ENVY THE MOON

By Renee Rebman

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DEDICATION

In memory of my grandmother, Flora A. Gentille.
The Playwright, Renee C. Rebman

STORY OF THE PLAY

Envy the Moon combines hilarious comedy with touching, powerful drama. Janine, the temperamental half of a totally unmatched set of twins, arrives at her sister's house in the middle of the night, making good on her endless threats to leave her husband. When Arlene and her understanding husband, Gary, try to explain it isn't a good time for a house guest, Janine is surprised to learn their mama has left their daddy on the very same night. Chaos ensues as each woman stubbornly refuses to return to her home. To add to Janine's problems, Red Jennings, a mysterious figure from her past, returns to town. In an emotional outpouring, Janine reveals to her sister that Red had date raped her years ago. She has never gotten over it and now secretly plans revenge. A thunderstorm floods the town and Red washes ashore, dead. By this point everyone is in an uproar and the question becomes more that a typical "whodunit."

Envy the Moon was first produced at the Mansfield, OH Commerce Center Dinner Theater on May 3, 1996 with the following cast:

Janine Walker.....Renee C. Rebman
Arlene Payton.....Maggie Paul
Gary Payton .....Daniel G. Hardwick
Mama Sampson .....Millie Leverton
Red Jennings .....Gordon J. Wendling
Directed by .....Doug Wertz
Stage Manager.....Stephanie Richards
Lights/Sound .....Katy Esmont
Property.....Elaine Overly
Set Design.....Doug Wertz
Assistant to Director .....Tammy Wertz

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 M, 3 W)

JANINE WALKER: Is in her early 30s. She is the naughty half of a set of twins; known to have a fiery temper if provoked. She married young and is struggling to deal with private issues from her past.

ARLENE PAYTON: ("Arlie") The quiet, more responsible twin; she has always been the mediator of family problems. She is longing for a child and lavishes attention on her pet white rat, Cecil.

GARY PAYTON: Arlene's husband. Generally good-natured. He is devoted to his wife but tires of her family and their problems interfering in his household.

MAMA SAMPSON: Is in her early 60s and ornery. She is very proud and protective of her girls, but aware of their faults and quick to point them out.

RED JENNINGS: A no-good small town drunk. He is an ex-con who shares a painful piece of Janine's past. Also in his early 30s, he looks older than his years.

TIME: The present.
PLACE: The Payton's kitchen and living room.

SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY

ACT I
Scene 1: Early one week in August.
Scene 2: The following morning.
Scene 3: Late Friday evening.

ACT II
Scene 1: The following Saturday morning.
Scene 2: Very early Sunday morning.

SETTING

Most of the action takes place in the living room and kitchen/dining area of the Payton home. The furniture is nice, but obviously older and much used, belonging to working-class people. Act I, Scene 3, the river bank, takes place DS.

PROPS

JANINE: Battered old suitcase, purse with cigarettes, lighter and ashtray, blanket and pillow, green shirt, knife, candle.

ARLENE: Baseball bat, lunch bag, candle in holder, sandwich.

MAMA: Purse.

GARY: Towel.

RED: Bottle of whiskey.

SET PROPS: Can of beer, large blue candle, bottle of bourbon and glass, felt-tipped pen, several plastic bags, paper bag, can of air freshener, gerbil type cage, coffee pot, box of Pop Tarts, nail file, cookie jar, dollar bills, cheese, pan and spoon, bottle of dishsoap, coffee cup, and lamp.

SOUND EFFECTS

rustling of a rat, telephones, quiet night sounds, and various storm and thunder effects

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTES ON THE LANGUAGE OF THIS PLAY

It is not this playwright's intent to shock or offend. While date rape is a serious and disturbing subject, I come from a community theatre background and realize presenting it on a stage is a delicate matter. Producing companies have my permission to tone down the language through out and the stage directions in Scene 3 as is necessary.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: It is late at night. The room is dark, but MOONLIGHT is coming in the windows. Someone is fumbling at the door. It opens and JANINE enters. She is trying to be quiet but fails miserably as she lugs a battered old suitcase through the door and sets it down with a thump. Cecil, a pet rat, RUSTLES around in his cage in the kitchen. Janine tiptoes into the living room and turns on one dim lamp.)

JANINE: *(Whispering loudly.)* Be quiet, Cecil! You want to wake up the whole damn house?

(JANINE rummages through her purse and produces cigarettes, lighter, and an ash tray. She proceeds to light a cigarette as ARLENE appears from the hallway brandishing a baseball bat. Janine turns, sees her and jumps back.)

ARLENE: *(Also whispering loudly.)* What are you doing in my house?
JANINE: Put that thing down, Arlene! You scared the life out of me!
ARLENE: It's 2:00 in the morning. What are you doing here?
JANINE: Put down that bat! My nerves are stretched as tight as a hooker's panties.
ARLENE: Oh, that's a real pretty picture, Janine. The things that come out of your mouth! Keep your voice down and talk sense or don't talk at all. *(SHE puts bat down and goes UPS to kitchen. She opens cupboard and gets a can of aerosol air freshener.)* You've upset Cecil. Look at him; a quivering bundle of nerves! *(Speaking to the rat through his cage.)* Hush now, Cecil. Mommy's baby needs his sleep. Calm down and go back to dreamland.
JANINE: That's sickening.

(ARLENE begins to spray air freshener all over the room and directly around JANINE, circling her. Janine squints to protect her eyes and shields her cigarette.)

ARLENE: That smoke will stink for days, darn you. And you know good and well Gary is prone to coughs.
JANINE: I need help.

(ARLENE gives one final spray and returns to kitchen to put the can away.)

ARLENE: Taking up smoking again! You quit over three years ago. I don't understand it, one step forward, then two steps back. Quitting means quitting, Janine. I'm disappointed about this.
JANINE: Didn't you hear me? I need help!
ARLENE: I heard you. What's the matter this time?
JANINE: I've done it, I've left Marshall.
ARLENE: You what?
JANINE: I've left my husband.
ARLENE: Oh, my!
JANINE: It looks like I'm going to have to camp out here for a while. At least, until I figure out what I'm going to do next. Is the bed in the guest room made up?
ARLENE: Well ... yes ... but, this isn't a good time.
JANINE: What are you saying, Arlene? You won't take your own twin sister in? Your very own baby twin sister!
ARLENE: I want to, Janine, I do. But, like I said, it isn't a good time.
JANINE: Not a good time ... I've left Marshall! I'm the one having "not a good time!" I'm in a crisis situation here. What are you pussyfooting around about?
GARY: *(Yelling from offstage.)* What's all the commotion, Arlie? Are you feeling sick again?
ARLENE: No, I'm fine! Go back to sleep, honey.
JANINE: Sick! Oh, Arlene, are you sick? Is that why you don't want me here? You should've confided in me. I'm your rock and you're mine! I can't bear to think of you being sick!

End of Freeview

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