

# ***Unknown Pieces***

*by*

*Joseph Arnone*

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Cast of Characters

<u>MIMA</u> :	14
<u>TESSY</u> :	40's
<u>MICHAEL</u> :	14
<u>DANA</u> :	40's

Place  
Tessy's home

Time  
Afternoon

2.

Setting: The play takes place inside a small town styled after 1950's Americana but actually exists in a future post-apocalyptic world. The action takes place inside the living room of Tessy's home, featuring the 1950's décor of the time.

At Rise: The play opens up with Tessy preparing to bake an apple pie with her teenage daughter Mima looking on from the couch.

*Town alarm sounds in the distance.*

MIMA: Why do they keep sounding that damn alarm?

TESSY: Cause they have to take precaution.

MIMA: It's giving me a headache.

TESSY: Tune it out.

MIMA: I can't tune it out.

TESSY: Try.

MIMA: I've been trying.

TESSY: Where's those ear plugs I bought you?

MIMA: Those ear plugs don't work.

TESSY: That's cause you're putting them in your ears wrong.

MIMA: No I'm not.

TESSY: Last time you had them in backwards.

MIMA: At first I did but then I adjusted them.

TESSY: Where are they?

MIMA: They don't work.

TESSY: How could they not work?

MIMA: They're cheaply made.

TESSY: That's cause you didn't buy them.

MIMA: Send them back.

TESSY: That's easy for you to say.

MIMA: I have a headache!

TESSY: I'm right behind you!

MIMA: Why do we even live here?! I hate this town.

TESSY: You know why we live here.

MIMA: No friends...not even enemies.

TESSY: What about that boy Michael?

MIMA: Did you say Michael?

TESSY: What's wrong with Michael?

MIMA: You know what's wrong with Michael.

TESSY: I can't believe you just said that.

MIMA: It's not that I mind him being the way he is but you know, why can't I have friends like me?

TESSY: Michael may be different but he's a good boy and I like him. You should be lucky to have friends like him.

MIMA: I didn't say I don't like him.

TESSY: He's a good boy.

MIMA: Yeah.

TESSY: You'd rather be gallivanting around with Peggy and Peggy couldn't care less about you and rightfully so because you're too decent for Peggy. She's too busy kissing boys and getting into trouble. You're a good girl.

MIMA: What's wrong with kissing boys?

TESSY: There's nothing wrong with kissing boys but you are not like Peggy.

MIMA: I'm not five years old anymore, Mom.

TESSY: I didn't say you were five years old.

MIMA: Calling me a good girl. It's insulting.

TESSY: You'd rather be a Peggy type?

MIMA: I just want to be ME.

*Knock on the door.*

MIMA: *(looking out window)* Oh hell, it's Michael. I don't want to see him right now.

TESSY: Why not?

MIMA: I'm not in the mood.

TESSY: Oh, stop it.

MIMA: Tell him I'm not feeling well.

TESSY: I'll do no such thing.

MIMA: Mom, please, send him away.

*Tessy opens the door.*

TESSY: Well, hello there Michael.

MICHAEL: Hi Mrs. Tanner, is Mima home?

TESSY: Why, yes she is...MIMA?

MIMA: WHAT?!

TESSY: Michael's here for you.

*Mima gives her mother a look as she trades places with her at the front door.*

MIMA: Hey.

MICHAEL: What are you up to?

MIMA: Oh, nothing.

MICHAEL: Wanna come out?

MIMA: And do what?

MICHAEL: I got fireworks.

MIMA: You do?

MICHAEL: Let's go blow some stuff up.

MIMA: Yeah?

MICHAEL: Come on.

MIMA: Mom, I'm going out with Michael.

TESSY: Don't wander off too far and be home before dinner.

MIMA: Okay...

*Mima leaves the house with Michael.*

*Tessy watches them by the window.*

TESSY: Fireworks...hope she doesn't blow off any fingers...

*Town alarm stops sounding.*

TESSY: (*sighs relief*) Oh, finally, that dreadful sound.

*Dana, a mail carrier approaches Tessy's doorstep.*

DANA: Evening, Mam.

TESSY: Is that you Dana?

DANA: Howdy, Mam.

TESSY: What are you doing here at this hour?

*Dana hands her mail.*

DANA: Haven't you heard the news?

TESSY: What news?

DANA: That alarm going off today was no false alarm.

TESSY: It wasn't?

DANA: That was a real alarm.

TESSY: It wasn't a test?

DANA: No, Mam. It was discovered that Leonard Japhy was sent in.

TESSY: Oh, my...Leonard Japhy?

DANA: It's a crying shame.

TESSY: What's going to happen to him?

DANA: He fell unconscious and they transferred him over to a special unit where they're running a bunch of tests on him. Doesn't look good.

TESSY: That's the fourth one this month.

DANA: Yep.

TESSY: But when are they ever going to get their act together over there, Dana?

DANA: Not easy to say. There's a lot of hush hush going on.

TESSY: Leonard Japhy wasn't the overachiever type. Why him?

DANA: Must have been doing better than we thought.

TESSY: But he didn't seem to be doing all that fantastic. I only spoke with his wife not two weeks ago and she told me all about how they were keeping everything even.

DANA: Perhaps they've lowered the bar.

TESSY: We weren't informed.

DANA: You and I both know the rules are always changing.

TESSY: Makes one feel as though nobody's safe.

DANA: (*sadly*) Sure does.

TESSY: (*concerned*) Are you okay? Would you like some freshly made iced tea?

DANA: I better not.

TESSY: You sure?

DANA: ...I knew Japhy.

TESSY: Oh, I'm so sorry Dana.

DANA: Like so many others he was a good person. Never caused one trouble. Loved his family. Did his job fair and square. Why him? I'll never know...same with so many other decent people we've lost that we've either known or heard about, including your husband... They were all law-abiding citizens. They followed all the rules. They weren't supposed to be taken from us. It's one thing to try and accept how our ambitions get lowered, but to bring the ceiling so far down on someone and crush them entirely? I'll never get my head around that. It's beyond me. I guess it's true when they say that all spirits need to stretch out their wings or else they're dead anyway. Being alive without truly living. Ever feel that way? I feel that way..constantly. It's the knowing of something wrong and knowing those unknown pieces will never get found.

TESSY: The rules are always changing. (*smiles*)

DANA: (*smiles*) Yes. Back and forth...they don't give anybody time to reposition themselves to make good. It's all this flip flopping nonsense going on. People get tired. That's how errors get made and then they're taken...when all any of us wish to do is the right thing.

TESSY: It's who's in charge.

DANA: I don't mind who's in charge but can't they make up their stinking minds? Stick to one plan.

TESSY: I'll have to call Leonard's wife this evening. What a crying shame.

DANA: How you getting on?

TESSY: Me? Well, we're doing alright.

DANA: That's good.

TESSY: Raising Mima on my own was never our original idea.

DANA: ...I'm sorry.

TESSY: Don't be.

DANA: Well, if you ever find yourself in need of a talk, you know where to find me.

TESSY: That's very kind of you Dana. I'll keep that in mind.

DANA: I hope you do.

TESSY: Very thoughtful. See you tomorrow...hopefully.

DANA: Hopefully...

*Dana walks off.*

**END OF PLAY**