

BIRTH OF A SALESMAN



By Donald "C-Note" Hooker

BIRTH OF A SALESMAN

By: DONALD "C-NOTE" HOOKER

Inspired by: ARTHUR MILLER'S "DEATH OF A SALESMAN"

In Honor of: AUGUST WILSON (AFRICAN-AMERICAN PLAYWRIGHT)

In the Spirit of: CHARLIE CHAPLIN

[CAST]:

MONEY MIKE

FILM DIRECTOR

BUYER #1

BUYER #2

POLICE OFFICER

CAMERAMAN

[OPENING SCENE]

MONEY MIKE strolls up and down the boulevard (stage) singing a rendition of the Bee Gees' song, "Staying Alice," and where appropriate in the song, does the same up and down arm motions that John Travolta made famous in the movie, "Saturday Night Fever," in his dance routines.

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MONEY MIKE:

Well you can tell by the way I use my walk, I'm a monied man
[Holds up one arm and makes the money sign with his fingers rubbing
together.] No time to talk [Looks at audience in disdain.] Big
city gritty where everybody's pretty, they're staying alive,
staying alive. [Brief pause.] I don't hustle by committee so
I gotz to stay witty [Points to temple side of the brain.] That's
what keeps my staying alive, staying alive [Does John Travolta
arm movements.] I'm, I'm, I'm, I'm, staying alive, staying alive,
I'm, I'm, I'm, I'm, staying alive, staying alive [Stops and takes
center stage and addresses the audience.] I'm Money Mike by the
way, Salesman [Shouts up in the air] Extraordinaire. I import
[Shoots out left arm, open palm], and export [Shoots out right
arm, open palm], this [Shoots out left arm, open palm], that
[Shoots out right arm, open palm], and the other [Shoots out left
arm, center of body with open palm.] And when they be yellin,
"Hey [Shouts up in the air] Money Mike whatcha sellin?" I be
tellin, "This [Shoots out left arm, open palm], that [Shoots
out right arm, open palm], and the other [Shoots out left, open
palm.] And sometimes things I wouldn't even tell my own, [Holding
back of hand to side of mouth as tho about to whisper a secret
in someone's ear.] mother." I'm Money Mike by the way, Salesman
[Shouts up in the air] Extraordinaire. [Looks to the audience
on the left, looks to the audience center stage, looks to the
audience on the right, and begins to transform into another
character.]

New Character: COUNTRY BUMPKIN *[Talk countryfied.]*

COUNTRY BUMPKIN:

But in reality *[Springs body forth to the audience as tho saying "Look, here I am!" Simultaneously with text]*, me just some Country Bumpkin who dunn hoboed his way out to the big city. *[Points in the air.]* I don't even have a car. I can't pass the driving test, on account I only have meez a second grade ed-U-cation. But when I got to reading dem dere books I come to find out you can be anything; you can travel anywhere on the planet; even to outter space *[Points up in the air]* why this here piece of rock *[Palms touching the ground (floor)]* you *[Points to audience]* and I *[Points to self]* are standing on; circling dat dere sun *[Looking up in air making a circular motion simultaneously with text]* wayyyyyy out here on the edge of the milky way galaxy *[Arms in the air; fingers moving; bending backwards simultaneously with text]* why you *[Points to audience]* and I *[Points to self]* we're made of stardust. Weez space people!!! Why this one feller, by the name of Shakespeare *[Transform into another character; a JAMES EARL JONES style speaking character]*

JAMES EARL JONES STYLE SPEAKER:

He said *[Holds both arms up in the air]* "The world is a stage *[Making a circular motion, as in a globe]* and we all are its actors *[Pointing to audience in all directions. Returns to COUNTRY*

BUMPKIN character.]

COUNTRY BUMPKIN:

Awh shucks. None of y'all care about me; cause you know I'm no factor *[Holds head down sadly and turns around, back facing audience.]; [Spins around on audience, points a wagging finger at audience while rubbing the money sign, fingers together with other hand.]* Cause chasing that cheese, that's what y'all really after. Me. I just want to write a script *[Mimicking writing in palm of hand]* That's so full of laughter *[Putting facial cheeks in palm of hands, giving a loving smile, panning the whole audience. Stylize smile after Red Skelton's "BUTTONS" character.]; [Changes back into the MONEY MIKE character.]*

MONEY MIKE:

Money Mike, Money Mike, Who got my money? Who got my money? *[Goes into audience to harass for money]* You? You? *[Stops and picks out an audience member and ask, this person must be a member of the theater crew.]* Red, green, or blue?

FAKE AUDIENCE PERSON:

Blue.

MONEY MIKE reaches into an imaginary bag on the floor. Pulls out an imaginary object and hands it to FAKE AUDIENCE PERSON

MONEY MIKE:

Here you go.

FAKE AUDIENCE PERSON reaches to grab imaginary object.

MONEY MIKE:

Unh, Unh, Unh, [Wagging index finger simultaneously with text]
money first.

FAKE AUDIENCE PERSON reaches into pocket and pulls out imaginary money and hands it to MONEY MIKE. (This is why the first contact must be from the theater crew. In order to condition or orientate other audience members we all are playing an imaginary exchange of money.)

MONEY MIKE:

[Takes imaginary money, holds it up in the air to inspect it]
Fifty bucks? You gotta do better than that. Come-on, come-on,
come-on [Waiving hand towards himself simultaneously with text]
give me some more.

FAKE AUDIENCE PERSON, grabs more imaginary money and counts out the imaginary bills and then hands to MONEY MIKE.

MONEY MIKE:

That's more like it [*Then hands over imaginary gift. MONEY MIKE then walks the audience, harassing for money.*] Money Mike, Money Mike, "Who got my money?" "Who got my money?" [*Stops at a woman*] Say ma'am, flats, heels, or open toes?

REAL AUDIENCE PERSON:

[*States preference.*]

After REAL AUDIENCE PERSON states preference, MONEY MIKE reaches into bag and grab imaginary shoes to hand to her. (If she hands him money he gives her item); If she does not, haggle her to hand some over); Once she hands over money and he gives gift, he praises her on the amount.

MONEY MIKE:

Three hundred dollars! Now that's a great tipper. Money Mike, Money Mike, "Who got my money?" "Who got my money?" [*Stops at a woman*] Hey Mami!

Enters FILM DIRECTOR and CAMERAMAN. MONEY MIKE, briefly turns back into COUNTRY BUMPKIN character.

COUNTRY BUMPKIN:

What do we have here? Looks like a couple of film makers.

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Turns back into MONEY MIKE.

MONEY MIKE:

Hey, you guys film makers?

FILM DIRECTOR:

Yeah.

MONEY MIKE:

That's great, I just got my screen actors guild card yesterday
[Shows pretend card.] I'm in the union now.

FILM DIRECTOR:

Yeah.

MONEY MIKE:

Wanna see what I can do?

FILM DIRECTOR:

Not really.

*MONEY MIKE pushes FILM DIRECTOR out the way; FILM DIRECTOR falls
down; MONEY MIKE goes into routine.*

MONEY MIKE:

Hey Larry! Hey Moe! Whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo [*Curly "Three Stooges"*]; You want the truth? You can't handle the truth! [*Jack Nicholson "A Few Good Men"*]; You want to meet my little friend? [*Al Pacino "Scarface"*]; One of these days Alice, Pow! Right in the kisser [*Jackie Gleason "Honeymooners"*].

MONEY MIKE bows to the audience; Audience applause; When MONEY MIKE raises back up he turns around to look for FILM DIRECTOR, and helps FILM DIRECTOR off the ground.

MONEY MIKE:

How did I do? How did I do?

FILM DIRECTOR:

That's alright and all, but we're not doing all that. What you got in the bag?

MONEY MIKE:

Oh? My bag.

MONEY MIKE goes and gets pretend bag dragging it on the ground and suddenly opens it to the FILM DIRECTOR.

FILM DIRECTOR:

Whoa! You got a gold mine in there!

MONEY MIKE:

It's not real.

FILM DIRECTOR:

It's not real? What, you're out here selling fake stuff?

MONEY MIKE:

No, they're props. *[Turns to face the audience]* I'm an actor.

FILM DIRECTOR:

Oh, well look. We want to get you on film doing your thing.

MONEY MIKE:

You got any money?

FILM DIRECTOR:

Yeah, we'll give you a hundred dollars.

MONEY MIKE:

[Feigning outrage] A hundred dollars? *[Asking audience]* What can I do with a hundred dollars?

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FILM DIRECTOR:

Alright, alright, two hundred dollars.

MONEY MIKE:

[Feigning outrage] Two hundred dollars? *[Asking audience]* What can I do with two hundred dollars? You got three?

FILM DIRECTOR:

Now you're getting greedy.

MONEY MIKE:

Alright, come with the two hundred.

FILM DIRECTOR reaches into wallet to get money, MONEY MIKE snatches money out of his hand. MONEY MIKE goes to harass people on the streets, this can be the audience.

MONEY MIKE:

Money Mike, Money Mike, "Who got my money?" "Who got my money?" Hey fella, you over there. You look like you know people around these parts. Well I'm looking for some people. You know, the people with the big wads of money; well, I don't know what they look like, but let them know Money Mike is looking for them. "Who got my money?" "Who got my money?" Money Mike, Money Mike, say, SUV, sport, or economical?

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REAL AUDIENCE PERSON:

[Preference stated]

MONEY MIKE:

Well I ain't got nothing in the bag that large, but give me some money anyway. *[If they hand over money, take it; if not, move on. Stops at a woman.]* Hey Mami!

Enters BUYER #1

BUYER #1:

I got your money right here Money Mike *[Waiving pretend money in the air.]*

MONEY MIKE:

You got my money?

BUYER #1:

Yeah, I got your money.

MONEY MIKE:

Whatcha got. Jacksons, Grants, or Franklins?

BUYER #1:

Poppa Frank right here.

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MONEY MIKE:

Benjamin Franklin, that was a good man right there; should've been a president. *[MONEY MIKE suddenly opens his bag that's lying on the ground.]*

BUYER #1:

Whoa! You got a gold mine in there!

BUYER #1 begins to reach inside the bag, but MONEY MIKE slaps the back of his hand.

MONEY MIKE:

Unh, unh, unh, unh, unh, *[While pointing wagging finger]* money first.

BUYER #1:

Well that's all you had to say. You didn't have to slap my hand *[Pays MONEY MIKE and reaches into bag for item.]* I can't wait to show my friends this *[Exits stage.]*

MONEY MIKE bows to the audience; Audience gives applause; MONEY MIKE raises up and immediately pretends to take off his hat and jacket, and ask audience members to hold these items while he goes into bag and finds a new set of pants, puts that on, finds a new shirt and mirror. While putting away mirror; reenters film crew.

MONEY MIKE:

You get that on film?

FILM DIRECTOR:

Yeah. But one thing. Why were you changing clothes?

MONEY MIKE:

Oh, that. That was a wardrobe change [*Turns facing the audience*]
I'm an actor.

Reenters BUYER #1, screaming from behind MONEY MIKE.

BUYER #1:

Money Mike, Money Mike, you sold me some fake stuff Money Mike
[*Grabs MONEY MIKE by the shoulder and spins him around to face him.*]

MONEY MIKE becomes a new character. This new character calls himself Cuba; so sound cuban.

MONEY MIKE:

Oye Popi; What you grab me for?

BUYER #1:

Money Mike, you sold me some fake stuff.

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MONEY MIKE:

I'm Cuba! Everybody knows me as Cuba! Do I look like an F-n Money Mike!

Enters BUYER #2

BUYER #2:

Hey Cuba. Cuba! You here me talking to you [*BUYER #2 runs up on CUBA.*]

BUYER #1:

I knew you were out here selling fake stuff.

BUYER #1 and #2 begin to rough up MONEY MIKE. Enters the POLICE OFFICER.

POLICE OFFICER:

Freeze! [*Shows pretend badge to the audience*] LAPD [*Begins to handcuff BUYER #2.*]

BUYER #2:

What are you arresting me for officer?

POLICE OFFICER:

For assaulting this man.

BUYER #2:

I didn't assault this man; he sold me some fake stuff.

POLICE OFFICER now goes and arrest MONEY MIKE.

MONEY MIKE:

Wait a minute officer; nobody goes to jail for selling fake stuff on the streets.

POLICE OFFICER:

The heck if they don't; this ain't Wall Street.

MONEY MIKE:

Hey Look! *[Points to film crew]* You're on Candid Camera.

POLICE OFFICER, BUYER #1, and BUYER #2:

Candid Camera?

MONEY MIKE:

Yeah, Candid Camera. You know, Lente Loco, Ashton Kushton's "Punk"; Those camera guys gave me two hundred dollars to sell you fake stuff. *[Deliver with emphasis]*

POLICE OFFICER, BUYER #1, and BUYER #2:

Somebody's going to jail***; I want my money***; Yeah, get'em***

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FILM CREW breaks and run, POLICE OFFICER, BUYER #1, and BUYER #2, chases after them off stage.

MONEY MIKE then begins to whistle the theme song to Gene Kelly's movie "Singing in the Rain"; Cast comes back in the scene to lend whistling support; MONEY MIKE begins to sing and dance Gene Kelly style.

MONEY MIKE:

Singing in the rain, I'm singing in the rain. Wait a minute. Stop! [Everybody stops whistling] That's just way to old school for me. But, 1977, Vinny Barbarino, aka, "John Travolta," [Does quotation symbols with hands.] Opening scene, "Saturday Night Fever"; Everybody come sing it with me [Encourages audience to sing.] I'm, I'm, I'm, I'm, Staying Alive, Staying Alive [Repeat over and over.]

CAST joins in to encourage audience to sing. BUYER #1 and BUYER #2 takes left stage; MONEY MIKE and FILM DIRECTOR takes center stage; POLICE OFFICER and CAMERAMAN takes right stage.

CAST goes out into audience to get audience to say the words, sing the words, and dancing, John Travolta style.

CAST:

I'm, I'm, I'm, I'm, Staying Alive, Staying Alive [Once audience is at a fevered pitch, CAST tells audience to give themselves a round of applause.] You're great; you're the beautiful people; give yourselves a round of applause.

THE END

Birth Of A Salesman was first performed in the gym at the California State Prison-Los Angeles County as a part of a one week run in December of 2015. It was the opening act to the critically acclaimed play, *Redemption in Our State of Blues*. *Redemption in Our State of Blues* was a semiautobiographical play written by its prisoner cast members and directed by Michael Bierman, and Meri Parkkarinen of The Strindberg Laboratory.

Birth Of A Salesman, the painting, see artwork cover, is listed #1 in Google Search Images under the results, "Who is America's most prolific prisoner-artist?". It is listed in Google Search Images top 25 under the results "Who is the world's most prolific prisoner-artist?".

Birth Of A Salesman was written as it was performed. The prisoner cast so enjoyed *Birth Of A Salesman* they demanded it opened their play. *Redemption in Our State of Blues* was performed before professional Hollywood actors and producers, such as Joe

Manganiello, and Scott Budnick, just to name a few. Major political figures and or their representatives, California Governor Jerry Brown, the California Senate, California Assemblyman Tom Lackey, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, and former President Obama's Labor Secretary Hilda Solis, and Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, just to name a few. This list of attendees included representatives from a myriad of high powered entities, such as the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, and the California Arts Council, just to name a few. In March of 2016, *Redemption in Our State of Blues* was brought back to do a one week encore run. It was covered by various forms of media up and down the State of California, from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, ABC-Los Angeles (KABC), and Los Angeles Public Television Station KCET. It was also covered online by People Magazine in its preproduction phase. Besides accolades, *Redemption in Our State of Blues* was instrumental in the raising of funds for "BREAK IT TO MAKE IT (BITMI): Busting Barriers for the Incarcerated Project, Los Angeles, California." A first in the nation prisoner reentry program. It includes earning a special class of good time credits called milestones, and earning two units of college credits in theater from the Los Angeles City College prior to parole. Once released, it provides two years of free housing at the Los Angeles Mission. Two years of free education towards earning an Associate of Arts Degree from the Los Angeles City College, and participation in the jails to jobs program of actual

paid theatrical work with the theater group The Strindberg Laboratory.

In addition to being a playwright, C-Note is also a poet, painter, and musician; who volunteers his time as a Prisoner Restorative Justice Coordinator. He is known as the King of Prison Hip Hop, and is the world's most prolific prisoner-artist.

who is the world's most x

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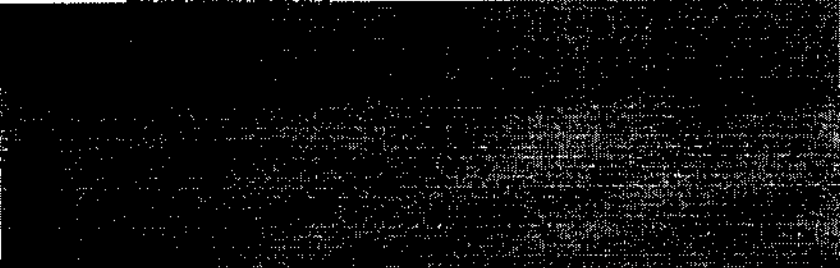
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