

# BECKY'S NEW CAR

## ACT ONE

*Becky's Living Room. Evening.*

*Lights rise quickly on the empty room, as we hear what might be a vacuum cleaner running offstage. Next we hear things falling and crashing — being grabbed, discarded, hurriedly put away, and then — Becky appears, in slacks and light sweater, somewhat disheveled, wearing one long rubber cleaning glove. With this gloved hand she is holding a toilet plunger upside down, with a new roll of toilet paper skewered on the handle. In her other hand is a Dustbuster, still running. A cleaning rag is draped over her shoulder. And yet, despite this dubious first impression ...*

*She is all charm, the perfect (if somewhat ill-prepared) hostess when she greets the audience.*

BECKY. *(To audience.)* Hi. Hello. Wait a second — *(She turns the Dustbuster off.)* There we go. Sorry. Hi! So glad you stopped by. I was just picking up the house a bit — *(She gives the new roll of toilet paper to an audience member.)* Could you put this in the bathroom when you go? Thanks. *(She moves about during the following, putting things in place, readying the house.)* You know how it is: Things ran late at work — so I called Joe, he's great, you'll love him, you'll probably end up liking Joe way more than you like me. Anyway, I told Joe I was still at work and could he pick up the pizza? — But he was stuck at his jobsite longer than planned — he's finishing up this apartment south of here, good money but a real long drive — and because of the rain last night, god that RAIN last

night, because of that he had to — wait — *(She finds an empty trash can and hands it to an audience member.)* See that drip right there. Just watch ... *(It drips, just a bit — from the grid — near the edge of the stage. To audience member.)* There. See. Could you put this over there for me? Thanks so much. *(She watches as the audience member puts the trash can under the drip.)* Wait. Let's be sure ... *(She waits with the audience member until a drip of water falls into the trash can. Smiles.)* Got it. Thanks. Did I mention that my husband is a roofer? Yes. A very good one. Twenty-plus years, but you know what they say — the shoemaker's kids and all that ... *(She continues to busy herself in the room.)* I should wake my son so you can meet him — that would be Chris — that would be his crap lying around here everywhere. *(She quickly holds up a piece of newspaper — offers it to an audience member.)* Sports section?

*(As needed.)* (Here you go.) // (I don't blame you.)

*(Back to straightening up.)* Don't get me wrong, I love my son — fruit of my actual loins — but God forbid he emerge from the basement where he lives as the Eternal Freeloader, sleeping off another night of grad-student angst and two-dollar shots. He didn't even do the one thing I asked of him, which was to get the dishwasher loaded — so, there you have it, that's the update: My son was loaded and the dishwasher was not — but, anyway, this is our humble home: *(She shoves a final magazine under the cushion of a chair or couch, strikes a friendly pose, and says:)* Welcome! *(Beat, looks around.)* Fact is: We need a new house. My friend, Rita — beautiful, wonderful woman, passed away last year, her husband Steve still hasn't gotten over it — anyway, Rita had this theory:

When a woman says she needs new shoes, what she really wants is a new job.

When she says she needs a new house, she wants a new husband.

And when she says she wants a new car, she wants a new life. *(A beat. Becky opens a drawer or cupboard and pulls out a very large [and nearly empty] carton of Diet Sprite. She fishes out a can, pops the top, starts to drink — then, seeing an audience member, she stops. To an audience member.)* Oh, I'm sorry. Did you want one? *(If this person says yes, she digs out the final can, saying:)*

*(As needed.)* (Here you go.)

*(Also: if this person says yes, she turns to the person next to this audience member, saying:)* (Sorry. That's all there is. Money's been tight and we let our Costco membership lapse, so ... you know.)