

Everything All at Once

A One Act Play

by

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CAST: MAN, 20's
WOMAN, 20's
STOCK GUY
STOCK GAL

TIME: 1920s, 1940s, 1960s, 1980s, present

PLACE: Big City Bakery, any city, America

SCENE I - 1920

Lights up.

*"I Don't Want to Set the World On Fire"
by the Ink Spots plays.*

STOCK GUY enters, carrying a sack of flour. Exits to retrieve another sack. STOCK GAL enters dressed as customer. She shops. STOCK GUY re-enters. A friendly nod. Throughout the play, STOCK GUY and STOCK GAL remain on stage, but do not speak.

MAN enters with a tray of bread. WOMAN enters.

WOMAN

Good afternoon, Jim.

MAN

Hi, Bette.

WOMAN

(posing)
Well? Notice anything?

(pause)
My hat, silly.

MAN

Oh.

WOMAN

I just bought it. I saw in the window at Madame Dupree's and fell in love with the color. Isn't that a great orange? Your favorite color. Well? What do you think? Does it look good?

MAN

Looks like a shiny apple.

WOMAN

What?

MAN

I mean...

WOMAN

Did you say it looks like an apple?

MAN

I mean like an apple that's new and nice and...like a shiny apple. When it's new and shiny.

WOMAN

You think it's shiny?

MAN

No, no, I mean... I don't mean nothing bad by it. You know, when apples are all new and such and that hat makes you look new and nice and all and... well, it looks nice on your head there.

WOMAN

(sweetly)

Thank you, Jim. I think I understand what you mean.

MAN

I don't mean anything bad by it.

WOMAN

I know.

MAN

So, what can I get you?

WOMAN

Do you have any kaiser rolls?

MAN

Uh, huh.

WOMAN

Can I have a dozen? Aunt Wilma and Uncle Pat are visiting this evening for dinner and they love kaisers.

(MORE)

Mother doesn't care for them. She only eats them when we have company.

MAN

I smother myself in sweet butter.

WOMAN

Pardon me?

MAN

I mean, myself, I smother them in sweet butter. How I like to eat kaisers. I don't put sweet butter on me, I mean. Just on the kaiser. After it's warm.

MAN wraps her order.

WOMAN

Isn't it a glorious fall day? I love the fall. October is my favorite month. It's so colorful. Reds and gold. Yellow and amber. My, oh my. Seeing all those colors makes me feel like I walked right out of a French painting.

MAN finishes, hands her the wrapped loaves. Pause. Then, simultaneously...

MAN

Orange on the leaves.

WOMAN

How much do I owe you?

WOMAN

What?

MAN

Orange.

WOMAN

Orange?

MAN

That'll be thirty-five cents.

WOMAN hands him coins. MAN rings up register, hands her change.

MAN (CONT.)

Fifteen makes fifty.

WOMAN

Thank you, Jim. (pause) It's such a lovely day, I think I'll take the scenic route home through the park. Admire the orange leaves. I love taking long walks. (pause) I will see you next week, alright?

MAN

Uh, okay, sure.

WOMAN

Bye, bye.

WOMAN exits, MAN waves. Lighting change.

STOCK GUY and STOCK GAL tableau. MAN addresses them and the audience.

MAN addresses audience.

MAN

Sam Nation! I hate words! Look at just what happened! Your hat looks like an apple! Sweet butter on me! Geez! I got some brain, huh? Every time I see Bette, my mouth don't work right, like my tongue just got a mean right cross from my teeth. Bam! One look at her smile and the fight's over, throw in the towel.

WOMAN enters. A full moon appears through the window.

MAN (CONT'D)

Like one day, she's in here and she's talking and she tells me about that there's going to be full moon and how she loves walking in the moonlight and everything and she says that it's her favorite "celesshal object." What in the Sam Nation is a celesshal object? But I don't say nothing because I don't know nothing so I just nod my head like I know what she's talking about and then out of the blue she says:

WOMAN

What is your favorite celestial object, Jim?

MAN

Sam Nation! I bake bread! So I go nuts 'cause I'm thinking she's just about the best looking gal in the whole world and I see she's smiling at me and boy when she smiles, geez! So I just stand there and look at it and look at it and get lost in it and then like out of nowhere, I says, I says:

(to WOMAN)

Your smile.

(to audience)

I know I don't got the goods up here, you know? But if I had a gal like Bette... geez. Words wouldn't matter much. The only thing I would need is a smile. That would say everything.

MAN exits. Lighting change.

SCENE II - 1940

"Little Brown Jug" by Glenn Miller plays.

STOCK GUY exits. STOCK GAL puts on a shop apron, places a "Loose Lips, Sink Ships" poster for display on the counter. She grabs a broom and sweeps. STOCK GUY re-enters in a WWII sailor uniform. An acknowledgement. He sits at nearby table. STOCK GAL brings him a cup of coffee.

MAN enters, wearing a shop apron over a WWII army uniform, carrying a basket of bread.

WOMAN enters, dressed in dirty blue coveralls, hair in bandana, carrying a lunch pail.

MAN

(standing at attention,
military-ish)

Attention!

WOMAN

Doug?

MAN

(saluting)

Yes, ma'am! It's me. What do you think?

WOMAN

Wow. Well, will you look at you.

MAN

I wore the duds to show you. I'm a regular G.I. Ain't it something?

WOMAN

I'll say. I heard you got back from basic yesterday. What was it like playing soldier?

MAN

Oh, a regular picnic. Free food, free beer, Betty Grable pictures all night long. A picnic.

WOMAN

I'm sure with you there it was. How long you back for?

MAN

Ah, they gave us four days to paint the town red. Then they ship us out to get our heads blown off.

WOMAN

Oh, now don't talk like that. You're going to be fine.

MAN

Yeah? Been reading the papers lately? Hitler's pissing on the Eiffel Tower.

WOMAN

Oh, no he is not.

MAN

It's in the papers! Nazi are pissing all over Paris. I tell ya, Josie, it ain't gonna be a barrel of monkeys when we finally get over there.

WOMAN

Oh, I know it sounds bad but I know nothing is going to happen to you, Doug. I'm absolutely sure of it.

MAN

Absolutely sure, huh. What makes you think so?

WOMAN

Because you have a very important job to do here. Remember?

MAN

Job?

WOMAN

Yes, a very, very important job that only you can do.

MAN

What...? Oh yeah, my job. Forgot about that. Well, that changes everything now. Just a second.
(dials a phone)

WOMAN

What are you doing?

MAN

Just a second.
(into phone)
Yeah, White House? Give me Roosevelt.

WOMAN

That is not the White House.

MAN

Yeah, Roosevelt? It's me, Doug. Yeah, right. I bake bread. Look, about this war. I can't make it. See, there's this girl I know, a real gem, says I'm the only guy who can make her laugh. Yeah, she says it's my job. So I can't make it to the war. Sorry. Hey, give my best to Stalin and Churchill. Bye.

(to woman)

There. All set boss.

WOMAN

Good. Now you got your priorities straight.

MAN

A laugh a day keeps the crap away, right?

WOMAN

Right.

MAN

So, what can I get you?

WOMAN

Is that all of your white loaves?

MAN

Yeah, Civil Defense cut back on the flour.

WOMAN

Gee. I guess I'll have one.

MAN

You got it, doll.

MAN wraps bread in paper.

WOMAN

I must look like a mess in these coveralls.

MAN

Nah, you always look great. Don't matter what you're wearing.

WOMAN

So, do you know where you're going?

MAN

Wherever the Nazis are shooting, I guess. I'm infantry. We catch the bullets for everyone else.

WOMAN

Well, just remember to duck, okay? You know how to duck?

MAN

Sure I do. Quack, quack, quack.

WOMAN

That's right. Now promise me, you'll duck. Promise?

MAN

I promise, Mother Goose.

(hands her the wrapped loaf)

That's thirty-two cents.

WOMAN hands him coins.

WOMAN

Well...

MAN

Yeah... well.

WOMAN

I wish the war wasn't....

MAN

Hey now, I'll be back lickety-split. When I do, you and me, we'll paint the town red, green, all sorts of colors.

WOMAN

It's a date. Take care of yourself, Doug.

MAN

You bet.

WOMAN exits.

Lighting change.

STOCK GUY and STOCK GAL tableau. MAN takes off apron, crosses to STOCK GUY.

STOCK GUY gives him a cigarette, lights it. MAN sits at his table, addressing him and audience.

MAN takes off apron. STOCK GUY and MAN ready their military gear.

MAN (CONT'D)

Now Josie is what I call the real deal. The kind of gal you marry and have babies with. One hundred percent, Grade A whole milk. Know what I mean? Funny thing, Josie's not my usual type of gal. I go for the movie star look. Grable, Turner, Hayworth. Trouble is, with a movie gal, when the picture's over, it's over. Know what I mean?

(MORE)

I ain't complaining, just that with the war going on it makes you think, you know? What things are about and all. So when I see Josie, I start thinking, love sure ain't what it used to be.

MAN crosses to counter, takes down war poster.

Gets out an American Flag. Together with the STOCK GUY, they will fold it in the tradition of the armed services. When finished, they salute and the STOCK MAN takes flag and exits.

MAN

See, before Josie, love was you said to get the action. And I knew how to use it, fella, let me tell you. Every Friday and Saturday night and every night in between. But you got to be careful. You handle love wrong, boom. The deep six. You gotta handle it like a grenade, pull the pin and then get rid of it fast. Like, when you hand her, her drink, you say "here you go, baby, I love you." Then you clink glasses and down it. If she says something like, "do you mean it?" you say "sure I do, baby, let's dance." Follow? Use it and lose it. But that was love before Josie. Before the war.

WOMAN enters, search lights through window.

WOMAN

Would you like to come to the USO dance, Friday night, Doug?

MAN

(to WOMAN)

Sorry, sweetheart. Can't make it.

WOMAN exits.

MAN

(to audience)

Nothing more in the world I'd like to dance with Josie all night. Stroll on the boardwalk 'til morning. The real deal, you know? But my unit ships out Saturday. Most of us ain't coming back. The last thing I want is Josie worrying about my sorry ass in some trench. Ah, shoot. Just my luck. I finally get the real deal and they start a war.

MAN exits. Lighting change.

SCENE III - 1960

"Don't You Want Somebody to Love" by Jefferson Airplane plays.

Wonder what happens next?

For a copy of the full script, email me at:

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Thanks!