

Cleansing Acts

by

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### **Cast List**

**William / Billy Casper**—A plain looking man in his twenties, who is quiet, reserved, and contemplating suicide.

**Maxine Casper**—William's mother, who is a bit on the crazy side. Unbeknownst to her, she is the main reason William wants to end his life.

**Star / Sandy**—A somewhat attractive prostitute in her twenties, who has experienced more pain than one should at such a young age.

### **Running Time**

25 minutes.

### **Synopsis**

A young man contemplating suicide calls a prostitute with whom he has a long term platonic relationship in hopes to have her with him when he dies.

### **Setting**

A bathroom. The bathroom can be done in a very minimalist way, with just a tub, toilet, and free standing door. There is no necessity for realism.

### **Time**

The present.

Cleansing Acts

TIME: The Present

SETTING: A Bathroom

PLEASE NOTE: The two central characters, WILLIAM / BILLY and STAR / SANDY, will ultimately end up unclothed together in a bathtub. This final scene is not for shock effect; it is a form of baptism for the two characters. The nudity can be handled any way the director chooses; it is not necessary for the audience to see the two characters in the nude, only for them to get the idea that they are nude. The aspect of language may also be handled in much the same way. Most prostitutes are rather free in their speech, but if the director feels a more conservative approach is necessary, then some editing may be made. Also, Star's name is purposely not mentioned; it isn't an oversight.

AT RISE:

Lights come up on a bathroom. WILLIAM CASPER is standing by the bathtub. The room is very sparse. We see WILLIAM remove a razor blade from the medicine cabinet and run his finger lightly along the edge of the blade. He sets the razor down on the edge of the tub and removes all of his clothing. Suddenly the bathroom door opens and in steps MAXINE CASPER carrying a bowl of cookie dough. WILLIAM quickly grabs a towel to cover himself.

WILLIAM

Mother! What are you doing? Can't you see I'm getting ready to take a bath?

MAXINE

Oh for heaven's sake, William, I've seen you naked hundreds of times.

WILLIAM

That was when I was a baby.

MAXINE

You haven't changed that much.

WILLIAM

Thanks.

Now here, try this.

MAXINE

MAXINE pushes a spoonful of dough into WILLIAM'S mouth.

What do you think?

MAXINE

I think this could have waited.

WILLIAM

Well? Good or no?

MAXINE

It's good, Mom...except...

WILLIAM  
(sighing)

Except what?

MAXINE

I don't know? Something in it tastes funny.

WILLIAM

It's probably the raisins.

MAXINE

I don't see any raisins in the batter.

WILLIAM

They're pureed.

MAXINE

Oh.

WILLIAM

You hate raisins, so I pureed them so you wouldn't have to see them. You know? Out of sight, out of mind.

MAXINE

Didn't work, Mom. Nice try.

WILLIAM

WILLIAM pushes her toward the door  
while attempting not to lose his towel.

WILLIAM

Now will you leave so I can take my bath?

MAXINE

Why are you taking a bath? You always take showers.

WILLIAM

I just felt like taking a bath today, that's all.

MAXINE

But you don't like baths. You wouldn't take them when you were a child. You said baths were for girls, not boys.

WILLIAM

I've changed my mind, okay?

MAXINE

You're not turning funny on me, are you?

WILLIAM

Funny?

MAXINE

Yes, you know, funny, Gay.

WILLIAM

No, mom. I have a girlfriend, remember?

MAXINE

Oh yes, you want me to tell you when your girlfriend arrives?

WILLIAM

Yes, please.

MAXINE

Will you be done with your bath by then?

WILLIAM

No, just send her in here.

MAXINE

But--