

I Hate You
A Tragedy
by
Toby Keenan

973-610-4458
776 Saint Charles Ave, Apt 3, Atlanta, GA, 30306
Tobykeenanbusiness@gmail.com
Tobykeenan.neocities.com

CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
JAMIE	Acrimonious father.	40's	Male
LULU	Fed up mother.	40's	Female
BEEBEE	A son who's just getting by.	6	Male

NOTES: *The animatronic cat is about six feet tall. It slowly moves around the stage like a roomba and has a loud voice box that has three different meows. It is to be controlled by a designated operator. The actors must understand this and work around it.*

SCENE 1

SPOTLIGHT UP ON:

A giant animatronic statue of a cat sits center stage, staring forward. It's a black tuxedo cat, with beady eyes that glow red. It lets out a loud meow. (See notes)

SPOTLIGHT UP ON:

JAMIE, slightly disheveled, wearing a flannel bathrobe, stands beside the cat, staring up at it.

JAMIE

I hate you. I hate you so much. There is not a single thing in this realm of consciousness that compares. The most dedicated of scientists, historians, poets, could form a coalition, spending decades looking for some way to describe it. They could study every myth, every human atrocity, search the stars for the largest entity in existence, but they would all die millennia before they found anything. No synonym. No analogy. No unit of measurement. Nothing even remotely comparable to the amount of hatred I feel for you. Hate. Hate. Hate. Hate//

LULU

//Jamie!

LIGHTS UP:

The lights flip on suddenly, revealing the setting; the living room of a decorated upper middle class home. A couch sits center stage behind a coffee table. LULU, dressed in a grey suit, stands at the edge of the stage holding bags of groceries. The cat begins moving around the stage at a snails pace.

JAMIE

You're home.

LULU

What are you doing?

JAMIE

Talking to the-

I know. Stop it.

LULU

Lulu sets her groceries down on the coffee table, sits down on the couch.

How was-.

JAMIE

Stop. Just- quiet.

LULU

Lulu tries to decompress. Meow. Lulu jolts up.

Damn it!

LULU

Not good then?

JAMIE

I'm not talking about it.

LULU

Lulu rifles through the groceries, picking up a beer. She drinks.

Weren't you supposed to pick up BeeBee?

JAMIE

Tuesdays are Amy's days.

LULU

It's Wednesday.

JAMIE

He can walk.

LULU

Lulu takes another sip. The cat approaches the couch.

You're really going to do this? Just walk in and shut me down at every step you can?

JAMIE

LULU

I've told you twice now, stop.

JAMIE

You are. Wonderful.

LULU

I just want a simple, silent minute to myself.

The cat pulls up right next to Lulu, meows really loud.

LULU

Fuck! Can you really not turn the volume down on this thing?

JAMIE

How dare you ask that. You know damn well I can't.

LULU

I can't take it anymore Jamie. I really can't. This has already driven me insane, and now, somehow, I'm farther than that!

JAMIE

It's driving you insane? Oh? Oh yeah? Huh? Yeah? You have no idea what you're talking about. You're nothing but a microbe of semen in the reproductive tract of insanities father.

LULU

Stop talking like that!

JAMIE

Like what? Like I'm my own person?

LULU

Like a thesaurus!

JAMIE

Should I stop expressing my true emotions? Huh?

LULU

Stop talking in questions! Stop taking this out on me!

JAMIE

I was taking it out on the cat! But as soon as you walked in you told me to stop! Should I just stop all function? Idle here like a doll? Stop breathing? Stop living?

Just, just, just, just- LULU

Meow.

Stop! (at the cat) LULU

Lulu throws her beer can at the cat. There's a beat. Lulu grabs another beer from the bag, cracks it and drinks.

BeeBee should be home by now. JAMIE

I don't care. LULU

Motherly. JAMIE

You're no better. You're no better. LULU

LIGHTS FADE.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 2

SPOTLIGHT UP ON:

The cat sits, center stage, facing the audience. It's eyes glow red. Meow.

SPOTLIGHT UP ON:

Lulu looks up at the cat.

LULU

I hate you. I fucking hate you. I hate your voice. The constant meowing. That sound! I hear it everywhere now! At work. At the store. Silence doesn't exist! I hate you. I hate what you've done. I hate what you've turned me into. It hurts. It hurts so much. I thought that people were the only things that could cause this type of wound. Thorns prick. Liquor toxifies. Sickness withers. Physical scars. But the body heals. A cut will close, a bruise will fade, liquor will slowly leave your system. Only a human being can do things to you that are unrecoverable. Wounds to the heart. Wounds to the soul. Yet here you are. A statue. A soulless statue, and you've done more damage to me than I thought was ever possible. How could you?

Meow. The cat turns and slowly leaves the spotlight, it's eyes shining through the dark.

LIGHTS FADE.

LULU

How could you?

LIGHTS UP:

It's dinner time. Lulu, Jamie, and BEEBEE sit at a kitchen table, eating dinner. Jamie and BeeBee face each other, Lulu sits at the head, facing the audience. Beebee wears a dirty baseball uniform. Lulu's suit jacket rests on her chair, her white undershirt unbuttoned lazily. The cat isn't on-stage. They eat in silence. From offstage; Meow. Lulu hit's the table, startling BeeBee.

JAMIE

So how was practice, Beebee?

It was good. BEEBEE

You hit any home runs? JAMIE

No. BEEBEE

They eat.

JAMIE

It was very nice of Ms. Amy to drive you again, wasn't it?

Lulu takes a sip from her beer can.

I don't like Ms. Amy. BEEBEE

Oh yeah? Why's that? JAMIE

She's mean. BEEBEE

JAMIE

She is, isn't she? A mean, judgmental, lazy-eyed shrew, enclosed in a cycle of failure, trapped by the consequence of an old, broken, un-lubricated con//

Lulu hits the table

Jamie goes back to eating.

BEEBEE
(about the beer)

Mommy, what's that?

LULU

It's soda.

BEEBEE

Can I have one?

LULU

No.

BEEBEE

You never let me drink soda. I want a soda.

LULU

You're not having one. You're never having one. Don't ask again. Don't test me. You're lucky enough to have the food in front of you. So is your father, considering I'm the only one who's pulling their weight! I mean it's ridiculous! I deserve so much more than this!

BEEBEE

But I-

The cat enters, slowly moving towards the table in Beebee's line of sight. Beebee sees it and shuts up immediately, shriveling in his seat. Meow. Jamie turns around to look at it.

JAMIE

In the kitchen? That's new.

BEEBEE

My tummy's full goodnight.

Beebee gets out of his chair, exits hastily.

LULU

Beebee!

The cat begins making slow circles around the table.

JAMIE

You're a wonderful mother.

LULU

How dare you. I'm not taking this. I don't have any more room inside of me for this.

JAMIE

But you have room for more beer?

Beat.

LULU

Don't make me the problem. I'm not the problem.

Lulu points at the cat.

LULU

This is the problem. This thing has fucked us!

She bashes her fist.

LULU

It's fucked us Jamie! It's poisoned our brains and now it's scaring our son!

JAMIE

You're scaring our son! Look at your fucking hands!

Lulu's hands are red from bashing.

LULU

Why the fuck is it in the kitchen?

JAMIE

I don't know.

LULU

You made the god damn thing. You should know.

Lulu exits. Jamie sits with himself. Meow. He jolts up.

JAMIE

(To Lulu)

You torture me! You torture me! You can't fathom what this is like! What this pain I feel is like! This penitence! This acrimony! You do nothing to console! You provide no amenity! You strand me in this! You reject! Disdain! Derision! Hate! Hate!

The cat rolls up behind Jamie. Meow.

JAMIE

(To the cat)

Get the fuck out of the kitchen you swine! You vermin you! I hate you! I hate you!

Jamie faces down the cat. Meow. He slaps it. Meow. The cat turns and exits.

LIGHTS FADE.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 3

SPOTLIGHT UP ON:

Beebee, in his baseball uniform, holding his bat and glove, looks up at the cat.

BEEBEE

I don't like you. You're scary. You make mom and dad yell.

Meow.

BEEBEE

I don't like it. I hear it everywhere. In my room. At school. I hear it at practice. The yelling. I don't like it. I don't like it! I'm gonna go somewhere where I'll never hear it ever again.

Meow?

Beebee exits, leaving his bat and mitt.

LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP.

Lulu sits on the couch in the living room, staring out. Beebee's bat and mitt lay where they were dropped. The cat moves back and forth across the stage.

Meow. Meow. Meow.

Jamie enters.

JAMIE

Amy called. She found him at the bus stop.

Lulu sits back in relief. Jamie sits down next to her. They take their moment.

LULU

Why.

Jamie stares off.

LULU

Why Jamie. Why? Please, please, please, just tell me. Why did you make this thing?

Beat.

JAMIE

I don't know. At one point I did. But I've lost that knowledge. I don't even know how it works anymore, how I even made it. It's all noiseless static in the void of lost memories.

LULU

Then why won't you get rid of it? Why have you done this to yourself. To me. To BeeBee? Do you know? Or have you lost that memory as well?

Beat.

JAMIE

Every human being who has ever lived, will one day make the biggest mistake of their life. And they'll never know. They could look the wrong way and be flattened by an oncoming semi-truck. They could say no to a job that would lead them to a life of fulfillment. They could choose to sleep in on the day they were supposed to meet the love of their life. And they'd never know. That's something no one should ever know. But I do. I know.

Jamie looks at the cat, following it with his eyes as it moves back and forth across the stage.

LULU

So it's solace? Some kind of selfish relief?

Jamie is focused deeply on the cat.

LULU

I don't understand this Jamie. I try and I try, but I can't. We've done this over, and over, and over, and I still don't get it. Don't you hate it? Don't you hate this thing?

JAMIE

I do. With every fiber of my body. With every aspect of my soul.

LULU

Then get rid of it.

JAMIE

No.

Get rid of it!
LULU

No!
JAMIE

Get rid of it right now!
LULU

No, no, no, no, no! I won't! I won't get rid of it, I don't want to get rid of it! I refuse!
JAMIE

Who are you? I don't know you!
LULU

I am calamity! Everything around me is swirling in! Machinations! Inhibition! A torturous nebula! Incomprehensible! And I writhe in it! I toil in it! I relish it! I'm freed by it! Fueled by it! A rush of elation gratified by chemicals propelled through synapses in my brain that drip drip drip into my very soul! Transcending condition! Actuating piety! Pure, unbridled, hatred! Hate! Hate! Hate!
JAMIE

The cat meows rapidly.

Shut up! Shut up! Shut up! Shut up!
LULU

Never! Forever! Hatred reign free!
JAMIE

Lulu grabs BeeBee's bat off the ground.

AAAAAAHHHHHH!
JAMIE

Lulu starts bashing the cat. With every hit, her and Jamie wince, contort, scream, as if they're being struck themselves.

LIGHTS FADE.

Silence.

SPOTLIGHT UP ON:

BeeBee enters at the edge of the stage. He turns offstage and waves, then faces back forward, takes a step, then stops.

BEEBEE

Mom? Dad?

LIGHTS OUT.

END OF PLAY

SAMPLE