

PROJECT DAWN by Karen Hartman

<https://www.concordtheatricals.com/p/64336/project-dawn>

A glass of wine handy, Gwen--an overworked public defender and heroic founder of an innovative court--yells at her kids.

GWEN

No I am not paying you back the four fifty. Because I didn't leave your bus pass at home. *You* left your bus pass at home.

Meredith Joanne how is your bus pass my responsibility?

Uh huh.

Uh huh.

So by that logic every *blessed* thing in this house is my responsibility because by pitching in to the household that feeds, clothes and supports us all, you are only always and perpetually covering for *me*? Is that the logic? Every *blessed* thing that gets done around here gets done for *mom*? For *Gwen*? You better study harder if you want to be a lawyer because your logic is for *the birds*.

Let's start with your premise that picking up Joey was my responsibility – Joey you are part of this conversation too, *everybody* is part of this conversation even Dad who's out – *get in here Joey*.

Everyone is part of this *blessed* conversation.

Everyone is part of this *blessed* home.

I am an intelligent individual, I'm told between 8 am and 6 or 7 or 9 pm Monday through Friday sometimes Saturday and occasionally Sunday evening. Hundreds of college graduates apply every year to work for me, for minimum wage which I pay out of my pocket. Most would do it for free but I don't take free interns because you know *why*? Because I cannot spend my *blessed* work days with entitled children and do you know *why*? Meredith Joanne? Joseph Andrew? Frances Connor? James Michael? Can any of you explain to me why I refuse to hire college graduates who can afford to work for free meaning ipso facto that mom and dad are underwriting their "careers?"

Because when someone works for you for free *you owe them*. They swap labor for experience and mentorship and whatever the *flip* else. I can't swap. I need to walk into my office, regard a young person blooming up at me, and say, get the cartons in the hand truck. And when I look up again I need to see the cartons in the hand truck.

And the next time there's a pile of boxes I need them in the hand truck before I ask.

I can't owe anyone another *blessed* thing. I would argue I *don't* owe anyone another blessed thing. It is time it is time it is time for us to become a little more of a unit, people. A little more of some step up, people.

(Meredith talks. Gwen unloads scorn)

Obviously you didn't birth your brother. That is the lamest excuse, come on Merry our brains work to a higher standard. *Obviously* you didn't choose to be the eldest. But what's the statute of limitations? I went to school in Uncle Pete's shoes, am I calling Granny now to ask for a new pair? *You eat the four fifty.*

(Withering)

You can too breathe. You're breathing right now or you wouldn't whine. A little more participation, all of you! A little more democracy in action!

(A doorbell we don't hear)

Pizza's here. Wash your hands and say grace.

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You are welcome to perform this monologue for free! It would mean a lot to me if you would [buy this play](#), and it's a good idea for your performance too.

You may CUT but you may not CHANGE the words. For this monologue only, a performer of color may change the children's names (Joseph Andrew, etc) to suit her own racial identity, or leave as is. Please introduce the monologue with title of play and author's name (this is a monologue from Leah's Train by Karen Hartman).

Feel free to send a video link to yourself performing the monologue through the Contact page, and let me know if I may share! Thanks and be well, KH

www.karenhartman.org