



Synopsis

Neil Simon's *The Odd Couple* is a comedy play about two friends with completely opposite characters, but who still remain friends despite individual differences between them. The main characters are Oscar Madison and Felix Ungar. Oscar is a 43-year old sportswriter, carefree and easy-going, but at the same time, he is a real slob. His slovenly nature is what made his wife divorce him, so now he lives alone in his apartment on the Upper East Side in Manhattan and enjoys the benefits of being a bachelor - leaving dirty dishes, ashtrays, half-filled glasses everywhere, and creating a mess in the apartment and no one would say a word about it.

Felix Ungar is Oscar's best friend. He is a 44-year-old news writer whose hypochondriac nature and the attitude of a neat freak make his wife divorce him. His wife throws him out of their house, so he is homeless and seriously thinks about suicide. Felix sends a telegram to his wife stating that he is going to kill himself. This is what she tells Oscar over the phone when she calls him, interrupting his usual poker game with his friends Roy, Murray, Speed, and Vinnie. This is how the play starts. When Felix finally arrives to the game he is late to, his friends are worried about him and try to cheer him up. Oscar even offers him to move into his apartment because he does not want to live alone. Felix

happily accepts his friend's offer, already imagining how he will clean the apartment, cook and fix things. Felix's wife is bent on divorcing him and calls Oscar's apartment to ask when Felix takes his clothes as she has her plans to redecorate their bedroom. He finally realizes that his marriage is over and starts his new life in Oscar's apartment by cleaning it.

Two weeks pass and Oscar's apartment looks immaculately clean. During the poker game, Felix serves food he cooked and asks his friends to use coasters when they put their drinks on the table. Not all friends are happy with the changes and Felix's nagging about keeping the table clean. They end the game early, and one of them, Murray, makes a comment about Oscar and Felix living a happy bachelor life together. However, their life is quite the opposite as two friends are ready to kill each other. Oscar is unhappy and thinks his friend is too uptight and obsessed about control over everything. Felix needs to have fun and relax, and Oscar knows how to make his friend relax. He wants to invite the Pigeon sisters, Cecily and Gwendolyn, who live in the apartment upstairs. Felix thinks that meeting the sisters would feel like a date, and he does not want to cheat on his wife. Although, he agrees if he cooks this dinner.

The dinner passes not according to Oscar's plans. Instead of Felix romancing the women and loosening up, he ends up crying and telling them about his children and his ruined marriage. Besides, the meal that Felix cooked is ruined. The sisters invite two friends for dinner at their

apartment, but Felix refuses, which makes Oscar feel disappointed and angry. Next evening, Oscar finally snaps when the friends wait for their poker game to begin. He kicks Felix out of his apartment. Felix leaves, making his friends worry that he might try to kill himself again. As it turns out, Felix is not going to commit suicide as he will stay with the Pigeon sisters for a while. Besides, he promises to be at the poker game next week. During the game, Oscar asks his friends to use coasters and ashtrays, which is a sign that he has learned something from Felix.