

THE RESTAURANTS ARE SCREAMING

a play by

JAMES B. CAMPBELL

<http://offthewallplays.com>

Copyright © 1977 and 2014 by James B. Campbell

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 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:

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

THE RESTAURANTS ARE SCREAMING

A PLAY BY

JAMES BENTLEY CAMPBELL

### CAST

JOE PLOTNIK

A factory worker, 40s

MARCIA PLOTNIK

JOE's wife, same age

LUWIG SCHILLER

MARCIA's father, 80s

MAN

A black man, 30s

MR. STARK

A social worker

This play was formerly titled "Draw Me A Picture".

*(A coastal city. The time is “V-J Day”, 1945, early in the evening. The kitchen of JOE and MARCIA’s apartment. There is a bedroom door, UR and a bathroom door UL. A door the front part of the apartment and the outside is DL. There is a window, R. There is a stand-up radio console, a table and two chairs. JOE is reading a newspaper. MARCIA is writing in a school notebook.)*

MARCIA

Joe?

JOE

What?

MARCIA

Can we turn on the radio?

JOE

No, you’ll wear it out.

MARCIA

We might get something.

JOE

It’s broke.

MARCIA

It’s not always broke. Sometimes it goes a long time without getting fuzzy.

JOE

You know what you get.

MARCIA

What?

JOE

Everybody kissing everybody else and throwing paper out of windows.

MARCIA

People feel like celebrating. What day is it?

JOE

You don't know what day it is?

MARCIA

It will be a "V-something Day". Like when the Germans surrendered they called it "V-G Day".

JOE

V-E Day. Victory in Europe. Nobody called it "V-G Day"

MARCIA

That's right. V-E Day. I'm so dumb. Where do I get my dumbness from?

JOE

Your old man.

MARCIA

Joe, that's not nice.

JOE

If there was a war in Denver, you'd call it "V-D Day".

MARCIA

No, I wouldn't. You're making fun of me.

JOE

What are you doing now?

MARCIA

I'm writing. More little things I like.

JOE

Poetry?

MARCIA

Just little thoughts. I'll read it to you. "The factory is a dusty skeleton, waiting and fast asleep..." It's my impression of the old linoleum factory by the river, waiting for someone to come and give it life again.

JOE

Who's going to do that?

MARCIA

I don't know, Joey. It's an impression of a way I feel deep inside.

JOE

You've been hanging around those old barges again.

MARCIA

I went exploring. The tide was out. I could see all the way to the front gate, where the driveway had sunken down. I listened. I heard chains and things swinging in the wind and the rattling sounds the fiddler crabs make running over the mud. Then, I heard something else. Only I didn't hear it with my ears. I felt it. It was a sleeping sound. Like the factory was sleeping. Waiting for someone to come and wake it up.

JOE

You're telling me that big empty thing out there is asleep?

MARCIA

It's dreaming. It's waiting. That's what I say in my little thought.

JOE

Prince Charming is going to come and kiss the factory and wake it up?

MARCIA

This is my hobby. When things look grim and dark, it's time to have a hobby.

JOE

Grim and dark? What do you know that's grim and dark?

MARCIA

When things bother you, you have to have something.

JOE

What's bothering you?

MARCIA

I get feelings.

JOE

Boy, you got a case. What kind of feelings do you get?

MARCIA

I don't know what kind.

JOE

Something's bothering you and you don't know what it is?

MARCIA

Yes. You feel like that too sometimes.

JOE

No, I don't.

MARCIA

Yes, you do but you never say anything. You're the mystery man.

JOE

That's the bunk. Something's bothering me and I know what it is.

MARCIA

Tell me. Let me in on the secret.

JOE

Your father has been living in my bedroom for three months.

MARCIA

That's what's bothering you? That's the big secret?

JOE

Yes.

MARCIA

Where else can he go?

JOE

Send him back to your brother's.

MARCIA

I can't do that. They hate each other. Eric threw him out.

JOE

I don't blame Eric one bit for that move, believe me. I'd've bounced him out of here a long time ago, but he's your father.



MARCIA

We can't afford to send him anywhere nice.

JOE

What do you mean, "we"? There is no "we". I don't have to afford anything. He's your problem. I just try to help out.

MARCIA

I could fix him up a cot right here.

JOE

If you fix him up a cot anywhere, fix him up a cot on the bathroom. That's where he spends all his time when he's not in the sack. Back and forth, he drives me crazy.

MARCIA

Joe. When we first met, you used to draw pictures. All the time. You'd draw with dark black ink...

JOE

India ink.

MARCIA

You drew pictures with ink from India.

JOE

New Jersey.

MARCIA

New Jersey?

JOE

You think "china" comes from China?

MARCIA

You drew lots of things...cars, tea cups. Animals. Once you drew one of me... sitting on a park bench. I have that in my cedar chest.

JOE

What the hell are you driving at?

MARCIA

You should have a hobby.

JOE

I don't want to have a hobby. You waste your time with that stuff. And you shouldn't be hanging around places like that factory, either. That's trespassing. You could get arrested or something. Besides, it's dangerous. People get hurt hanging around there. They get stuck in the mud and they drown. Sure they do. Remember that Merrell kid last year? They say he fell through a hole in one of the barges, went up to his knees in that oozy mud, couldn't get loose and nobody around to help him. The tide comes in and it goes right over his head and he drowns. They went looking for him for a week. They never found him. I bet the crabs ate him, got his eyes and everything.

MARCIA

You're making fun. You shouldn't make fun of that.

JOE

I don't make fun of that. I make fun of you. Every once in a while you come up with this thing about hobbies...

MARCIA

This is hope. Do you know what Ernie Kupidelowski does for a hobby? He makes airplanes out of tissue paper, sticks and glue. He makes them so they can fly by themselves. When his planes go up, his hope go up with them...

(JOE *turns on the radio while she is talking. She is interrupted by squeals of static.*)

RADIO

“...cheering wildly...Crazy...Harry? Yes, they are, Mel...official V-J Day...Times Square...wonderful...crazy...” (LUDWIG *enters.*)

LUDWIG

Is there milk?

MARCIA

What, Dad?

LUDWIG

Milk? Milk?

MARCIA

Milk gives you too much mucous.

LUDWIG

What?

MARCIA

Mucous.

JOE

For Christ's sake!

MARCIA

Milk gives you too much mucous.

LUDWIG

It is for the ulcer.

MARCIA

I'll make you some tea.

LUDWIG

What is that on the radio?

JOE (*Turns the volume down.*)

The war is over. Japan surrendered.

LUDWIG

Eric says, do you know my son, Eric? He says the English bombed Hamburg. They dropped bombs and bombs until there was nothing left. People were burning alive in the street, and screaming. Dresden too they bombed. Do you know Dresden? They made china there. Did you ever hear of Dresden china? Well that was where it was coming from, Dresden. What was that on the radio?

JOE

Football game.

LUDWIG

There is nothing on the radio today but the sports and this crazy music. I only listen to Wagner, or The Lone Ranger. Sometimes, Queen For A Day. I think I'll go and take my nap now.

JOE

Christ's sake.

MARCIA

What about your tea, Dad?

LUDWIG

I don't want tea. I take a nap now, to look my best when the doctor comes.