

AN EVENING WITH THADDEUS

--

A two-act drama

by
John Glass



john@studentplays.org

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👉 About Student Plays 👈

Student Plays consists of **John Glass, Jackie Jernigan,** and **Dominic Torres**. We are a group of playwrights and directors that have written scripts for middle school, high school, and the university. We are proud of the variety of ages that our scripts serve, and we are particularly proud of our *Latino-themed plays*. These are scripts that focus on Latino youth and the Latino experience. Any school can perform a Latino-themed play: it just requires a general introduction and exposure to the Spanish language, something that most schools and students already have.

To learn more, or to communicate with one of the playwrights, contact us at john@studentplays.org.

** Although it is part of the *Student Plays* domain, “An Evening with Thaddeus” was written for adults. **

List of Characters

- COURTNEY** Early thirties. Aggressive.
Ambitious. Quick-witted.
- SHAI** Late twenties, brother of
Courtney. Kind and simple.
- JOEL** Fifties. Man of absolutely
few words. Simple, very slow
in speech and movement.
Wears a pair of gloves
throughout entire play.
- GRANDPA** Seventies or early eighties.
Crotchety, sarcastic. Is able to
walk a little but uses a
wheelchair.

The entire play takes place in an old antebellum home in Galveston, Texas. The house is located in one of the back bay/inlet areas of the Gulf Coast. The time is a weekday in the late spring of 2002. A hurricane has been projected to hit land that evening.

Throughout the play, there is the sound of strong blasts of wind and the occasional banging of wood against the outside windows of the house. These sounds progress as the play moves forward. There is also the repeated sound of broken glass late in **ACT TWO**.

All of **ACT ONE** takes place in the same set, the living room and dining room of the house. There are several windows throughout the set, and scattered pieces of plywood.

All three scenes of **ACT TWO** are in different bedrooms, but each room is extremely similar. The rooms are unused bedrooms in the house, each having a basic setup of chairs and a table.

☛ **General Requirements:** Flashlights, hammers, rain ponchos, two cordless drills, boxes of screws and nails, an old lantern, candles, a small radio, various sizes of scrap wood (very thin plywood/ paneling) and GRANDPA's box, which is a small cardboard box containing papers and journals. The box should be thin and portable, and not too heavy or bulky. A wheelchair.

**** Set Notes:** During the play, the “drilling of the plywood” over the windows can be a simple task. Thin pieces of trim can be drilled to the walls of the set to depict a window, and then the actors can drill pieces of scrap plywood *into the trim*. This may be better than drilling plywood all over the walls of the set. The “pieces of plywood” in the play can be small, very thin pieces of paneling, or any other kind of light wood.

ACT ONE

Scene One

At RISE: The kitchen and dining room of the house. Morning. COURTNEY is working with a drill, screwing pieces of plywood to the windows. After a few seconds, enter SHAI.

COURTNEY There you are.

SHAI Hey. Yeah, I'm back.

COURTNEY About time.

SHAI Um. Thaddeus? Is that what they're really calling this one?

COURTNEY Well. We had Pablo, Robert, Steven . . . and now it's Thaddeus.

SHAI The names they come up with. Someone's getting paid to do all that.

COURTNEY Yeah. Shai, where have you been? I've been working all morning.

SHAI Trying to track Vicki down. I think she's panicking like everyone else.

COURTNEY Well. They're projecting this one to be huge.

SHAI Please . . . it's just gonna blow over. Like always.

COURTNEY There's supposed to be an evacuation.

SHAI I heard. Can they do that?

COURTNEY I don't know. Never really had a serious storm before.

(Pause)

Can you help me?

(He slowly picks up a drill, begins to help.)

SHAI Did the neighbors leave?

COURTNEY Yeah. Their cars are all gone.

(Pause as they work.)

COURTNEY I needed you earlier. We might need more supplies.

SHAI I was trying to get ahold of Vicki. I went over to her house, left, then went back again. Waited around. I think she may have gone to Dallas.

COURTNEY To her aunt's?

SHAI Yeah. I think so.

(Pause.)

Guess who called while I was driving home?

COURTNEY Who?

SHAI Grandpa.

COURTNEY Grandpa? He has your cell number?

SHAI I gave it to him the last time we saw him. He wants to come over.

COURTNEY Over *here*?

SHAI Mhmm. He said he was concerned about us.

COURTNEY Concerned. Whatever. He *needs* us.

SHAI Yeah. I think so. He sounded urgent.

COURTNEY I don't want that know-it-all over here. Him and his warped, outdated views on everything. That panel was a train wreck.

SHAI Well. It wasn't ideal.

COURTNEY Don't be naive about Grandpa. And you know that Mom wouldn't want him here either. Not that I'm worrying about her opinion.

SHAI Still . . . we can't just *leave* him there can we? That area floods easily . . .

COURTNEY You've been doubting this storm is coming. Now you seem pretty sure it's headed our way.

SHAI No. My mind's just all over the place. I'm worried about him. And about Vicki.

SHAI They're family. They need to be here. (*Beat. Puts the drill down.*) Good God, Courtney, what's wrong with us? Here we are, in this huge house, in the middle of a potential hurricane. And it's just you and me.

COURTNEY Ha. What else did you *expect*?

SHAI In the old days, sheesh, families hunkered down together without even thinking about it. They just did it. Stuck together. But now . . . *(Beat.)* What about Russell?

COURTNEY Don't know. We've played phone tag all morning. That's why I haven't gotten more done here.

SHAI See, that's what I mean, right there. *He* should be here too. He's more or less family. *(Beat. Slowly begins to exit.)* Look, this is bothering me. I'll be back. I'm going to drop by Vicki's one more time.

COURTNEY You just left there!

SHAI I know. But she may have returned. Maybe I can catch her before they leave.

COURTNEY You sure about that? You know how you get . . .

SHAI Nothing like that is going to happen. And I really want to see Marshall.

COURTNEY Lord . . .

(Pause.)

Well. Are you going to get Grandpa?

SHAI I thought you didn't want him over here.

COURTNEY Well, I don't. But we might feel horrible if we didn't at least try. *(Beat.)*

Or—or, wait, uhhh, it's *Grandpa*. What am I saying?

SHAI I'll go get him. He should be here with us.

COURTNEY Okay. Well, go then. If you must. But hurry. It's almost noon. The weather's getting worse.

SHAI I know.

COURTNEY We might need extra batteries. And maybe candles. And I'll need your help.

SHAI Okay. I'll be back.

COURTNEY Hey . . .

SHAI What?

COURTNEY Be careful.

(He nods and exits. Long pause as she works, periodically checking her phone. A blast of wind opens the door up. JOEL slowly enters the doorframe and stands there quietly. He is wearing old coveralls, gloves, and boots, with a hammer stuck in his belt loop. He is wet from the rain. In the next few minutes, there is the gradual sound of howling wind and of wood banging against wood.)

COURTNEY Uh, hello? Can I help you?

JOEL Hello.

COURTNEY Oh . . . *Joel*? Is that you?

JOEL How's everything?

COURTNEY Well, uh, how are *you*?

JOEL Good.

COURTNEY Come in, come in. Oh. You need a towel, hang on. (*Walks over to retrieve one.*) Wow, what are you doing here?

JOEL Sorry. Thought maybe ya'll could use a hand out there.

COURTNEY Where?

JOEL With the windows. Boarding them up.

COURTNEY Oh. Yeah. There's a bunch of windows. God, *too many* windows. (*Hands him the towel.*) There you go. So, wow. I haven't seen you in years. *Uncle* Joel, right?
(*A nervous laugh*) We never knew what to call you.

JOEL Sorry. This is probably weird.

COURTNEY No, not at all.

JOEL I just . . . well, the storm is coming. And I was out driving around.

COURTNEY Uh, right. It's definitely coming. It's hurricane season, right? You didn't have a place to go?

JOEL Not really. No.

COURTNEY Oh . . . okay. Well.

JOEL Some of your loose wood is out there, banging again the side of the house. Thought maybe I could fix it.

COURTNEY Oh, good. You brought that hammer?

JOEL Yes, I did. I have tools in my car.

COURTNEY Oh. Why?

JOEL I use them.

COURTNEY Okay. Great. (*Beat.*) So where are you living? I haven't seen you since . . . well, I can't remember when.

JOEL I was out in New Mexico.

COURTNEY Oh. Is my dad still out there?

JOEL Yes. Yes, he is. You don't mind if I stay here? Tonight?

COURTNEY No. Um. That's fine.

JOEL Good.

COURTNEY Yeah, it's no problem. You . . . you *are* family.

JOEL Right.

COURTNEY You want to take your gloves off?
You want—

JOEL Could I have another towel?

COURTNEY Yes, of course. (*She goes to get one.*)
Of course. We have plenty.

JOEL I appreciate it. I got all wet.

COURTNEY You *did* get all wet.

JOEL I was outside for a while. Over on this side.
(*Pointing*) Looking at the loose wood.

COURTNEY Um. Okay. Here you go. (*Beat. She notices her phone on the table.*)

Oh, hang on. I missed this call. Hang on one sec, Joel. *(She plays with her phone for a few seconds, aggravated, then puts it down, hard.)* Dammit.

JOEL Where's your mother?

COURTNEY She's not here. She's in the Middle East. Shai and I live here now.

JOEL I think I saw him leaving. When I was outside.

COURTNEY Yeah. We moved in here about a year ago. Mom basically gave the house to us.

JOEL Gave it to you?

COURTNEY Well. Shai and I were living somewhere else at the time, and then . . . well, we needed somewhere new to live. Mom was moving out of the country so she just let us have it.

JOEL I didn't know.

COURTNEY Sort of a long story.

JOEL It usually is.

COURTNEY Huh?

JOEL In this family, it usually is a long story. (*She gradually picks up the drill, returns to work.*)

COURTNEY Right. Um. So you're back in Galveston. Where are you living?

JOEL In a mobile home.

COURTNEY Oh.

JOEL Over in Navco. The Windpipers.

COURTNEY Yes, I know where those are.

JOEL Thing's gonna be toast. All this wind and rain.

COURTNEY Oh. Okay.

JOEL Sorry. I know I'm intruding.

COURTNEY No, it's fine, Joel. Really.

JOEL I was out, driving around. I remember that your mom lived here . . .

COURTNEY Yep.

JOEL Came by and saw the lights on. Decided I'd knock.

COURTNEY It's fine. Seriously. Hang on, I'm getting another call.

COURTNEY (*Picks it up, pushes buttons, becomes angry.*) Damn! His calls keep dropping! And this reception is nearly gone. (*She slams phone down on table, picks up the drill.*) Sorry. I'm waiting to hear from somebody. Hey, um. I kind of need to get back to work, Joel. I've got to find more screws and— (*He stops her, holds her arm*)

JOEL I want to thank you. I just need a place to stay.

COURTNEY Yeah. Of course. Don't worry about it.

JOEL You won't even know I'm here.

COURTNEY Right.

JOEL Thank you so much.

COURTNEY Don't even think about it. It's not a problem. Make yourself at home, Joel.

JOEL I can cover those windows on the outside. On the side facing the pier.

COURTNEY Gosh, I forgot about those. Shit, this house is huge. Okay, thanks. Shai's drill is here, somewhere.

JOEL I have my hammer. *(Begins to exit.)*

COURTNEY Okay. And Joel? There's an old clothesline attached to one of the windowsills. It's kind of in the way. It's really thick. I was trying to cut it with a utility knife. The knife is out there – you'll see it.

JOEL A knife?

COURTNEY Yeah. On the windowsill.

JOEL Okay. A knife.

COURTNEY But be careful. It's old. You can't close it – the blade is always out, and it's really sharp.

JOEL I can take care of myself.

COURTNEY I'm only saying, you know, be careful with it. It's a large knife, and the blade—

JOEL I told you. I can take care of myself. *(Pause as he stares at her)*

COURTNEY Okay.

JOEL Believe me. I've always taken care of myself. *(He exits. COURTNEY stares at the door for a moment, and exits. Lights fade.)*