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Killed a Man in Reno
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Ratface

by j. Snodgrass

3 Males, 1 Female

Synopsis: RATFACE is the story of Charlie Thompson, who awakens from a failed suicide attempt to find that his mother, best friend and doctor would all rather see him dead, for their own nefarious reasons.

Touchstone, U.S.A.

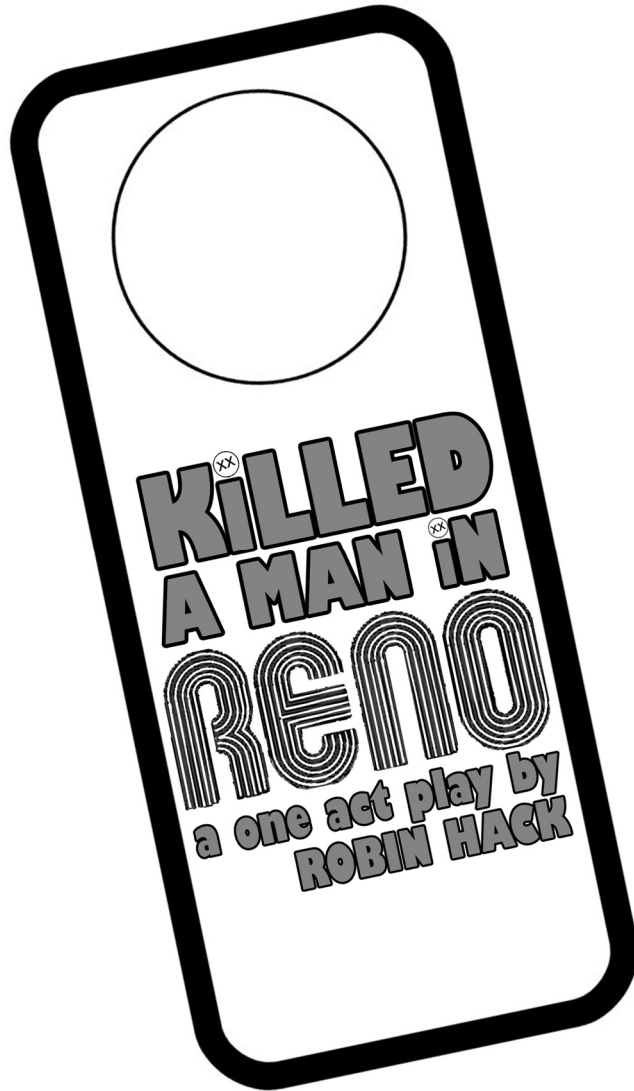
or How Terrorism Brought an
American Family Back Together

by Paul North

3 Males, 3 Females

some play multiple roles

Synopsis: Billy converted to Islam causing his parents to think he's a terrorist; now the only solution is for the ghost of Billy's older sister, Liberty, to come back and set things right again. A look at the American family and all its dysfunction.



KILLED A MAN IN RENO was originally produced in 2008 by the Play de Luna in Winter Park, Florida. It was directed by David Veitch. The cast was as follows:

KURT LAWRY- John Connon
JULIE LAWRY- Cynthia Murell
MILES- Kurt Thomas
DEREK- Scott Poole

KILLED A MAN IN RENO

The Characters:

Kurt Lawry

Julie Lawry

Miles

Derek

Bellhop

The Scene: *A hotel suite in the city of Reno, Nevada. The time: not so long ago. The door is opened by Miles, the concierge, and in walk Kurt and Julie. They are followed by a Bellhop carrying their luggage. He places them on the floor and exits.*

Miles: Here we are.

Julie: Oh, wow!

Kurt: Hey, this is pretty nice.

Miles: Isn't this something? This is one of our premiere suites.

Julie: Kurt! Honey, look at this view!

Kurt: That's pretty terrific. Hey, check out the mini bar!

Miles: The master bedroom and bath are right through those doors there. All of the bathrooms in our premiere suites feature a full size Jacuzzi tub and separate stand up shower. The forty inch color television can be controlled with this remote right here.

Julie: Look at that big TV honey!

Miles: If you access channel three, it will provide you with all the information you need about the hotel and all featured events.

Kurt: Cool. Thanks.

Miles: In addition, we also feature a twenty four hour concierge service, so if you need anything at all just press four on your room phone and ask for Miles. That's me. I'm Miles.

Kurt: Thanks again Miles.

Julie: Thank you.

Miles: You're welcome. Well, I certainly hope you enjoy your stay here at the Reno Golden Nugget, and please, call down if you would like me to reserve any gaming tables for you. Or if you would like me to make you any dinner reservations, if you want to kill a man, if you need any show tickets, anything.

Kurt: Wait a second. What did you just say?

Julie: What did he say?

Miles: If you would like me to obtain any show tickets for you I would be more than happy to do so. Willie Nelson is performing in our grand stage auditorium tonight.

Kurt: No, no, right before that. What was that you just said?

Miles: Oh, right. If you would like to kill a man please call down and let me know.

Julie: Kill a man?

Kurt: Are you being serious?

Miles: Yes.

Kurt: Why would we want to kill a man?

Miles: Well, to watch him die of course.

...

Kurt: Come on, you're kidding me right?

Miles: No sir, I'm not.

Kurt: So you're asking us if we want to kill a man, just to watch him die. Is that what you're saying?

Miles: Yes sir. That is correct.

Kurt: But why would we want to do that?

Miles: It's what Reno, Nevada is famous for Mr. Lawry. We don't have quite the glamour and glitz of Las Vegas, but we are capable of offering our own unique activities.

Julie: Do a lot of people do this?

Miles: Sure, all the time. I set one up just this morning for a couple here on their anniversary.

Kurt: Isn't that illegal?

Miles: It's not legal sir, but it's not exactly a hundred percent illegal in this particular county.

Kurt: Are you telling me that it's not against the law to murder someone here?

Miles: Have you ever hired an escort before? Ever smoked a little reefer? Ran a red light? Rolled through a stop sign? Those things are all illegal aren't they?

Kurt: Well, yeah, but you can't compare any of that to actually killing a man just to watch him die can you?

Miles: All I'm saying is that certain things get overlooked from time to time. That's all I'm saying.

Kurt: But we're not talking about parking in a handicapped spot here or shoplifting a tube of lipstick. We're talking about killing somebody.

Miles: That's fine sir. It's obviously something that's not for you. Please forget that I mentioned it.

Kurt: Yeah, let's just forget it then.

Julie: I'd like to do it.

Kurt: What was that honey?

Julie: I want to do it. I'd like to kill a man just to watch him die.

Miles: Very good Mrs. Lawry. I'll be happy to make the arrangements for you.

Kurt: Hang on a second pal. Julie, what the hell are you talking about?

Julie: I don't know. I've always kind of wondered what it would be like to kill a man. It seems like it'll be scary and exciting. Plus, we've never done it before. I think it will be fun.

Kurt: Well, forget it! I'm not going to let you kill anybody.

Julie: No, I mean that we would do it together.

Kurt: Even worse! It's not happening!

Julie: Why not?

Kurt: Why not? Because it's wrong that's why!

Julie: Oh, gee wiz! Look whose being all righteous all of a sudden.

Kurt: I can't believe you're asking me to do this.

Julie: Okay, so when you want to do something immoral with me everything is fine, but when I want to do something immoral with you, Kurt suddenly takes the high road.

Kurt: What are you even talking about?

Julie: You know what I'm talking about.

Kurt: No, I don't.

Julie: Um, the threesome we had on your birthday?

Kurt: Oh, that.

Julie: Yes, that!

Kurt: Miles, could you excuse us for just a moment?

Miles: Certainly sir.

Kurt drags a pouting Julie over to the other side of the room.

Kurt: How can you even compare a private, intimate experience shared between two or three people, with killing a man? One thing has absolutely nothing to do with the other.

Julie: Oh, the hell it doesn't! I didn't want to do it, and you were like "but honey, it's my fantasy." And I said that it made me feel uncomfortable and you were all like "but honey, it's something that I've always wanted to do with you, and it will spice up our marriage and keep things fresh and blah blah blah." So I did it. Because I'm the idiot that loves you, I had sex with you and that slut you met at the health club. For you.

Kurt: Look honey, we just got here. Why don't we unpack first, maybe have a couple of drinks from the mini bar, get something to eat and we can talk about maybe killing a guy later.

Julie: Never mind. Just forget it.

Kurt: Come on. Don't be like that.

Julie: No, it's fine. You are obviously uncomfortable with the idea and I don't want you to do anything you don't want to do. So we'll unpack, and have a couple drinks, and I'll go to the spa, and you'll go play blackjack and we'll do what we always do, okay? Really, I'm fine.

Kurt: You don't sound like you're fine.

Julie: Okay, now you're making a big thing about it.

Kurt: I just want to want to have a good time this weekend. Can we just do that please?

Julie: Why does it always have to be about your good time?

Kurt: That's not true. I always want to include you.

Julie: Then how come you never listen to me?

Kurt: I listen! I just don't understand why you want to kill a man, that's all.

Julie: That doesn't even matter! What matters is that we always do what you want to do. Why do you always have veto power over me? Can we just..... Look, the weekend is already off to a weird start. Can we just go back home and forget about it?

Kurt: You're being ridiculous. We'll do it.

Julie: I told you to forget about it.

Kurt: Nope. We're going to do it. Excuse me, Miles?

Julie: Kurt, stop it.

Miles: Yes sir?

Kurt: I think we're going to go ahead and kill a man just to watch him die please.

Miles: Very well sir, that's something that I can take care of for you.

Julie: Find out how much it is first.

Miles: Uh, sure. How much will this cost us Miles?

Miles: Two thousand dollars an hour sir.

Kurt: Wow. That's a bit more than I expected to spend this soon after we got here.

Miles: I'm afraid that the price is non negotiable Mr. Lawry, but you wouldn't be responsible for any of the cleanup.

Julie: That's a pretty good deal honey. It would cost at least ten grand to hire a professional hit man to rub somebody out.

Kurt: I'm not even going to ask how you could possibly know that. Look, all I have here is fifteen hundred in cash. Who do we give the money to? Do we give it to you or the man we kill?

Miles: You would give the money to me sir.

Kurt: Right. That makes sense.

Miles: And the price is still two thousand dollars.

Julie: Will you take a traveler's check?

Miles: Of course.

Julie: Great! Who should I make it out to?

Miles: Just leave it blank. We have a stamp.

Julie takes the traveler's checks out of her purse, signs them and passes them to Miles. Kurt reluctantly hands over the cash.

Julie: Here you go.

Miles: Thank you. I'll send a man up to your room right away.

Kurt: You're going to send him up now?

Miles: Is that a problem sir? I could send him up later tonight if you want.

Julie: No, no. Right now is fine.

Miles: Alrighty then, the man should be up shortly. Just give me a call when you're done and once again we hope you enjoy your stay with us.

He exits.

Julie: Okay! Here we go. This should be fun. You're still okay with this right?

Kurt: Yeah. Yeah, I'm okay.

Julie: Great! We're all good to go then. Do you want me to make you a drink?

Kurt: Scotch please.

Julie: Coming right up.

She pours them each a glass.

Julie: To new experiences. Cheers.

Kurt swallows his in one gulp.

Julie: Would you like another?

Kurt: Yes please.

Julie: You know, I think we're going to like it here in Reno. I know that we usually go to Vegas, but it seems like our money goes a bit further here and they really seem to appreciate our business more. Have you noticed that?

Kurt: Kind of, yeah.

Julie: I mean, look at this suite! The same room in Vegas would cost almost twice as much, right?

Kurt: It would cost a little more, yes.

Julie: It definitely would. Coming here was a good idea. Wait a second; you're acting a little weird. Is there something wrong?

Kurt: No.

Julie: Are you sure?

Kurt nods.

Julie: Okay then. I've got to go tinkle. I'll be right back. Love you!

She gives him a quick kiss and scampers off to the bathroom. Kurt quickly swallows the rest of his drink and pours himself another. He then starts to wander around the room, anxiously fiddling with stuff. He picks up the TV remote and is about to turn it on when there is a knock at the door. Kurt cautiously opens it to reveal a man holding a duffel bag.

Derek: Hey there man. How are you doing today? I'm Derek. Miles sent me up here. I'm the guy.

Kurt: Are you kidding me? It's only been a few minutes.

Derek: I had a last second cancellation on the floor below us. May I come in please?

Kurt: Uh, sure.

Kurt lets him in. They stare at each other awkwardly for a moment.

Derek: So, is this your first time?

Kurt: What? What do you mean?

Derek: Uh, you know, your first time doing this?

Kurt: Oh, well, this is my wife's thing actually. She's in the bathroom.

Derek: Oh.

...

Kurt: She's peeing.

Derek: Gotcha.

Kurt: So, have you been doing this awhile?

Derek: No. Not long at all, no.

Kurt: How did you get involved in all this if you don't mind me asking?

Derek: Well, I moved here a couple of years ago to work as a performer in a fifties rock and roll revue, which eventually closed. Then I kind of did some odd jobs for a bit. I was a blackjack dealer for a little while. I did some banquet work, that sort of thing. Then I had some personal stuff happen, and the opportunity to do this came up, so I took it. That's about it really.

Kurt: Got to pay the bills, right?

Derek: Sure do. Listen; is there any particular place you want to do this? The bedroom or the living room or what?

Kurt: What do you suggest?

Derek: Whatever man. Right here in the living room is probably the easiest.

Kurt: Uh, okay. Should we move the furniture out of the way or anything?

Derek: That's fine. I mean, if you think you're going to need the extra space.

Kurt: Yeah, why don't we do that. I wouldn't want to damage or stain anything that I would get charged for, you know what I mean? Should we put some newspaper down or something?

Derek: I brought a plastic sheet.

Kurt: Oh good. Here; grab the other end of this would you.

They move the furniture out of the way and Derek pulls a large plastic sheet out of his duffle bag that they both unfold and spread out in the middle of the floor. In the meantime, Julie emerges from the bathroom, now wearing a robe.

Julie: Oh hey! Is this the guy?

Kurt: Yeah, this is Derek. Where did that robe come from?

Julie: It's complimentary. I didn't want to mess up my clothes. Hi Derek! I'm Julie.

Derek: Hi there Julie. It's very nice to meet you.

Julie: It's nice to meet you too Derek.

Derek: Wow. I mean, I was a little nervous there for a second. You never know who you're going to get on these things, but you are really beautiful.

Julie: Well thank you Derek.

Kurt: What do you mean by that?

Derek: Nothing. I just mean she's a very attractive woman, that's all.

Julie: He doesn't mean anything by it Kurt.

Derek: Yeah, I'm just saying that you're a very lucky guy, that's all.

Julie: Don't get all uptight about this Kurt.

Derek: I'm not here to cause any problems or anything.

Julie: Oh no, it's fine. Everything's fine, right Kurt?

Kurt: Yes! It's fine, okay!

Julie: Well, there you go. Everything's fine. So, are we going to do this out here then? We already got the room ready I see.

Derek: Yes we did. Is there any particular place you want me?

Julie: Just stand in the middle if you would. Kurt, go stand next to him, I want to get a picture.

Kurt: Are you kidding me?

Julie: *(pulls a camera out of her purse)* No, I want to get a before and after picture of you guys.

Kurt: Julie, this is illegal. Why would you want to have photographs of it?

Julie: What's the big deal? I just want some pictures of our trip to show Linda and Allen when we get home.

Kurt: Again, why would you want to have photographic evidence of a crime to show Linda and Allen?

Julie: They just showed us all of those pictures of them in the Bahamas.

Kurt: But that was just of them holding giant drinks and Allen parasailing and Linda with hair braids and crap. They weren't doing anything wrong.

Julie: Well neither are you! You're just standing next to some guy.

Kurt: I don't feel comfortable with this. And what are you going to do with the film? Just bring it in to the pharmacy for the developers to see? What if they call the police?

Derek: It's really not that big a deal man.

Julie: See? Stop being such a baby and go stand next to him!

Kurt reluctantly stands next to Derek, who smiles and throws an arm around him as Julie snaps a picture.

Julie: There we go, that wasn't so bad. Should we get started then?

Derek: You want to get right down to it, huh? That's cool.

Derek starts to take off his pants.

Kurt: Whoa! What the hell are you doing?

Derek: I'm getting undressed. Would you prefer if I didn't?

Kurt: Yes I would actually!

Derek: Oh. I just figured that you guys wanted me to be naked for this, that's all.

Julie: Better to just take it slow Derek. It's nothing personal; Kurt just has some issues with naked men. He won't even go into the men's locker room at his own health club.

Kurt: That's because it's full of fifty year old naked guys that just hang out in the sauna. Look, something's not right here.

Julie: What are you talking about?

Kurt: This! This whole situation! Why would someone willingly do this? Why are you doing this Derek? Are you dying? Is that it? Are you dying of some horrible disease that will cause you months of endless agony or something?

Derek: No, I'm perfectly healthy.

Kurt: That doesn't make sense. Why would you consent to something like this if you weren't already dying?

Derek: I'm not.....oh, wait. I see what you're saying. Yeah, that's it. I'm dying. I've got.... body cancer. It's cancer of the entire body. It's the most painful kind of cancer you can get. There is no cure for it. That's why I'm doing this, okay?

Julie: There you go. I knew it had to be something like that.

Kurt: Julie, there's no such thing as.....

Julie: Alrighty then, let's get going here. Derek, you stand there in the middle. Kurt, you go first.

Kurt: Why do I have to go first?

Julie: I think I would like to watch just the two of you for a little while. I might join you in a few minutes.

Kurt: No, no, no. This is your thing. You go first.

Julie: Um, I seem to remember a similar situation on your birthday when you asked me and some slut from your health club to get started and you would join us in a few minutes. Do you remember that?

Kurt: Fine, I'll go first.

Julie: Good. Now get in there killer.

Kurt: I don't know what to do.

Julie: Oh, for God's sake! Derek, you get down on your knees.

Derek: Okay then. *(gets down)*

Julie: Kurt, get up close to him and put your hands around his throat.

Kurt: Is that okay Derek?

Derek: Sure man, just go for it.

Kurt begins to tentatively strangle him lightly, then more viciously as Julie coaches him from the sidelines. Derek begins to get visibly uncomfortable while Julie seems to get more and more turned on.

Julie: Yeah, keep doing that. A little harder. You're not doing it hard enough. There you go. Shake him around a little bit. I like that. Now do it harder. Harder! Yes! Give it to him! Let him have it! Yes!

Derek: This is.....this is starting to get uncomfortable. Stop it please. Stop!

Kurt: Whoa! I'm sorry. Are you okay?

Derek: Yeah, I'm okay. Just give me a second here.

Julie: Oh come on! What did you stop for?

Kurt: He said stop.

Julie: So you stop?

Kurt: What else am I supposed to do?

Julie: Look, could you at least pretend that you're into this?

Kurt: I'm trying my best alright! I don't.....I don't think I can do it while he's looking at me. It freaks me out a little.

Julie: So tell him to close his eyes or turn around or something.

Derek: Actually, there's a blindfold in the side pocket of my duffle bag over there. You can use that if you want.

Julie: There you go, Kurt. You can put the blindfold on him. Go get that.

Kurt fetches the blindfold and hands it to Derek, who puts it on.

Julie: Now start again.

Derek: Wait a second. Okay, I'm ready. Go.

He starts choking him again. Julie continues to coach him.

Julie: Here we go! Yeah, just like that. Harder! Give it to him. Now push him down on the floor. There you go. Get on top of him. Yes! Keep doing that! Pin him down. Just like that! Yes!

She picks up the camera and snaps another picture.

Kurt: Julie!

Julie: You stopped again!

Kurt: Would you quit it with the camera?

Derek: Uh, guys. I'm all for fulfilling your fantasy and all, but all fun and games aside, I really don't want to do the strangling thing anymore. It's starting to really hurt. Can we maybe do something else?

Kurt: Yeah, that's fine. I'm definitely fine with that. Did you bring anything that we can, you know, use on you?

Derek: Yeah, there's some stuff in my duffle bag.

Julie: Actually, I think I have something in my purse that we can use. Kurt, go look in my purse.

Kurt picks up her purse, pokes through it and pulls out a large knife.

Kurt: What the hell Julie? You carry this thing around in your purse?

Julie: I keep it in there in case I'm in a parking lot late at night or something. What's the big deal?

Kurt: This huge thing? Are you also going to be flensing whale blubber?

Julie: Stop being silly. Now listen; I want you to take it over there and use it on him.

Kurt: You want me to use it on him? Okay, where should I put it?

Julie: Anywhere! It doesn't matter. Surprise me.

Derek: It's all right man. I'm here for you guys, so just do whatever you want to do.

Kurt readies himself like an acrophobic man about to jump out of an airplane. He makes several hesitant steps towards him, slowly raising the knife.

Julie: There you go. Keep going. Keep going. It's going to be alright. Everything's okay. It's perfectly natural in some cultures. That's it. Get closer.

Julie snaps a picture of him with his arm raised in a pre-stabbing motion. Kurt flinches and quickly turns around.

Kurt: Stop taking pictures already!

Julie: Oh, calm down.

Kurt: I'm serious!