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Publishing**

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Lone Star Spirits

By

JOSH TOBIESSEN

Dramatic Publishing Company

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

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JOSH TOBIESSEN

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(LONE STAR SPIRITS)

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“*Lone Star Spirits* was originally produced by Crowded Outlet
in New York City; Artistic Director, Wes Grantom.”

For Isak and Nora

Thanks to The New Harmony Project, Pioneer Theatre Company, Slant Theatre Project, The Sacandaga Playwrights Retreat and Sarah Rasmussen. Special thanks to Amelia McClain and West Grantom for loving this play all the way to the stage.

Lone Star Spirits was originally produced in June 2016 by Crowded Outlet in New York City.

CAST:

Drew..... Aaron Roman Weiner
Walter..... Martin LaPlatney
Jessica.....Amelia McClain
Marley..... Mikaela Izquierdo
Ben..... KeiLyn Durrel Jones

PRODUCTION:

Director..... Wes Grantom
Set Design..... D’Vaughn Agu
Costume Design..... Amy Pedigo-Otto
Lighting Design..... Driscoll Otto
Sound Design.....Josh Millican
Production Manager.....David Pilchman
Production Stage Manager.....Heather Ber

The play was subsequently produced by Jungle Theater in Minneapolis from April to May 2017.

CAST:

Jessica..... Christian Bardin
Ben..... John Catron
Drew..... Nate Cheeseman
Walter..... Terry Hempleman
Marley..... Thallis Santesteban

PRODUCTION:

Director..... Sarah Rasmussen
Scenic and Costume Design.....Sarah Bahr
Lighting Design..... Barry Browning
Sound Design..... Sean Healey
Stage Manager and Properties..... John Novak

Lone Star Spirits

CHARACTERS

DREW (m): Late 20s to early 30s. Former high-school hero. Misses it.

WALTER (m): Mid-to-late 50s. Marley's dad. Manages and lives in the store.

JESSICA (w): Late 20s to early 30s. Single mom. Works hard, plays hard.

MARLEY (w): Late 20s to early 30s. Walter's daughter. Used to live here. Happy she left.

BEN (m): Late 20s to early 30s. Marley's fiancé. Runs an online "men's accessories" store.

Lone Star Spirits

ACT I

(A liquor store in a small town in west Texas. The store is a section of an old house, maybe out the window we see the sign "Lone Star Spirits." As the lights come up, DREW swings open the front door and walks in. He's wearing jeans, a button-up shirt and a cowboy hat. He heads straight for the beer cooler in the back and grabs two beers, opening one and taking a swig. He calls to WALTER, who's offstage in the "house" portion of the building.)

DREW. How are ya, Walter!?

WALTER *(off)*. That Drew?

DREW. It is.

WALTER *(off)*. You having a beer?

DREW. I am.

WALTER *(off)*. I'll have one too.

DREW. Right here. *(Sets the second beer on the counter for WALTER and looks around.)*

WALTER *(off)*. Harlan let you go early?

DREW. A bit.

WALTER *(off)*. An hour.

DREW. Said I had something to do.

WALTER *(off)*. What's that?

DREW. Didn't ask.

WALTER *(off)*. No, I'm asking what you had to do.

DREW. Stop working.

WALTER (*off*). Right.

(*DREW takes a drink.*)

DREW (*remembering*). Oh, what was I going to ask you?

WALTER (*off*). No idea.

DREW. That thing you were gonna do?

WALTER (*off*). That all you got?

DREW. In Fredericksburg, right? You were gonna go to the bank or hardware store or somewhere?

WALTER (*off*). Could have been.

DREW. The doctor! That was it, right?

WALTER (*off*). I did do that.

DREW. So how'd that go then?

WALTER (*off*). Which?

DREW. The doctor.

WALTER (*off*). Fine.

DREW. Good.

WALTER (*off*). The hell do they know?

DREW. Something you'd hope.

WALTER (*off*). You know what I mean.

DREW. Sure.

WALTER (*off*). Get you hooked on drugs is what they do.

DREW. Fuckers.

WALTER (*off*). Pharmaceutical whores.

DREW. Why I don't go.

WALTER (*off*). Don't you?

DREW. Look at me. (*Lifts up his shirt and slaps his abs.*)

WALTER (*off*). Sure.

DREW. Prime of my life.

WALTER *(off)*. That right?

DREW. Go to a doctor I'll pay a hundred bucks to hear that.

WALTER *(off, disgusted)*. Professional opinion.

DREW. Billable hours.

WALTER *(off)*. That's lawyers.

DREW. All the same.

WALTER *(off)*. Sure.

DREW. Doctors and lawyers and such. Fuck that.

WALTER *(off)*. My point.

DREW. And I agree with your point. *(Lifts up his shirt again to admire his abs.)* Have you noticed I've been working out?

WALTER *(off)*. Have you?

DREW. You haven't noticed?

WALTER *(off)*. Maybe I have.

DREW. For this football monument.

WALTER *(off)*. Oh, sure.

DREW. For the statue on top, in case the artist needs to work from life.

WALTER *(off)*. A statue of you, is it?

DREW. A statue of the winning touchdown reception—which just happens to have been completed by me. And while we're on the topic, why haven't you donated to my kickstarter campaign?

WALTER *(off)*. That the internet thing?

DREW. Or just give me money. This thing ain't cheap.

WALTER *(off)*. All right.

(DREW walks behind the counter.)

DREW. You still got it?

WALTER *(off)*. I do.

(DREW takes a coffee can from behind the counter and opens it to look inside.)

DREW. I'm gonna check.

WALTER *(off)*. It's all there.

DREW. Good of you to keep it. Don't trust myself with it.

WALTER *(off)*. There's a thing they got these days called a bank.

DREW. Fuck the bank.

WALTER *(off)*. All right.

DREW. They're all fees, charges, interest rate motherfuckers.

WALTER *(off)*. Sure.

DREW. I trust you, Walter.

WALTER *(off)*. It's all there.

DREW. And you're gonna chip in, right?

WALTER *(off)*. We'll see how business goes this week.

DREW. That what it depends on?

WALTER *(off)*. It's a good week, I'll help you out.

DREW. So, no help from you then.

(WALTER comes out from the back, straightening a tie, and grabs his beer. He notices DREW in his cowboy hat.)

WALTER. The hell's up with the hat?

DREW. It's a fucking hat. What do you mean?

WALTER. That a new hat?

DREW. It's not a new hat, it's an old hat that you've seen me wear before—And so what that I'm wearing a hat, you're wearing a necktie, why the hell are you wearing a necktie?

WALTER. I can wear a necktie if I like.

DREW. And you can also not wear a necktie if you like, since you own the whole damn store.

WALTER. I can wear what I like.

DREW. Is my point.

WALTER. So we're agreed.

DREW. And that's all you're sayin' about the necktie?

WALTER. If that's all you're sayin' about the hat.

(The bell over the door rings. JESSICA enters and heads to one of the back coolers. She's the same age as DREW and is dressed for a night out. Tight jeans, boots and a sparkly top.)

JESSICA. Hey, Walter.

WALTER. Lookin' good, Jess.

JESSICA. Girls' night out.

WALTER. All right.

(JESSICA examines one of the refrigerators in the back.)

JESSICA. You got milk in here?

WALTER. See any?

JESSICA. No.

WALTER. Where it would be if there was.

JESSICA. Apple juice or anything?

WALTER. No apple. Orange juice, maybe.

JESSICA. Don't see any.

WALTER. That's where it would be.

JESSICA. You got any kind of juice? It's for Dylan.

(WALTER thinks for a moment.)

WALTER. Margarita mix.

JESSICA. Where's that?

WALTER. Behind you.

JESSICA. That go good with waffles?

WALTER. I think it would.

(JESSICA grabs a bottle and comes to checkout with WALTER.)

JESSICA. I'm going grocery shopping tomorrow. I just don't have time to go all the way to Big Lake right now.

WALTER. Three seventy-five.

JESSICA. I do understand proper nutrition, for the record. I'm not just the worst parent in the world.

WALTER. I know.

JESSICA. Just that Dylan needs juice and I already got dinner in the toaster, so ...

WALTER. Hey, Jess.

JESSICA. What?

WALTER. I know.

(WALTER hands JESSICA her change. She notices his tie.)

JESSICA. Big night, huh?

(WALTER shrugs and looks over at DREW. JESSICA finally notices DREW, and he gives her a nod. She ignores him.)

JESSICA. You look nice, Walter.

(WALTER nods and checks that his tie is straight.)

WALTER. Enjoy your waffles. And I'll order some milk and juice.

JESSICA. Yeah, thanks.

(JESSICA exits, and DREW moves back over to the counter.)

DREW. What's she talking about?

WALTER. Bit rude, weren't you?

DREW. To who?

WALTER. Jess.

DREW. Was I?

WALTER. Said nothing.

DREW. Gave her a nod.

WALTER. That it?

DREW. What do you want?

WALTER *(giving DREW a look)*. Aren't you giving her the business?

DREW. The what?

WALTER. The old naked noodle.

DREW. Are you five years old?

WALTER. But you get what I mean?

DREW. I'm not "giving her the business."

WALTER. Are you not?

DREW. No.

WALTER. Where'd I get that then?

DREW. You tell me.

WALTER. I don't remember.

(WALTER takes a drink.)

DREW. It was Janet Dooley, I'll bet.

WALTER. May have been.

DREW. Can't keep her jaw shut.

WALTER. She does like a good long chat.

DREW. Talk is what she likes to do.

WALTER. Sure, chat implies she listens some too.

DREW. Which she does not.

WALTER. No.

DREW. And she's fat.

WALTER. Hey now!

DREW. Is she not fat?

WALTER. So let her be fat. What do you care?

DREW. No, it's true. Wouldn't mind the fat if it weren't for the gossip.

WALTER. Let's not confuse the two.

DREW. Yeah, I think I did take out my dislike of the gossip on the fat.

WALTER. It's good of you to see that.

DREW. It is good. I have very good, um ... What's it?

WALTER. The um ... yes.

DREW. You know what I'm talking about?

WALTER. Yeah.

DREW. Self-aware something.

WALTER. Ness.

DREW. Self-awareness.

WALTER. Good.

(DREW moves to some glasses on one of the shelves and grabs a bottle of whiskey.)

WALTER *(cont'd)*. You havin' a shot now?

DREW. I am.

WALTER. Quick one then.

DREW. You'll have one too?

WALTER. If you are.

DREW. Oh, and um ... One for Henry?

WALTER (*thinking*). Henry? Ahhhh ... No, not yet.

(DREW pours two glasses and passes one to WALTER. They throw them back together.)

DREW. You seen him lately?

WALTER. Can't say that I have.

DREW. No sign at all?

WALTER (*thinking*). My keys did go missing.

DREW. Did they?

WALTER. For a day and a half almost.

DREW. Ah sure, doesn't everybody lose their keys?

WALTER. But I found them in a place where I had already looked.

DREW. Did you?

WALTER. I did. In a place where I was sure I had already checked.

DREW. You were sure?

WALTER. Pretty sure.

DREW. Pretty sure?

WALTER. I can't say it was definitely him, but I wouldn't rule it out.

DREW. Hm.

(They drink. WALTER notices his watch and suddenly drains his beer.)

WALTER. Well, good of you to stop by.

DREW. It was.

WALTER. Thanks for the visit.

DREW. Giving me the boot?

WALTER. Just noticed the time.

DREW. Got somewhere to be?

WALTER. Thought you might.

DREW. Not at all.

WALTER. Young guy like you. Friday night.

DREW. No place I'd rather be.

WALTER. Don't you go to Charlie's?

DREW. I did, till it burned down.

WALTER. That's right.

DREW. Took the insurance and moved to Dallas.

WALTER. What about Pepper Jack's?

DREW. Never went there even when they were open.

WALTER. Why don't you go check out the Bank Shot? See if they got that dartboard fixed.

DREW (*pointing*). And why don't you tell me what the hell that necktie is all about?!

WALTER. Seems like you already know what judging by that stupid hat!

DREW. It is not a stupid hat, it's an awesome hat and I get compliments confirming that fact every time I wear it!

WALTER. Not from me, you don't.

DREW. And fuck you for changing the topic. That topic being, why do I got to hear about this from Janet Dooley?

WALTER. You listen to that fat liar?

DREW. So she's fat again, is she?

WALTER. She is now.