

"Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread" Drama/Dialogue: Week Four

Carolyn, an older woman, and Earl, a young man, are sitting at a small table together. They are on break and each is drinking a cup of coffee. The genders and names of the characters can be changed as necessitated by the available cast, but the relative ages should remain the same: one older, the other younger. Regardless of the genders, the younger cast member should take the part of Earl.

Carolyn: Mornin' Earl.

Earl: Morning Carolyn. How's it going?

C: Oh, it's going.

E: *(Shorts a laugh)* Yeah, I know what you mean.
(He rubs the back of his head, like he's got a bit of a headache)
I had a pretty busy weekend myself.

C: Oh yeah? Wha'd you do?

E: I had a very full social calendar.

C: *(Nods, understanding)* Ah. Gotcha.

E: Yeah, last night was pretty crazy. But not as crazy as Saturday night. Oh, man...

C: It got pretty wild, huh?

E: Oh, geez. Did it ever! I mean, it was out of control! But, uh... Don't say anything to anyone, OK? I don't wanna get caught violating my parole.

C: Oh, hey. No problem.

E: So what'd you do this weekend?

C: Well, Saturday I was down here.

E: You mean this place is open on weekends, too?

C: Sure. People who're hungry are hungry all the time, not just when it's convenient for us.

E: Yeah, I guess there's that. So why'd you come down here on the weekend, though? You're here almost every day. Don't you have stuff you gotta do?

- C: Well, sure. But I'm only here in the morning. I've got plenty of time for myself when I'm home in the afternoon. Besides it's like I said, people are hungry every day.
- E: I don't get why you spend so much time down here. Don't you get tired of it? I mean, as soon as I've got my community service hours done, I'm out of here.
- C: And there's no other reason why you decided to come here instead of going someplace else?
- E: Not really. Well, they had a spot open and they could take me right away. And I figure it had to be better than picking up garbage or something like that. Plus, I don't know. I kinda like to cook and stuff like that. So, anyway, you still didn't tell me what you did this weekend.
- C: Well, like I said, I came down here on Saturday morning. Then I went out for dinner and a movie with some of my friends from card club. We saw that new one with..., oh... what's her name?
- E: *(teasing)* I don't know, I wasn't the one watching the movie!
- C: *(good naturedly)* I will ignore that, Mr. Smarty. Anyway, then on Sunday I went to church and Sunday school.
- E: *(laughs)* You're dumb.
- C: *(feigning indignance)* I beg your pardon!
- E: You're going to school. On Sunday!! Geez, you're down here every morning. You deserve to take Sunday off. *(rubs head absently)* I know I sure needed it.
- C: Well, for your information, Mr. Smarty, if I didn't go to Sunday school and church I never would have found out about this place. And you wouldn't have someone nice like me to spend so much time with!
- E: They told you about this place in church? I don't believe it. All they ever want from you in church is money.
- C: How do you know that? Do you go to church somewhere?
- E: *(laughs)* No.
- C: Well, if you don't go to church, how do you know that all they want is your money?
- E: Well, that's what my dad used to say. He didn't go either. So how come they were talking about this place in church?

- C: It was last year, during World Hunger month.
- E: What's that?
- C: Every year we take a whole month and devote it to World Hunger.
- E: You mean, like, Africa and places like that?
- C: Sure – Africa, Asia. But also right here at home. We take a whole month to study hunger and what causes it in the world and here at home. Last year they had Sue, the director of this place, come in and talk to our Sunday School class about local hunger issues. She talked about the challenges involved in running a soup kitchen like this that feeds 200 people a day.
- E: Two hundred!?
- C: Sure, we do the kids' breakfast in the morning and then we do lunch. You've been here for a couple of weeks now, didn't you notice that it was that many?
- E: I guess I never really bothered with counting.
- C: I bet you didn't lose count of all the beer you drank over the weekend.
- E: *(slightly defensive)* What's that supposed to mean?
- C: *(regretting the turn in the conversation)* Oh...never mind.
- E: *(a little more indignant)* No, c'mon now. You took a shot at me. What did you mean by that?
- C: *(sighs)* Look, Earl. You're a nice guy. And you're not dumb, either.
- E: *(somewhat mollified)* Thank you.
- C: But you need to realize that there's more to this world than where the next party's at.
(pauses)
- E: And?
- C: And, well... life isn't just about having a good time.
- E: Yeah... that's what the judge said, too.
- C: I know you've heard it before and you're probably not going to like hearing it again,...

E: *(interrupting)* but...

C: ...but she's right!

E: *(begins "shutting down", becomes a bit distant, defensive)* Don't get started on that junk, OK? I've heard enough of it from my parents and I don't need to hear it from you, too! OK?!

C: *(looking a little hurt)* I'm...I'm sorry, Earl.

E: *(softening a bit)* I get tired of everyone telling me how worthless I am.

C: Well, of course you're not worthless. That's exactly my point! You're basically a good person, like most other folks are. And you're smart, too. But you've got to learn to think beyond the end of your own nose.

E: What's that supposed to mean?

C: Well, like I said before: there's more to life than the getting ready for the next party.

E: What? You want me to go to church?

C: Well, it wouldn't hurt.

E: *(rolls his eyes)*

C: Seriously, why don't you come to church with me?

E: Why should I do that?

C: Well, 'cause I think you'd get something out of it, that's why! Look you were wondering why I come down here, right? Well, my church is a big part of the reason I come down here. Like I said, it's how I learned about this place.

E: So?

C: I learned a lot more, too. You were surprised that this kitchen serves 200 people a day. Did you know that there are two other kitchens in the area, too, that do the same kind of thing that we do here?

E: Really?

C: Really. Like I said: the hungry are everywhere, including right here.

E: Yeah, but I don't have money for church.

- C: Earl, the church isn't just interested in money. I'm not gonna tell you that we don't need money.
- E: *(triumphantly)* Hah! See, I told you!
- C: *(persevering)* Earl, my church isn't interested in making money. It's not a business. But I'm not going to lie to you. They do need money, but only so they have the resources they need to help other people.
- E: How's that?
- C: For example, it's World Hunger month again. So just this past Sunday we were talking about how widespread it is. Over one billion people are hungry. And every day about 16,000 children die from hunger or the problems that hunger can cause.
- E: *(whistles)* Dang!
- C: Dang, is right. But I can't go over to Africa and work there like I do here. So we take up a special collection for World Hunger. And at the end of the month we send it to the national church so that they can use the money we send to help feed people and to help educate them all over the world.
- E: What good is that gonna do them?
- C: What?
- E: Education.
- C: Well, there's a saying: "If you give a person a fish, that person will eat for one day. If you teach a person to fish, that person will eat for a lifetime".
- E: Yeah, I've heard that before. I guess that makes sense.
- C: One of the reasons I go to church is so that I can learn about things like this. Because if I never bother to learn about things like hunger and poverty, I'll never know what I can do to help.
- E: You mean like finding out about this place and coming to work here.
- C: Right! If we want to end hunger than we need to learn about what we can do to fight it and to prevent it. And we need to teach people who are hungry, too. So that they can help themselves.
- E: And your church does all that?

C: Well, not just our little church all by itself. But together with all the other Lutheran churches we do some pretty amazing stuff.

E: I think my mom was Lutheran.

C: So?

E: Well, I guess it's sorta in my blood.

C: *(trying not to get too excited)* So you'll come with me?

E: Well, you said this world hunger thing is just for a month, right?

C: Mm-hmm.

E: OK. I'll give it a shot. But just for a month first. I'm not making any promises.

C: OK. *(smiling)* Just remember that this month has five Sundays.

E: C'mon, old lady. We gotta get back to work.

C: *(crumples up her napkin and throws it at him)* I'll give you "old lady"!

(They both laugh as they get up and leave.)