

MUDDIN' IN CHUMUCKLA

A Play in One Act

By James Armstrong

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PUBLISHED BY

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Six teenage friends hop into a car on a Friday night, determined to have a blast, and perhaps rekindle their fading relationships. But with high school over and the future beckoning, nothing can remain quite the same. Lynn and Bert discover their attraction for each other may not be enough to keep them together. Jay finds that the hometown he loves will never offer enough for him. Kate discovers that her friends may care more for her than she knows. Carl tries desperately to relive days that never were. And Monique, always the center of everything, discovers that the world she once knew may be gone forever. Each learns a bit about life and love, holding onto things and letting go of things, on the zany road to the town of Chumuckla.

Two car seats or benches form the entire set of this highly theatrical play that uses the audience's imagination for a funny, crazy, sometimes painful journey through dirt roads and broken dreams.

"Muddin' in Chumuckla" earned the 1995 Robert Fisher Oxnam Award in Playwriting, and as a part of that award received a professionally-staged reading at Playwrights Theatre of New Jersey. It was subsequently performed by the Northwest Florida Young Playwrights Festival in Gulf Breeze, Florida, and later at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey.

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(3 m, 3 f)

MONIQUE: 19.
CARL: 19.
JAY: 18.
KATE: 19.
LYNN: 19.
BERT: 17.

TIME

The present. Friday night.

PLACE

A medium-sized town in the western Florida panhandle.

Performance time: 45 minutes.

*Note: There really is a town in Florida called Chumuckla,
and people really do go muddin' there.*

MUDDIN' IN CHUMUCKLA

(AT RISE: CARL, KATE, BERT, MONIQUE, JAY, and LYNN are seated on the edge of the stage with telephones. Carl, Kate, Monique, and Jay are making calls already.)

CARL: Jay!
MONIQUE: Kate!
KATE: Hey, Mo.
CARL: Whatcha doing tonight?
JAY: I dunno.
CARL: Monique and I had this great idea.
MONIQUE: Carl came up with this really stupid idea.
MONIQUE and CARL: We're going muddin' in Chumuckla!
JAY: What?
KATE: Where?
CARL: Muddin'.
MONIQUE: In Chumuckla of all God-forsaken places.
JAY: What's muddin'?
CARL: You've never been muddin'? Trust me. It's great.
MONIQUE: And we're using my Pontiac.
JAY: Is it safe?
CARL: Relatively speaking. Well, it's not skydiving.
KATE: Why do people do things like that?
MONIQUE: He's a man.
CARL: There's mud flying everywhere. It's great!
MONIQUE: I know it sounds stupid, but do you think that
you could come along?
JAY: Is Kate going?
KATE: I'll go if Lynn goes.
CARL: Mo was calling her. Do you want me to call Mo?
MONIQUE: I'll call her right now.
JAY: Sure.
CARL: Talk to you in a sec.

(CARL and JAY hang up.)

KATE: Bye.

(MONIQUE and KATE hang up. Monique and CARL dial new numbers, but Carl gets a frustrated look on his face, as if he's just gotten a busy signal, and hangs up the phone.)

MONIQUE: I can't believe I'm doing this.

(LYNN'S phone RINGS and she picks it up.)

LYNN: Hello.

MONIQUE: Lynn?

LYNN: Yeah.

MONIQUE: It's me, Monique.

LYNN: Hey.

(CARL picks up the phone again, and dials.)

MONIQUE: Carl wants to go muddin'.

LYNN: Cool. Where you goin', Century?

MONIQUE: No. Actually, Chumuckla.

LYNN: Century's better.

(KATE'S phone RINGS, and she answers.)

KATE: Hello?

CARL: Kate, this is Carl. Did Mo call you?

MONIQUE: So I take it you'll come with us?

LYNN: I dunno. Is Bert invited?

KATE: Yeah. About muddin'.

MONIQUE: Sure.

LYNN: I'll call Bert.

CARL: Are you comin'?

LYNN: Call ya right back.

(LYNN and MONIQUE hang up. Lynn dials.)

KATE: I told Monique that I'd go if Lynn goes.

CARL: Is she coming?

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KATE: I don't know. Call her.

(BERT'S phone RINGS, and he picks it up.)

BERT: Hello.

CARL: OK. I'll call her.

LYNN: Yo! It's me.

KATE: Bye.

BERT: Hey.

CARL: See ya, Kate.

(CARL and KATE hang up. Carl immediately dials again.)

LYNN: You wanna go muddin'?

BERT: Tonight?

LYNN: Yeah, tonight.

BERT: I've got a big history test Monday.

LYNN: You've got all weekend.

BERT: Besides, I really don't feel comfortable with your friends.

LYNN: They're your friends too, Bert.

BERT: Not really.

(CARL gets his frustrated look back as he receives another busy signal. He hangs up and dials again.)

LYNN: They like you.

BERT: I know that, it's just ...

LYNN: Come on. What's your problem?

BERT: All right! OK, I'll go.

LYNN: Great. See you there.

(LYNN and BERT hang up. Lynn dials. JAY'S phone RINGS.)

JAY: Hello?

CARL: Jay, it's Carl again.

JAY: So is Kate coming?

CARL: Maybe.

End of Freeview

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