

A THOUGHT POPS UP IN MY HEAD

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CHARACTERS

JEAN - The old woman who tells the story, and the main character in the story.

BROTHER - He is a Balloon.

FRIEND - She gets invited over to play house.

MOTHER - She serves drinks and snacks to the children

FATHER - He is stressed about his life, and wants to know why.

DOCTOR - He saves the BROTHER's life.

SCENE 1

We are in JEAN's living room. All white lights are on. There is a couch on the center of the stage. She sits on the right side of the couch and holds a newspaper in her right hand. In her left hand, she is holding a balloon which is supported by a rod, since it isn't filled with helium. The rod is wedged in the couch so that it may stand by itself. The newspaper has a heading that reads, "Boy gets shot in the head by playing with a gun."

Jean reads the paper.

JEAN: "Breaking news, a five-year-old boy in the town of Fullerton, California suffered a gunshot wound to the head. The boy sadly passed away. Reports say that the boy gained access to a .308 rifle which was left unattended, outside a safe, and loaded with enough bullets to fill the magazine. "I had no idea," the father says. "I assumed that my son would know better than to pick up something that did not belong to him. I left my gun believing that I had nothing to worry about." Authorities prosecuted the father for child negligence and his sentence has yet to be determined."

Jean puts down her newspaper and looks at the audience.

JEAN: I guess not very many people learn from their mistakes, do they? With so many events which involve a loss or injury, some of which have already happened before, you would expect people to progress from these events, having learned from their past mistakes, moving on in life, and continue to live void of mistakes. Unfortunately, people do not really learn from their mistakes.

JEAN (cont.): Many children, especially from when I was young, injure themselves in many ways, but I myself had to watch as my brother get shot in the head, though thankfully, he survived! We, as a family, Mother, Father, Brother, and Myself have learned from this traumatizing event, and were able to live a nice, normal life. My brother even lived long enough to serve in the military! What you are about to see is that very event, where we did not know any better, but were able to mature, because it happened, and we live to tell the tale.

Lights fade into black. JEAN leaves the stage, and the balloon on the rod still stays in place. A table is put in front of the couch. A young JEAN comes and sits where the old JEAN was.

SCENE 2

The Lights fade in from black to Yellow. We are in the living room. Young JEAN is seen reading a book. It is clear that she is bored. The phone rings, JEAN picks it up.

JEAN: Hello?

FRIEND: Hi there! Are you having a nice day?

JEAN: It's alright.

FRIEND: Good. Do you have any plans today?

JEAN: Not really. It's actually quite boring realizing how slow a weekend goes.

FRIEND: Yeah, that is true. I called because I was wondering if I could come over to your house and hang out?

JEAN: Of course! I finally get to do something.

FRIEND: Awesome! I will be there in five minutes.

JEAN: Alrighty! Goodbye.

JEAN hangs up.

JEAN: Mom!

MOTHER: Yes?

JEAN: I invited my friend to come -

The Door knocks and JEAN glances.

MOTHER: What was that?

JEAN: I invited my -

The Door knocks and JEAN glances again.

MOTHER: What?

JEAN: I -

The Door knocks and JEAN stands up and opens the door. It's the friend.

JEAN: Hello? Oh! It's so good to see you!

FRIEND: It's good to see me too!

MOTHER enters the stage.

MOTHER: Hmmm. I thought I heard someone walk in. I just wish someone told me someone was expected before they arrived. I would have made something for you two. Anyways, hold on. Sit at the table.

JEAN sits down still on the right side while the friend sits on the other side.

MOTHER: I will make you three something in just a moment.

MOTHER leaves the stage.

FRIEND: So what are we having?

JEAN: I am not quite sure actually. My mom always makes things I don't know about. Some of which I don't really like. She is a little silly too.

MOTHER: Owie!

Pots and pans crash and make noises offscreen.

MOTHER: Got something in my eye.

Some time passes and the MOTHER finally enters with two spoons and two cups of pudding crushed oreos and a gummy worm and serves it to JEAN and her FRIEND.

MOTHER: Enjoy!

The kids eat their snacks.

JEAN: So, what are we going to do?

FRIEND: I don't know. Wait why do you ask? Oh wait! I know what we could do! We can play House! You know, we pretend we are doing things even though it's just air!

JEAN: Ok, What will it be about?

FRIEND: I don't know. I will just have to think about it.

The kids continue to eat. The Father comes in through the door.

FATHER: Honey I'm home!

The FATHER speaks in a raised voice throughout most of his presence onstage.

FATHER: It has been quite a day. Had to fire someone. He was a loon! Couldn't keep his cool. Hopefully he learned after the many warnings I gave him, as well as his peers, and therestofhisdamnbloodline!

Beat

FATHER: Hi kids!

JEAN and her FRIEND: Hey there!

FATHER: What are you two up to?

JEAN: We're gonna play house. We just need to find what theme it should be.

FATHER: Well, why not cops and robbers? It stays in touch with today, There are so many crooks out there. A lot of them get busted, locked up, and then new ones keep coming in! It's all a vicious cycle! You'd think they'd learn but they don't! You know why? It's all because-

MOTHER: Honey? Can you get this out of my eye?

FATHER: Alright, Honey! You really need to learn to slow down while doing literally anything, you know?

FATHER leaves the stage.

Some time passes.

JEAN: Cops and robbers, huh? Wait! Where should we do this at?

The Kids think for a little bit.

FRIEND: How about the attic?

JEAN: Sounds good to me! Mom! Dad! Can we go to the attic?

MOM: Sure thing, kids! Have fun - Ow! Honey? It happened again!

FRIEND: Come on, let's go!

The kids leave the stage and the lights fade to black. The table is removed, leaving behind the couch and the balloon. Other random ilmatinenced objects are put on the stage.

SCENE 3

The Lights fade into a blue color. We are in the attic. The kids look around and are bewildered by what they see.

FRIEND: Gee, there are sure a lot of fun things around here.

The FRIEND looks around and notices something and walks towards it.

JEAN: Yeah. I wonder what we should get from here.

FRIEND: Hey, look at this!

The FRIEND picks up a racket coated in a matte black that simulates metal used for a Glock. JEAN makes a shocked expression as she gasps.

JEAN: Wowee! I had no idea this was here in our very own attic! My DAD would usually keep it under his bed, but why is it here?

FRIEND: Who cares? Do you think we should use this in our game?

JEAN: Well...

JEAN thinks to herself about the cool action which would happen. She smiles as she thinks about it.

JEAN: Yes! We can definitely use that!

FRIEND: Alright!

The FRIEND runs towards the couch with the gun in hand and finger on the trigger.

JEAN: Wait, hold on! We have to load it, first!

JEAN shows a box filled with tacks.

FRIEND: He left those in here too?

JEAN: Yeah. He got them from an amusement park.

FRIEND: Which one?

JEAN: I do not know... Anyways, are you ready to begin?

FRIEND: Wait hold on.

The FRIEND puts on a blue hat.

FRIEND: Ok now I am Ready.

The two kids are ready to play, it starts off with JEAN, the robber at the bank, ratchet with thumbtack in hand. announcing that she is robbing the bank and then the FRIEND, who is a cop, says that the robber is under arrest. JEAN takes her BROTHER hostage, threatening to hit him with the racket until the cop complies. The two go back and forth until they both pause. They sit down on the couch and sigh.

FRIEND: So how was that?

There is a long pause.

JEAN: I am not sure actually... I initially was too scared to do this, but then I realize it was really fun. It didn't really matter, all that mattered was that no one was -

The lights abruptly go out for half of a second. They turn on white lights for less than half a second and it synchronizes with the pop of a balloon to simulate a gunshot. The lights stay black for about five seconds before fading into blue again. The two observe the now headless brother, who has suffered a gunshot to the head. A shattered balloon and red, lustrous confetti surround the rod that supported the balloon. The two kids look at each other, shocked by what they see. JEAN stutters but she then screams for her mom.

MOTHER: What is it honey?

The MOTHER and FATHER enter the room. The two are murmuring toward each other, AND the mother has a bandage on her hand, implying she burned herself while cooking. She looks at the body. Everyone is panicking.

MOTHER: Oh my god!

FATHER: What happened? What were you two doing?

JEAN: W-w-we were playing cops and robbers, and, m-m-my brother---!

MOTHER: Oh my baby!

FATHER: JEAN! Get the phone! Call the Doctor! Come on!

JEAN and the FATHER leave the stage.

FRIEND: Is he dead? I noticed his breathing...

The MOTHER notices the chest rising.

MOTHER: You're right. There is still hope!

Sirens come on. The DOCTOR's here. The DOCTOR, JEAN, and the FATHER enter the room. The DOCTOR has a bag in hand which contains multiple balloons and bags of luster red confetti. He slowly approaches the headless body, checks its pulse and feels around. He opens up his bag and takes out a balloon colored completely differently than the previous balloon. He takes a cardboard funnel, inserts into the spare confetti into the balloon, removes the tube, blows air into it, ties it back up, and attaches it back onto the body.

DOCTOR: He's okay.

The family sighs in relief. The doctor then cleans up the spilled confetti from the previous balloon and takes whatever he collected and puts it in the ziplock back where he keeps his confetti. He gets up and he leaves. The family stands in silence for a few moments.

FRIEND: I'm gonna go home. I didn't tell my parents that I left.

The FRIEND leaves.

MOTHER: I think that's enough cooking for a while. Gotta spare myself.

The MOTHER leaves.

JEAN: I think I am going to sit with my brother for a while. I think he needs my undivided attention right now.

JEAN sits to the right side of the balloon and holds on to it.

Beat

JEAN: So you were saying something about why criminals keep coming up and never learning?

Everyone freezes in place.

SCENE 4

The lights become white again. Older JEAN walks onto the stage to give one last speech to the audience.

JEAN: And there you have a truly unforgettable moment in my life. I remember it was nothing I would ever expect, and probably one that will happen over and over again. Every event that has happened so far in your life happens for a reason, but that is only if you learn from it. Even with a traumatizing event like the one that played before you, there is a lesson to be learned from it. The lesson may be unique to you. However, people who have these types of experiences often do not share them, because very few people listen to them. People like me end up in nursing homes by their families, making the nursing homes responsible for me, forever forgotten by my family. They have no one to talk to, no one to attain wisdom from. As a result of this, society has no lessons to learn from, no way to better themselves before it is too late. I request that all of you, regardless of how far away you are from your elders, keep in touch. Help them. Hear their stories. Learn from them. Become better than you are now.