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Dramatic Publishing

THE SMELL OF THE KILL

By
MICHELE LOWE

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THE SMELL OF THE KILL

A Full-length Play
For 3 women

CHARACTERS

DEBRA
MOLLY
NICKY

3 OFFSTAGE VOICES (male)

(NICKY enters. She opens the kitchen drawers two at a time, searching for something. The pounding starts again.)

DEBRA. What is going on down there?

NICKY. I found them.

DEBRA. Why are they making that noise?

NICKY. They want our attention.

DEBRA. Did you tell Marty I was ready to leave?

NICKY. No.

DEBRA. Why not?

NICKY. He's in the meat locker.

DEBRA. Nicky, could you please go back down there and tell Marty I want to go home.

NICKY. Debra, sit down.

DEBRA. I want to leave.

NICKY. Debra, Marty can't come up.

DEBRA. What do you mean he can't?

NICKY. He can't.

DEBRA. You tell Marty to come out of there this minute!

NICKY. Believe me, if he could he would.

DEBRA. Why can't he then?

NICKY. Because he's locked in.

DEBRA. Oh, my God!

NICKY. This door's been a problem lately.

DEBRA. What about an ax?

NICKY. There is no ax. There's a key.

DEBRA. Where is it?

NICKY. It's in one of these drawers.

MOLLY. Nicky...

DEBRA. When did you see it last?

NICKY. Last week.

DEBRA. Is it there?

NICKY. I don't see it.
DEBRA. Something terrible's going to happen.
MOLLY. Nicky...
NICKY. I know it's in here.
MOLLY. Nicky...
NICKY. It's got to be in here.
MOLLY. Nicky?
NICKY. What?
MOLLY. Are they all in there?
NICKY. All three of them.
MOLLY. Oh, those poor animals. It must be terribly crowded.
DEBRA. Who cares about the animals—they're dead! Maybe
 we should call the fire department.
NICKY. No, no, I'll find it.
DEBRA. We shouldn't wait any longer.
NICKY. Debra, nothing's going to happen to the boys.
MOLLY. Is it cold in the meat locker?
NICKY. Yes.
MOLLY. But not that cold, right?
NICKY. Oh, it's cold.
MOLLY. But not *that* cold.
NICKY. It's cold.
MOLLY. How many degrees?
NICKY. Ten.
DEBRA. Oh, my God!
NICKY. Maybe fifteen.
DEBRA. They could freeze in there.
MOLLY. If you couldn't find the key.
DEBRA. They could suffocate in there.
MOLLY. If it wasn't in the drawer.
DEBRA. They could have heart attacks, strokes!

NICKY. Wait a minute—I found something. (*She lifts a key out of the drawer.*)

DEBRA. *They could all die down there!*

NICKY (*the key falls out of her hand*). Oops.

DEBRA. What was that?

NICKY. Back door key.

DEBRA. Are you sure?

NICKY. Positive.

DEBRA. We can break down the door.

NICKY. It's five inches thick.

DEBRA. We'll tip it over.

NICKY. The thing weighs over a ton. It took three men to bring it in.

MOLLY. I told Danny to wear a sweater tonight.

NICKY. Did he?

MOLLY. No. I said, "Danny, the nights are getting chillier."

DEBRA. Nicky, what does the key look like?

NICKY. How long does it take to make ice?

MOLLY. I don't know—I buy it by the bag.

NICKY. Take a guess.

MOLLY. Let me think.

DEBRA. Nicky, why did you stop looking?

NICKY. What's the rush?

MOLLY. No rush.

NICKY. Jay loves the winter.

MOLLY. Danny loves the fall.

NICKY. If only he knew how to dress for it.

MOLLY. Sit down, Debra.

NICKY. Have a drink, Debra.

DEBRA. I'm going down there.

(DEBRA exits. The alarm on MOLLY's watch beeps.)

MOLLY. Danny bought me a watch with an alarm. He has it set for every two hours.

NICKY. What for?

MOLLY. So I can call him.

NICKY. Why?

MOLLY. He loves me.

(The pounding starts again.)

NICKY. So call him.

MOLLY. He's wearing his beeper. I'm supposed to beep in.

NICKY. What do you say?

MOLLY. I leave little messages.

NICKY. Pick up milk.

MOLLY. I love you.

NICKY. Drop dead.

MOLLY. Stuff like that.

NICKY. I think he'd appreciate a call right now.

MOLLY. You think?

NICKY. Definitely.

MOLLY *(picks up the phone and dials)*. I'd like to leave a message for Daniel Gilroney. Yes, would you tell him that his wife is thinking of him *right now*. Thank you.
(She hangs up.)

NICKY. Well done.

MOLLY. At night he checks it to make sure the battery's running.

NICKY. Must be aggravating.

MOLLY. Oh, you don't know...

NICKY. Every two hours...

MOLLY. No matter where I am.

NICKY. The john?

MOLLY. Oh, sure.

NICKY. Jesus. *(Beat.)*

MOLLY. This is tricky...

NICKY. Yes.

(NICKY pulls the key out of her pocket. MOLLY takes it and puts it in her purse.)

MOLLY. How cold did you say it was?

NICKY. Fifteen degrees.

MOLLY. Bananas freeze at twenty.

NICKY. Colder than that. *(Beat.)*

MOLLY. Nicky, do you believe in heaven? Where there are angels with wings sitting on clouds listening to Enya? If Danny goes to heaven, he could see our baby.

He could explain...about the waiting.

NICKY. Oh, Molly...

MOLLY. That it wasn't my fault.

NICKY. No, of course not.

MOLLY. He wouldn't let me give her a name.

NICKY. She was too little, Molly.

MOLLY. I should have done something—

NICKY. You couldn't.

MOLLY. I should have given her a name.

(DEBRA enters.)

DEBRA. What have you done!

NICKY. I didn't do anything.

DEBRA. This is your fault!

NICKY. What did I do?

DEBRA. Isn't there an emergency button in there or something?

NICKY. What for? The dead ducks? So they can buzz us in case they want to come out and make a phone call?

DEBRA. Why haven't you called the police?

MOLLY. Gosh, I didn't think of that.

DEBRA. I'm calling 911. *(She looks for the phone.)*
Where's the phone? Where's the phone?

(DEBRA sees the phone on the counter. She lunges for it. NICKY grabs it first.)

NICKY. Grab her!

(MOLLY captures DEBRA.)

DEBRA. OW!

MOLLY. Sorry.

DEBRA. What are you doing?

MOLLY. I'm hurting you.

DEBRA. Stop it!

MOLLY *(leans in)*. Debra, you smell nice.

DEBRA. Get off of me!

MOLLY. But your gray's coming in.

DEBRA. Ow!

NICKY. Let me see.

DEBRA. You're crazy.

(MOLLY jerks DEBRA's head toward NICKY. NICKY looks at DEBRA's roots.)

NICKY. No, she's right.

DEBRA. Ow!

NICKY. Promise you'll stay still and Molly will let you go.

DEBRA. Let go of me!

MOLLY. She's not going to stay. Let's tie her up.

DEBRA. No.

NICKY. Oh, come on, Debra. (*NICKY exits.*)

DEBRA (*to MOLLY*). My arm! You're twisting it!

MOLLY. Sorry.

(The pounding sounds again.)

DEBRA. We have to get them out of there! Listen to them!

(NICKY enters with two pairs of pantyhose.)

NICKY. Will these work?

MOLLY. Donna Karan?

NICKY. Calvin Klein.

(The sound of pounding again.)

DEBRA. Marty!

(NICKY shoves a dishtowel into DEBRA's mouth.)

MOLLY. She's moving, she's moving— Get the chair.

NICKY. Don't let her go.

(MOLLY and NICKY overpower DEBRA.)

MOLLY. Hold her. (*She takes the pantyhose and ties DEBRA up.*) I've got her.

(*NICKY sits on DEBRA and puts her in a headlock.*)

NICKY. My brother used to do this to me. (*She looks back at MOLLY tying up DEBRA.*) How'd you learn to do that?

MOLLY. We had boats when I was little.

NICKY. Sailboats?

MOLLY. Yachts.

NICKY. I always wanted a boat.

MOLLY. Boats are fun.

NICKY. Jay didn't want one. He wanted a meat locker.

MOLLY. His mistake.

NICKY. I bet he's thinking that right now—as he watches his penis shrivel up.

MOLLY. It must be teeny tiny by now.

NICKY. I picture them down there right now, desperately trying to keep warm, three homophobic golfers rubbing up against each other. Marty's probably got his hands all over Jay.

MOLLY. Or Danny.

NICKY. Oh, what's the big deal. If it makes them happy, let them! (*MOLLY has finished tying up DEBRA.*) She looks mad.

MOLLY. She just wants attention.

NICKY. Now what?

MOLLY. I don't know.

NICKY. I don't know either. We can't leave her like that.

MOLLY. No.

NICKY. This has got to work for everyone.

MOLLY. Right.

NICKY. Maybe we should vote.

MOLLY. I never vote.

NICKY. Oh, Molly, why not?

MOLLY. I forget to.

NICKY. Ask Debra if she wants to vote.

MOLLY. Debra, if I take out the dishtowel will you scream again? (*DEBRA shakes her head.*) I'm trusting you, Debra. (*MOLLY removes the dishtowel.*)

DEBRA. Vote for what?

NICKY. The boys. We can vote them "IN" or we can vote them "OUT."

DEBRA. You wouldn't just leave them in there?

NICKY. Up to the voters. (*She takes a marker and draws a long line down the refrigerator. She marks the left side "IN" and the right side "OUT."*)

MOLLY. Should we put their names up? That way we don't lose track of who's been voted on.

NICKY. Good idea.

(NICKY writes the men's names down the left side of the refrigerator. DEBRA drags herself and the chair toward the door to the dining room.)

NICKY. Where is she going?

MOLLY. She can't get far.

NICKY. Everybody ready?

MOLLY. Everybody's ready.

NICKY. I think each woman should vote for her own husband. The decision of the judges is final and must be unanimous.

MOLLY. Unanimous.

NICKY. After all, if we let one of them go free, he could point a finger.

MOLLY. Oh, yes.

NICKY. If it hadn't frozen off.

DEBRA (*stops in her tracks*). Wait a minute, wait a minute, you're saying if just one of us wants her husband released, they all go free?

NICKY. I think it's the only way. Unless you have a suggestion.

DEBRA. No, no, no, I'm with you. It's the only way.

MOLLY. I agree.

DEBRA. In that case, I'll be good.

NICKY. Promise.

DEBRA. I promise. Now, will you please untie me!

NICKY. Molly, what do you think?

MOLLY. She promised. (*MOLLY releases her.*)

DEBRA. Thank you.

MOLLY. Your wrists are red.

DEBRA. And whose fault is that?

(NICKY takes a bag of frozen peas out of the freezer and gives it to DEBRA.)

NICKY. Here.

(DEBRA puts the peas on her wrists.)

DEBRA. Let's vote.

MOLLY. Let's just do it right. Should we do this by open vote? Should we do it by secret ballot?

NICKY. Oh, I don't know. Debra, what do you think?

DEBRA. Secret ballot? Sure, secret ballot.

MOLLY. I only want to do right by Danny. I want him to feel good about this.

NICKY. All those in favor of secret ballot?

(DEBRA raises her hand.)

MOLLY. You lose.

NICKY. Who wants to go first?

MOLLY. Can I go first?

DEBRA. I'll go first.

NICKY. I think Molly should go first. Two against one.

MOLLY. Should I stand up? Should I sit down?

NICKY. Whatever you want. You're among friends. Right, Debra?

MOLLY. I think I'm going to stand up.

DEBRA. Molly, two weeks ago you and I had lunch at Chez Paul.

MOLLY. Right.

DEBRA. What happened?

MOLLY. I had scallops.

DEBRA. Who showed up?

MOLLY. Danny.

DEBRA. Why?

MOLLY. He loves me.

DEBRA. What did he do?

MOLLY. He held my hand.

DEBRA. Did he say anything?

MOLLY. No. He just held my hand and left.

DEBRA. That's it?

MOLLY. He paid the check.

DEBRA. He surprised you, held your hand, bought you lunch, and you'd leave this man in a freezer?

MOLLY. No matter where I go...

DEBRA. He adores you!

MOLLY. No matter what I do...

DEBRA. He worships you!

MOLLY. He finds me.

DEBRA. It's wonderful!

MOLLY. I can't take it.

DEBRA. What more could a woman want than a wonderful, adoring...?

MOLLY. Asexual...

DEBRA. Husband!

MOLLY. I want a baby.

DEBRA. OK. You can have Nicky's baby.

NICKY. What are you talking about?