

The Little Death

a short play by
Peter M. Floyd

© 2006 Peter M. Floyd

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

PAUL: A young man

JANIE: A young woman

MRS. ADAMS: A woman between 40 and 60

MR. THOMPSON: A man in his late thirties or forties

SCENE: Paul's apartment, at about 10:30 on a Saturday night

A small apartment, occupied by a bachelor: a little cluttered but not excessively so. We see the living room, which consists of a couch and armchair of contrasting colors, a coffee table, and an end table. On the coffee table is a can of salted peanuts. Off one side is the apartment's front door; on the opposite side are two passageways, one leading to the kitchen, the other to the bathroom and bedroom. The room is empty as lights come up.

PAUL (*off*)

So, he's standing there, drenched in water from head to foot, and he says, "Is that all there is?"

We hear laughter from PAUL and JANIE as a key turns in the lock and the front door opens. PAUL enters, and holds the door open for JANIE. They are a young, attractive couple, enjoying each other's company but with a slightly nervous air about them.

PAUL

Well, uh, here we are. (*He closes the door behind her.*)

JANIE

So, this is your place? It's very...

PAUL

Shabby, yes. It was actually a beautiful, immaculate place when I moved in here -- glass chandeliers, Queen Anne furniture -- but I couldn't stand that, so I hired this very pricey interior decorator to give it the exact look of urban squalor that I was aiming for. I call it the New Jersey Garbage Scow School of Design.

JANIE

Oh, I've seen plenty worse, believe me. This one place I was in, right after college, was basically a cesspool with four walls and a stairwell. The cockroaches would hold nightly parades down the front hall. Brass bands, floats, everything.

PAUL

This place used to have roaches, but they all moved out. It was getting just a little too squalid for their tastes.

JANIE (*nervous laughter*)

Yeah?

There follows a moment of silence, and then the two of them slowly launch into a kiss, tentatively at first, as if they weren't quite sure how it will turn out, but then with increasing passion. Eventually, they stop to take a breath.

JANIE

Wow.

PAUL

Janie...

JANIE

Look, Paul, I really hate to spoil the mood, but right now I have to pee like a racehorse.

PAUL

Um. Okay. The, uh, bathroom's down that way, first door on the right, just before the bedroom.

JANIE

Well, I'll take the bathroom first, and after that, maybe we'll try out the bedroom. How does that sound? (*She kisses him again, with no hesitation this time, and exits down the hall.*)

PAUL

Oboy. Oh boy. Oh! Boy! Yes, yes, yes, yesyesyes! (*Turns his eyes heavenward.*) Thanks, God! I owe You big time! (*He exits into the kitchen, and returns with a bottle of champagne and two glasses, dancing and half-singing as he does so.*) Gonna get laid tonight, gonna get laid tonight, oh yeah, I'm gonna get laid tonight. (*Takes a deep breath as he sets bottle and glasses down on the coffee table.*) Okay, Paul, don't fuck this up.

He nervously pops a peanut into his mouth. At the same moment, a knock comes from the front door.

PAUL

Fuck.

He stands still a moment, indecisive. The knock comes again.

PAUL *(to himself)*

Okay.

He runs to the door and pulls it open.

PAUL

What?

MRS. ADAMS enters. She is a prim, officious woman whose age is (apparently) somewhere between forty and sixty. She carries a clipboard.

MRS. ADAMS

Paul Doyle?

PAUL

Yeah?

MRS. ADAMS

Paul Stewart Doyle, son of Sebastian C. and Mary L. Doyle?

PAUL

Yeah?

MRS. ADAMS

Born on the 16th of November, 1977? *[Note: Year can be adjusted, as appropriate for the actor playing Paul.]*

PAUL

...Yeah?

MRS. ADAMS

Excellent. *(She puts a checkmark on the paper in her clipboard.)* My name is Mrs. Adams: I've come for you.

PAUL

Come for me?

MRS. ADAMS

That is correct. Would you please accompany me now?

FOR PRODUCTION RIGHTS, GO TO <http://www.hitplays.com/>