

poor life choices



TORONTO
FRINGE
FESTIVAL

THE TIES THAT BIND AND GAG

By Poor Life Choices Productions

Synopsis

The Ties That Bind and Gag is a dark comedy inspired by the bonds and bondage of family. Written by Anna Mehler Paperny and directed by Juliet Paperny, it is a play about family, by family, for family.

Three generations of a tight-knit family cram into a rental car to drive to a funeral. Neuroses collide, emotions run high, grievances are aired and over-shared, traffic laws are broken.

Buckle up and spend some claustrophobic quality time on a guilt-trip road trip with your nearest and dearest – the people you love and can't stand, or just can't understand. The ensuing drama's funny because it's true and hilarious because it's heartbreaking.

When Lydia returns home to Los Angeles with her daughter Zoe to drive her brother and aging parents to a funeral, she figures she's in for a chore. She doesn't expect a cascading meltdown as she struggles to deal with her father's dementia, her mother's desire to find her granddaughter a nice Jewish girl, and with her own roiling guilt at living so far from parents so old. What would you do, seated between your senile, disapproving grandparents stuck in traffic on the freeway? (Pro-tip: Bring snacks.) What would you do as an 80-something mother and grandmother, finally surrounded by the loved ones who never visit, and never stay for long when they do? How much of the way we torment each other is deliberate, and how much do we inflict despite ourselves?

During their rental-car odyssey this family will find intergenerational chasms are tough to bridge and a punishing sense of obligation is a helluva way to say "I love you." *The Ties that Bind and Gag* is a play about learning to like the ones you love – or at least to refrain from tossing them out of a moving car.

Brought to you by Poor Life Choices Productions and the all-star ensemble cast of Toni Ellwand, Alex Franks, Rachel VanDuzer, Anne Shepherd, Barry Birnberg and Jamie Johnson, *The Ties That Bind and Gag* will leave you wanting to call your grandmother, hide in a ditch and estrange yourself from your extended family all at once.

You will laugh. You may cry. You will never look at family car rides the same way again.

Come see us! You never visit.