

"Art Gallery, in the Middle of Nowhere. Circa Now."

A Play in Ten Minutes

By

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

MATT The alpha male content with getting his way.

TOM The best friend to whomever needs him most.

JULES The one who wants more than being content.

All close to twenty.

SETTING

A field in Middle America.

TIME

A summer evening. Pretty much now.

We're in a field. It's night. A starry one. Mid-summer in the middle of America.

The flatbed of a broken pickup truck sits on one side of the stage. An easel sits across from it. An assortment of camping lanterns and beer bottles scatter the landscape.

At the easel is JULES, pushing twenty. She studies her canvas. TOM is seated on the tailgate and MATT is standing in the flatbed, both enjoying a beer. Illegally. Such is the norm for their Saturday nights.

MATT

You think there are people up there?

TOM

In heaven?

MATT

In space. Up amongst the stars. Sitting around in a field doing absolutely nothing on their own planets in the middle of nowhere?

JULES

Nope.

TOM

Nope, there aren't people? Or nope, there's not just sittin' around in a field?

JULES

Both. Why is Matt here?

TOM

He heard you were painting a masterpiece, Picasso.

MATT

She's not a Picasso.

JULES

Ass.

MATT

I was going to say you're more like a Seurat.

JULES

Seurat was a poser.

MATT

So what are you?

JULES

Nothing.

MATT

I'm here because it's Saturday night. Where else am I gonna go? Now, can I see what you're working on?

JULES

Not until you apologize.

MATT

I'm not apologizing for calling you Seurat.

TOM

We should play a game. Five ninjas? No, Werewolf!

MATT

We should play art gallery.

TOM

Because that's the funnest game ever.

JULES

We're not playing "art gallery".

MATT

It'll be a hoot, trust me.

TOM

Is there more beer at the art gallery?

JULES

There is no art gallery.

MATT

There's more beer in the car. / And if you didn't want to play art gallery, then why did you bring one with you? //

TOM

/ The car's like a mile that way.

JULES

// Art gallery's not a real game. There's no point.

TOM

She doesn't want to show us her painting. Why don't we just sit here and enjoy the view?

JULES

The view of what?

TOM

The... field. The stars. Maybe see if we can see those space fuckers up there lookin' down on us.

MATT

Take a look at this, space fuckers!

(MATT flicks off the heavens.)

TOM

You know, when they abduct and probe your ass, you'll only have yourself to blame.

MATT

I have a sweet ass, they should be so lucky.

TOM

It sure would be nice to meet 'em though.

JULES

I told you, there's nothing out there.

TOM

You know, I'm trying to distract Matt from hounding you, so maybe not pick fights with me.

MATT

No hounding going on. Just curiosity. Pure and simple.

JULES

Curiosity for what?

MATT

To see what you see.

JULES

I see nothing.

MATT

Why do you keep saying that?

JULES

Just tellin' you how I see it, Matt. What do you care?

MATT

I care.

JULES

Tom, why is he here?

TOM

I think he just said.

JULES

No, I mean why did you bring him. Here? Tonight?

TOM

He asked to come here and I'm his friend.

JULES

So you're not my friend?

TOM

Jules.

MATT

We're all your friends, Jules.

JULES

I don't want you as a friend, Matt. So if that's why you're here, to be my friend, my pal, then go get your ass abducted.

MATT

Wow. I mean, I would, if that's what you wanted, but you said there's nothing up there.

JULES

You can't let me have anything can you?

MATT

I'm trying.

JULES

Trying to what? To see what I see. Except you can't Matt.

TOM

Jules, I think he's trying to agree with you.

JULES

Now he wants to be on my side? Stand by me? Play art gallery out here in the middle of nowhere? Matt, you didn't think my art was good enough to look at when you were fucking me, why the hell would you want to look at my canvas now?

TOM

That's why you guys broke it off?

MATT

I was wrong, Jules.

JULES

Words are so not going to help right now, Matt. You wanna shine me on? It doesn't matter. You know why? Because you weren't wrong.

MATT

You heard back from the art school didn't you?

TOM

You applied to art school?

JULES

No.

MATT

Yes, you did.

JULES

Matt.

MATT

I'm sorry.

JULES

You should be happy. You didn't want me going anyway.

MATT

That's not what I'm sorry for.

TOM

Why didn't you say something?

JULES

Because there's no point.

TOM

There's always a point. God has a plan for all of us.

JULES

God? God can take my easel and shove it up his / ass.

TOM

/ Hey!

MATT

You don't mean that. Those canvases are important to you.

JULES

You think this is important? It's a fucking piece of fabric stretched over wood waiting for something, for anything to happen to it. Crying out for a dab of color, for release, to not be sitting in a field in the middle of bumfuck nowhere with two bumfuck friends drinking beer after beer as they talk about God and aliens and ninjas and whatever else the fuck takes their minds off the fact that there is nothing out there. Because that's what I see, Matt---you want to see what I'm painting??

(JULES takes the canvas and shows the boys what she's been painting. It's completely blank.)

JULES (CONT'D)

That's it -- nothing! Because there's nothing worth painting.

(JULES throws down the canvas. MATT moves to comfort her, but she pushes by him and sits on the edge of the tailgate.)

(MATT picks up the canvas.)

TOM

Jules.

(MATT takes the canvas and puts it back on the easel. HE picks up her brush and palette.)

(MATT starts painting.)

TOM (CONT'D)

Matt, c'mon, man, don't make it worse.

JULES

Matt... what are you doing with my canvas?

(TOM goes over and watches Matt paint. TOM smiles.)

JULES (CONT'D)

What is it?

TOM

He's painting you.

JULES

Why?

MATT

Because you're not nothing.

(Slow fade to black.)

END OF PLAY