House Haunters

By Craig Sodaro

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Getting old feels like the end … especially for Margo. She's worked hard to build her career and her life with husband Lars. But her 30th birthday isn't what she planned. Already late to her own party, she and Lars quickly eat the last of the food before greeting guests. In hindsight, the crab salad may have been a little off … Apparently WAY off! Now they must start over in the after-life. But before they can rest in peace they must find a house and help the occupants. With the help of a celestial guide, they view three houses. There's the far-out beach bungalow with equally far-out residents, the retiree craftsman with a ghost already in residence, and the rental that needs a lot of TLC. Which one will they choose? In the end, Lars and Margo gain forgiveness, and a whole new perspective on what's really important.

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(Minimum 2 m, 7 w; Maximum 3 m, 12 w, 1 flexible.)

LARS: Thirty-something defense attorney.
MARGO: His thirty-year-old wife, an assistant prosecuting attorney.
JANICE: Margo's best friend.
CELESTE: A realtor.

House One
BABETTE: A twenty-something free spirit.
PHILLIPE: Her musician boyfriend.
VOICE: Offstage voice of a neighbor.

House Two
MARZIPAN: A retiree.
MARIGOLD: Her equally retired sister.
MADELINE: Their mother.

House Three
EDNA: A sophomore in high school.
LUCY: A classmate.
JEN: Another.
MOM: Edna's mother.
HECTOR: A classmate.
TINA: A classmate.

SETTING

A series of boxes painted white and blue sit here and there on the stage. These will serve as furniture or other items as indicated in the script.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: A suburban patio, evening, played before the curtain. LARS rushes on right.)

LARS: Honestly, Margo, I don't understand why you have to be late for your own birthday party. *(When he gets no response, he turns around to right.)* Margo? Margo? We're late! Everybody's here already!

(MARGO hobbles on with one high heel shoe on, one in her hand.)

MARGO: Quit yelling at me, Lars, and help me.
LARS: What happened to your shoe?
MARGO: I can't run after you and get both of them on at the same time.
LARS: Why didn't you wear what you had on?
MARGO: My running shoes? This is a birthday party, not a marathon. Now, hold still.
LARS: But we're late!
MARGO: Fashionably.
LARS: The party started an hour ago. There won't be a thing left to eat.
MARGO: We couldn't help it if that garbage truck overturned on the 202. We texted Janice. She understands. Now, don't move.
LARS: Why?
MARGO: I need a shoulder I can lean on.

(MARGO leans on LARS'S shoulder so she can put her other shoe on.)

LARS: *(Coyly.)* Guess that's why you married me, ha?
MARGO: *(Sarcastically.)* You finally figured it out.
LARS: You okay, hon? You're wound up like a Slinky.

MARGO: Wouldn't you be if this were your thirtieth birthday party? Thirty! I used to think everybody thirty or older was ready for assisted living.
LARS: I'll give you all the assistance you need.
MARGO: Oh, brother! Speaking of which, did you take the trash out?
LARS: Ahh … yes, maybe … I think I might have.
MARGO: *(Sighing.)* No, you didn't. You forgot again.
LARS: I didn't forget. Really! I thought about it, but then I just felt it was unwarranted.
MARGO: How do you figure?
LARS: The trash can wasn't full.
MARGO: So?
LARS: It's a waste of time dragging it to the curb and then dragging it back. It takes at least a minute, and if I wait until next week when it's full, I'll have saved a whole minute.
MARGO: Is that your idea of a logical argument?
LARS: Ticks all the logical boxes.
MARGO: Now I see why you are a semi-successful defense attorney. You use twisted logic.
LARS: I'm insulted.
MARGO: Your logic is twisted!
LARS: I'm insulted because you said I'm semi-successful. I just got Jimmy Dunston acquitted of grand larceny.
MARGO: You mean Jimmy "The Weasel"?
LARS: It's not nice to call names.
MARGO: You got him acquitted because the one witness who'd have testified against him took a 128-day cruise around the world.
LARS: Uh-oh! You're jealous!
MARGO: I am not! I'd be seasick for 128 days! The point is she's a sales rep at a jewelry store. Where did she get the money to go around the world on a cruise ship?
LARS: Maybe she won the lottery.
MARGO: The Jimmy "The Weasel" lottery, no doubt.
LARS: He still got off and I made enough money to push me from semi-successful to really successful.
MARGO: I wish I'd have had that case. I'd have nailed him with or without that witness.

End of Freeview

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