

"ANGRY YOUNG MAN"
a rhyming Verse Comedy
loosely adapted from Moliere's "Le Misanthrope"

By Daniel Trujillo

DIALOGUE SAMPLE

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CHARACTERS (in scene)

FRANK, an out-of-work director. He's got a lot of problems.

CECILIA, an actress. The focus of FRANK's attention.

CHARACTERS (in play)

PHIL, a philosophy major. Frank's best friend.

LAWRENCE, an actor's actor, and hanger on to CECILIA.

ELLEN, a waiting-to-be-an-actress. CECILIA's sister.

RICHARD, an actor and a hanger-on to CECILIA.

DELILAH, a personal assistant and also a hanger-on to CECILIA.

XAVIERA, a successful soap-opera actress

SETTING

The play takes place over one night and the following day in Cecila and Ellen's in the East Village of New York City, in the 1990s. It is small and trendy.

THE STORY SO FAR

Frank has come to his girlfriend Cecilia's apartment to confront her about a movie part she's auditioning for. He also ran into one of her many associates, an actor named Lawrence (a.k.a "Le Lairre"). He suspects something more than a professional friendship between them. Cecilia comes home, to find sulking Frank.

CECILIA

I'm going out on a limb. Is something wrong?

FRANK

I had a chance to poke around the sides
You gave me for his film. The screenplay prides
Itself in finding forms of mutilation
And women's sexual humiliation.

CECILIA

But isn't my part great?

FRANK

I think she whines.

CECILIA

Aside from that.

FRANK

She's got a lot of lines.

CECILIA

I know. Exciting, huh? A principle.
I never thought I'd reach this pinnacle.

FRANK

Let me get something straight. You like this part?

CECILIA

Of course. Why wouldn't I?

FRANK

Because you're smart.
This character is totally offensive.

CECILIA

Of course I was a little apprehensive
When I first read it. It's a challenge, though.
How far do people's moral standards go?

FRANK

Bullshit! This isn't about moralities!
It caters to the sensibilities
Of voyeuristic thirteen year-old boys!
Tits, ass and guns, stupidity and noise!

CECILIA

I guess you just don't like it.

FRANK

That's like saying
That Lucifer just wasn't in to praying.
I think that it's disgusting. I'm in shock.
Why would you want this mindless piece of schlock?

CECILIA

It's an enormous opportunity,
And I'm in shock you aren't supporting me!

FRANK

I am supporting you. I'm trying to make
You see this movie deal's a huge mistake.
You're trading in your self-respect for fame --
Not even fame! An off-chance that your name
Will be remembered by another cad
Who'll want you for a film that's twice as bad!
D'you want to be the flavor of the week?
They'll cast you so, if that's the role you seek.

CECILIA

It would be nice if all my offers were
Of Pulitzer or Oscar caliber,
Unfortunately, the dollar calls the shots.
The N.E.A. is limited in slots
And I'm a lousy waitress. Screw respect.
I can't afford to ponder and select.

FRANK

No matter who it harms.

CECILIA

I don't remember
A scene about some bunnies I dismember.
Do you?

FRANK

But what about the kids who watch
And learn to be disgusted by their crotch?
Or women brutalized by brain-washed men
Who see abuse condoned time and again?
'Cause that mentality sparks the attack:
A woman's better naked on her back.

CECILIA

Is that where this is going? Nudity?

FRANK

Your clothes are off before we reach page three.

CECILIA

I think that you are jealous. Are you green
'Cause guys will see my nipples on the screen?

FRANK

No. My objections aren't Victorian pride.
I don't mind nudity that's justified.

CECILIA

That's not my question, darling. What I'm asking
Is if you'll mind it when my body's basking
Under the awe-struck gaze of adolescents?
It seems to me that's what you mean, in essence.

FRANK

Oh no. Don't change the subject. What I mean --

CECILIA

Indulge me, Frank. Picture it on the screen.
My pink parts, ten feet wide, in all their glory,
Contributing no drama to the story,
Gratuitous, exploited, bare and jiggling!
Hear that?! The Sigma Bumfuck boys are giggling!
Oh no! The horror! Oh, how can you stand it?

FRANK

Ooo, you're so clever. You're a taboo bandit.
You'll change the nation with your daring-do.

CECILIA

Yeah, unlike some, I'm not pretending to.
Now please, let's drop it, hon. Have you heard
From Mr. Rollins yet?

FRANK

No, not a word.

CECILIA

I'm sure he'll write us soon.

FRANK

Well, if you schmooze
Him here as well, I'm sure he'll give good news.

CECILIA

I'll get a box. Just write your next complaint.

FRANK

No one's implying that you're not a saint,
 But I have to question your new policy
 Of giving out your keys so generously
 To every wanna-be and sleazy dork
 Who claims they're in the business in New York.

CECILIA

I need to make my home a gathering spot
 For the connected people. Those who've got
 The paying work will offer it for free
 To those who've shown them hospitality.

FRANK

Your hospitality is almost chronic.
 I'm sorry, but it doesn't look platonic.
 I also question people's motivations
 When they come over with congratulations
 But seemingly are interested in more.

CECILIA

What in the hell -- was someone here before?

FRANK

Your love, Le Lairre.

CECILIA

Oh, tell me that you're funning.

FRANK

No, he was here! And Jesus, was he running
 The foulest kind of theatre-weenie smog.
 He hurt me with his stupid monologue,
 But then he called you "goddess". He was smitten
 Far more by you than anything he'd written.
 Oh, he was eager! He's a young *gallant*.

CECILIA

He's also gayer than a hot croissant.

FRANK

Don't try - ! He is?

CECILIA

A hoo-hoo through and through.
 His boyfriend bartends at The Kangaroo.
 I get free shots when I drop by the place,
 And they swill too, when they aren't sucking face!
 So yes! You caught me! He's my paramour!
 Oh, should I pick your face up off the floor?

FRANK

He's still an opportunistic two-faced leech.

CECILIA

Why, Frank? Because he wrote a crummy speech?
Or 'cause he's capable of being gentle?!
Maybe the reason you're so temperamental
Is you no longer feel affectionate for me.

FRANK

How could you say that?

CECILIA

Well, you must abhor me.
You're harsh, you never want to go for drinks.
You're out of love. Or that's what Ellen thinks.

FRANK

My Earth is you, and every step.

CECILIA

That so?
Stop acting like I've turned into a ho.
Stop slamming every person that I've met.

FRANK

I don't insult them all.

CECILIA

You want to bet?

FRANK

I like Ellen. Ha!

CECILIA

People would like Ellen
If it turned out that she's a wanted felon.
I mean the other people that I'm close to,
The ones you never treat like you're supposed to.

FRANK

I gave them chances. More than they deserve!
They'd manage still to irritate a nerve.
Delilah, case-in-point. That crunchy twit
Is such a picture-perfect hippie-crite.
Does her phony accent and mysterious air
Convince you that she's not from Delaware?

CECILIA

That's one assumption that requires no proof.
 I'm first to say Delilah is a goof.
 A networked goof. I couldn't keep my distance.
 She's one of M.B.'s personal assistants!
 The girl's a lonely actress, nonetheless,
 Who lives vicariously through my success.
 I humor her dramatic aspiration,
 She sprinkles me in M.B.'s conversation.
 I can't afford to be thrown overboard
 By saying she's as intriguing as a gourd.

FRANK

How can you sleep?

CECILIA

I use a bed. And you
 Must welcome this as part of what I do
 For us, and for Seattle, down the line.
 Make nice with these acquaintances of mine.

FRANK

I'm asking you to reevaluate
 The ethics of the offer on your plate.
 You're asking me to scuttle my morality
 For social strategy and personality!

CECILIA

All right. Perhaps I'll turn the movie down.

FRANK

That's so - ! You will?

CECILIA

But baby, promise not to frown
 Upon my friends at my event tonight.
 And stick around. And try to be polite.
 I'll think about it if you get a grip.

FRANK

That's blackmail.

CECILIA

Yes. That's our relationship.

FRANK

God, please, Cecilia! Anything but that!
 They'll make me vomit with their name-drop chat!
 "Oh, so-and-so is doing this and this!"

(MORE)

FRANK (*cont'd*)

Tonight is something that I have to miss.
I'd rather stretch my body on the rack.

CECILIA

Then there's the door. Don't plan on coming back.

FRANK

Come on Cecilia! That's unreasonable!

CECILIA

The party or the door. That's feasible.
I don't think that I ask an awful lot.
I want one evening where you haven't fought
With someone over something minuscule
As if it were a fucking noble duel!
This is The Modern World! A person tries
To put aside their gripes and *compromise*.
See, I give, you give. That's the way we live.
It's not extreme. It's my prerogative.
So you can either be a concrete wall,
Not give an inch, not anything at all,
For fear that you'd appear to be a traitor,
In which case all I have to say is "Later!";
Or, you can let your cooler head prevail,
Stop being such a quintessential male,
Come help me get the wine I've got to buy,
And then, tonight, be Sweet-and-Pleasant Guy!

FRANK

Wine, huh?

CECILIA

And cheese, and pastries, pretzel sticks,
And get some kind of peanut party mix.
That's plenty. And, if everything goes right,
We'll see about you crashing here tonight.

(*CECILIA exits. Blackout.*)