

# Adventure Cabaret

## I Am a Hoarder

[Divorce scene]

**Hoarder:** And now I am divorced, all because of a single piece of paper among the tens of thousands of pieces of paper that fill my house. Here's how it happened.

*The wife of the hoarder enters.*

**Wife:** Honey, I have a question.

**Hoarder:** Ok, shoot.

**Wife:** What is this piece of paper? *(She holds up a small, crumpled piece of paper that looks very old.)*

**Hoarder:** May I see it?

*The wife hands it over.*

**Hoarder:** Oh yeah. This is the receipt for that bicycle I bought.

**Wife:** You mean the bicycle you ruined by leaving it out in the rain because you brought more junk into the house, and there wasn't any room? The one that is just a rotting, rusted mess that can now never be fixed?

**Hoarder:** Honey, I've told you before I'm going to get it fixed...some day.

**Wife:** Oh my God. Can't you see that no one could ever fix it now?

**Hoarder:** I'll fix it!

**Wife:** Ok, what is the date on the receipt? *(The hoarder hesitates.)* WHAT IS THE DATE ON THE RECEIPT?

**Hoarder:** September 14, 1992.

**Wife:** Can you explain to me why you are keeping a receipt from more than thirty years ago for a bicycle you ruined?

**Hoarder:** What if I need to take it back?

**Wife:** To a shop that closed twenty years ago?

**Hoarder:** Umm...

**Wife:** Give me that piece of paper. I'm throwing it out. Give it to me!

**Hoarder:** No! I need it!

**Wife:** Give me that goddamned piece of worthless paper!

**Hoarder:** NO! NO...I...I can't.

**Wife:** You give me that piece of paper, or we're getting a divorce. It's me or that worthless, senseless piece of paper.

*The hoarder is frozen, clinging to the piece of paper. The wife approaches him, and he puts his arm behind him, shielding the piece of paper from her grasp. Tenderly, she takes his face in her hands.*

**Wife:** Honey, it's over. I now know that you care more about a single, absolutely worthless piece of paper than you do about me, our marriage, or our entire history. I love you, but you are sick, you are crazy, and I have to leave you. Good luck with everything, and thank you for your honesty just now. It hurts horribly and always will, but I needed to know the truth. Goodbye.

*Exits.*

**Hoarder:** And that's how my marriage ended. I've never seen my wife since, but I keep that piece of paper in my pocket all the time. I don't even know why.

[Daughter scene]

**Daughter:** Hi dad.

**Hoarder:** Hi sweetie. What's going on?

**Daughter:** Oh, I just wanted to check in with you.

**Hoarder:** Ok.

**Daughter:** So how's it going with Dr. Johnson?

**Hoarder:** Good! He says I'm really starting to make progress.

**Daughter:** Really?

**Hoarder:** Yes. He's really optimistic that I'll be better soon.

**Daughter:** Dad?

**Hoarder:** What?

**Daughter:** There is no Dr. Johnson.

**Hoarder:** Of course there is.

**Daughter:** NO! There is NO DR. JOHNSON! All this time, you've been lying to me.

**Hoarder:** Honey, please. Don't do this.

**Daughter:** I checked everything. There is no therapist named Dr. Johnson at the adress you gave me, or anywhere else in this town. It was all lies.

**Hoarder:** No...please.

**Daughter:** I gave you *two thousand dollars* to finally go to a therapist to finally get well, because you didn't have any money because of all the crap you bought that you didn't need, and instead you spent it buying EVEN MORE crap you don't need, making our house even worse, and now YOU LIE TO ME ABOUT IT!

**Hoarder:** I...I...I can explain.

**Daughter:** NO! No, YOU CAN'T EXPLAIN! You stole from me, and then you lied to me! As if it wasn't enough that mom left you because you destroyed our house and destroyed your marriage, now you...steal from me...and lie to me.

**Hoarder:** How can you say that?

**Daughter:** Oh, you're just going to keep on lying?

**Hoarder:** But...

**Daughter:** Dad, I'm done. I'm done with you. You're a thief, and a liar, and you don't care about anybody, not even yourself. All you care about is all the rotting stuff stacked to the ceiling in this house you made so horrible.

**Hoarder:** I promise I'll make it up to you.

**Daughter:** No. No, you won't. I never want to see you again.

*Exits.*

**Hoarder:** And that's how I lost my daughter. To make myself feel better, that night I stole some stuff I didn't need from the back of a hardware store, brought it back and hid it in the little bit of space left in the garage.