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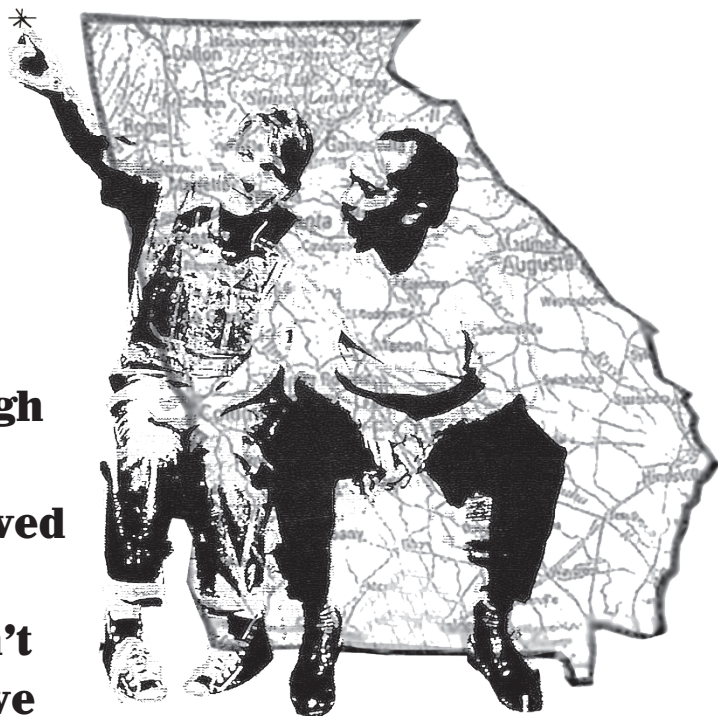
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Dramatic Publishing

Pamela Parker's

Second Samuel



**laugh
be
moved
but
don't
leave
unchanged**

*

AACT National Festival Hit

*

*

Pamela Parker's
Second
Samuel

Comedy/Drama. By Pamela Parker. Cast: 7m., 4w. It was a simpler time in the late 1940s, especially in South Georgia and specifically in a sleepy little town called Second Samuel. What had been called the Great Depression was quickly fading into memory. The war had been won, the election was now over, and "Give 'em Hell Harry" was still president. It had been an exciting time for sure, but the folks in Second Samuel were ready for things to settle down and get back to normal. Except—this was the summer Miss Gertrude passed away, and deep dark secrets were about to be revealed. Nobody could have imagined how the death of one sweet little old lady would turn the entire town upside down, leaving everybody in Second Samuel wondering if anything would ever be normal again! Area staging. Approximate running time: 1 hour, 45 minutes. Code: S1F.

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Pamela Parker's

SECOND SAMUEL



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(SECOND SAMUEL)

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Second Samuel was produced by the Wetumpka Depot Players, Wetumpka, Alabama, in 2010 and 2011. The production was directed by Tom Salter and included the following:

CAST

B Flat	Jonathan Conner
Frisky	Tony Beckham
US	Steve Mitchell
Mansel	Patrick Hale
Mr. Mozel	William Harper
Omaha	Kristy Meanor
Jimmy Deeanne	Kim Mason
Ruby	Cheryl Jones
Marcela	Cindy Veazey
Doc	Bradley Moon
June	Bob Johnson

PRODUCTION TEAM

Stage Manager Carol Heier
Lighting Design Matthew Walter
Costume Design Sherida Black

The international premiere of *Second Samuel* was by David Young Productions, Perth, Australia, directed by Susan Hayward and included the following cast and production team:

CAST

B Flat Tyler Jones
Frisky Chris Juckes
US Nat Martin
Mansel Raul Torres Jr.
Mr. Mozel Ray Egan
Omaha Beverley Lawrence
Jimmy Deeanne Breeahn Jones
Ruby Elizabeth Jansen
Marcela Nicole George
Doc Kevin Langoulant
June Phil Lord

PRODUCTION TEAM

Stage Manager Linda Redman
Sound Design and Operation Graeme Johnson
Publicity TAZ Entertainment

ACT I

SETTING: *The stage is set in three parts. Stage L is the “Bait and Brew”—a saloon and bait shop with beer signs, stuffed fish and other manly decorations. Stage R is the “Change Your Life, Hair and Beauty Emporium.” This is the town beauty shop; it’s pink and girly, with hair dryers, styling chairs, etc. Between these two areas is a walkway and steps to Miss Gertrude’s porch. Elaborate or plain, Miss Gertrude’s home must be the touchstone of the play. There is an area DC so that B FLAT can talk to the audience; it can also double as a fishing hole. Several entrances and exits can take place from the auditorium; the playwright believes it makes the audience feel more at home and invested in the story, they become participants rather than just observers.*

AT RISE: *The play begins in blackout. We hear a light chirping of birds, maybe bees buzzing. The lights rise on the center area and B FLAT is sitting on the steps, writing in a notebook. He is a pleasant-looking young man, simple and generally happy. When he notices the audience, he smiles shyly and waves. He then looks at the notebook and begins reading to them. After one or two lines, his own thoughts take over and the notebook*

is no longer necessary. He starts speaking slowly and hesitantly but as he speaks, his shyness disappears.

B FLAT. There was a time not so very long ago when folks was different than they are nowadays. Oh, not necessarily better, just different. Everybody said yes ma'am and yes sir and they meant it! They'us polite and it did seem like they cared more. It didn't seem to matter how mean or spiritually impure you might be, you'd do as a neighbor...if folks knew you'us good to your mama. Wadn't long after the big one, W.W. II! The men come back home from whuppin' ol' Adolf Hitler, the women quit their jobs in the factories and the children finally got to meet this man called "daddy" they'd only heard about up until now! Oh, it was an excitin' time! Everybody knew good things was 'bout to happen! 'Cause these was the days of good ol' Give 'em Hell Harry S Truman! He was our favorite president here in Second Samuel. Wasn't like that all over. Give 'em Hell Harry was always sayin' stuff to upset people, and most of the state voted against him in the last election. (*Proudly.*) BUT NOT US! Mansel Dean said...

(B FLAT says these lines with the person speaking. The men step onto Miss Gertrude's front porch, alternating right and left.)

MANSEL. Harry don't take no crap off nobody and ain't got his nose stuck up some la-tee-da Warshington senator's butt.

B FLAT. Ol' Doc said...

DOC. Mr. Truman is from Missouri and while that don't quite make him Southern, he ain't really a Yankee neither!

B FLAT. Frisky told me once...

FRISKY. The president use to work with his hands and that makes him just like one of us.

B FLAT. And you know what? When I read about his sign, "the buck stops here," I knew he meant all of us and not just hisself! Well, that's how we felt here in Second Samuel! *(Pause.)* Second Samuel, G.A.! [Pronounced Gee-AA] That's a funny name, ain't it? It comes outta the Good Book. They named it that 'cause when they first built the town they called it Samuel, you know, after Samuel. Then...

(JIMMY DEEANNE steps onto the porch. She is overly dramatic, speaking as if she is at a town picnic. MARCELA and RUBY stand beside her, waving flags. B FLAT mimics her speech and movements.)

JIMMY DEEANNE. Samuel was burnt to the ground, the very ground, when that heathen Yankee, Sherman, marched through on his way to the sea? And had to be rebuilt, totally rebuilt after the late, great disturbance! *(She and B FLAT wave a "beauty queen" wave.)*

B FLAT. But I don't think nobody remembers first Samuel. Well, old Puddy Walsh says he does but he's only around eighty and everybody knows he's 'bout half crazy so they don't pay him no mind anyway. Second Samuel never has been what you'd call a big town, although we do have an awful lot of stores and other establishments that even big cities like Atlanta don't have.

Why, Second Samuel is even in a wet county! Since the highway going down to Florida runs through town, all the stores wanted to be able to sell beer to the tourists! We voted on it several years back. It would have passed u-nana-most-ly except for Juanita Wanamaker, whose daddy was bad to drink? He went out for a cigar one day and called a whole week later from a sheep farm in Montana and said he wasn't ever coming back. Our local waterin' hole is owned by Frisky Madison. It's just outside the city limits, up near the lake, so along with the beer and whiskey they sell live bait too. That's why the sign out front says, "Red Eye and Red Wigglers." The menfolks like to gather there to talk over current events, drink a beer or two and discuss the best way to fillet a fish. Generally speakin', things are a-hoppin' up at the Bait and Brew!

(The lights come up in the Bait and Brew. FRISKY is reading the paper, MR. MOZEL is asleep and MANSEL takes a big swallow of beer and belches. Lights down.)

- B FLAT *(cont'd)*. Well, I did say generally speakin'. *(Pauses, stands smiling. There is the sound of birds chirping. He listens for a moment.)* Second Samuel is a quiet town. No, not silent! They's lots of things to listen to, they just ain't a lot of noise. You can hear birds a-singin', screen doors slammin' after supper...and sometimes at night? If you're standin' down at the drugstore where the traffic light is? If you're real quiet—you can hear it change colors! You can!

(US steps out onto the porch to see if B FLAT is talking to someone. But when he sees no one but the boy, he shakes his head and chuckles.)

B FLAT *(cont'd)*. Oh, it's a wonderful place to live! You know what? I don't think there's a better...

US. B Flat? *(B FLAT quickly stops talking, turns and smiles. US looks around the stage, still puzzled.)* Who you talkin' to?

B FLAT *(shrugs)*. Nobody.

US. I could hear you a-yakkin' all the way in the kitchen.

B FLAT. I's just playin'.

US. Well, how 'bout you try playin' a little softer, buddy. I can't hear myself think. *(He goes back into the house. B FLAT watches him, then turns to the audience.)*

B FLAT. That's US, my best friend. He's usually real nice, but he's got a lot on his mind, so he don't mean no harm.

(US steps quietly back on the porch.)

B FLAT *(cont'd)*. Most the time he's so much fun to be with, he... *(He turns and sees US and gets very quiet. US looks out into the audience.)*

US. B Flat, you got somebody out here I ought to be knowin' 'bout?

(B FLAT looks at the audience and puts his finger to his mouth letting them know to be quiet. Then he looks at US and shakes his head.)

B FLAT. Nope. Nobody 'cept just me.

US. I needs you to stop yo' playin' an' help me get this place fixed up now, you hear?

B FLAT (*hangs head and shrugs*). Uh-huh.

US. I's got to get back over to the saloon. You 'member to sweep up this front porch 'fore you leave now.

B FLAT. Uh-huh.

(US turns to leave, looks back at B FLAT and sighs. He crosses back to B FLAT and puts his arm around him.)

US. I didn't mean nothin'. I knows you upset.

B FLAT. I'm OK.

US. Kids was askin' 'bout you.

B FLAT. Yeah?

US. Said for me to bring you home for supper. They want you to see their tree house! "Bring B Flat home, Daddy! He'll love our tree fort!"

(B FLAT smiles and nods, then he looks at US.)

B FLAT. US, you reckon she's in heaven?

US. I knows she is! God had to get somebody up there to run the Heavenly Choir for him! (*He and B FLAT laugh.*) I'll see you later, buddy. (*US exits to the Bait and Brew. B FLAT waves at US.*)

B FLAT. This is the summer that Miss Gertrude passed away. You know her, don't you? She's that tall lady that lived right here on Railroad Street? You know! She give piano lessons? Oh, you 'member her!

(He stamps his foot. The men are now in the Bait and Brew. The lights come up as they speak.)

B FLAT (*cont'd*). She'us the sweetest woman that ever drewed a breath.

FRISKY. She'us the sweetest woman that ever drewed a breath.

B FLAT. And the kindest.

US. And the kindest.

B FLAT. Never said nothin' bad 'bout nobody.

MANSEL. Never said nothin' bad 'bout nobody.

(B FLAT stays on steps and watches as they all pause, waiting for MR. MOZEL to speak.)

MR. MOZEL. I'm afixin' to get sugar diabetes listenin' to all this morbid sentiment drippin' outta your mouths.

(Lights out at Bait and Brew.)

B FLAT. As you can tell, Miss Gertrude was dearly loved by everybody in Second Samuel. Well, except Mr. Mozel, who don't like nobody. She is especially missed down at the Change Your Life, Hair and Beauty Emporium, owned and run by Omaha Nebraska Madison.

(The lights come up in the Emporium. OMAHA is fixing RUBY's hair and fussing at Mary Sue, an unseen child.)

OMAHA. Well, I'll tell you one thing for sure... *(A noise from the back. She speaks loudly.)* Sit up big now, Mary Sue, honey...I'll think of her every time I open a bottle of "Blue Roix." *(Rattle of bottles from back. She speaks louder.)* Sit still, Mary Sue, you act like you got ants in your pants! She had the easiest hair I ever worked with

and pretty as all get out when I finished. It's just like cotton candy. (*Noise from the back. OMAHA shouts.*) Mary Sue...you want me to tell your mama? (*A squeaky girl's voice, "No ma'am."*) You know what I'm a mind to do? Go over to the funeral home and see if I can't do her hair just one more time, you know, sort of like a final tribute! June won't mind, he told me once he never could get ladies hair to come out right. (*Crash from the back. OMAHA yells.*) Mary Sue, you fixin' to rub me the wrong way! (*To RUBY.*) I want you to remind me of this if I ever agree to watch this devil child again. When's her mama gettin' back from the drugstore? (*RUBY shakes her head.*) Well, she better hurry before I strangle the little... (*She starts into the backroom but stops at the door. She speaks sweetly into the back.*) Oh, hey, Loo Ray! (*A voice answers but the words are not clear.*) No, bless her heart, she was no trouble at all! Uh-huh, anytime. Happy to! Bye-bye! Bye-bye, baby! (*To RUBY.*) Demon child from hell. (*Snaps fingers.*) I'm gonna call Frisky right now and tell him what I'm gonna do! (*She crosses to the phone.*) Hey, Arleta. I'm just fine. Yeah, hon, I got you down for a wash and a set...I know, it's sad, bless her heart, she's a fine woman. Can you ring up the Bait and Brew for me?

(Lights up in the Bait and Brew as the phone rings.)

US. Hello, Bait and Brew.

OMAHA. Mornin', US. How you doin'?

US. Why, I'm just fine, ma'am, and yourself?

OMAHA. I expect I'll do in a pinch! *(They both laugh.)*

US, if Frisky ain't too busy would you mind if I spoke to him?

US. No, ma'am, he ain't busy. *(To FRISKY.)* It's yo' wife.

FRISKY. Tell her I'm busy.

US. No, now I done told her you ain't busy.

FRISKY. Tell her you's wrong; I am busy.

US. Talk to yo' wife. *(FRISKY reluctantly takes the phone.)* You knows you crazy 'bout her.

FRISKY *(sweetly)*. Hello, honey.

OMAHA. Frisky, I just wanted to tell you I might not be there when you get home for dinner today.

FRISKY. What you doin', baby?

OMAHA. Soon as I finish up here I'm gonna run over to the funeral home and see can't I do Miss Gertrude's hair this one last time. *(She cries.)*

FRISKY. Now, sweetheart, don't cry. You know I hate it when you cry!

OMAHA. She'us just such a nice lady!

FRISKY. And you'us a nice lady, too, wantin' to do somethin' like this!

OMAHA. Oh, Frisky, I love you!

FRISKY. Ahh... Me too, hon. You take all the time you need. I'll see you later.

(Lights out in the Emporium. In the Bait and Brew, MR. MOZEL and MANSEL are playing checkers.)

US. Said she loved you, didn't she?

FRISKY. None of your business.

US. I can always tell. Every time you say, "Me too, hon," I knows she said it.

FRISKY. You know what she's fixin' to do?

US. Uh-uh.

FRISKY. Go down to June's and fix up Miss Gertrude's hair.

MANSEL. Your wife's a fine woman.

FRISKY. Thank you, Mansel.

MANSEL. Not at all.

(The lights stay up in the Bait and Brew with a special on FRISKY. The lights rise slowly in the Emporium with a special on OMAHA. She is still working on RUBY's hair. B FLAT is watching from the center area.)

B FLAT. You never would guess it to look at him? But Frisky use to be quite a man about town. That is till he fell in love with Omaha.

FRISKY. You know if it hadn't been for Miss Gertrude I might not never met Omaha. One day I got this frantic call from her... *(Imitates an old lady.)* "Frisky, you got to come over here!" You know how she talked! Any way, she said, "There's this great big ol' crazy man in my backyard tryin' to get into my house. Please come help me!" Well, hell, I hadn't even got dressed yet so I's runnin' over there pullin' up my britches and buttonin' my shirt and when I run in she said the man done took off but she had somebody she wanted me to meet. She drug me into her kitchen and I said, "Hell, Miss Gertrude, I ain't even dressed yet." And she said, "Don't worry, you look fine." And there Omaha was, a vision in a pageboy bob!

OMAHA. Miss Gertrude introduced us, you know. Yes, she'd asked me over one day for coffee. You see I's

tryin' to start up my business without my family's help and I'd just moved here and didn't know anybody! She's so friendly! Then she went to the phone and a few minutes later Frisky came runnin' in. He didn't even hardly have his britches on! Found out later, Miss Gertrude tricked him into comin' over. He was so handsome with that bare chest and that nasty little Clark Gable mustache! Oooh!

FRISKY. Omaha Nebraska Purcell. Can you believe it? I never did understand her family namin' her somethin' like that till we went to a family reunion up in Chattanooga and I met her sisters Selma Alabama and Tallahassee Florida. Lord have mercy, them Chattanooga Purcells is big on states. I liked to die when I met her uncle, Jackson Mississippi! What else could I do but marry her.

OMAHA. You see, Frisky and I hadn't been datin' long at all when we run up to Tennessee for my family reunion. My family just could not get over his odd name. Frisky Homer Madison, it is kind of strange, I reckon. They loved him though! My sister Tallahassee? She's just crazy about him! Even named her firstborn son after him. *(Pause.)* Madison Wisconsin! Now that's a pretty name!

(Lights out in Emporium. B FLAT enters the Bait and Brew.)

B FLAT. US, you reckon if I clean up the storeroom later on, I could get me a Baby Ruth right now?

US. Sho' nuff, B Flat, you help yourself.