes a cell phone from his pocket and checks that it too is working

HOWARD

He smells the pepperoni. From my clothes. Any calls?

CHARLEY

You better fix that tear, Howard.

HOWARD

I'm expecting a call from the Cricket.

CHARLEY

The Cricket Theater? A View from the Bridge?

HOWARD takes a script from his duffel bag and waves it in CHARLEY'S face

HOWARD

I just did a call back. Eddie Carbone.  
(He rhymes Carbone with 'zone' throughout)

CHARLEY

What? I was... I didn't get a callback. And it's Carbon-e.

HOWARD

'Swhat I said. Eddie Carbone. You think I'll get the part? They're going to make the calls tonight so I gave them this number and my cell number. They'll call if I get it. They won't call if I don't get it or maybe they'll call and tell me anyway that I--

CHARLEY

I KNOW HOW IT GOES. I didn't get a lousy callback. (At the REST ROOM door) I'm Eddie Carbone!  
(EXITS to REST ROOM)

HOWARD

(To CHARLEY)

They can't cast the artistic director of another theater. Looks bad. Anyway, the director said he was looking for someone who can really act. Can you show me Eddie? How he walks. (Strutting) Eddie Carbone is'a home. Eddie Carbone is'a waiting for the phone.

SOUND: The phone rings. HOWARD, momentarily startled by the coincidence, creeps up on the phone and picks up gingerly

HOWARD (cont'd)

*Hello? Cricket Theater? Who? Andy? Oh, you mean Charley. Charley didn't do a call back. This is Howard... I mean Edel, Edel Muller. Howard? That's who I play in a play... in a play! No. No. My real name is Edel Muller, Muller Delicatessen and Dairy. What? Who? Charley? CHARLEY! IT'S YOUR WIFE!*

CHARLEY (O.S.)

Take a message.

HOWARD

*Look, Mam... I'm kinda expecting a call and... a message? Sure... okay... the airport... okay... bye... midnight... okay... I'll tell him... Who? How'd you spell that... okay, bye.*

HOWARD hangs up. Then he picks up to check that it is still working. He hangs up again. He also checks his cell phone

CHARLEY

(ENTERING from REST ROOM)

What did she want?

HOWARD

You have to go to the airport.

CHARLEY

What?

HOWARD

ZEE-EEE... ZEE-OH-... SEE-EEE--

CHARLEY

CEO?

HOWARD

That's it. Midnight. Tonight. The airport. Flight four, one...

CHARLEY

Three?

HOWARD

I guess.

CHARLEY grabs up the phone and dials. HOWARD checks his cell phone to make sure it is working

CHARLEY

That can't be right. I never expected Wantage would... Come on, Doris, pick up the phone.

HOWARD

She said she was going out.

CHARLEY

(Calmly)

Doris, Doris, dear, when you get this, call me at the theater.

CHARLEY hangs up, picks up his briefcase and paces

HOWARD

What approach should I take to Eddie?

HOWARD struts while CHARLEY paces

CHARLEY

Think, Howard. What did she say?

HOWARD

Midnight. Airport.

CHARLEY

Is that all? No verbs, prepositions. She doesn't talk like that.

HOWARD

I hear only important words. Helps with my lines. How does he walk?

CHARLEY  
(Pulling on his overcoat)  
I can do it. What time is it?

HOWARD  
You are leaving?

CHARLEY  
What does it look like?

HOWARD  
But the show. The show must go on.

CHARLEY  
Don't give me that garbage.

HOWARD  
You're the one always says "Stay, Howard, produce the goods"  
when I'm--

CHARLEY  
This is different.

HOWARD  
How is it different? You're our main director. You're the one  
keeps the show going. You're the one tells the audience when  
it's over. Don't leave. The house is open... CHARLEY! We need  
you.

WILLY ENTERS from STREET with a rolled up  
drawing and blocks CHARLEY'S EXIT

WILLY  
Charley! We got the go ahead from the bank.

CHARLEY  
Out'a my way, Willy.

WILLY  
We have a meeting at the bank tomorrow.