

Frozen Waffles on the Interstate

by
Richard T. Young

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PUBLISHED BY

ENCORE PERFORMANCE PUBLISHING

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ABOUT THIS COLLECTION

This play involves a woman and man who are strangers to each other until happenstance causes them to meet in a confined space. Through self-disclosure their lives touch and perhaps change. In this play the stage "gimmick" of being able to hear the characters thoughts as well as their spoken words is used. Although the theme is on the serious side there is much humor. In "Frozen Waffles on the Interstate" a lady truck driver picks up a blind Vietnam vet. Both their lives seem to be in a holding pattern and they challenge each other to make changes. From the collection "Ducks at Thirty-Five Thousand and Other Plays."

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(2m 2w.)

LIZ - Late twenties.

GARY - Early twenties.

LIZ'S THOUGHT

GARY'S THOUGHT

PRODUCTION NOTES FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

It's possible to do the play with a cast of two and produce the "thoughts" via tape, but I think you would lose a great deal of impact in the process. I think it is best if the "thoughts" are seen in silhouette only. They should move, and react normally but their faces should be in the dark.

Mime is very important to the action. Non-existing windows are rolled down, doors are opened etc. Precision is the key. All in-hand props should be real.

The profanity, although mild and appropriate, should be considered carefully before it is included. It may be cut, or replaced with more mild expletives at the discretion of the director. In this play Gary's thought says "shit" once. It is obviously not a swear, but a description of the real stuff. However; some audiences will be offended and the director may replace the word with "manure" or "dung" if needed. Also in the same scene the word "rape" is used several times. "Attack" may be substituted if it seems wise to do so.

Frozen Waffles on the Interstate

(LIGHT comes up on LIZ. Liz is dressed in faded blue jeans, a blue work shirt, vest, cowboy boots, and has a blue bandana tied in her hair. She speaks with an unidentifiable western-drawl-twang. We can hear the sounds of a diner in the back ground. She is on the phone in the middle of a heated conversation.)

LIZ: You know I cain't run that, I'm not licensed! If I got caught I could go t' jail... Even if I didn't git stopped what if it leaked 'r something else happened. That stuff can kill people an I wouldn't have any idea what to do ...they'll pay how much? That's more than three times ... *(Sarcastic.)* No I don't need the money, ain't ya heard I jist ran my rig off the road and struck oil... But what if I git caught or something goes wrong? I don't like it. Ralph, I know you are trying to do me a favor, but the risk just ain't worth it. Don't ya have anything else. Golf balls? How much? Ralph, that ain't a whole lot better than breakin' even. All right, I'll think about the chemicals.

(LIGHT fades on LIZ and a pool of light comes up on GARY. He is dressed in faded blue jeans, canvas shoes, and a red plaid flannel shirt. His hair is longish, and he is wearing dark glasses and carries a long thin cane such as a blind person uses to "feel" their way along. The Doc he speaks to is unseen by the audience.)

GARY: We've been over this a thousand times, why should I be angry? I'm blind, being angry now won't help. Release? Release of what. *(Laughs.)* Doc, if there is anything in my soul that needs to be released it's buried so deep that a grave digger couldn't find it. I know that's what you are afraid of, but if I don't feel it consciously how is it going to hurt me? So who should I be angry at? *(With rising anger.)* The government that drafted me?

GARY: *(Continued.)* The military that put me into the glorious five percent that ever see combat. The politicians that involved us in the most inane war of all time. The Lt. who picked me to walk point, the VC that shot Lips and put a punji stake right where I happened to throw my face. How about God maybe I should be angry at Him? Tell me Doc, who should I be angry with first!

(LIGHTS fade quickly on GARY, and rise on LIZ. She is just dialing the last numbers of another phone call.)

LIZ: Hello, Momma? Momma you're gonna have t' talk louder I kin barely hear ya. Are the girls asleep? I hoped t' talk with em. No, no don't wake em up. I'll call again tomorrow. I expect t' be home on Friday, only thing is ...dispatch is having trouble finding me a load for the return. Well, he's got some chemical stuff but I don't have a license to haul it. If I's caught or wrecked or somethin' it could be real bad. Maybe I will, I don't know, I'm thinking about it. Momma it pays more than three times the normal ...you know how much we need ...I know Momma, but we need the money. *(Pause.)* Did he call? Did his lawyer call? No, I think that's good. The less we hear from them, the better. ...Ya found what? Yes I left it on purpose. I told ya I don't think carrying a gun is a good idea. Momma nobody is gonna hijack me fer a truckload of frozen waffles ...So find me a job where I kin stay home. Ya know I tried. I am not wasting my education. If can get a little ahead I can I stop driving long enough to look for a better job, then maybe I can finish my degree. Momma there ain't nothing wrong with driving 'cept that I'm gone all the time. It's good money n' we need it. *(Pause.)* ...How's Daddy? I know he don't understand, but times are different now. Yes I'll be careful. Give my babies a hug fer me. Bye.

(The LIGHTS fade on LIZ and come up on GARY. We hear highway sounds. Gary is hitch-hiking. He is wearing an old army fatigue jacket and has a worn canvas rucksack over one shoulder.)

End of Freeview

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