

the beginning of

FOUR SHRINKS ON COFFEE BREAK
(from **SINFULLY RICH**)

a short comedy by Rich Orloff

The characters: NELSON, JESSIE, KELLY and PAT,
four psychotherapists who confirm our worst fears
of what psychotherapists are really like. (*Note:*
Except Nelson, the therapists can be of either sex.)

(*Further note:* The addresses mentioned in the script should be localized
for each production.)

(*One final note* [I promise]: The characters should be played as real and
vivid people, saying and doing what they do with conviction. Remember
that people in dreams, no matter what they do, always seem real.)

As the scene begins, we hear a typewriter or computer keyboard
clicking away, and we hear a VOICE saying aloud what it is typing:

VOICE

Paranoid dream #47... Shrinks on Coffee
Break!... a comedy by Rich Orloff.

The lights go up on:

The lounge for a group of therapists. As the scene begins, NELSON
is seated at a table, relaxing, whittling a cucumber. JESSIE enters.

JESSIE

(with great feeling)

God damn, they're boring!

NELSON

Just finish a session?

JESSIE

Yeah. Boy, some people are really screwed up.

Whew. Especially my last patient:

(turns to the audience to announce:)

Steven Grimes of 6151 Orange Street, Miami.

NELSON

What's wrong with him?

JESSIE

What's wrong with him? He's a bozo;
that's what's wrong with him. He was born
a bozo, he'll die a bozo, and he lives, breathes
and thinks like a bozo. And get this...

(starts to chuckle)

He actually thinks...

(really tickled by this)

He really thinks... He thinks I'm going to cure him.

Both therapists bust a gut laughing about this.

NELSON

(seriously)

You should be able to make a mint off this one.

JESSIE

Don't I know it. After my first session
with him, I went out and bought a four
thousand dollar home entertainment center.

NELSON

Good for you.

JESSIE

Every time I watch a TV show in SurroundSound,
I think, "Thank God for mental illness."
And how are you?

NELSON

I just got done with the most boring
patient in the history of psychotherapy.
(turns to the audience to announce:)
Sharon O'Toole of 5113 Newcastle, Coral Gables.

JESSIE

What's her problem?

NELSON

(with glee)

Nothing.

JESSIE

But she's rich, huh?

NELSON

No, not really.

JESSIE

Then why do you see her?

NELSON

She has the greatest tits in North America.

JESSIE

That's valid.

NELSON

I spend all hour staring at them.

JESSIE

She ever notice?

NELSON

Oh, yeah. That's what I love about being a therapist. I just tell her, "What makes you think I'm interested in your breasts? Why do you want to project that onto me?"

(sighs)

They fall for that every time.

KELLY enters.

KELLY

Hi, guys.

Kelly takes out a portable phone, dials a number and puts a handkerchief over the receiver.

KELLY (cont'd)

(into phone:)

You don't know who I am, but your wife's having an affair.

Kelly hangs up.

JESSIE

Well done.

KELLY

Thank you. Thank you very much.

Kelly takes a tape recorder out of a bag.

NELSON

What's that for?

KELLY

Didn't I tell you? I'm taping my sessions with:
(turns to audience to announce:)
Deniece Robinson, 5036 Denny Avenue,
Fort Lauderdale.
(slight pause)
phone (305) 555-8278.

NELSON

How come?

KELLY

I'm using the intimate details of her
life for a sleazy novel I'm writing.

JESSIE

Does she know?

KELLY

Of course not! But what she doesn't
know won't hurt her.

NELSON

I think Freud said that.

JESSIE

I like to play tapes of my patients' sessions
at parties. They're always good for a laugh.

NELSON

(disapproving angrily)
Now wait a second. Wait a damn second.
Playing patients' tapes at parties. That's
going one step too far. The way you act
sometimes, a certified therapist. Where
the hell did you get your diploma from?

JESSIE

I need a diploma?

PAT enters. Pat has just had the most horrendous session of her (or his)
entire career.

PAT

God almighty! I need a drink!

The others all take out hip flasks and bottles from their briefcases, purses,
sportsjackets, etc. Pat grabs the nearest container and chugs it.

JESSIE

Another day filled with wimps,
losers and jerks?

PAT

Worse.

KELLY

Uh-oh. Did you just see him?

PAT

Yeah. I tell you, I always knew I'd have
some difficult patients, but five hundred
dollars an hour is not enough to put up with:
(turns to audience to announce:)
Rich Orloff, 800 West End Avenue, Manhattan.

NELSON

Orloff... Orloff... I know him. Isn't he
the guy who has those grandiose delusions
of how women fantasize about him?

PAT

That's the one. I tell you, any woman
who fantasizes about him is perverted.

JESSIE

What's his problem?

PAT

He's a total waste of matter and energy...
Thank God he pays on time.