

JAY-WALKING

By

JAVI MULERO

javimu111@yahoo.com
mujavier2000@yahoo.com
Tel. #: (323)804-8264

ACT I

Scene 1

(A "MAN" crosses the bare stage. As he does, we hear TWO WHISTLES from off-stage. Almost instantly, a "POLICEMAN" makes his entrance on a mo-ped, or, okay, on a bicycle.)

POLICEMAN:

Sir, will you please stop when I whistle?

MAN:

Who, me?

POLICEMAN:

Yes, you, sir. Thank you, sir.

MAN:

Why? What did I do?

POLICEMAN:

You know what you just did.

MAN:

What? I just crossed the street!

POLICEMAN:

Exactly. Do you see an intersection with signals for pedestrians? Do you see a crosswalk here, sir?

MAN:

I just -- all I did was cross the street, officer!?

POLICEMAN:

Fine. Then that'll be a court date and probably a fine from the judge of up to maybe a few hundred dollars.

MAN:

Oh, Jesus! You've gotta be kidding, officer!

POLICEMAN:

You have just "jay-walked," sir. May I see you ID, please?

MAN:

Look, officer: I'm new here in California. I'm from Chicago.

POLICEMAN:

Your ID, sir, please.

(CONTINUED)

MAN:

Officer, I didn't know!

POLICEMAN:

And now, for resisting an officer's request, I'm going to have to ask you once again to please give me your Drivers Licence, sir.

MAN:

Officer, please. Please, please, please, please! I just moved to Hollywood. I'm broke and we don't have those laws in Chicago!

POLICEMAN:

Your ID, sir, or I'm placing you under arrest.

MAN:

Here. Here. Here's my ID. Here. See? From out-of-State. From Illinois. See, officer?

POLICEMAN:

I can see it, sir. I can also read it. And this is your Ralph's Supermarket card, sir.

MAN:

Sorry. Sorry. Here. See? Illinois. See, officer?

POLICEMAN:

I told you I can read, sir. I also told you I can see, and this doesn't look like you, sir.

MAN:

I know.

POLICEMAN:

You're blond in this picture, sir.

MAN:

My hair is darker now, officer, yes.

POLICEMAN:

Is this really you, sir?

MAN:

If - yes- if you would please look at the face, you will see - perhaps - that it is my face, officer.

POLICEMAN:

Are you aware that a fake ID is a major criminal offense?

MAN:

It isn't!

POLICEMAN:

Yes, it is. As in "jail," sir.

MAN:

No, I mean, it isn't a fake ID! It's real! Look: I'm an actor. I went dark with my hair because my agent told me that I looked better with darker hair. I mean - dark hair looks better on me, officer.

POLICEMAN:

I think blond suits you better, sir.

MAN:

I - Thank you, officer. I will consider that in the future. Now, could you please give me a break, sir, and I will never do it again? I swear.

POLICEMAN:

No.

MAN:

Officer. Please. I'm from Chicago. I didn't know. How is one supposed to know?

POLICEMAN:

That's the law here, sir.

MAN:

Yes, but it's not fair. Everywhere else in the U.S., people - well, they just walk across the street whenever they want.

POLICEMAN:

That is not the case here, sir.

MAN:

Why not?

POLICEMAN:

Too many cars in Los Angeles, sir. People would get hit too often. The Laws are for your own protection, sir. You have to show up in court nowadays. The judge will impose whatever fine he feels you deserve. You may try to contest it. That's the court date right there. Clear?

MAN:

Clear. Clear. Very clear. But please, officer. Can't you just let me go this time and I promise I will never never ever do it again, I

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MAN: (cont'd)
promise?! (out of breath:) I'm new in town and I'm so
broke in this city, I am temping for three different
companies.

POLICEMAN:
Maybe you should move to another city, sir.

MAN:
Maybe, yes. But hopefully not because of a parking
ticket.

POLICEMAN:
Jay-walking.

MAN:
Jay-walking ticket, excuse me. Officer? Please?

POLICEMAN:
Have you learned anything today, sir?

MAN:
That the traffic laws can get you here even if you're
just walking.

POLICEMAN:
What else?

MAN:
And I will never cross the street in Los Angeles
again. With these long blocks, I'm going to have to
get a cab to do it.

POLICEMAN:
Unless you're at an intersection.

MAN:
Unless I'm at an intersection.

POLICEMAN:
Or at a crosswalk.

MAN:
Or at a crosswalk.

POLICEMAN:
In a business area, that is.

MAN:
Oh, okay. Still learning.

CONTINUED:

5.

POLICEMAN:

That's okay.

MAN:

(defeated)

I came here to act. I'm still learning this big city.

POLICEMAN:

What may I have seen you in?

MAN:

Theater. All theater. In Chicago. I only just came here to get an agent. And as I said, I'm -

POLICEMAN:

Broke.

MAN:

Yes.

POLICEMAN:

Just do a showcase and invite some agents and casting directors.

MAN:

Yes, I know, but -- (then:) How in the world do you know that??

POLICEMAN:

Because that's what I did.

MAN:

Oh, Jesus. You're an actor too?

POLICEMAN:

Yes. And I have an agent.

MAN:

You DO?? And are you doing well??...

POLICEMAN:

I had three lines in a TV pilot that was not picked up by the network.

MAN:

Yeah? What did you play?

POLICEMAN:

A cop.

MAN:

(beat)

I could see you as one, yes.

(CONTINUED)

POLICEMAN:

I was good, too.

MAN:

I'm sure, I'm sure. You're good enough as a real cop that gives one a ticket.

POLICEMAN:

It was supposed to be a recurring role but the pilot didn't go anywhere.

MAN:

Oh. Why? Where did it go?

POLICEMAN:

The network hated it. The show now takes place in space.

MAN:

That could do it, yes.

POLICEMAN:

You don't have an agent, then, huh?

MAN:

No. Well, I'm working on it. I mean, I HAVE an agent, but they suck.

POLICEMAN:

Mine are good. I work a lot.

MAN:

(beat)
In acting?

POLICEMAN:

You still wanna get this ticket?

MAN:

No, no! I mean - not if - not if I don't HAVE to, officer. And I do promise I will NEVER cross the street ever again.

POLICEMAN:

Why not? Just don't jay-walk.

MAN:

I mean: jay-walk. I will never jay-walk. Ever. Even in Chicago.

POLICEMAN:

You can jay-walk in Chicago all you want. Just don't do it here.

(CONTINUED)

MAN:

I won't. It's just - I was so excited about the new "Backstage" issue. I just bought it and I was rushing home to read it to see if there are any auditions up my alley coming up.

POLICEMAN:

What's this week's issue about?

MAN:

Agents. See? Look.

POLICEMAN:

Really?

MAN:

Yeah. See? The top twenty agencies. Here. And the so-so agents. And here, see? Look: the bottom ten agencies. So, needless to say, I'm not going to approach any of those.

POLICEMAN:

(looking into magazine:)
Those are my agents!

MAN:

Which ones?

POLICEMAN:

There: in the 'Bottom Ten' List.

MAN:

Of course, I didn't write this; I just bought it.

POLICEMAN:

And they put my agents at the bottom of the list!

MAN:

Well, you know. These lists are highly subjective.

POLICEMAN:

Why did they do that?

MAN:

I'm sure it wasn't personal.

POLICEMAN:

And you just bought this?

MAN:

But when I did, I had not yet looked inside, I swear!

(CONTINUED)

POLICEMAN:

No, no! They DESERVE to be at the bottom. They're TERRIBLE!

MAN:

Oh. Are they?

POLICEMAN:

That's why I have to be a cop! More often than NOT!

MAN:

I'm sure you're a very good one.

POLICEMAN:

Good actor or good cop?

MAN:

Cop. (Then:) And an ACTOR too, of course!

POLICEMAN:

I'm a great actor!

MAN:

And a great cop too, I'm sure!

POLICEMAN:

I'm a great cop too. Nobody gets by me with their crap. And if they try, they get it! I'm not a very flexible person.

MAN:

Well, yes, I can see -- (then:) You know, I'm sure they don't mean it.

POLICEMAN:

And now YOU move here. Like one needs more competition!

MAN:

I'm just -- you know -- trying it out. Here in California. Who knows for how long. Maybe I'll go to New York next.

POLICEMAN:

What made you decide here, instead of New York?

MAN:

Oh, I thought of New York. Art flourishes there. Then, instead of the Art, I thought of the money, and so, I came here...

(CONTINUED)

POLICEMAN:

Yeah?

MAN:

My Chicago agents said don't do it, you're not ready for L.A. yet. But I took a chance. After New York, I probably would have come here anyway.

POLICEMAN:

So you just took a shortcut?

MAN:

Yeah. Sort of.

POLICEMAN:

Like a jay-walk. So to speak.

MAN:

If you like. Yes... Once in a while one has to. It's nothing personal.

POLICEMAN:

I had to take another job besides acting. It was my shortcut. Otherwise, it was unemployment for me. Acting was not working out often enough.

MAN:

And what job was that?

POLICEMAN:

This one. LAPD.

MAN:

Oh. Yes. I see, yes.

POLICEMAN:

My jay-walk.

MAN:

Well, there's no law we have to be actors, right?

POLICEMAN:

Or a janitor.

MAN:

Or a cop.

POLICEMAN:

But there IS definitely a law here that you can't just jay-walk.

MAN:

True, true. But they all exist: Actors, policemen, janitors. Because they need to. Because somebody's gotta do that; because their natures exist. So, it's a law for each one of us to do everything that we can possibly do to -- well, to keep on doing it. I mean, who knows? I might even have to end up as a cop too!... (Silence) I mean, part-time. (Silence) You know what I mean.

POLICEMAN:

(beat)
I hate my job.

MAN:

Well...

POLICEMAN:

Hey, you know what? I don't want to give you this ticket anymore. You're cool.

MAN:

Really? You're sure?

POLICEMAN:

Yeah. You're broke. You just moved here. You didn't know. And now you know.

MAN:

I DEFINITELY know. Well, here: here's my "Backstage" magazine. Keep it!

POLICEMAN:

For me?

MAN:

Yeah, for you. It's my thanks.

POLICEMAN:

But what about you?

MAN:

It's okay. I'll just go back to the newsstand. I'll get another one. My treat.

POLICEMAN:

Thank you!

MAN:

Well, take care, officer.

(CONTINUED)

POLICEMAN:

Good luck with your career, sir.

MAN:

You too, officer. Goodbye.

("MAN" crosses back in the direction from whence he came at the beginning of the Play. "POLICEMAN" yells after him:)

POLICEMAN:

Wait! Sir! - Wait!!.... You can't jay-walk!
Remember!...

(SOUND of CAR BREAKES SCREECHING violently, followed by the SOUND of a sickening THUD, as if a car had hit someone hard.)

POLICEMAN:

Oh, my God!

(Then, the "POLICEMAN" looks at his "Backstage" Magazine.)

POLICEMAN:

Oh, well... It's just what L.A. needs... One less cop!...

(And he motors, or rides, back in the direction of the commotion...)

THE END