



20 MAGICAL MINUTES OF DARKNESS & SILENCE & PEACE

by

Tara Meddaugh

A 10-minute play

EXCERPT

For the complete play, visit:

www.tarameddaugh.com/20-magical-minutes-of-darkness-silence-peace

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Special thanks to Kevin Snipes, Mike Bouteneff, Susan Ward, Dylan B., Luke B., Alan Lutwin, Brenda Hettmansberger, Brian Bagot, Rob McEvily, Missy Flower

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20 MAGICAL MINUTES OF DARKNESS & SILENCE & PEACE was first performed on July 22, 2022 in Ossining, NY. It was produced by Westchester Collaborative Theater with the following cast:

Grace.....Brenda Hettmansberger
Joffrey.....Brian Bagot/Rob McEvily

Directed by Susan Ward

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Character Breakdown

GRACE	Female. A raccoon, around 20s-50s in human years. Energetic, social, a young mother.
JOFFREY	Male. A raccoon, around 20s-50s in human years. Wears the air of defeat, pained, loss, grief; has never been great at socializing, but especially at a loss now.

Setting

The parking lot of a train station. Summertime.

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AT RISE: A parking lot at a train station. JOFFREY, a raccoon, holds a large heavy sack. He is carrying it awkwardly, and we can see it is very heavy and that he is very tired, but he holds with great care. GRACE, also a raccoon, and also tired, but not hiding her annoyance, enters.

GRACE

Joffrey?

(rounding corner)

There. You. Are!

(JOFFREY moves to not be seen)

I can still see you, Joffrey! You're not as small as you think!

(moves to follow him)

Don't you—don't you dare scamper away from me!

(JOFFREY tries to get away from her. SHE tries to follow him/cut him off etc)

Stop it, Joffrey! I'm tired! See these lines under my eyes? It's not just the color of my fur! I've been searching for you all day!

JOFFREY

I wish you hadn't.

GRACE

I wish I hadn't too, but I was late to the meeting last night—only because the peaches were ripe in that yard by the pond, and no raccoon in their right mind is going to pass up a ripe peach tree—I mean, would you?

(JOFFREY doesn't respond)

Exactly! But of course, because I'm late, they give me the task no one wants. Ruby got to just look for wasp larvae which takes, what, an hour? Finding you took from midnight until now! I have never been up in the daylight this long! How is that fair?

JOFFREY

No one needed to look for me.

GRACE

Well, it was kind of a lot—what happened. And then you disappeared and everyone in the gaze thought someone should bring you back and—I mean, they were probably right because, look at you.

JOFFREY

What?

GRACE

Eyes half closed! Dull sheen. You look like a giant gutter rat.

JOFFREY

I'm depressed!

GRACE

Have you even slept at all today?

JOFFREY

Have you?

GRACE

Of course not, but that's because I've been down every street and alley in the neighborhood, trying to find you! I left my babies under the deck with a cat watching them so I could look for you. And I was supposed to meet up with Frank last night, but I had to cancel and Frank has a very handsome tail. You know, it's fluffy but just the right amount of coarseness. When I look at it, I swear my heart is beating like—

JOFFREY

Why are you telling me about Frank? I don't want to know about him.

GRACE

I'm just saying I gave all this up to look for you and you don't seem—you don't even seem happy to see me.

JOFFREY

Because I'm not! I'm not happy to see anyone. And—and—yes, if you must know—you can report back that I did sleep a few winks in the day. I slept by the stream, under the bridge. And it was noisy. And crowded. And a fish bit my tail.

GRACE

Is that why your fur is all wet?

JOFFREY

No.

(JOFFREY starts to walk away. GRACE follows him)

GRACE

Then why is it wet, Joffrey? It's looks clumpy. It smells like—what is that?

JOFFREY

Coke. Or Pepsi. I can't tell the difference.

GRACE

Were you rolling in it on the sidewalk? Or did you find it in a dumpster? I hope you weren't drinking it. Were you? You know human bubbly drinks can—

JOFFREY

Why do you care about human drinks? You haven't shown any interest in what I do since we turned 12 months old and you adulated.

GRACE

We both adulated. And you seemed just fine having your one raccoon—

JOFFREY

And you were fine being with everyone all the time.

GRACE

Oh, it's my fault I have a lot of friends?

JOFFREY

No. No, but why is it suddenly so important to you why—why my fur smells like Coke? Or Pepsi? Or anything else?

GRACE

The Pepsi isn't so important but—

JOFFREY

Then save your questions for what is important. Okay, Grace?

GRACE

Okay.

(pause)

So. Here's the important question. Are you coming back with me now?

JOFFREY

No.

GRACE

Ugh! So I have to just keep staying here on this hot pavement with you until—

JOFFREY

I'd actually rather you leave. You can go back and say you found me and I'm fine. You did your job.

GRACE

No, I didn't—because I'm supposed to bring you back with me.

JOFFREY

Why? I'm not your family. I don't have any family now.

GRACE

But you're part of our gaze. So we want you with us. Not creeping around some train station.

(pause)

Why don't you want to come back? This parking lot is gross.

JOFFREY

I'm doing something.

GRACE

With that sack? It looks heavy.

JOFFREY

Weighs about as much as you.

GRACE

Oh. Is that—is she—

JOFFREY

She's in there.

GRACE

Hm.

(GRACE looks at the bag)

END OF EXCERPT

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ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT



Tara's plays have been presented by theater companies such as Fusion Theatre, Mosaic Theater Company of DC, The Directors Company, Le Petit Theatre de Terrebbonne, Theatre One, Tutti Bravi Productions, Westchester Collaborative Theater, Possibilities Theater, Tagragg Productions, One Armed Man, Oracle Theatre, Inc, The Acme Theatre Company, The Harlequin Players, Woman Seeking..., and numerous schools, universities and colleges including Gardner-Webb, Prince Williams, and Colgate. Her work has showcased at festivals such as the Artists of Tomorrow Festival in NYC, The Bangkok Community Theatre Fringe Festival, the Pittsburgh New Works Series and the Last Frontier Theatre Conference in Alaska. Tens of thousands of teachers, actors and students world-wide have utilized her monologues for competitions, course material, auditions, performances, and showcases. Tara has taught Playwriting at Carnegie Mellon, the Pittsburgh Public Theatre, and for The Westport Country Playhouse, and she has led Creative Dramatics Workshops for children in underserved areas throughout New York and New Jersey. Additionally, she has script consulted on several animation and VR projects. Tara's work has been published by YouthPLAYS, Smith & Kraus, Oxford Press South Africa, the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts (LAMDA), Limelight Editions/ Applause Acting Series, The Hunger Journal, Meriweather Publishing, Applause Theatre & Cinema, Performer Stuff and Ace-Your-Audition. She is a recipient of the Shubert Fellowship in Dramatic Writing, the Sloan Screenwriting Fellowship, the New Works for Young Women [Actors] Award, The Write Stuff Award, and is a member of the Dramatist's Guild. Tara holds her MFA in Dramatic Writing from Carnegie Mellon University.

For more information about Tara Meddaugh or her work,
visit her website at www.tameddaugh.com.

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