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WASHED UP COMIC

THE SETTING IS A CHEAP HOTEL ROOM IN NEW YORK CITY. IT IS ABOUT MIDNIGHT, AND THERE IS A RED NEON LIGHT THAT BLINKS ON AND OFF, JUST OUTSIDE THE WINDOW. THE FURNITURE LOOK LIKE YOU HAVE STEPPED BACK IN TIME TO 1975. LOTS OF YELLOWS, ORANGES AND OF COURSE LIME GREEN.

Ruth (30's) sits on the bed doing her nails. Her hair is in curls as she waits for her husband, Matt- who is a stand up comic.

Matt (30's) enters through the front door. He is wearing a cheap old tuxedo, and is very depressed.

MATT

Hey honey, I thought you'd be in bed by now.

RUTH

I wanted to know how it went tonight.

MATT

Well, for lack of another word, "Horrible".

RUTH

Oh... I don't believe it.

MATT

Yeah, well believe it. When a night club comic doesn't get one laugh all night, that is horrible.

RUTH

Honey... Come on.

Matt sits on the bed with Ruth.

MATT

I'm just glad you weren't there to see it. It was brutal. Not only did the audience not laugh, they turned on me.

RUTH

Hecklers?

MATT

I've never seen hecklers organized like this before.

RUTH

Why didn't you use some of your snappy come backs that you always use. Like when a heckler yells out, "Hey, You are a bumb!", You always say, "Yeah well the last time I saw a face..."

MATT

... Like your's it had a fish hook in it." Everybody has heard those come backs a million times. They didn't even laugh at my near sighted brain surgeon routine, and that gets laughs every time.

RUTH

Oh... Baby, you're kidding me? Gee, honey, maybe you are out of practice. Why don't you do your routine for me, and I'll act like the hecklers. Maybe it will get some of your timing back.

MATT

No, I'm tired, honey.

RUTH

Come on now, you know you can't sleep after you've bombed.

MATT

Okay.

Matt gets up from the bed, and grabs Ruth's brush to use as a mike.

MATT (CONT'D)

Can you give me an intro?

RUTH

Ladies and gentlemen, we are proud to present to you, a great young comic, Matt Maxwell.

Matt comes running out from the side, and stops in front of the bed.

MATT

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, thank you. It's nice to be back here at the Grand Junction. As a matter of fact, I believe I was here a few years ago.

(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)

I am not sure though, I'll have to go home and check my towels.

Ruth just stares at him with no reaction.

MATT (CONT'D)

Come on folks, laugh it up, these are the jokes. I know you are out there, I can hear you breathing.

Ruth still sits there idle.

MATT (CONT'D)

Okay... what is this an audience or an oil painting?

Ruth just nods her head with disgust. Matt gets a little panicky.

MATT (CONT'D)

Okay, folks, why don't we go for a cruise on the Mediteranian, and I'm sure along the way we will run into some of your favorite stars, why wait just a minute, look who is the captain of our ship, non other than the govenator himself, Arnold Shwartznegger!!!

Matt turns his back to Ruth, as though he is getting into character. He turns around and his body takes the form of Arnold Schwartzneggar.

MATT (CONT'D)

(as Arnold) I'll be back...

The impression is hideous.

RUTH

You stink!

Matt snaps out of being Arnold.

MATT

Oh yeah, lady, well you know what they say about sticks and stones, why don't you get some and hit yourself with them. Getting back to the cruise now, and we have been out to sea for quite some time, so why don't we ask somebody, just how long do we have til we get back to port. Oh, there is somebody, say excuse me, sir?

(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)

Can you tell me when we are getting back to port? Wait just a minute, would you look and see who it is, non other than the big TV star himself, Mr. T!!!

Matt turns around again, and reaches into his pocket, where he has a Mr. T wig. He puts it on and turns around in character.

MATT (CONT'D)

I pity the fool, that is tired of this cruise!

Ruth is really disgusted.

RUTH

You stink!!!

MATT

You know lady, I have neck ties that are dumber than you.

RUTH

But what does that have to do with the fact that you stink.

MATT

For crying out loud, Ruth, can you come up with something better than "you stink"?

RUTH

No, I don't think you understand. You really stink.

MATT

What?

RUTH

Those impressions are horrific, and Mr. T? It's 2008! No one knows who Mr. T is.

MATT

Wait just a minute, Ruth...

RUTH

You know something? My dad was wrong about you. He said that you would never make a name for yourself. Well you have made a name for yourself as "The Great El Stinko".

It hits Matt that she is not joking.

MATT

Wait a minute!

RUTH

How do you like those apples, Mr. Maxwell, America's fastest falling comic?

MATT

Well maybe, I'm not the greatest comic in the world, but Ruth...

RUTH

Maybe? MAYBE? I mean lets face it, Matt, the last time you got a laugh was when you tried to cash a check.

Matt is now furious.

MATT

Well, it's not because of me, It's because of you! How can I be a good comic, when I have to come back to a wife that tells him he stinks? Ruth, you are the only woman I know that has a mouth big enough to whisper in her own ear!

RUTH

Knock it off you pain in the neck!

MATT

Pain in the neck? Well I have a much lower opinion of you.

RUTH

You are a loser! I mean that line about having neck ties smarter than me. That doesn't even make any sense.

MATT

Oh, now you want to make sense? How about we play horsy? I'll play the front and you just be yourself.

RUTH

That does it! I'm going to bed.

MATT

Yeah, well maybe I'll join you.  
That will be more laughs than I  
have had all week.

RUTH

There is nothing more vicious than  
a washed up comic.

MATT

Vicious? You want vicious? Ruth, if  
a rattlesnake bit you, they would  
rush the snake to the hospital.  
THAT'S VICIOUS!!!

RUTH

Matt, you are washed up, a loser  
and finished as a comic.

MATT

I'm finished? No, Ruth, we are  
finished.

Matt goes and get a suitcase and starts to pack.

RUTH

Now wait a minute, Matt, calm down.

MATT

You want to see a great impression?  
This is an impression of Matt  
Maxwell leaving his wife.

He continues to pack.

RUTH

Matt!!! You dumby, you are doing  
it.

Matt now a little calmer.

MATT

Do what?

RUTH

Haven't you heard yourself? Matt,  
all that stuff about the horsy ass  
and rattlesnake. Matt, you were  
good. You can do it.

MATT

Wait, you mean...

Light comes on.

MATT (CONT'D)

Yeah, you bet I was good. You mean you were?

RUTH

Yeah... I knew if I got you going you would do it.

MATT

You didn't mean any of it?

RUTH

No.

MATT

Oh, baby, I love you.

They hug and kiss.

RUTH

I love you too. Lets go to bed.

MATT

Yeah.

Ruth gets in bed, Matt starts to exit to the bathroom and stops.

MATT (CONT'D)

You really think I'm a good comic?

Ruth lying in bed with her face to the audience.

RUTH

Yeah, honey.

Matt exits and she then motions her hand as if to say, not so much.

Lights out.

The End.