

Cast:

Martin Talon	25. Intelligent. Headstrong.
Angelica Talon	26. Intelligent. Cold.
Sophia Talon	The Matriarch. Very In Charge.
The Savage	Primal. Hairy.

Set:

The entire play takes place in the Talons' parlor/patio area. Minimalism is suggested, but if produced with full set, everything should reek of class and money.

Costumes:

The Talons all dress affluently in muted tones. The Savage has more color on his loincloth, tribal mask, and spear.

Time:

Whenever.

Dialogue:

The Savage is translated in parenthesis after his gibberish. This is not intended to be heard by an audience, simply to give the actor subtext.

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE: The Savage is best played by a large white fellow, to avoid any of the racist implications that other casting could create.

This play premiered at the 2003 Bay One-Acts Festival in San Francisco. It was directed by Mike Ward for Isis Arts Collective with the following cast: Christopher Symonds as Martin; Sarah Mitchell as Angelica; Ann Kuchins as Sophia; and Travis Bedard as the Savage.

MARTIN and ANGELICA sit opposite each other drinking martinis. They are mid-conversation.

ANGELICA

It's not that I object to the class of women you see...

MARTIN

(pause) Yes it is.

ANGELICA

No, it is not. The fact that you slum through coffee shops and Salvation Armies looking for rubies amidst the clutter... well, it is embarrassing, but it's your business.

MARTIN

Thank you.

ANGELICA

And the minutes you take off my life and Mother's life with introducing us... well, that's necessitated by family loyalty, and we accept that we must sacrifice those minutes to your happiness.

MARTIN

Big of you.

ANGELICA

But I want to make sure that you're not blind to what these women are after. Why they're with you. These hussies think of you as marriage material. They want to become part of the family. They want the wealth and they want the prestige.

MARTIN

They have as much control as I allow them.

ANGELICA

All boys think that.

MARTIN

What am I going to do, date you? Waiting for a woman that both you and Mother approve of could force me into monk's robes.

ANGELICA

I'm not suggesting that.



Chris Symonds as Martin and Sarah Mitchell as Angelica in Isis Arts Collective's 2003 production of *Living With The Savage*.

MARTIN

As if the collection of stable hands and coffee-jerks you're reputed to rut with were anything to boast about.

ANGELICA

My men at least want me for sex first, position second.

MARTIN

Well, you'd like to think so. Wait, which position do they want you in first?

ANGELICA

Hah. Brother, there are two differences in how we handle our affairs. First, I am in complete control. They get what I give them and are incredibly grateful. You actually let those bimbos get to know you as if they were your peers, your equals.

MARTIN

Please. Neither they nor I forget the underlying nature of our relationship. I wish we could forget it. Because I have to stop sleeping with them when I see the gold digger behind their smile. And I've yet to meet the woman who could ignore the family fortune.

ANGELICA

You're so eccentric. What are you trying to do, find true love? That's the saddest thing I've heard in days. The world's your oyster and you want to make it your cave, a place where you and the missus can hide away from the rest of life's possibilities.

MARTIN

I'm not a romantic! Love just sounds like it might be very pleasant, for a couple of months at any rate.

ANGELICA

Such a dreamer! Second difference: You're so public with your amours. We all have our dirty laundry, but yours never finds its way to the hamper.

MARTIN

Pure hogwash.

ANGELICA

Please! I could list twenty women you've pursued, where and when you first slept with them, what time you got home afterwards, and how many more hours later you decided it was over. You couldn't name one of my lovers with any certainty.

MARTIN

Mark Romanoff. *(Pause)* Well?

ANGELICA

One of the reasons you'll never know for certain is that I have enough discretion to not play guessing games.

MARTIN

At least if there's a pregnancy involved in one of my affairs, I'll know who the father is.

*They smile at each other, laugh softly, and clink glasses.
SOPHIA strides on stage.*

SOPHIA

Daughter, Son, come here.

They dutifully obey.

MARTIN

Yes, Mother?

SOPHIA

You need to prepare yourselves for a little adjustment to our living situation.

ANGELICA

Adjustment, Mother?

SOPHIA

I've always worried that the lack of a father figure would set both of you back. Especially you, Son.

MARTIN

You needn't worry, Mother. I'm doing just fine.

SOPHIA

Nevertheless, this has been a concern of mine for a number of years, ever since your father—

ANGELICA & MARTIN

Yes, yes.

SOPHIA

Today I've taken a step to alleviate the pressure his absence has placed on you both.

MARTIN

Mother, what are you saying?

ANGELICA

You've taken a lover?

SOPHIA

I have someone I'd like you to meet. (*Calling off*) Come!

The SAVAGE enters.

Children, this is my Savage. He's going to be staying with us. Savage, these are my children.

They all stare at each other.

ANGELICA

Um... hello... Savage

She moves toward him with an extended hand.

SAVAGE

Rrrraarrrrggghhhh!!! [You are a very attractive young woman.]

ANGELICA

Oh!

He raises his spear and there is a lot of screaming back and forth.

MARTIN

Now just hold on—

SAVAGE

Arganaweeeeeee! [What's your problem?]

The SAVAGE begins chasing MARTIN with his spear.

SOPHIA

Oh now, Savage... Savage... SAVAGE, heel!

He scurries to her side.

SAVAGE

Sorrrr-reeeee!!

SOPHIA

Isn't that adorable? It's his only word of English!

MARTIN

What a Savage!

SOPHIA

Isn't he wonderful? So authentic. I love his big bear chest, the way he wields his spear.

She proffers her hand to the SAVAGE. He begins smelling her arm.

ANGELICA

Don't be vulgar, Mother. You've had your laugh, now let's get him out of here before he breaks something.

SOPHIA

Daughter, he's not going anywhere.

MARTIN

What are you talking about?

SOPHIA

He's my lover.

MARTIN

(Simultaneous) What... what are you saying?!?

ANGELICA

(Simultaneous) Oh, disgusting! He's so dirty!

SOPHIA

Now, Children, I knew you'd be resistant—

MARTIN

Resistant!

SOPHIA

And having him here living with us will be a big change for you.

ANGELICA

Here with us? He'll soil the linen!

SOPHIA

He bathes, Daughter.

ANGELICA

One could never tell!

SOPHIA

He likes it when I bathe him, at any rate.



Chris Symonds as Martin and Sarah Mitchell as Angelica in Isis Arts Collective's 2003 production of *Living With The Savage*.

ANGELICA

When did you bathe him?

SOPHIA

At the custom's office, they have this little room—

MARTIN

May I say that this whole unseemly topic is making me ill?

SOPHIA

No, you may not!

The SAVAGE moves his smelling up her arm to her neck.

MARTIN

Sorry, Mother. But... can't you at least make him take off his mask? He's inside, and I don't like that I can't see his eyes.

ANGELICA

He can't stay here.

MARTIN

Uh-oh.

SOPHIA glares at her, then approaches menacingly.

SOPHIA

That's not really your decision, now is it, Daughter? You are still living under my roof. There is no "we" in the running of this home. I am still Mother, and you are still Daughter and Son. Do I make myself clear?

ANGELICA

Yes, Mother.

SOPHIA

(pause) Martin?

MARTIN

Weren't you watching just now? He tried to impale me!

SOPHIA

You provoked him.

MARTIN

I didn't!

SAVAGE

Grrrr pappabar? [You're a little punk, aren't you?]

SOPHIA

Have a little compassion, Son... his ways and customs are much different than ours. He was just saying hello to Angelica and you came at him suddenly. You need to appreciate the life he comes from.

MARTIN

The life he needs to go back to.

ANGELICA

Mother, he won't be happy here.

The SAVAGE is smelling SOPHIA all over.

SOPHIA

Oh! Well... I think he'll be very happy here.

MARTIN

Mother!

SOPHIA

We'll continue this conversation later.

She and the SAVAGE carnally make their way offstage as the children moan distastefully.

ANGELICA

Oh my God.

MARTIN

I'm going to be sick.

ANGELICA

What are we going to do?

MARTIN

Be sick!

ANGELICA

No, little brother, think actively... what are we going to do ABOUT this?

MARTIN

I'm hoping my physical illness will show Mother that this is unacceptable.

ANGELICA

Seems unlikely after that display.

A rhythmic thumping begins, shaking the walls.

MARTIN

What... what is that?

ANGELICA

Oh Mother!

MARTIN

God!

He hands her his drink and exits, retching just offstage as ANGELICA stares at the shaking wall.

ANGELICA

I don't ever remember Mother having sex before, do you? I suppose she and father must have, though I'd always hoped we were the product of artificial insemination.

MARTIN reenters, wiping his mouth. She passes him back his martini.

MARTIN

We've got to get him out of here!

ANGELICA

Of course. The question is how.

MARTIN

(Rinsing and gargling) A trail of raw beef leading to a pit should work.

ANGELICA

Be serious.

MARTIN

I am.

ANGELICA

I have trouble envisioning you digging a pit.

MARTIN

I'd hire someone.

ANGELICA

We have to think practically.

MARTIN

(Focusing on the thumping) He's like a jackhammer.

ANGELICA

Focus, Martin.

MARTIN

We need to get an elephant rifle!

ANGELICA

Murder is not a viable option. Use your head!

The rate of the bed thumping doubles.

MARTIN

We have to do something... where the hell is his spear?

ANGELICA

Get a hold of yourself!

She slaps him.

MARTIN

Ow! That hurt!

ANGELICA

Listen to me, Brother... Our objective is to get him out of here while neither going to prison nor being disinherited. Clear?

MARTIN

We've got to convince Mother to cast him out!

The thumping increases to an impossible pace.

ANGELICA

I don't think that'll be happening. I think she likes it savage.

MARTIN

Oh! Oh! Oh!

ANGELICA

I'll just have to civilize him!

MARTIN

What?

The thumping crescendos with ANGELICA's following speech in final, earthshaking impacts.

ANGELICA

That's it... I'll train the beast right out of him... get his elbows off the table, comb his hair, put him in pants... I'll teach him the value of money! Then she'll lose her taste for him! I'm a genius.

MARTIN

You're deluded. It could take a million years to teach him to use toilet paper. I'll get him out of here on my own. Mother has to understand the folly of what she's doing. He's savage, we're civilized... He has to go!

Silence ensues as MARTIN stomps off.

ANGELICA

(Softly) Go your own way, Martin, I'll go mine.