

Soup to Nuts

By

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## Cast of Characters

### Kenny Parker:

Kenny is a kind, caring, 75-80 year old man who once lived a very exciting life. However, due to his age, he has become bored and lonely because he has to live a life that he considers dull. He tries to make peace with this, but his strong mind and will force him to want to return to his old life. This also makes him want to help Loretta, as he knows that she has been in pain for years now.

### Loretta Parker:

Loretta is a quiete 75-80 year old woman who never had an exciting life. What little she had in her youth was enough to make her happy, but losing it due to age made her shut the world out. Eventually, she made peace with this and tries to keep a happy disposition for the sake of Kenny. However, she feels empty on the inside.

ACT I

Scene 1

*Morning-Living room in Kenny and Loretta's house. There are two chairs, 2 coffee tables, a couch and a table in front of the chairs and couch. On the table are sewing needles, a basket of yarn, a pair of glasses and a TV remote. LORETTA PARKER, a worn down old woman, around 75-80, is sitting in her chair, looking out the back door screen. Loretta has made peace with the idea that the exciting times of her life are over. She now goes about her days tired, waiting to go to her eternal sleep. KENNY PARKER, a depressed, bored 75-80 year old enters. He has a limp, a bad back, or some other physical indicator of his age. The actor/director can play around with this. Kenny has been trying to make peace with his life in the same way Loretta has, but has been incapable of doing so. Kenny sits down in his chair reads a newspaper. The headline reads "Scandal in Washington," or some other type of news story that seems to happen all the time. There is silence. Both Kenny and Loretta look lonely and miserable. Loretta makes a small noise, such as a cough, and Kenny looks up, desperately hoping she has something to talk about or something to do. When he realizes she wasn't trying to start communicate with him, he looks down back at his newspaper. Kenny has become bored with the newspaper, as he has for the past 10 years, and reaches for the TV remote in front of him on the table, going through the same motions he has for the past 10 years. As he gets closer to it, something in his body snaps and he is unable to continue getting it, and he is in noticeable pain. The pain can be from over-extending his back, throwing his hip out of place, or some other injury that usually shows someone is getting old. Whatever this is exactly is once again dependent on what the actor /director comes up with. When this happens Loretta takes notice.*

LORETTA

(Interested, but not too concerned)

Are you alright Ken?

KENNY

(In more pain than he'd like to show)

Yeah, yeah, I'm fine, Loretta. I just need a minute. I'll be fine in a moment.

(CONTINUED)

LORETTA

Oh you don't need to go on acting strong for me. We're getting old you know. Do you see a bug over on the screen door over there.

KENNY

(Deeply affected about being told he is old)  
I, uh, I don't know. I can't tell.

LORETTA

Oh. I'll just get my glasses. Later.

*There is silence. Kenny is in denial about being old, and desperately wants to try to get out of the rut his life has become. He tries to think about something he can do to become lively so he decides to try to reconnect with Loretta, who is still off in her own world looking at the screen door, thinking about life and her surroundings.*

KENNY

I talked to Rudy the other day.

LORETTA

(A little caught off guard)  
Oh... Who is that again?

KENNY

I worked with him at the airline.

LORETTA

How nice. How is he?

KENNY

He's good. He said his back's a little sore lately, but he's good.

LORETTA

That's good.

KENNY

Yup. He said his wife is starting to get forgetful.

LORETTA

(Completely uninterested)  
Hmmm.

KENNY

(Realizing her boredom)  
Yeah.

*There is silence again. Kenny is trying desperately to think about something to do.*

KENNY

Any news from the kids?

LORETTA

Ummm... Oh yes, Joe called yesterday.

*Beat*

KENNY

Well what did he say?

LORETTA

He said he's still out playing his rocking and rolling music and that he probably wouldn't be home for another year.

KENNY

Oh. Well what about Linda?

LORETTA

Oh you know she never calls. She's too busy with her business meetings and her executives and what not.

KENNY

Yeah. I guess she is a bit busy.

*Medium silence.*

KENNY

For a second I was going to ask how Davey was.

LORETTA

Oh. Yeah.

KENNY

I really miss him.

LORETTA

I do too. What a pointless war that was.

KENNY

Yeah. It was.

*Trying to think of a happier memory.*

KENNY

Do you remember that time when he-

LORETTA

(Avoiding the subject)  
Not right now, Kenny.

*There is a medium length silence. Loretta gets up and goes to the table to grab her sewing needles, her basket of yarn and puts on her glasses. She then takes her stuff back to her chair. This all happens slowly, due to Loretta's age, and Kenny looks on, sadly, realizing Loretta doesn't have much time left either and wants to escape his current reality. As such, as Loretta is about to start sewing, Kenny gets up, still in pain from earlier, but is able to do so.*

KENNY

Don't start sewing, Loretta.

LORETTA

Why not? Do you not like my sewing?

KENNY

No, no. Let's go out dancing.

LORETTA

Dancing?

KENNY

Yeah, dancing. We haven't been out swinging since we moved away from New York. Why don't we do it again?

LORETTA

I'd rather not, Ken.

KENNY

But you love to dance.

LORETTA

I used to. But my back can't take it anymore and you still look like you're hurt.

KENNY

I'm alright now, I feel like I'm 30. But we don't have to go out dancing. Why don't we get a cup of Joe?

LORETTA

Coffee always makes me gassy.

KENNY

Fine, fine. I know. We haven't seen a good picture in ages. Why don't we go to a petting pantry?

LORETTA

A petting pantry?  
(Tired of his suggestions)

LORETTA

Those chairs hurt my back to much, Ken. Let's just stay here. I'll go make us some soup.

KENNY

I don't want soup anymore.

LORETTA

But you love soup.

KENNY

That's not what I mean.

LORETTA

Kenny, I think you're acting silly.

KENNY

I'm not acting silly. I went to Oxford.

LORETTA

That was over 50 years ago.

KENNY

Don't be a wet rag, Loretta. We're still hep. We can still go out and swing with the young people.

LORETTA

Oh Ken. We're passed our time. Let's let the young people have their fun. We can just stay here.

KENNY

I don't want to just stay here.

LORETTA

Why do you want to go out so badly?

KENNY

(Avoiding the question)

It doesn't matter, just please come with me Loretta. I don't care where we go, just go with me somewhere, please.

LORETTA

(Nearly giving in)

Ken. My answer is no. I'm sorry, but I can't.

*Kenny can't accept this, and after struggling with himself, decides to leave.*

KENNY

I need to go.

LORETTA

And where are you going to go?

KENNY

I don't know.

LORETTA

Where?

KENNY

I don't know. I need to go somewhere. I need to go out of this house.

LORETTA

Oh Ken, why don't you just sit down. I'll make some soup and-

KENNY

I told you I don't want soup. I can still go out and do something. I can still do things, and talk to people, and go to fancy places. I'm not some old fuddy-duddy. I'm not beat yet. My life isn't over.

*Kenny doesn't know what to do after saying this. He's hoping he's convinced Loretta otherwise, and at the same time he doesn't want to leave without her. Loretta walks over to him and slowly, gently sits him down on the couch.*

LORETTA

What is this about, Kenny.

KENNY

I want to go out.

LORETTA

That's not what I'm talking about. Something is wrong with you.

KENNY

Nothing is wrong with me. I couldn't be bett-

*As Kenny tries to get back to his feet in a hurry, the part of his body that was in pain from earlier strikes up again, forcing him to stay seated.*

LORETTA

Sit down and relax, Ken.

KENNY

I've been sitting down and relaxing for over 10 years.

(CONTINUED)



LORETTA

It's all we can do now.

KENNY

It can't be all we can do now. How am I supposed to settle for this boring, garbage. My life used to be exciting. I went to college on a different continent, I flew stranger across the world for a living, we even lived in New York City. We couldn't go outside one day without meeting someone new and interesting to talk to. We used to go out to fancy restaurants and have fun. Now look at us. All you do is look out that screen door, and they won't even let me get on a plane anymore because I'm "too old." How the hell am I supposed to just accept this and do nothing for the rest of my life? How the hell am I supposed to just sit in this chair and do the same thing every single day until I die? How?

*Kenny begins to break down in tears as Loretta, still taken aback, comforts him. They stay like this for a fair period of time. After eventually recomposing himself, Kenny readies himself to speak again.*

KENNY

I'm sorry, it's just-

LORETTA

No, no... It's alright.

*Kenny tries to get up.*

KENNY

I'll, uh, I'll go make us some soup.

LORETTA

(Not understanding the irony)

No. It's okay. We don't need soup.

KENNY

Well... now what? What do we do now?

LORETTA

I... I don't know...I I'm... I'm so tired.

KENNY

(Still somber)

It's only 11:30

LORETTA

No. Not like that.

(CONTINUED)

KENNY

Then how.

LORETTA

I mean I'm tired of this routine everyday.

KENNY

(With a glimmer of hope in his voice)

So you agree with me? So you'll go with me somewhere?

LORETTA

No, Ken. That's not what I mean.

KENNY

Then what do you mean?

LORETTA

Nothing. Forget it.

KENNY

No, no. Tell me.

LORETTA

I don't want to. Weren't you going to make soup?

KENNY

That can wait. I want to know what you mean, Loretta. Just tell me. Please.

LORETTA

I don't want to, Kenny.

KENNY

(starting to get annoyed)

Why do you keep pushing me away?

LORETTA

I'm not pushing you away.

KENNY

I can tell that you are, Loretta. I'm trying to help you, but why won't you let me?

LORETTA

I don't need help, Kenny.

KENNY

Yes you do, Loretta. You used to be so exciting and adventurous. We used to talk and have fun together all the time. Now all you ever want is to go through the same routine every single day. All you want is to sit in you chair and ignore me and look out the screen door and-

(CONTINUED)

LORETTA

You think I want to live my life like this? Do you think I want sit down all day and eat the same damn soup we've had for the past ten years? Of course not. I don't even like to sew. But this is all we have now. We're not supposed to keep going out and acting like we're young all of our lives. I don't like it. I hate it. I'm bored to tears every day. But if we don't, we're just going to wind up hurting ourselves. I'll break my hip, you'll break your back, Linda will call and say that Joe died in another pointless war, and nothing good will come out of any of it. I hate it. I would love to go out on the town again. I would love for us to act like we're 20 again. I would love for us to go out and dance under the moonlight like we used to, but we can't. I'm trying to still accept this, I have for years... but I'm too tired to do that anymore. Listening to you go on and on about how miserable you are and how much I've changed, it just makes me just want to be done with it all. I don't want to accept this anymore. I hate it. I just want to go to bed. I just want to go to bed and never wake up. I want to go to bed one last time, and never deal with any of this again. That's all that I really want.

*There is a medium length silence. Loretta avoids eye contact with Kenny.*

KENNY

Is this really all we can look forward to?

LORETTA

What else could there be?

KENNY

I don't know.

*A long silence returns. Once it ends, Kenny and Loretta begin a somber conversation.*

KENNY

What do you think about these days?

LORETTA

What?

KENNY

What's on your mind now a days? I don't think I've asked you in a long time.

LORETTA

I try not to think so much these days. Whenever I do, I just wind up sad.

(CONTINUED)

KENNY

Why?

LORETTA

Because when I do start thinking, I remember New York. I remember us dancing. I remember Davey. There's nothing else to think about now, so all I can do is remember, and I don't want that. And even if I did find something new to think about, I'd only end up sad in due time.

KENNY

I didn't know you felt this way Loretta.

LORETTA

I guess I didn't really either. What about you? What do you think about?

KENNY

You did say there's not much to think about. The airline. The kids. The two of us.

LORETTA

What about all those newspapers you read?

KENNY

They're all the same.

LORETTA

Oh.

KENNY

I guess today we've been thinking a lot more.

LORETTA

Yeah. I guess we have.

*Beat*

KENNY

Loretta.

LORETTA

Yes?

KENNY

Can I ask you something important?

LORETTA

Yes?

KENNY

What do you think about when you think about dying?

*Short silence.*

LORETTA

It actually has been the only thing that has made me feel calm. I haven't been happy for years now, but it always seems like I'm getting closer to not have to worry about breaking another bone or another one of my children dying. I finally won't be tired anymore.

KENNY

What about right now? I don't want you to be unhappy now, Loretta.

LORETTA

I don't want you to be unhappy either. I just don't know what we can do. I can't accept it anymore, but there is nothing we can do about it.

KENNY

You're were right before, Loretta. We can't go out all the time, and we aren't as young as we used to be, but there has to be something we can do. There has to be a way we can still be happy.

LORETTA

What is there we can do? We don't have youth, we don't have our kids around to help us,; how can we still be happy now?

*Kenny takes a moment to think, before finally coming up with an answer.*

*Kenny slowly gets closer to Loretta on the couch. He kisses her on the cheek. They look at each other, smile, then slowly hug each other. The hug should last for a little while. When it ends, Kenny reaches his hand out to Loretta and she takes it. They then get closer to each other on the couch.*

KENNY

I'm sorry, Loretta.

LORETTA

I'm sorry too, Ken.

*After doing some thinking, Loretta stands up and holds her hand out to Kenny.*

*Kenny takes Loretta's hand and he stands up. They begin to slowly dance with each other back and forth. The lights slowly fade out.*

BLACKOUT

END