

The rich man and Lazarus

A Play

The parable of the rich fool A Play



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This two-act play is a modern version of the original story of the rich man and Lazarus, as told by the Lord Jesus in Luke 16:19-31. The main character is Dexter Rich, a very wealthy man, who resents Lazarus the homeless man, sitting at his gate begging for coins. He reports him to the Health Department, who put him in hospital, where they meet again.

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This one-act play is a modern version of the original parable of the rich fool, as told by the Lord Jesus in Luke 12:16-21. The main character is Dexter Rich, who is obviously the rich man from the parable. He has made money his god, having great faith that his money can buy him anything he wants to buy, and allow him to do anything he wants to do. He walks over anyone who gets in his way and buys his way around all obstacles. But then, he hears from the One whom he can't buy off. The whole play takes place within Dexter's office.

All skits can be downloaded from [www.therescueshop.org/Free Skits](http://www.therescueshop.org/Free%20Skits)

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The rich man and Lazarus

A Play

Performers

Dexter Rich
Lazarus
Nurse
Doctor
Orderly

Props

Desk
Chair
Beds x 1
Wheelchair
Phone, plates etc

Act 1. The rich man

Scene. Dexter is in his office, sitting behind his desk, when he picks up the phone, and dials a number).

Dex. "Yes...can I talk to Sergeant Thomas please?...Thankyou..."

(Silence)

Dex. "Sergeant...Yes...Dexter Rich here..."

(Silence).

Dex. "You know what it's about!...Same thing it was about last week...and the week before that...and the week before that...It's that bum who lives on the street...Lazarus...He's at my gate again..."

(Silence).

Dex. "You *can* do something about him...can't you take him to another town?...One letterbox is as good as another to him, I'm sure..."

(Silence).

Dex. "Just remember...I play golf with the Mayor!"

(Silence).

Dex. "I know you don't...you work for me!...I'm a taxpayer...so I pay your wages..."

(Silence).

Dex. "Well...Can I lodge a complaint?...He's at my gate, begging me for coins, every time I drive out...and it has to stop...Now!"

(Silence).

Dex. "No...I'm not threatening you...and no...I'm not a charity...If he wants money he can get a job, like everyone else..."

(Silence).

Dex. "No...I am not giving him a job...Have you seen him?...He's covered in sores from head to toe...and the dogs lick them...he's a health hazard..."

(Silence).

Dex. "Well...if you won't help me, I may just do that...Good day to you..."

(Puts phone down).

Dex. "Can't help me?...What do I pay taxes for, if I can't get help from the Police when I need it?"

(Picks up phone and dials another number).

Dex. "Yes...Health Department?...Yes...there's a homeless bum living out by my letterbox...That's what's the matter...He's covered in sores from head to foot...and the dogs are always licking his sores...it's disgusting...he's a health hazard...I tried the Police but they weren't interested...I want him gone from here...he needs help..."

(Silence).

Dex. "Yes...it's one hundred Richman Street...you'll see him sitting by my letterbox...hardly a stitch of clothing on...Thin as a broomstick...Just take him away please...Thankyou...Bye..."

(Dexter looks out of his window, and heaves a sigh of relief).

Dex. "Finally...some answers!...That'll get rid of *him*..."

Curtain falls

End of Act 1

Act 2. The rich beggar

Scene opens with Dexter in bed and a Nurse in the room with him.

Dex. "Tell me again...what I'm doing here?"

Nur. "You had a heart attack...three days ago...You were yelling at someone by your letter box...and you had a heart attack...He told your neighbours and they called an ambulance...And the ambulance brought you here to Abraham's Hospital"

Dex. "I can't remember a word of that happening..."

Nur. "You're very lucky to be alive...You can thank your saviour on the street and your neighbour for that!"

Dex. "If I could remember any of it?...and how long do I have to stay here for?"

Nur. "Until the Doctor thinks you're well enough to go home..."

Dex. "I feel well enough now?"

Nur. "That's why you're not the Doctor...Mr Rich...and...Oh...we have a surprise for you...you're going to get a neighbour today...That might cheer you up?"

Dex. "I just hope he doesn't snore?...or talk?...or cough?..."

Nur. "He might hope the same about you too?" (She turns around). "Oh...here he comes now!"

(Orderly wheels Lazarus in, in a wheelchair).

Dex. (Gasps). "Him!...What's he doing here?...What's he doing in hospital?"

Ord. "Someone reported him to the Health Department...and they sent him here to recover..."

Dex. "I don't want him in here...I don't want to catch the plague?"

Ord. "It isn't catchy...The Doctor thinks it's some type of dermatitis...He's in here until it's cleared up...I'll go and get the meals trolley now..."

(He leaves and returns with a trolley with plates of food on it).

Ord. "There you are Mr Lazarus...a meal fit for a king..." (Takes cover off).

Dex. (Looking). "Steak?...This place is growing on me after all..."

Ord. (Gives a tray to Dexter).

Dex. "Ah...my friend...Thankyou..." (He takes the cover off and yells). "What's this?...It looks like lawn clippings?...This isn't food?...I don't want this slime!"

(Doctor walks in).

Doc. "Mr Rich...How are you feeling?"

Dex. "Look at this?...What is this mess?"

Doc. "It's spinach souffle...it's good for you..."

Dex. (Loud). "I'm not a parrot...I don't want spinach...I...want...steak!"

Doc. "You can't have steak...it will kill you!"

Dex. "It's never killed me before?"

Doc. "It tried to a few days ago..."

Dex. "I'm not playing second fiddle to a bum...If he gets steak...I get steak too!...So, I want a steak!"

Nur. "I'm sure you do...but your cholesterol level is through the roof...that's why you had a heart attack..."

Dex. "I could make it worth your while?"

Doc. "But it wouldn't be worth yours...I'm trying to help you live a little longer..."

Dex. "I don't want to live...I want steak!...Why does he have steak?...You don't give steak to beggars...they don't appreciate it..."

Doc. "He needs a lot of nutrition...so he gets the best..."

Dex. "The best?...I don't want this slime..." (Loud). "I...WANT...STEAK!"

Nur. "We're here to help you, Mr Rich..."

Dex. (Yelling). "I WANT STEAK!...I WANT STEAK!...I WANT STEAK!..."

(Doctor and Nurse look at each other, and Doctor nods).

Nur. (Looks at Dexter and smiles, then leaves).

Dex. "What's she smiling for?...I demand to know?"

Doc. "She's gone to get you something special..."

Dex. "Good...About time...and tell her I want it medium rare!...I have steak at every meal at home...and

I want steak at every meal here!”

Doc. “You can have steak...when your cholesterol level comes down...”

Dex. “This isn’t right!...That homeless bum gets steak...and I get this green slime?...”

Doc. “You had your good things...now he’s having his!”

Dex. “And what’s in that bowl?”

Doc. “Ice cream...”

Dex. “Ice cream?...Ice cream?...He gets ice cream too!...Why don’t I get ice cream?...Who’s your Superior?...I demand to know?...This isn’t over yet!”

(Nurse returns with a syringe).

Dex. “What’s that thing?...”

Nur. “It will help you calm down...”

Dex. “I am calmed down...I don’t want that...I want steak!”

Nur. “This is the next best thing...”

Nur. “Now, sit still...or this will hurt...”

Dex. “I want steak...Ahh...” (Sits still, then Nurse stands up, and Dexter lays his head back on his pillow).

Nur. “Mr Rich?”

Dex. (Smiles weakly, then closes his eyes).

Nur. “There’s your steak, Mister!”

Doc. “Would you like another steak Mr Lazarus?...I can get one for you?...You would?...”

Laz. (Nods).

Doc. “Nurse...could you call the Kitchen for me please...and get them to send up another steak for Mr Lazarus?”

Nur. “Yes...I’ll do it now...”

Doc. “He’s lucky someone reported him...He may not have lasted much longer...But he’s safe now...here in Abraham’s Hospital...”

Curtain Falls.

Finis.

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Ed.P.

The parable of the rich fool

A Play

Performers

Dexter Rich
Simmons, his Accountant
Biggs, his Architect
Stranger
Desk
Chair
Laptop
Phone etc

Props

Scene. Dexter is in his office, sitting behind his desk, when he hears Simmons coming along the hallway.

Dex. "Here comes, 'Yes, Sir.'"

Sim. (Knocks on the door).

Dex. "Come in Simmons..."

Sim. "Morning Sir!...Sunny day out there, it..."

Dex. "Simmons!...If I want a weather forecast, I'll ask for one!"

Sim. "Yes, Sir!"

Dex. "How are the Stocks trading this morning?"

Sim. "Very well, Sir...Oil went through the roof last night, so if you trade all of your Oil Stocks this morning, you'll make a cool profit of ten million...and sugar went down...way down...rock bottom...so if you invest heavily there it can only go up again and..."

Dex. "Sounds like a smart move, Simmons...do it..."

Sim. "Yes, good...Ah...Mr Rich...I was thinking...My Salary hasn't gone up in quite a few years...and I was wondering if I could have a raise?...You know, just a little bit?...Maybe fifty?"

Dex. "Dollars?"

Sim. "Yes?"

Dex. "Who do you think you are, Simmons?...I'm not going to squander my hard-earned cash giving every dog's body a raise!...I need to save it...I'm not going to retire on a pension like you pack of fools...I'm going to retire in luxury, where money's no object!...And you have the gall to ask me, to

dip into my Retirement Fund and give you a raise, so you can live in luxury now?...Case closed!”

Sim. “Yes, Sir...”

Dex. “And find Biggs...I need him to draw up the plans for the new warehouses?”

Sim. “Yes, Sir!...I think I saw him downstairs before?...I’ll go and have a look for him?”

Dex. “You do that...”

Sim. “Yes, Sir!”

(Simmons leaves).

(Dexter picks up the phone and dials a number).

Dex. “Bill?...Yes, all good here...I wondered if you heard anything at the Council meeting that may interest me?...I can make it worth your while?...Really...Okay...Keep it under wraps...We’ll have lunch and come to a mutually satisfying agreement...Yes...Good to do business with you Bill...Bye.”

Big. (Knocks at the door).

Dex. “Come in Biggs...I’ve got a new project for you...”

Big. “Yes, Mr Rich?”

Dex. “We’re going to tear down the old warehouse and make a much bigger one...Sales have skyrocketed...so, we’re expanding into other types of buildings, and we need more storage space...”

Big. “Yes, Mr Rich!”

Dex. “Now, this is what I want...” (He reaches for a pen and paper, drawing on the paper). “See?...like this?...and as many stories as we need...I want it twice the size of the old warehouses at least...I’m going to triple the import stocks...and...”

Big. “We can’t...”

Dex. “Can’t!...Can’t!...What do you mean, can’t, Biggs?...That word is not in my vocabulary!...Can’t is a dirty word around here!”

Big. “But...Planning doesn’t allow that sort of construction, so close to the boundary...”

Dex. “Biggs!...Money can buy anything!...I didn’t bring you here to haggle with me...I’ll bribe every person on the Council if I need to...”

Big. “But...”

Dex. “No buts either Biggs...I’ll look after the Councillors...you just design the building...*how* I want

it...and don't come back here again, until you bring me the plans for my new building!"

Big. "Ahh..."

Dex. "Go on... get to work!"

Big. (Wiping his brow). "Yes, Sir!"

Dex. "That's better...See!...All it takes is a little conversation!...we can work everything out, cordially if we just talk about it!"

Big. "Yes, Sir..."

(Biggs leaves).

Dex. (Picks up the phone, and dials a number).

Dex. "Hello, Dick...How are you?...Yes, yes, business is scraping along...Look, I need a favour...I've got this new warehouse that I'm putting up, and it seems like it's going to be a tad close to the boundary?...Is there some way we can work this out?...I mean...we can have lunch some time and sort it out?...I'm sure two gentlemen can come to a mutually pleasant agreement?...Yes, I thought you'd be able see a way around this...Good...How about lunch Tuesday?...Good!...Always a pleasure doing business with you!...See you Tuesday Dick...Bye."

(Puts the phone down, looks out the window, and smiles).

Dex. "A few dollars in the right place, helps to oil the wheels of progress when they squeak!"

(Dexter hears Simmons coming down the hallway again).

Dex. "Here comes 'Yes Sir,' back again..."

(Simmons knocks).

Dex. "Come in Simmons..."

Sim. "Sir...there's a man outside, says he has something really important to tell you...and he said it can't wait?"

Dex. "Important?"

Sim. "Yes, Sir..."

Dex. "What kind of important?...Thousands?...Millions?...Did he say?"

Sim. "No, he wouldn't tell me...he said it's for your ears only!"

Dex. "Hmm...must be insider trading?...Can you get the cash box, Simmons?...I might need to give

him a parting gift..."

Sim. "Yes, Sir..."

Dex. "And send him in..."

Sim. "Yes, Sir!"

(Simmons leaves, and the stranger walks in).

Dex. (Stands to greet the stranger, holding his hand out, and they shake hands). "Welcome my friend...I believe you have some valuable information for me?...I'll hear your information first...then we can talk business..."

Str. (Smiles). "Yes, have it your way..."

Dex. "So, what's this important info you have?...Thousands?...Millions?"

Str. "It's worth more than that...It's priceless!...And I'll give it to you for free..."

Dex. "Free?...No, I pay my friends well...So, what is it?...Insider trading?"

Str. "I'm here to tell you about everything money can't buy...Money may be able to buy most things on earth...but it doesn't buy anything in heaven!...We have faith in God that..."

Dex. (Annoyed). "Oh really?...Well let me inform you about god!...Around here, *my* money is god...and I have great faith in my god, because it can buy anything I ask it to buy...and it can do anything I ask it to do. Numbers are god around here...and they're very big numbers...so it's a very big god...Now, I'd like you to count out loud...one...two...three...four...five...because every time you say a number you are wasting twenty-dollars-worth of my time...Time is money around here...and money is god...so don't waste god's time!...You Jehovah's Witnesses just..."

Str. "I'm not a J.W..."

Dex. "Don't butt in when I'm talking to you!...I said you Jehovah's Witnesses just think you know it all, don't you?...Around here, I'm at the top of the food-chain...so don't bring your God into this...This is my territory!...And you can leave right now..."

Str. "You don't..."

Dex. "Silently, please!...Around here money speaks...my money...and it's saying goodbye to you...so go!"

Str. (Leaves).

Dex. (Scoffs). "God!...I'll God him if he ever comes back again..."

(Sits at his desk and taps the keys on his laptop)

Dex. "Look at that balance!...I've passed my goal...I'll never need to worry about money again...I've made it!...Oh, Dexter...You will never need to think about money again!...Ever!...You can take your ease...eat...drink...and be merry!...You've made it, my friend!"

(A loud, stern voice speaks to him).

"You fool!"

Dex. (Looks around the room, then behind his chair, and under his chair. He gets up from his desk and goes to the door, looks out to the right, then to the left).

Dex. "Who said that?...I'm no fool?"

(Goes back to his desk and looks around the roof).

Dex. "Where are you?"

(He looks under his desk).

Dex. (Bellows out). "Simmons!...Simmons!"

Sim. "Coming, Sir!"

Dex. "Simmons, were you outside my Office door, just now?"

Sim. "No, Sir..."

Dex. "Was anyone outside my door?"

Sim. "No, Sir!"

Dex. "Someone was speaking to me...and when I find out who it was, they will wish they had never been born!"

Sim. "Yes, Sir."

Dex. "Well...Don't just stand there idle...Get back to work!"

Sim. "Yes, Sir..."

(Simmons leaves).

(The voice again speaks sternly to Dexter).

"You fool!"

Dex. "If this is a prank, I'll summon the Police and have you arrested...Come out you coward and face me!...Come on!"

(Dexter goes out of his office and looks right and left down the hall. Then he comes back in and looks under his desk and chair. Then he looks in each of his desk drawers).

Dex. "Where are you?"

(Again, the stern voice speaks).

"You fool...This night your soul is required of you!"

Dex. "This night your soul is required of you?...I hope that isn't who I think it is?" (Looking around the ceiling). "I was only joking when I was talking to that Jehovah's Witness...I'm sorry if I said something wrong?...I'm sure we can work this out somehow...I have a lot of money you know?"

(Looks at the clock).

Dex. "It's three o'clock...dark at seven...so that's four hours till night-time...at the minimum?...What do I do for my last four hours?" (Loud). "Can we talk about this?...Have a conversation?...I'm sure we can come to some agreement?...I'm always willing to give and take?...I'll give...if you'll take?...You'll find that I'm very generous to my friends?"

(Dexter paces around the room).

Dex. "This isn't fair? I don't even believe there's a God anyway...so nothing's going to happen to me, if I don't believe in it!...Is it?...No, of course not... It isn't!....Right...I'm going home...then I'm going to play a round of golf...then I'll go out to the Club tonight with the boys!"

(He tidies up his desk and picking up his bag, he goes to the door, turns and looks back into his office).

Dex. "Good night...and I'll see you same time...same place...tomorrow morning!"

(He switches off the light and closes the door).

Curtain Falls.

Finis.

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