



When Emily and Randolph Cuttingham's marriage goes sour, Emily decides to put her husband up for sale and reap the financial benefits. In Emily's neck of the woods, spousal sales are not illegal.

In this explosive play, Emily is introduced to Orpah, a mysterious and extremely successful husband-sales agent. Orpah reveals advanced techniques to guide Emily through the husband sale process. But as Emily prepares Randolph for sale, she runs into unexpected twists that threaten to jeopardize her carefully planned moneymaking scheme.

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HUSBAND FOR SALE BY OWNER



AMEEN OLUAJAYI

HUSBAND^{FOR} SALE BY OWNER

Apologue of a Misguided Goldfish



~ A PLAY ~
AMEEN OLUAJAYI

HUSBAND FOR SALE
BY OWNER



APOLOGUE OF A MISGUIDED GOLDFISH

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This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

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TO THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF MANKIND

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I owe inexpressible thanks to the great I AM, who inspired the writing of this book; and to my wife, Temi OluAjayi, for patiently reviewing the manuscript with me.

I don't mind bad husbands. I have had two. They amused me immensely.

—Oscar Wilde, *An Ideal Husband*

The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream was.

—William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

THE CHARACTERS

EMILY CUTTINGHAM, *A goldfish*

RANDOLPH CUTTINGHAM, *Emily's husband*

PENELOPE, *Emily's best friend & co-worker*

AMBER, *Emily's close friend*

MUSTAPHA KHOMEINI, *Randolph's friend*

MURRAY O'HAIR, *Old friend of Randolph's*

PATRICK ROBERTSON, *Randolph's oldest friend*

ORPAH

FITZGERALD, *Butler to Orpah*

I AM

MR. SANDS

FOUR HUSBAND BUYERS

THE SCENES OF THE PLAY

ACT I

Penelope's office

ACT II

Home of the Cuttingshams

ACT III

Same as Act II

ACT IV

Same as Act II

ACT V

Orpah's Mansion

ACT VI

Same as Act II

ACT VII

Same as Act II

ACT VIII

Same as Act II

ACT XI

Same as Act II

ACT X

Same as Act II

ACT XI

Same as Act II

ACT XII

Same as Act V

TIME

The Future

PLACE

Waterville, Outer Earth

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ACT I

SCENE

PENELOPE'S OFFICE IS FURNISHED WITH A DESK, TWO CHAIRS AND A COAT HANGER.
PENELOPE IS SITTING AT HER DESK.

NARRATOR: *Penelope is reading an office memo. On her desk is a freshly brewed cup of coffee and a glass vase filled with flowers.*

(Enter EMILY.)

EMILY: Ohaiyo.

PENELOPE: *(Looks up at EMILY.)* What?

EMILY: I said, ohaiyo.

PENELOPE: What *about* Ohio?

EMILY: No not the state. *Ohaiyo* in Japanese. It means good morning.

PENELOPE: *(Uninterested, looks down at her desk.)* Uh huh.

EMILY: When someone says ohaiyo, you respond by saying—

PENELOPE: New Jersey.

(Both goldfish chuckle.)

EMILY: No silly, you say ohaiyo back.

PENELOPE: Listen, I haven't had my morning coffee yet. Let's skip the Chinese until I've had my Colombian Supremo.

EMILY: *(Sitting on the vacant chair.)* It's Japanese, not Chinese.

PENELOPE: Didn't I say I haven't had my morning coffee?

EMILY: *(Chuckles then looks at the flowers on PENELOPE's table.)*

Wow, your Sea Roses really bloomed over the weekend.

PENELOPE: *(Looks at the flowers then smiles and nods agreeably.)* Yes they did.

EMILY: *(Rises and moves closer to the flowers.)* I am so jealous! *(Touches the flowers.)* I just love the arrangement. *(Turns to PENELOPE.)* Your husband really went all out this time.

PENELOPE: *(Delightfully.)* Oh didn't he? *(Clasps fins together.)* I especially love the poem that accompanied the flowers. He's such the romantic, and boy did he hit a home run this weekend!

EMILY: I don't even want to know what that means!

PENELOPE: A good girl doesn't kiss and tell. *(Flicks eyebrows.)* But if you ask nicely, I could squeeze out a thing or two...

EMILY: Knowing you Penny, a thing or two is probably too much information.

PENELOPE: *(Teasing.)* Once upon a time in a bedroom—

EMILY: *(Folding her fins across her gills.)* No Penny. Really, I don't want to know. *(PENELOPE laughs, EMILY smiles and moves back to her seat, settling in it.)*

PENELOPE: By the way, that reminds me. Are you still thinking about listing your husband?

EMILY: *(Nods agreeably resting her left fin on the desk.)* Yep. Actually, I'm no longer thinking about it. I've decided for sure. I'm going to sell him.

PENELOPE: Why do you want to sell him anyway? *(Shrugs.)* You guys seem okay... I certainly haven't noticed anything out of the ordinary. *(Sternly.)* Oh wait... he's not hitting you is he? If he is, you can tell me.

EMILY: Oh heavens no. Nothing even remotely close to that.

PENELOPE: (*Claps her fins together, places them on her desk and leans closer to EMILY.*) Well, is he sowing his oats outside the farm?

EMILY: (*Folds her fins across her gills and rolls her eyes.*) No Penelope. He's not sowing his oats outside the farm. (*Speaking through the side of her mouth.*) He's not sowing any *in* the farm for that matter.

PENELOPE: (*Surprised.*) Did I hear you correctly? He's not sowing oats in the farm? Then he *must* be sowing oats outside the farm.

EMILY: (*Unfolds fins and drops them on the desk.*) Geez Penelope no! Randolph is not having an affair.

PENELOPE: Are you sure?

EMILY: (*Folds fins across her gills.*) I would know okay? Besides he always wants to but I never give in. I just... I just don't feel like I want to be in this marriage any longer.

PENELOPE: Why, what's your damage?

EMILY: (*Firmly.*) There is no damage, okay? It's just, I'm kind of, *y'know*... bored with the thing.

PENELOPE: By, *the thing*, do you mean Randolph or your marriage?

EMILY: Stop fooling around. I'm serious about this.

PENELOPE: Well I'm not kidding either. Are you bored with him or are you bored with the marriage?

EMILY: (*Adjusts fins, folding them tighter across her gills.*) What in the world's the difference?

PENELOPE: Well if you're bored with him, the problem's him. If you're bored with the marriage, it could be you.

EMILY: (*Rolls her eyes.*) Thanks Dr. Phil. You're a real doll. (*Unfolds fins.*)

PENELOPE: (*Shrugs.*) Just trying to help.

EMILY: (*Insincerely.*) Sure you are... and maybe I could lie down on your desk so you can analyze me. *Y'know*, be my shrink. (*They share a laugh.*)

PENELOPE: Speaking of listing your husband, want to hear a true story?

EMILY: Sure.

PENELOPE: This lady was trying to list her husband, but he wouldn't cooperate.

EMILY: Yeah?

PENELOPE: Well she made a very unusual call to their life insurance agent. She asked how much she would receive from the insurance company if her husband – get this, *accidentally* flushed himself down a toilet.

EMILY: Interesting...

PENELOPE: The agent grew suspicious and called her husband.

EMILY: (*Grows attentive.*) What'd he do?

PENELOPE: Naturally the guy was unnerved. He asked about the call she made to the insurance company. She didn't deny it. Instead, she assured him that he would remain safe *if* he went along with her plans to sell him.

EMILY: (*Grows even more attentive and leans closer to PENELOPE.*) Oh gosh! What'd he say?

PENELOPE: Nothing. But he played ball after that. He cooperated throughout the sale process – not a peep from him.

EMILY: (*Laughs.*) I wonder why.

PENELOPE: (*Laughing.*) Hey, who wants to die young huh?

EMILY: (*Quieting down.*) I guess she did what she had to do.

PENELOPE: (*Shrugs.*) I guess so...

EMILY: Hmm... I hope I don't have to go to that length with Randolph. But guess what, if I have to call our life insurance agent...

(*They share laugh.*)

PENELOPE: (*Still laughing.*) Hey, if that's what it takes, then a gal's gotta do what a gals gotta do! (*Sips her Colombian Supremo.*) It seems like you picked the right time for this though. I know the market's hot right now. Husband prices have gone up.

EMILY: Yep, I noticed. My neighbor just listed her husband as well. She's trying to get a feel for the market. Hey, do you know any good husband-sales agents or agencies?

PENELOPE: No, not really. (*Shrugs.*) Why don't you try The Yellow Pages?

EMILY: No... I'd rather use a recommended agent. Know what I mean?

PENELOPE: Yeah I know. I know... um... I don't really know anyone. Oh wait! There is one lady I've heard about. Her name's Ora or something. No wait... Orpah. That's it! Her name's Orpah. Jackie was telling me about her. You remember Jackie?

EMILY: Jackie?

PENELOPE: Yeah Jackie. She—

EMILY: Oh yeah I remember her! How's she doing? Did she get a new husband like she planned?

PENELOPE: I don't know... haven't really kept in touch with her.

EMILY: I do hope she's okay. Last time we spoke, she went on and on about her marriage and how boring it had become.

PENELOPE: I know... she was that way when I spoke with her – really droopy and such. Anyways, she said the lady helped her with listing her husband on the market.

EMILY: Oh yeah?

PENELOPE: Yeah. She had all praises for the lady – called her a godsend.

EMILY: (*Laughs.*) Godsend huh?

PENELOPE: (*Laughing.*) Yeah godsend! I tell ya, that girl needed freedom!

(*A short laugh.*)

PENELOPE: You know what? I still have her number.

EMILY: Who Jackie's?

PENELOPE: (*Nods agreeably.*) Yeah. I could call her up and find out about the lady for you.

EMILY: Cool, I'd like that, thanks.

PENELOPE: No big. Hey, it's about that time.

EMILY: Yep, let's get back to work.

PENELOPE: See you later girl.

EMILY: See yaa...

(*Exit EMILY.*)

(*PENELOPE goes back to reading the office memo.*)

ACT DROP