

# ***Man in the Picture Frame***

*by*

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Cast of Characters

WILMA :

40 's

JAROTT :

20 's

Place

Apartment

Time

Evening

2.

Setting: The play takes place inside Wilma's cluttered, dimly lit one bedroom apartment. It's an old place, building was probably constructed hundred years prior and not much has changed other than the tenants and the paint.

At Rise: The play opens with Jarott sitting at a table and Wilma looking on while leaning up against the refrigerator.

*Jarott sits at a table.*

*Wilma leans against the refrigerator.*

JAROTT: Why'd you even invite me here?

WILMA: Why?

JAROTT: Your place stinks.

WILMA: You don't like my place?

JAROTT: Smells like sex.

WILMA: What's wrong with sex?

JAROTT: Didn't say there's anythin' wrong with sex.

WILMA: Oh.

JAROTT: It's the smell. The smell of bad sex. Rotten.

WILMA: What kind of sex is that?

JAROTT: What a stupid question.

WILMA: How so?

JAROTT: You've heard of disease? *(Beat.)* Have you?

WILMA: I'm familiar with the word.

JAROTT: That's the smell. Like a funky smell. Like the smell of a sick patient. Hate that smell.

WILMA: Don't think anyone likes the smell of a sick patient, sweetheart.

JAROTT: Then why does your place smell like it?

WILMA: I couldn't tell ya.

JAROTT: Couldn't tell me cause you don't want me to know somethin' or couldn't tell me cause you ain't sure?

WILMA: Don't know what it is you're smelling, but change the subject.

JAROTT: Why'd you call me up here?

WILMA: You looked lonely.

JAROTT: Well, I'm not. *(Beat.)* Not lonely.

WILMA: I've been thinking...thinking a lot lately and you looked lonely, so, I just thought...

JAROTT: Thought what?

WILMA: Thought we could talk?

JAROTT: People don't do that anymore. It's weird. People don't just talk.

WILMA: It don't have to be.

JAROTT: I'm not one for talking.

WILMA: No?

JAROTT: I don't like it.

WILMA: Okay. We don't need to.

*Pause.*

JAROTT: You got any smoke?

WILMA: Smoke?

JAROTT: Weed. You got any?

*Wilma goes into the bedroom.*

*Jarott walks around the living room. He stares at a photo inside a frame of a man.*

*Wilma enters carrying a bag of weed, a lighter and rolling paper. She rolls a spliff and hands it all to Jarrot.*

*Jarrot sits on the couch and smokes. He coughs.*

*Jarrot offers some to Wilma who waves him off. He smokes some more.*

*Jarrot points to the photo he was observing.*

JAROTT: Who's that?

WILMA: Nobody.

JAROTT: How's that nobody? *(Beat.)* Everybody's somebody to somebody. *(Beat.)* Hey! Thought you said you wanted to talk.

WILMA: Not about Jake.

JAROTT: Why not?

WILMA: Change the subject.

JAROTT: Is that what you do? Change the subject whenever you don't like the channel?

WILMA: Why you stressed?

JAROTT: What?

WILMA: Why are you so stressed?

JAROTT: I'm not.

WILMA: Looks like you're running. Your limbs. Running from something.

JAROTT: When?

WILMA: Are you running from something?

JAROTT: You a cop?

WILMA: Not anymore.

JAROTT: What? You were a cop?

WILMA: That was a long time ago. Do I make you nervous?

JAROTT: You quit?

WILMA: Yep.

JAROTT: Why?

WILMA: What you running from?

JAROTT: Shut your mouth!

WILMA: What did you do?

JAROTT: I said, leave it out!

WILMA: Hmm, you came into my apartment, smoked...can't answer a simple question.

JAROTT: Neither can you.

WILMA: My place, my rules.

JAROTT: Fuck this!

*Jarott starts to leave.*

*Jarott exits and slams the door.*

*Wilma fixes herself a drink and sits calmly.*

*After a moment there's a timid knock on her door. Another timid knock is quickly followed after the first.*

WILMA: What d'you want?

JAROTT: Let me back in.

WILMA: Fuck off!

JAROTT: Come on! (*Beat.*) Open the door! (*Beat.*) Please, I can't go back out there.

WILMA: Why not?

JAROTT: Cause they're..if you let me in I'll explain it all to ya.

WILMA: Fuck off!

JAROTT: PLEASE! (*Knocks harder.*) Please, please, open up! I can't go out there!!!

WILMA: I'll give you one second to get going on your story or I'm calling the cops.

*Wilma opens the door and Jarott enters aggressively.*

*Jarott goes straight for the weed and takes a huge hit. He sits and tries to relax.*

*Wilma sits across from him.*

JAROTT: I did something I shouldn'ta done. It's my temper. I've always had a bad temper. I've always had this, this impulse problem. This, this reaction - fast! I wrestle to contain it but when things get past a certain point, I react, I react a lot faster than I can keep up with. You see? I react before I can get a handle on it. I've been lucky, many times, many times I've been lucky, so lucky that I thought I was just one of them lucky ones, right? But tonight it finally got me, it took a good chunk out a me and now I, yeah, I'm on the run, right? You listenin'? I'm on the run! I can't go back. Two blocks from here I did something there's no coming back from. And it's over. I can't go anywhere near it and I can't fix it. It's done. Now, you, Miss, you gonna ask me again or you gonna sit there on your throne and make me go back out there?

WILMA: You could stay here for a bit.

JAROTT: That's, that's nice of ya.

WILMA: Could use the company for a bit.

JAROTT: Don't you care enough to ask what I done?

WILMA: No. Not really, no. Cigarette?

*Jarott nods no.  
Wilma sparks her cig.*

You could stay here. In exchange for something...

JAROTT: Like what?

WILMA: To do with me.

JAROTT: What's that?

WILMA: Love.

JAROTT: What?!

WILMA: Like love! Making love to me.

JAROTT: You crazy?! You're a crazy woman, aren't ya? That what you ARE?!

WILMA: Be quiet! I got neighbors, you know? I got neighbors that like the quiet. *(Beat.)* I didn't expect you to react so rudely. Don't you find me attractive? *(Beat.)* All kinds of men find me attractive, especially young naive ones, like you. I want you to make love to me, once, just once. I want to close my eyes and imagine you're somebody else, somebody that used to love me, somebody that I still love. I'm not interested in hair pulling, neck gripping, ego smacking love. I want you to caress my neck, my shoulders. No rushing. Have you learnt how to take your time? Whatever it is that you have inside, whatever it is that you are struggling with, whatever it is that makes you the mess that you are. I want you to turn that into love and pour it in to me.

Doesn't have to be tonight. Doesn't have to be next week or next month. Doesn't have to be next year. But it has to be, at some point, if you want to stay. You can stay here for as long as you need to...if you make good on our deal.

JAROTT: This has to do with *(Pointing to the man in the picture frame.)*...that guy Jake?



WILMA: Do you promise me?

JAROTT: And if I don't?

WILMA: Then you can't stay here.

JAROTT: ...One time?

WILMA: One time.

LIGHTS OUT.

END OF PLAY