

He Makes It All Fit Together

A Short Play

by

Jay Dover

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Jay Dover
gerald@dover41.com
310.918.9822

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CAST: BETTY TALBERT, waitress, black
BEN WOJTOWICZ, plumber, white

TIME: 1954

PLACE: Betty's kitchen, Cleveland, Ohio

Time is 1954. Place is Cleveland, Ohio, the home of BETTY TALBERT, her kitchen to be precise. Under the sink are the exposed legs of BEN WOJTOWICZ, plumber. BETTY is black, BEN is white.

BEN works the pipes. Tools and various shaped pipes are scattered around him. The place is a mess. Sounds of metal on metal, gentle chanting.

BEN

Leak wants only to leak. Leak wants only to leak. I give to you, you give to me. One turn, in turn. One turn, in turn, we turn together turning and turning and turning.

Suddenly, water spirts from an exposed faucet above in the sink. BEN quickly rises.

BEN

Oh darn! Leak wants only to leak!

BEN attempts to cover the spouting water. BETTY enters, getting dressed for work at a diner.

BETTY

Oh no! What are you doing?

BEN

Shut off the valve.

BETTY

Do something.

BEN

Hold this down.

BETTY

I'll get all wet.

BEN

I gotta shut the main valve. Quick! Leak wants to leak.

BETTY carefully takes over BEN's position. He quickly crawls underneath the sink and shuts the valve. The water stops.

BEN

There we go.

BETTY

Do you know what you're doing?

BEN

Sure I do.

BETTY

It was just a little drip.

BEN

Those drips got a life of their own, don't they?

BETTY

I don't care what they got. Look at my kitchen.

BEN

I like the wallpaper. You do that yourself?

BETTY

I'm talking about this.

BEN

This too shall pass.

BETTY

This too shall pass? What kinda plumber are you?

BEN

One who understands how it all fits together.

BETTY

It don't look like nothing is fitting together from where I'm standing.

BEN

I can see how you can see that. But it does and I understand it.

BETTY

Well, I tell you what I understand. I understand that I should never have let you talk me into letting you come over here and fix a drip. Coming into my diner everyday, ordering the same ham sandwich and a pickle. A sandwich and a pickle. Nothing ever to drink. Why don't you ever want something to drink?

BEN

My thirst is satisfied in other ways.

BETTY

I knew I shouldn't have listened to Eugene. There is something definitely wrong with you. Where's your license? I wanna see your license.

BEN whips out a scroll from his coveralls, hands it to BETTY. She unrolls it, reads.

BETTY

"To all whose eyes gaze upon this scroll. Ben Wojo...
Wojo...toe...wizer..."

BEN

(pronounced Watt-oh-witz)

Wojtowicz.

BETTY

Wojtowicz. "is a plumber. Signed, The Plumber Association of the Universe." You expect me to think this is for real?

BEN

But see how it glitters?

BETTY

You're a fool, you know that. A fool who doesn't know what he's doing and I want you out of my kitchen.

BEN

But I'm almost finished.

BETTY

You're finished now and I gotta go to work and I don't want to see you there with your ham sandwich and pickle and nothing to drink.

BEN

A few more turns, Betty and your drip will go back to where it can drip in peace and harmony.

BETTY

Get out of my kitchen.

BEN

But, Betty...

BETTY

Don't call me Betty.

BETTY hands back the scroll roughly.

BETTY

I want you finish and gone. Look at what you done to my kitchen.

BEN

Beautiful isn't it?

BETTY

Are you outta your mind? Now pick up all this crap and get out!

BEN

Wait, Betty. I can prove I'm a plumber. If I can prove it, will you let me stay and help cross over your drip to whence it came?

BETTY

Whatta you gonna do?

BEN picks up an elbow pipe and an "S" pipe.

BEN

See these? What you got here is a "U-ee" and an "esse-y". Two completely different shapes and sizes. Right? Yet they have same purpose. Channel the flow of water from the faucet, down the sink, throw the catch-all trap, into the main conduit, out to the street sewer line, down into the city wastewater basin, through the filtering tubs, then out to the lake, where fish and fauna and all sorts of wondering lake creatures live and breathe. Then back up through the air as vapor, into the clouds, then smashed and electrified and then you know what you get?

BETTY

I gotta go to work.

BEN
 Rain. Rain to wet the soil, the soil to grow crops, corn and potatoes, make grasses green and to make beautiful, beautiful things, like...

BEN pulls a daisy out of one of the pipes.

BEN
 Daisies.

He hands it to BETTY.

BEN
 And...

BEN pulls out a rose.

BEN
 Roses.

He hands it to Betty.

BEN
 Plumbing makes beautiful things. Like you, Betty.

BETTY
 How did you do that?

BEN
 I am a plumber.

BETTY
 This some kinda joke?

BEN
 I am a plumber. I understand how it all fits together. I bring harmony to water management. As well as life.

BETTY
 I think you're a fool talking trash is what I think.

BEN
 And I think you're beautiful.

BETTY
 I gotta go to work and you gotta leave.

BEN
 Touch the pipes.

BETTY
 What?

Wonder what happens next?

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

gerald@dover41.com

Thanks!