

Telemarketer Torment

Pamela Loyd





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TELEMARKETER TORMENT

by

Pamela Loyd

A comedy which will work well on Zoom,
as Reader's Theater, or as a fully staged product.

(15 minutes)

CAST

SILVIA: Woman annoyed by telemarketer calls

JANET: Silvia's friend

TELEMARKETERS:

LINDA: Happy Home Slipcovers. Does she need therapy?

GARY: Classy Calendars. Does he get creeped out easily?

BRENDA: Sunshine Solar Panels. Does she owe money?

STEVE: New Horizons Car Insurance. Did he have an accident?

BRIAN: Lovely Lawns Artificial Grass. Did he do WHAT?!!

PLACE

Silvia's living room or office, dealing with telemarketer calls.

TIME

An afternoon in the present.

PRODUCTION NOTES:

Every character needs a phone to make calls.

As a Zoom play there should only be two characters on the screen at any time. Silvia will be on screen the entire time; each caller will come on only when they call, then click off when they end the call.

As a staged play, telemarketers will enter and exit when they call and hang up.

Any resemblance to actual telemarketers, living or dead, is highly likely. However, these telemarketers, and their predicaments, are the product of the playwright's wishful fantasies. No telemarketers were harmed in the making of this play.

TELEMARKETER TORMENT

AT RISE: Silvia shouts at her phone.

SILVIA: Stop calling me! Do you hear me? You're the tenth telemarketer who's called me today! Stop calling me! Just stop-stop-stop-stop-stop!

Phone rings.

SILVIA: Oh no. Not another one. (*answers phone*) What do you want?!

TELEMARKETER LINDA: (*chirpy*) Hello. How are you doing today?

SILVIA: I'm doing terrible, that's how I'm doing! And it's all because you people keep calling me and calling me! Don't you telemarketers ever stop?

LINDA: Well it's good I called then, because I have something that will cheer you up. My name is Linda and I have an amazing offer from Happy Home Slipcovers for all your furniture. Not just your sofas, but even your tables and bookshelves and dressers--

SILVIA: Slipcovers for bookshelves and dressers? You got to be kidding. Look, I don't want your ridiculous slipcovers and I don't want to be cheered up! (*hangs up phone*) Stop calling me, you annoying idiots! Well, I guess I told her. It feels kind of good to "tell off a telemarketer." (*laughs*)

Phone rings. SILVIA answers.

SILVIA: (*cautious*) Hello?

LINDA: (*chirpy*) Hello. It's me again. Linda from Happy Home Slipcovers. I think we got cut off so I'm calling you back.

SILVIA: We didn't get cut off. I hung up on you, Linda.

LINDA: Oh. Well, as I was saying, I have an amazing offer for you that will cheer you up—

SILVIA: Are you going to keep this up? Going on and on and on? Then calling me back and going on and on again?

LINDA: That's what we do. You can't get away from us, you know. (*desperate*) I have to make this sale so I have to keep calling you. If not today, then tomorrow, and the next day, and the next day after that. So let me tell you again about this amazing offer that will cheer you up.

SILVIA: (*glum*) O.K., alright, I give up. Tell me about your "amazing" slipcovers and see if that cheers me up.

LINDA: Oh, I'm so glad you want to hear about the slipcovers. You're the only one today who's willing to listen to me. Whew! What a relief. You just cheered me up too.

SILVIA: What do you mean I cheered you up? You mean your day hasn't been so good either?

LINDA: Well . . . you know how it is . . . for telemarketers.

SILVIA: No, I don't know . . . Do you mean . . . Wait a minute. Let me think about this. (*puts phone down, frowns, then enlightenment*) Ah! I think I know what to do. (*on phone*) Hello, Linda, I'm back.

LINDA: Yes, as I was trying to tell you, we have this amazing offer—

SILVIA: Yes, yes, an amazing offer, I know. But you were also telling me you needed cheering up, that talking with me is a relief—

LINDA: I shouldn't have said that, it really was off-script. You see we're supposed to just say what's written here—

SILVIA: Of course you are. But today is your lucky day, Linda. Because you have called the . . . uh . . . the . . . the Telemarketer Therapy Services. The place telemarketers call for help dealing with their difficult feelings about their job.

LINDA: Do they? You mean there are therapy services just for telemarketers?

SILVIA: Yes, there are. (*soothing*) Now tell me Linda, how do you feel? Don't you hate your job? Don't you hate it when people hang up on you?

LINDA: Well, yes, I do. I do hate it.

SILVIA: Or even worse, when they say something mean? Like "Stop calling me you annoying idiot!"

LINDA: It really hurts my feelings when they say things like that.

SILVIA: (*understanding*) Of course it does, Linda. And how many sales do you actually make a day? Can you even pay your rent? Or feed your family? And does your boss continually yell at you to "make more sales, make more sales!"

LINDA: (*crying*) You were going to be my only sale today.

SILVIA: And don't you feel bad about yourself trying to sell useless stuff at over-inflated prices? Trying to push people to buy things they don't want? Not being the "better person" you wish you were?

LINDA: (*crying*) You're right. I have to withdraw the amazing offer. The slipcovers really are worthless. No one ever wants to slipcover their dresser. How would they open their drawers? (*sobs*) I'm so sorry for calling you. I have to hang up now. (*hangs up*)

SILVIA: (*hangs up*) Wow! So that's how to get rid of telemarketers. Find a way to make them hang up on you. I can't wait to try this again.

Phone rings.

SILVIA: Oh good. (*answers phone*) Hello?

TELEMARKETER GARY: Good afternoon. My name is Gary and I'm calling to offer you our new online calendars from Classy Calendars.

SILVIA: Oh, Gary. Dear, dear Gary. I can't tell you how glad I am that you called. I'm desperate to talk to somebody about all my troubles.

GARY: Oh, I don't think—

SILVIA: So many problems. First I got fired. Then my husband left me, my children don't care about me, I have no friends. No one loves me. I am so depressed. I might have to end it all, you know?

GARY: I don't think I'm the right person for you to talk to about this.

SILVIA: And then of course I have all these health issues. I've got terrible flatulence. And a constant hacking cough. (*makes annoying hacking cough*) And then I've got these bleeding sores all over my body. I could describe what they look like if you want.

GARY: (*horrified*) No, no! Please don't!

SILVIA: I really need a friend to talk to about these things, Gary. You'll be my friend, right? You'll call me every day, right? Oh, and I have to tell you about my toe fungus. My toes are turning green and moldy and it's creeping up past my ankles. Oh, don't get me started on that.

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!