

"Treasure"

by

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SETTING: The attic of a hoarder.

CONCEIT: The attic is three feet deep full of stuff: old photos, books, magazines, clothes, quilts, furniture, ornaments, appliances, toys, etc.

All of this is imagined. In reality, **the stage is bare.**

In fact, the only actual prop on the whole stage is **an old photograph** of a family of four (two adults and their young children), all smiling. This photo is lying face up on the attic floor and visible for the audience to see. But, to the characters, it is buried deep under all that junk.

CHARACTERS: Two adult siblings. They can be any sex or age.

- **ALEX:** The older sibling. Successful, bitter, sarcastic. Moved away long ago.

- **DREW:** The younger sibling. Kinder, gentler, optimistic. Stayed behind.

FADE IN:

A trapdoor opens in the attic floor. Alex's head pokes through.

ALEX

Oh my God.

Alex pushes some junk aside and steps carefully into the attic, trying to find a safe place for their feet.

ALEX

Oh my God.

Drew appears through the trapdoor.

DREW

I told you.

ALEX

I know, I just didn't believe you.

Drew gingerly makes their way over to Alex.

DREW

It's hard to believe. There must be half a ton of stuff up here.

ALEX

Who would do something like this?

DREW

Our mother.

ALEX

I thought it was bad downstairs. How the hell did she get all this crap up to the attic, anyway? She wasn't that strong.

DREW

Time. She had 45 years.

ALEX

Did you know about this?

DREW

Yes and no. I mean, I knew she was a bit of a hoarder.

ALEX

A bit?

DREW

I knew she hated to throw anything away. I was always talking to her about it... trying to convince her to get rid of some things. And, honestly, I thought she was. I just hadn't been up to the attic.

ALEX

What is all this stuff, anyway?

Alex wades forth into the mess, stumbles for a moment, and then catches their balance.

DREW

You okay?

ALEX

I'm fine.

DREW

You have to be careful up here.

Alex ignores Drew and pushes further into the horde.

ALEX

Well, if you don't hear from me soon, send out a search party.

DREW

That's not funny.

ALEX

I wasn't joking.

Drew begins searching through the nearby debris.

ALEX

What the hell?

DREW

What is it?

ALEX

Just an old toaster... from the 70's, I think.

DREW

It's an antique. Maybe it's worth something.

ALEX

Don't start. You sound like Mom.

DREW

Well, I'm sure there's something valuable up here.

They continue digging through the mess. Alex kneels down to get a closer look at something.

ALEX

Stop looking, I just found it, the answer to our prayers. 1979 TV Guide - BJ and the Bear. We're rich.

DREW

Very funny.

ALEX

Why did she save all this junk?

DREW

I don't know.

ALEX

You never asked her?

DREW

Not really.

ALEX

Well, it's too late now.

DREW

Yes, it is.

Drew pulls aside a bag to reveal something.

DREW

Wow.

ALEX

What did you find?

Drew holds up an old Halloween costume.

ALEX

Is that my old Peter Pan costume?

DREW

Yep.

ALEX

I was adorable.

DREW

It's our old Halloween costumes.
All of them. You have to come over
here and see these.

ALEX

How do I get there?

DREW

Carefully.

Alex hobbles over to Drew.

ALEX

Damn. These bring back some
memories.

DREW

Good times.

ALEX

I guess.

DREW

Is that your old coonskin cap?

ALEX

I didn't have an 'old coonskin cap'.

Drew leans in for a closer look and touches it.

DREW

Oh Christ, it's a dead squirrel.

ALEX

Maybe you can sell that on eBay.

Drew tries to wipe off their hands on their pants while Alex chuckles.

DREW

That was gross. That was really gross.

ALEX

Let's get out of here. The attic is bad for my allergies.

DREW

You don't have allergies.

ALEX

Not yet, but I'm getting them.

DREW

What does that mean?

ALEX

Look at this...

(gesturing to the attic)

This is the kind of place that gives you allergies.

DREW

Well, I want to keep looking.

ALEX

Looking for what?

DREW

I don't know... there could be something important up here.

ALEX

There is nothing valuable up here.

DREW

There is.

ALEX

Look, we'll just hire a service.

DREW

A service?

ALEX

There are people who do this sort of thing. They come in with a big dumpster and they clean it all out for you. They'll get rid of all this trash and then we can sell the house.

DREW

I don't want to get rid of it all.

ALEX

It's okay. I'll pay for it.

DREW

I don't give a damn if you pay for it!

ALEX

What's got into you?

DREW

Nothing.

ALEX

Then, what the fuck are we still doing up here?

DREW

I'm looking for something.

ALEX

What? What are you looking for?

DREW

A photograph.

ALEX

A photograph?

DREW

It's old. It's a picture of all of us. I think we were on vacation... maybe visiting Aunt Sarah. It's of all of us and we're smiling.

ALEX

It doesn't exist.

DREW

We all looked so happy: Mom, Dad, you, and me. You must remember it.

ALEX

I don't.

Drew defeated, sits on the ground - right next to the photograph.

ALEX

If it ever existed, which I doubt, then she threw it away.

DREW

No.

ALEX

Why not?

DREW

Because she never threw anything away. Look around you.

Alex turns and looks around the attic.

ALEX

I'll tell you what's not up here. Anything of Dad's. And, you know why? Because that shit got thrown away. That shit, she could part with.

DREW

Dad left a long time ago.

ALEX

I'm aware.

DREW

(quietly)
Like you.

ALEX

What?

Drew rises up.

DREW

You left. You weren't here. You moved away. You got out as soon as you could.

ALEX

You're damn right I did. And, if you were smart, you would have left, too.

DREW

I couldn't. There were too many memories.

ALEX

Me, too. And, that's why I left.

DREW

There were good times.

ALEX

Not for me.

Alex sits down in the wreckage.

DREW

You're a liar.

ALEX

What do you want me to say? Of course, there were good times. But it just hurts too much to think about, okay? I just want to move on. That picture of us got thrown away long ago.

Drew treks over to Alex.

DREW

So, you do remember the photo?

ALEX

Yes. We took it at a rest stop on the drive to Aunt Sarah's. We just had ice cream and you still had chocolate on your face.

DREW

That's the one.

ALEX

It was a good day.

DREW

I guess that's enough, then.

Drew offers Alex a hand up.

ALEX

Thanks.

DREW

You're welcome.

One last look around the attic.

ALEX

I bet Mom would be upset that we're pawing through all her precious stuff.

DREW

I don't know, maybe this is what she wanted.

ALEX

What do you mean?

DREW

She was sick for a while. She knew we'd find all this. Maybe she wanted us to remember it all.

ALEX

Maybe.

Alex looks towards the exit.

ALEX

Can we get out of here now? I think I need a tetanus shot.

DREW

Sure.

Alex leads Drew towards the trapdoor.

Alex begins to descend, but Drew stops.

ALEX

Are you coming?

Drew thinks for a moment.

DREW

No, I'm sorry. I just need to check one last time.

Alex playfully rolls their eyes and descends as Drew wades once again into the horde.

Drew begins searching, far away from the actual photograph.

A moment later the trapdoor rises.

ALEX

You'll get lost up here without me.

Alex steps back into the attic.

ALEX

I'll help you look.

The two smile at each other.

FADE TO BLACK.