SIDE 2 — Mrs. Savage & Her Children

THE CURIOUS SAVAGE by John Patrick

Mrs. Savage • Titus • Lily Belle • Samuel

Focus: Sharp comedic timing • Listening under pressure • Cold family contrast

(The children enter for the confrontation about the missing money.)

TITUS
I don't know what to say to you, Mother. For the life of me, I don't know what to say.

MRS. SAVAGE
Polite people say “Good evening.”

LILY BELLE
Deception is so unlike you.

SAMUEL
I'm not angry—I'm just hurt.

TITUS
Have you the faintest idea of the enormity of what you've done? You've sold control of fifteen Savage industries.

LILY BELLE
We'll have to sell our stock in Savage Brass to buy it back.

MRS. SAVAGE
Oh, didn't you find out? I sold that first.

LILY BELLE
I mustn't get excited—I mustn't get excited—I get lines.

TITUS
What else—what else did you dispose of?

MRS. SAVAGE
Everything in my name.

SAMUEL
We're ruined.

TITUS
Where is the money? You couldn't have spent it?

LILY BELLE
Tell us what you did with it, dear.

MRS. SAVAGE
I converted it into a neat little bundle of negotiable bonds—and buried them.

TITUS
When you say “buried”—you mean “hidden”?

MRS. SAVAGE
I mean buried—as in funeral.

SAMUEL

In the ground?

LILY BELLE

I feel physically ill.

TITUS

Where is it buried?

MRS. SAVAGE

I forget.

TITUS

Oh, Lord, grant my mother one moment of clarity!

LILY BELLE

Where did you bury it—concentrate!

MRS. SAVAGE

(Puffs her cheeks, then explodes them.)

Best thing in the world for taking lines out of the face, Lily Belle. I've got to do something about getting you a new eye.

(To the teddy bear)

Do you know any place that sells bear's eyes, Lily Belle?

LILY BELLE

Give me that stupid thing and answer us!

(Tries to take the bear. Mrs. Savage bites her.)

LILY BELLE

She bit me!

TITUS

Nonsense. Whatever Mother might do—she wouldn't descend to biting.

SAMUEL

It was a wasp.

LILY BELLE

If ever there was a wasp—it's the woman we call Mother. I know when I'm bitten. Teeth marks!

TITUS

Lily Belle—we'll get nowhere fighting among ourselves. Now stop it. We can't afford it.

MRS. SAVAGE

You can't afford anything.

TITUS

We simply refuse to be angry with you, Mother. Lily Belle, apologize.

LILY BELLE

I will not.

TITUS

Lily Belle!

LILY BELLE

(Swallowing hard)

Mother, it's quite all right, I don't object to your biting me—gnaw and mangle me to the bone—gum me to your heart's content—only tell us what you did with our money.

MRS. SAVAGE

My money—you've already had your share.

LILY BELLE

The estate is ours. It's belonged to the Savage family for generations.

SAMUEL

Eight generations.

TITUS

It's unthinkable that you should be the first Savage to be found wanting.

MRS. SAVAGE

Found wanting what?

TITUS

The Savage pride.

(Sees the dart board with Lily Belle's picture.)

What of it? That can't possibly hurt you.

LILY BELLE

It's a vicarious form of murdering someone! It's just the most vicious sort of voodoo magic known to science. We were fostered by a werewolf—every Savage son of us!

TITUS

My patience is exhausted. What have you done with the money?

MRS. SAVAGE

(Shouting)

I told you. I buried it!

TITUS

Where? Unless you tell us at once, you're going to a public institution.

MRS. SAVAGE

You've got me in such a state, I can't think. I haven't a brain in my head, anyhow—you've said so time and again. With all this shouting—you've given me a headache. I can't remember a thing.

TITUS

What do you mean you can't remember a thing?

MRS. SAVAGE

I can't. My head is pounding. The only thing that clears my head is those powders I used to take.

TITUS

Where are they?

MRS. SAVAGE

I'm out of them.

(Brightly)

Here's the prescription number—it's from my druggist. In Boston.

TITUS

You mean drive all the way back to Boston!

MRS. SAVAGE

(Clutching her head)

Where is everyone?

End of Side