

Too Much Time, Too Much Money

✘ I don't think a day goes by when I don't use that expression. I either read about or see someone who just has too much time on his hands, or has too much money, and gets into some sort of trouble. I see it in people in all walks of life but Hollywood seems to be the breeding ground for these types of useless twits.

This month's ungrateful waste of humanity is Charlie Sheen. Not a day has gone by in the last couple of weeks when his meltdown hasn't been all over the internet. I'm going to say that if his name wasn't "Sheen," he probably wouldn't be on the very popular dopey sit-com which earns him a reported \$1.8 million per episode. If not for his father, he would've been just another ok-looking, ok-acting, wannabe trying to make it in Hollywood. For every Charlie Sheen, there's probably a 1,000 members of SAG who can't even get a job as a corpse.

So what does he do with his good fortune? For over 20 years, he's had a history of criminal charges and involvement with booze, drugs, gambling and hookers which makes him the perfect poster boy for my headline. If he truly has an addiction or other psychological problems, he certainly has the money to employ the services of a first-class psychologist and not some hack who'll take his money and tell him what he wants to hear.

If Sheen is spending long hours shooting a sitcom and still has the time to get into so much trouble, he should find something useful to do. Why don't we ever hear anything negative about actor, Gary Sinise, who also stars in a hit tv show, CSI NY? Why, because when he's not earning a living, he's out doing concerts and charitable work on behalf of our military, that's why. In my equation, Gary Sinise doesn't have "too much time." He's using the blessings he's been given – his name, his money and his time – to make life better for others.

All this reminds me of an article I read in the Denver Post, "The rat race behind India's prosperity." It told the story of Sabid Ali Sheikh, 23 years old, who is one of Mumbai's 44 "night rat killers." He was described as a "clean man, dressed in elaborately embroidered jeans and a crisp shirt, who thinks himself lucky to have even this dirty work." His father has been a rat killer for 30 years, and his brothers, who sell vegetables, wish they could be rat catchers too.

More than 4,000 people applied for these coveted jobs. Competition is fierce and only 18-30 year-old men can apply. They must be able to lift a 110-pound sack, run a few miles and demonstrate their ability to catch and kill a rat in the dark within 10 minutes. Each rat catcher must kill 30 rats a night, six nights a week. Sabid earns \$271 a month if he makes his quota; if he doesn't make his quota, he's not paid.

Contrast the two. Sabid has practically nothing, but is grateful for what he does have. From his actions, I doubt Sheen recognizes how blessed he is and appreciates nothing.

You might say, "Hey, Leona, it's his money, it's his time. He's not hurting anyone but himself." Well, that might be right if he was living in a cocoon. I just read his meltdown is costing CBS and Warner Bros. millions of dollars and affecting the livelihood of numerous people.

So for right now, Charlie Sheen is my perfect scapegoat for all that's wrong with people with too much time and too much money. Next month, we'll be reading about some other Hollywood loser who can't find something productive to occupy his or her time.

If someone is so bored with their life that they lose all empathy for people around them and involve themselves in destructive behavior that not only affects them but others as well, they should get help, find a hobby, read a book, do some charity work, do anything other than wasting their precious

life. Sabid, the rat catcher, speaks about his simple life. "Everyone wants to be famous and known. But this is my destiny. Everything you wish will not come true."

I get Sabid. I don't get Charlie Sheen and people like him, but if you do, God bless you.