

Two Cents
Madelyn Marks

Characters:

MAX: Younger than Harper

HARPER: Older than Max

Setting:

Harper's bedroom

(We hear a shatter, sounds like glass-maybe something ceramic. Lights up on HARPER sitting on the floor with a hammer in their hand. In front of them is a shattered piggy bank. There are coins and crumpled-up cash among the shards. For a brief moment, we watch HARPER begin to flatten out bills and organize coins. Enter MAX)

MAX

How much?

HARPER

I don't know yet. I have to count it.

MAX

Cool

(joins HARPER on the floor)

HARPER

You heard it break?

MAX

The whole neighborhood heard it break.

HARPER

I seriously did not know it was gonna be that loud.

MAX

Well you did use the biggest hammer you could find.

HARPER

It's a large piggy bank.

MAX

Was a large piggy bank

HARPER

Yes, was

MAX

This is so exciting.

HARPER

I know, I finally get to see how much money I saved.

MAX

You mean *we*

HARPER

What?

MAX

How much money *we* saved

HARPER

(completely stops and looks at MAX)

Pardon?

MAX

Well some of that change is mine.

HARPER

So?

(continues sorting)

MAX

So occasionally I've been putting my spare change in your piggy bank.

HARPER

When?

MAX

I don't know, just like whenever

HARPER
OK WHEN?

MAX
OCCASIONALLY

HARPER
Well how much is that?!

MAX
I don't know—periodically.

HARPER
THAT'S JUST A SYNONYM FOR OCCASIONALLY.

MAX
Relax. All I'm saying is that I deserve at least like a third of the money.

HARPER
A third? Are you kidding me? That's like...
(attempts to count the money in their head, gives up)
A lot! That's a lot of my money!

MAX
Our money

HARPER
You're the worst kind of person.

MAX
I contributed to the piggy bank so I feel like it's only fair that I receive some of the money.

HARPER
You can have...two cents.

MAX
Two cents??? I put way more than two cents in there.

HARPER
Mmm I don't think you did.

MAX

Come on Harper, I put money in there. I know I did.

HARPER

Well I didn't see you put any money in.

MAX

Well I did!

HARPER

You know what? If you help me finish sorting it, I will consider giving you more than two cents.

MAX

Like how much more?

HARPER

Hmmmmm like...three cents

MAX

HARPER

HARPER

Come on, help me sort.

MAX

Fine.

(joins HARPER in sorting)

Why do we have to sort it?

HARPER

So that when I take it to the bank it's—

MAX

You mean when *we* take it to the bank.

HARPER

What? No, it's a one-person job. I'll take it to the bank.

MAX

OH so you can deposit it all into YOUR account? I DON'T THINK SO.

HARPER
I cannot believe you.

MAX
Just let me go with you.

HARPER
No

MAX
Please! I'll be so good and nice.
(pouty face)

HARPER
Ugh! Fine, you can come with me.

MAX
Yes! And then I can just deposit my third of the money into my account.

HARPER
MAX! I am not giving you a third of this money.

MAX
Well I feel like I deserve-

HARPER
You deserve like two cents! Not a third of my money!

MAX
Our money

HARPER
OH MY GOD

MAX
It's only fair.

HARPER
No it's not!

MAX

You're really gonna look me in the eyes and tell me I'm not worth a third of this money to you?

HARPER

Stop it.

MAX

Stop what?

HARPER

Stop trying to guilt trip me.

MAX

Me? Guilt trip you? I could never.

HARPER

I should have waited to do this when you weren't home.

MAX

That's rude. You're being very rude to me.

HARPER

wHaT?

MAX

Come on Harper, just let me have a third of the money.

HARPER

If I let you have a third, will you promise to shut up forever?

MAX

No but I'll be like really nice to you forever.

HARPER

What are you even gonna do with the money?

MAX

Maybe I'll get my own piggy bank and then this will never happen again.

Fine! Get your own piggy bank!

HARPER

Maybe I will!

MAX

Maybe you should!

HARPER

Yeah maybe I should!

MAX

That's what I just said Max.

HARPER

And then when I have my own piggy bank, I'll put so much money in it.

MAX

Well yeah that's like the whole point.

HARPER

Don't patronize me!

MAX

I'm not – that's not what's happening.

HARPER

I'm gonna have so much money in my piggy bank. You'll see.

MAX

Cool. Can't wait.

HARPER

(pause)

MAX

I'm still getting a third of this right?

HARPER
Are you serious?

MAX
Pleaseeeeeeeee

HARPER
Max-

MAX
(desperately, like their life depends on it)
PLEASE

HARPER
You'll get your own piggy bank?

MAX
I will strongly consider it.

HARPER
(thinks for a moment, then reluctantly)
Alright, you can have a third.

MAX
Really?

HARPER
Yes

MAX
So

(pause)
Does this mean I'm worth more than two cents to you?

HARPER
Help me pick up the shards of pig.

(lights down as they clean up the broken piggy bank)

END OF PLAY