

# ***When We Imagine***

*by*

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Cast of Characters

<u>JESSE</u> :	16
<u>FELIX</u> :	16
<u>DAVE</u> :	50's
<u>MARTHA</u> :	50's

Place  
Anywhere suburban

Time  
Present

2.

Setting: The play takes place in two locations. The first location is a road consisting of a curb, a bus stop shelter and a withered lawn as a backdrop. The second location takes place at Jesse's house with the same kind of lawn, except with a large inflatable pool, a barbecue and a wooden table with benches for seating.

At Rise: The play opens with Jesse sitting on the curb and Felix standing and smoking a cigarette.

**SCENE 1**

*Jesse sits on the curb with her back leaning against the bus stop pole.*

*Felix stands a short distance from Jesse, staring down the block.*

JESSE: *(Holding up money.)* Here...you have an extra cigarette?

FELIX: *(Without looking.)* ...No.

JESSE: I'll pay you. *(Waves money.)*

FELIX: *(Ignores her.)*

*Jesse stands up.*

JESSE: Give me a cigarette.

FELIX: No.

JESSE: What's your problem?

FELIX: Smoking's bad for you.

JESSE: Fuck you.

*Jesse sits back down on the curb.*

No wonder you have no friends.

FELIX: *(Looking at Jesse for the first time.)* Neither do you.

JESSE: I could be Miss. Popular if I really wanted to be. I could be as popular as the rest of them. I could do and be whatever I want, so....

FELIX: ...So...why don't you?

JESSE: Why don't I what?

FELIX: Be popular.

JESSE: Cause it's stupid.

FELIX: Oh. *(Beat.)* It is.

JESSE: Always outgoing, kissing up to people, I really need a fucking cigarette!

*Felix gives Jesse a cigarette from his pack. He lights it for her using the cigarette in his mouth*

FELIX: Will you shut up now?

*Jesse enjoys the cigarette with pleasure and delight.*

JESSE: God, that's what I call a cigarette.

*Pause.*

...You live on the other side of town.

FELIX: So.

JESSE: Over on Granite Street...right?

FELIX: Spying on me?

JESSE: I live around the corner, but my house faces your house. I can see your house through our neighbor's yard cause there's nothing obstructing my view. You know you could see my house from your house?

FELIX: That's your house? That shitty pink house?

JESSE: That's the one.

FELIX: Oh.

JESSE: You getting a car?

FELIX: Maybe...eventually...

JESSE: You should get a car. I see you in one of those old school muscle cars. That'd be a good match. I'm always matching things. Napkins with dishes or socks with shoes or people with cars...the way my brain works. Comfort. When I have the right match, it gives me relief, like, to figure out what's missing. I like to find the other half of things. Nothing is whole, right? A book has a bookmark, just like ink has paper or coffee has sugar or a TV has a remote or money has a wallet, sometimes, most of the time or a lover has a lover. (*Quickly.*) - Where's that rotten ass school bus gone off to? I'm much too old to be riding 'round in a yellow school bus! Can't tell you how many times I duck whenever we drive past someone I know. Which is why you should get a car, Felix.

FELIX: You get a car!

JESSE: I can't.

FELIX: Why do I have to get a car? You want free rides or something?

JESSE: Yes, I do.

FELIX: And free cigarettes, too?

JESSE: I offered you money.

FELIX: Don't want your grubby money.

JESSE: Should we walk?

FELIX: Huh?

JESSE: Home together.

FELIX: It's too hot.

JESSE: Lazy

FELIX: My clothes are already sticking to me.

JESSE: I have a pool.

FELIX: You do?

JESSE: It's like an inflatable pool. It's big. Like, one extremely large blow up pool. You could take a dip.

FELIX: Yeah?

JESSE: When we get home.

FELIX: Maybe...

*Jesse walks and turns.*

JESSE: You coming or not?

LIGHTS OUT.

## SCENE 2

*Felix has his shirt off and still wearing his jeans. He sits on a wooden bench in front of the inflatable pool, soaking wet.*

FELIX: That water has no relief. Like swimming in a hot jacuzzi. Cooler out here when the wind moves.

JESSE: Don't you dare make fun of my pool.

FELIX: I wasn't.

JESSE: I love my pool. I do all patching up each season.

FELIX: Patching up?

JESSE: (*Pointing.*) You see them puppy bandaids?

FELIX: Yeah.

JESSE: Works better then tape.

FELIX: Had no idea.

JESSE: Night swims are nice.

FELIX: Are they?

JESSE: I come out here by myself sometimes, stare up at the moon from my float and imagine things.

FELIX: What you imagine?

JESSE: I imagine my Dad not being blind...Imagine my mom being a nice person...Recently, I imagined myself being a world famous inventor, like Einstein when he became famous for E=MC2; having that kind of impact on the world, doing something great for once...what d'you imagine?

FELIX: Nothin'.

JESSE: You don't ever let your mind wander?

FELIX: No.

*Jesse gets her float. She places it in the pool.*

JESSE: Get on the float.

FELIX: Nah.

JESSE: Come on Felix. Get on my float and close your eyes.

FELIX: Why?

JESSE: I want you to imagine.

FELIX: You messing with me?

JESSE: Come on...

*Felix goes into the kiddie pool and climbs on top of the float.*

FELIX: No tricks.

JESSE: Don't waste my time.

FELIX: Alright, alright.

JESSE: Close your eyes.

*Felix closes his eyes.*

FELIX: Now, what?

JESSE: Imagine.

FELIX: Imagine, what? How?

JESSE: Imagine a made up world.

FELIX: I don't know how to do that.

JESSE: You play video games, don't ya?

FELIX: Yeah, so -

JESSE: You know how video games have a made up world?

FELIX: Yeah.

JESSE: Create one of them from your imagination.

FELIX: I don't know how to -

JESSE: Okay, okay...imagine a beach, any beach, there's no right or wrong beach cause it's your beach, got it?

FELIX: Right.

JESSE: Look around your beach, what do you see?

FELIX: ..Um, I see the ocean, the sand, birds I guess -

JESSE: NO, no, no..you're just saying what you know exists at the beach...I want you to invent your own beach...what color is the ocean?

FELIX: Gray.

JESSE: Imagine your ocean being sky blue, like a rich, bright, deep ocean blue...got it?

FELIX: Oh wow, yeah, I see it now.

JESSE: What color is the sand?



FELIX: The sand is brown.

JESSE: That's boring. Come on...give me a color that feels more alive.

FELIX: Shit...uh, how about orange?

JESSE: Orange?

FELIX: What's wrong with orange?

JESSE: Orange sand is awesome. Now, what do you want to do at this beach?

FELIX: I wanna go surfing, but I never been surfing.

JESSE: Doesn't matter. In your imagination you can go there! You can do *anything!*

FELIX: Should I try...?

JESSE: Go for it.

FELIX: The waves are massive.

JESSE: Make them even bigger.

*Felix laughs.*

*Jesse enjoys laughing as well.*

FELIX: Everything below is so small.

*Jesse leans in and kisses Felix.*

*Felix kisses her back.*

*Jesse's father Dave is seen walking with his white cane.*

*Dave hears his daughter and listens once close enough and then...*

DAVE: YOUR FRIEND STAYING FOR DINNER?!

*Jesse jumps up. Felix falls off the float and into the pool.*

JESSE: Daddy! WHAT?

DAVE: Your friend.

JESSE: Felix.

DAVE: Staying for barbecue?

JESSE: Uhm, Felix, you wanna stay for supper?

FELIX: Uh, yeah, sure, okay.

DAVE: You any good on the grill young man?

FELIX: Uh, I'm, I've never -

DAVE: Good! I'll show you a thing or two. Jess, mind setting the table.

LIGHTS OUT.

### SCENE 3

*The aftermath of having had dinner. Not only has food been devoured, so has plenty of beer, especially by Dave and his wife Martha.*

DAVE: *(He drinks.)*...I sat there for over an hour, keeping watch. *(Pause.)* And then...in the distance...the enemy was approaching. Only one man, see? Wasn't sure if he'd lost his way, abandoned his regiment or what..but, he was all alone, far out...by himself...I took aim..fired..but, my gun jammed; that damn sound acted as the signal this bastard needed. He opened fire on me. I took cover...I was never hit, until, well, that's when there was a blast of shrapnel; the shrapnel is what got me in the end...*(He drinks.)*

*(Beat.)*

MARTHA: *(Slurring her words. To Felix.)* More potatoes?

FELIX: Huh?

MARTHA: *(Slurring words with emphasis.)* Do-you - want - more - PO-TA-TOES?

FELIX: Um, no, thanks.

*Martha gets up.*

MARTHA: Good for you. *(She taps Felix on top of his head.)* Good. *(Turning to Dave.)* Dave, why don't you stop telling the world about your infamous war stories you selfish son of a bitch?!

DAVE: I wasn't telling the world, I was telling F, F, F -

MARTHA: FELIX!!!

DAVE: That's right, FFFelix.

JESSE: Christ.

MARTHA: On and on and on and on we go until all that beer fills up your brain and you think you can see again! You can't!

JESSE: MOM!

MARTHA (*Exploding.*): You ain't ever gonna see again, Dave!

DAVE (*Exploding.*): I know I ain't you ungrateful civilian!

*Dave takes hold of his white cane and stands up falling face down to the ground.*

*Jesse shrieks. Felix helps him up.*

*Martha wobbles and helps Dave up as well.*

*Martha pushes Felix away casually taking over walking with Dave back to the house.*

*Martha and Dave can both be heard arguing inside the house once the door is slammed shut.*

*Pause.*

FELIX: You alright?

JESSE: You should go.

FELIX: I don't mind your dad's war stories.

*Jesse clears the table, placing everything dirty into a large black garbage bag.*

*Felix helps by putting beers and sodas and condiments into a cardboard box.*

*Felix looks on at Jesse.*

FELIX: Hey, you okay?

JESSE: I'm fine. You should go, really.

FELIX: You should see my family...they all belong in an asylum.

*They laugh, easing the tension.*

FELIX: You really see me driving a muscle car?

JESSE: Definitely.

*Felix lights a smoke. Offers one to Jesse.*

JESSE: I don't smoke.

FELIX: I thought you -

JESSE: How else was I gonna get you to talk to me?

FELIX: Slick.

JESSE: *(She winks at him.)* Slickest you'll ever meet.

FELIX: Glad you did.

JESSE: Yeah?

*They kiss.*

**END OF PLAY**