**THE GINGERBREAD LADY**by Neil Simon  *JIMMY*

I'm okay, I'm not upset anymore. I'm alright...I know my leg is shaking, but I'm alright. They pushed the opening of the show back one night...It's opening Tuesday instead of Monday. It's also another actor, instead of me. They fired me. The little son of a bitch fired me three nights before the opening. Fired by a nineteen-year-old producer from Oklahoma A & M...Look at that leg. Do you realize the tension that must be going on in my body right now? If he didn't like me, why'd he hire me in the first place, heh?... The entire cast is shocked. Shocked. Three night before the opening. He didn't even get somebody else to tell me. He wanted to tell me himself...He stood there with a little smile on his Goddamned baby face and said, "Sorry, Jimmy, it's just not working out.".... Three night before the opening. My name was in the Sunday Times ad. I've got eighteen relatives from Paterson, New Jersey, coming to the opening. Six of them already sent me telegrams...My Aunt Rosario sent me a Candygram, I already ate the Goddamned candy. Everybody in the cast wanted to walk out on the show, I wouldn't let them. Even the director was crazy about me...I can't breathe, I can't catch my breath, I'm so upset...I gotta calm down, I'll be alright. You know how it feels for a grown man to plead and beg to a child? A child!... I said to him, "You're not happy, I'll do it any way you want. Faster, slower, louder, I'll wear a dress, I'll shave my head, I'll relieve myself on the stage in front of my own family, I'm an actor, give me a chance to act.".... He turned his back on me and shoved a Tootsie Roll in his mouth. It's the worst piece of crap every put on a stage. That's why I'm so humiliated. To get fired from a piece of garbage like that, who's gonna want me for something good? Do you know who they gave my part o? The understudy. He's not even a full-time actor, he drives a cab in the day...A Puerto Rican cab driver. Can't speak English. He go me coffee the first two weeks, now he's got my part...Look how my neck is throbbing. That's blood pumping into the brain, I'm gonna have a hemorrhage. What am I going to tell my family in Jersey? My sister's taking my twelve-year-old niece, her first time in the theatre, never saw me on the stage, she's gonna think she's got a Puerto Rican uncle...I was thinking maybe I wouldn't tell anyone. Opening night I'll show up in the theatre, walk out on the stage, two of us will play the same part, one in Spanish, one in English, the critics will love it. Look at my fingers. There's no color in the nails. That's a hemorrhage. I'm having a Goddamned hemorrhage and I can't find it. What the hell difference does it make? What am I going to do? I'm not going to make it, I'm never going to make it in this business. Republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with Liberty.