

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE

(A Comedy in One Act)

By

GEORGE FREEK

Copyright © August 2019 George Freek and Off The Wall Play Publishers

<https://offthewallplays.com>

This script is provided for reading purposes only. Professionals and amateurs are hereby advised that it is subject to royalty. It is fully protected under the laws of South Africa, the United States of America, the British Empire, including the Dominion of Canada, and all other countries of the Copyright Union. All rights, including but not limited to professional, amateur, film, radio, and all other media (including use on the worldwide web) and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved; and any unauthorized use of the material may subject the user to any and all applicable civil and criminal penalties. For any information about royalties or to apply for a performance license please click the following link:

<https://offthewallplays.com/royalties-and-licensing-of-plays-sold-by-off-the-wall-plays/>

THE CHARACTERS

JAMES O'HARA, A TV Actor, 40s

MARY O'HARA, His wife, 40s

JAMIE O'HARA, Their son, 20s

MARY LOU SWENSON, His large, beautiful fiancée, 20s

DR BOB RICHARD, A Primary Care Physician, 30s

THE SCENE

The O'HARA home

THE TIME

The Present_

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE

(We are in the O'HARA living room: as lavish as budget allows. There is a door to the outside, center stage; a closet door next to it; an archway stage left, and an archway stage right to a dining room. At rise, MARY enters from stage right, followed by JAMES, who is primly wiping his mouth with a napkin. However, he then ostentatiously belches)

MARY

James!

JAMES

It must have been those water cress sandwiches. I'd like to tell you they were superb.

MARY

Thank you.

JAMES

I'd like to tell you that. I would love to be *able* to tell you that.

MARY

Naturally, you're being sarcastic.

JAMES

Not at all, I'm being frank. They were superb water cress sandwiches. They would be wonderful for livestock. Why is it, when I leave the table lately I feel like a goat?

MARY

Have you taken a good look in the mirror recently?

JAMES

That really hurt.

MARY

You asked for it, James.

JAMES

And I got it, didn't I? (Uneasily) But I'm beginning to look a bit goat-like, aren't I?

MARY

Now don't be billy—I mean *silly*!

JAMES

The water cress was a subtle hint, wasn't it? I need to control myself.

MARY

James, you're being ridiculous. You know you're still a fine-looking man.

JAMES

Yes, I do know that, don't I? Control, control, control! (He smiles at her)

MARY

That's better.

JAMES

Where is our son this afternoon, Mary?

MARY

(Now she looks nervous) I think he's gone to see Doctor Richard.

JAMES

(Worried) This summer cold of his has lasted a long time, hasn't it?

MARY

You mean considering it's almost December?

JAMES

And what do you think about this doctor of his?

MARY

What do you mean?

JAMES

Well, for one thing, there's his name! Doctor *Richard*! He's a professional man, isn't he? Doesn't he have a last name?

MARY

That is his last name—Richard.

JAMES

Oh. Well, that sounds suspicious to me. It sounds like an alias.

MARY

James, we have enough on our plate. Don't add paranoia to it.

JAMES

I'm not paranoid, I'm psychic.

MARY

You've told me many times. But I'm still waiting for you to prove it.

JAMES

(He stares intently at the phone) The telephone is going to ring.

MARY

(After a rather long pause) Just as I thought—

(But then suddenly the telephone does ring. JAMES looks even more surprised than MARY)

JAMES

Now do you believe me?

MARY

(Going to answer the phone) That was a lucky guess and you know it! (She answers the phone) Hello? No, dear, I'm afraid he's not. Yes, of course I will. (She rings off) That was Mary Lou.

JAMES

I didn't imagine it was the garbage man.

MARY

Why would the garbage man be calling us?

JAMES

How would *I* know?

MARY

You're supposed to be psychic, aren't you?

JAMES

Mary, that's nothing to laugh about.

MARY

I'm not laughing, dear.

JAMES

I hope you realize what a tremendous responsibility it is. Sometimes I curse this power! Who knows what disaster I might see some day? And I'm afraid no one would believe me. In fact, they'd probably mock me. Good God, you know what mockery does to an actor's ego? I shudder to think about it! (He shudders)

MARY

Don't think about it.

JAMES

You're always so practical. I'm getting carried away.

MARY

And don't we have more important things to think about?

JAMES

You mean my rehearsal this afternoon?

MARY

No! I mean Jamie and Mary Lou. James, what do you really think of Mary Lou?

JAMES

Isn't it a little late to start asking questions like that, considering she and Jamie are supposed to be married next month?

MARY

(Mysteriously) I wonder.

JAMES

What is it you wonder about? (Pause) Is my hair all right for rehearsal?

MARY

James, I know you're an actor. So your ego is terribly vulnerable. But everything is not about *you*.

JAMES

But Mary, there's something I haven't told you. I didn't want to upset you. I've heard vicious rumors that they're considering dropping my character from the show.

MARY

That's nonsense, James. Whenever your contract comes up for renewal, you always hear those 'rumors.' Why, you know you're the most important person in that soap opera.

JAMES

I know it. You know it. My millions of fans know it. But do the producers and sponsors know it? And by the way, Mary, it is a *day time drama*!

MARY

I'm not really sure what it is. (Now stroking him) But I know you're the star, James. Doctor Bettelheim is the rock around which all those neurotics revolve. They must have their analyst, mustn't they? Why, without you, that show would collapse before you could say 'Gesundheit.' Every time I watch it, I marvel at your talent, dear.

JAMES

You're right. All vanity aside, I guess I am rather good. (He kisses her) I appreciate your honesty, dear.

MARY

Sometimes the truth *doesn't* hurt. But James, now can we talk about Jamie and Mary Lou?

JAMES

I don't know what good that will do. It's between Jamie and Mary Lou, isn't it? I really think you should have more confidence in our son, Mary. I'm sure if they have problems, they'll manage to work them out, *before* they're married. I *know* they will.

MARY

I hope you're right.

JAMES

(Nervously) So do I.

(MARY looks uneasily at him, and is about to say something, when JAMIE then enters the room.)

JAMIE

Hello. (Gets nervous, as they look at him) Is something wrong?

MARY

Jamie, you sound more like your father every day!

JAMIE

I don't claim to be psychic.

JAMES

And you can thank your lucky stars for that!

MARY

Jamie, what did the doctor tell you this afternoon?

JAMIE

Um—he said I’m much better. (He coughs)

MARY

That’s a very nasty cough.

JAMIE

I’m eating a peppermint. It went down the wrong pipe.

MARY

It sounded like it got stuck in a garbage disposal!

JAMES

Look here, Jamie, your mother and I are getting extremely worried about this so-called summer cold of yours. I want to have a word with this Doctor Richard, and I want some straight answers from him!

JAMIE

Dad, I don’t have a summer cold.

MARY

(Alarmed) Then what is it?

JAMES

I’ll handle this, Mary. Jamie, do you have tuberculosis?

MARY

Tuberculosis!

JAMIE

No, of course not—and you’ll be able to talk to Bob—Dr. Richard, this afternoon. He’s coming to the house.

MARY

Your doctor is coming *here*? But then it must be serious!

JAMIE

There's something I've been putting off telling you. I'm really very ashamed of myself, mom—

JAMES

(Holding his head) I'm getting very bad vibrations in my cerebrum!

MARY

It's simply those three brandies you guzzled after lunch.

JAMES

And I think I need another one!

MARY

Don't forget you have rehearsal this afternoon.

JAMES

You're right. I'd better have two! (He then exits stage right).

MARY

Your father is an extremely dependable man, Jamie. You can depend on him to act irresponsibly. Well, I knew he was an actor when I married him.

JAMIE

I guess I take after him! Mom, I'm very sorry I've upset you both. I've been a coward—

(Then the door bell rings very insistently)

MARY

Oh, that must be Mary Lou.

JAMIE

Mary Lou!

MARY

She called for you earlier. Well, I think if I have to meet this Doctor Richard, I'd better change into something more presentable.

JAMIE

Mom, can you listen to me for just a minute—

MARY

I will later, dear. (She exits)

(The door bell rings even more imperiously. JAMIE looks panic-stricken. He finally seeks refuge in the closet. Then MARY LOU barges into the room)

MARY LOU

Hello? Jamie? I know you're here! Where are you!

(JAMES then enters. He's slightly unsteady but in control)

JAMES

Hello, May Lou.

MARY LOU

(Peers at him critically) How are *you*, Mr. O'Hara?

JAMES

Now that is a very interesting question. You see, I have—

MARY LOU

I'm looking for Jamie.

JAMES

I knew that. (He opens the closet door to grab a coat, sees JAMIE) What are you doing in there? No, don't tell me—

JAMIE

(Smiling foolishly) I was just getting your coat for you. (He grabs a coat and hands it to JAMES. It's clearly MARY'S coat) Here you are.

JAMES

(He stares at the coat) I never wear this one. (He hands it back to JAMIE)

JAMIE

Of course not. Here you are. (He hands JAMES another one of MARY'S coats).

JAMES

If you'll just step aside, I'll get it myself. On second thought, I'd better tell your mother I have to get to rehearsal. (He grabs a coat and exits stage left).

JAMIE

Hello, Mary Lou. Have you been here long?

MARY LOU

Your father is a strange man.

JAMIE

He claims to be psychic.

MARY LOU

I'd say he was closer to psychotic. But that's not why I'm here.

JAMIE

(Suddenly he appears very determined) Well, for whatever reason, I'm glad you are here, Mary Lou—

MARY LOU

It didn't look that way to me! You were hiding in the closet.

JAMIE

Never mind that. Look—

MARY LOU

Now you listen to me, Jamie. I've heard all I care to hear about this summer cold of yours. It's time to take care of that, once and for all, and we're going to start right now! And as a nurse—

JAMIE

You're not a nurse.

MARY LOU

I would be if I'd passed my boards. But I declined to take my boards when my uncle offered me the position of Director of Physical Training at the Penitentiary. I have worked out a complete training program for you. I have it all documented. (She removes a rather long document from her purse). We'll go over the fine points later, but I think we can get underway immediately. Now, on your feet, Jamie—

JAMIE

I'm on my feet.

