

# STILL LIFE

A Ten-Minute Dramatic Duet

by  
J.J. Jonas



*Brooklyn Publishers, LLC*

Toll-Free 888-473-8521

Fax 319-368-8011

Web [www.brookpub.com](http://www.brookpub.com)

Copyright © 2000 by J.J. Jonas  
All rights reserved

**CAUTION:** Professionals & amateurs are hereby warned that *Still Life* is subject to a royalty. This play is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, Canada, the British Commonwealth and all other countries of the Copyright Union.

**RIGHTS RESERVED:** All rights to this play are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion pictures, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

**PERFORMANCE RIGHTS & ROYALTY PAYMENTS:** All amateur and stock performance rights to this play are controlled exclusively by Brooklyn Publishers., LLC No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. If necessary, we will contact the author or the author's agent. PLEASE NOTE that royalty fees for performing this play can be located online at Brooklyn Publishers, LLC website (<http://www.brookpub.com>). Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. You will find our contact information on the following page.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged. Only forensics competitions are exempt from this fee.

**AUTHOR CREDIT:** All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this play must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this play. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the play. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

**PUBLISHER CREDIT:** Whenever this play is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice:

*Produced by special arrangement with Brooklyn Publishers, LLC*

<http://www.brookpub.com>

**TRADE MARKS, PUBLIC FIGURES, & MUSICAL WORKS:** This play may include references to brand names or public figures. All references are intended only as parody or other legal means of expression. This play may contain suggestions for the performance of a musical work (either in part or in whole). Brooklyn Publishers, LLC have not obtained performing rights of these works. The direction of such works is only a playwright's suggestion, and the play producer should obtain such permissions on their own. The website for the U.S. copyright office is <http://www.copyright.gov>.

**COPYING** from the book in any form (in whole or excerpt), whether photocopying, scanning recording, videotaping, storing in a retrieval system, or by any other means, is strictly forbidden without consent of Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

#### TO PERFORM THIS PLAY

1. Royalty fees must be paid to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC before permission is granted to use and perform the playwright's work.
2. Royalty of the required amount must be paid each time the play is performed, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.
3. When performing one-acts or full-length plays, enough playbooks must be purchased for cast and crew.
4. Copying or duplication of any part of this script is strictly forbidden.
5. Any changes to the script are not allowed without direct authorization by Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.
6. Credit to the author and publisher is required on all promotional items associated with this play's performance(s).
7. Do not break copyright laws with any of our plays. This is a very serious matter and the consequences can be quite expensive. We must protect our playwrights, who earn their living through the legal payment of script and performance royalties.
8. If you have questions concerning performance rules, contact us by the various ways listed below:

*Toll-free:* 888-473-8521

*Fax:* 319-368-8011

*Email:* [customerservice@brookpub.com](mailto:customerservice@brookpub.com)

**Copying, rather than purchasing cast copies, and/or failure to pay royalties is a federal offense. Cheating us and our wonderful playwrights in this manner will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Please support theatre and follow federal copyright laws.**

# STILL LIFE

by  
J.J. Jonas

**CAST: KEVIN and WILL**

**\*For competition purposes, only two chairs are necessary. All other props may be mimed.**

**SCENE 1: Two men enter two separate rooms at the same time (both face audience). They simultaneously go through the same actions (open door, get a glass of water at opposite ends of the rooms, sit down in chair and open newspaper). They mirror one another, one moving gracefully (KEVIN), the other is encumbered by cerebral palsy (WILL)**

**PROPS: Pitcher of water, glass or cup, something resembling an oxygen mask. If possible, KEVIN should wear a white orderly's outfit, bag, large sketch-pad, pastels.**

KEVIN: *(speaking to an unseen person)* I've been looking for a job for six weeks now. I'm enrolled at the Art Institute here in Houston, but painting my way through school really doesn't get the bills paid.

WILL: Orderly! Orderly! Where are those idiot orderlies? What does it take to get some help around this place? *(falls down, off balance, and pulls himself back up on the chair)*

KEVIN: I think society should revere the artist, should preserve the artist. The artist is the one who holds up a vision of the future for others to follow. How can I inspire my vision if I am encumbered by such mortal matters such as the electricity bill? Society should support the artist to follow his dream.

WILL: I'll do it myself. Do it myself. Those of us condemned to survive always do it by ourselves.

**SCENE 2: KEVIN has entered WILL'S room to help him take some pills. KEVIN must place the pills in his mouth and give him the water to drink.**

KEVIN: Mr. Alexander? I am here to give you your daily medication. How are you doing today?

*(HE leans down to feed WILL the pills and WILL involuntarily knocks the cup from KEVIN'S hand and spills it on KEVIN.)*

KEVIN: Ah, geez, I'll have to get another one.

WILL: Sorry.

*(WILL'S speech is greatly affected by his condition and his movements should reflect the jerking, gnarled contraction of the palsy; this should continue throughout the piece.)*

KEVIN: Well, can you take them without water? Or do you have to have the water to swallow?

WILL: I...need...the water. I need the water to...swallow. Dumb...klutz.

KEVIN: What did you say? I'm not the one who dropped it. You knocked it out of my hand. Don't be calling me a klutz.

WILL: Are you...calling me...a klutz?

KEVIN: I'm not calling you anything. You're the one who called me a klutz and I don't appreciate it. I'm trying to help you. I'll get another glass of water.

*(goes to sink and gets another cup of water)*

WILL: Don't...do me...any favors...Klutz.

KEVIN: I asked you not to call me that. I told you I'm just trying to help you. You know you can't do it by yourself. Now, just let me help you without you calling me names.

WILL: You...think you're...better than me, don't you? Just because...I'm tied up in...knots here like...a cripple. You think... I'm a cripple...don't you?

KEVIN: I don't think anything about you. I'm just doing my job—

WILL: And that's all...it is...to you. A job. You don't care.

KEVIN: *(under his breath)* I'm not paid to care.

WILL: Then why are you doing this if you don't care?

KEVIN: I need the money for school, if it's any of your business.

WILL: Where do you go to school?

KEVIN: The Art Institute.

WILL: (*perks up*) You're an artist?

KEVIN: Yes, I'm an artist. Some of my professors don't think so yet, but I just need time. I happen to think that you're born an artist, born with the soul of an artist. You either have it or you don't. It's not something that you can be taught.

WILL: And you...were born...with such...a soul?

KEVIN: (*a little arrogantly*) Yes, I was.

WILL: How do...you...know?

KEVIN: (*impatiently*) How do I know what?

WILL: What...kind of...soul you were...born with. I mean...you could have...been born with the soul...of a garbage collector...or a fish gutter. Yes, that's it...you seem like you have a...distinct soul of a...fish gutter.

KEVIN: That's disgusting.

WILL: Not...to...the fish gutter...it is his...passion. When he... makes love...he thinks of...Charlie...Tuna. (*HE laughs and then begins to cough and wheeze*)

KEVIN: Settle down. You're working yourself up into a state.

*(HE reaches for an oxygen mask and covers WILL'S face with it for a few seconds until WILL begins to breath regularly again)*

KEVIN: Are you all right now? You really shouldn't get carried away with your vulgar jokes. Try thinking of something beautiful.

WILL: Okay. What medium...do you use?

KEVIN: Medium?

WILL: Watercolor...sculpting...charcoal?

KEVIN: Well, right now, I'm trying all of them to see in which medium I unleash my expression.

WILL: Unleash?

KEVIN: Yes, I have to explore which of the arts brings forth the blossom and fruition of my talents.

WILL: Sounds like...you're either...a lost...dog or a peach...tree.

KEVIN: You wouldn't understand.

WILL: I understand. My mind...is not...crippled.

KEVIN: Hmph. Some might argue with that.

WILL: I'm not a retard...stupid. I'm probably...smarter than you ...ever thought...of being. I have an I.Q. of 145. What's...yours?

KEVIN: That's none of your business. Besides, we're not supposed to discuss personal information with a patient.

WILL: That...low, huh?

KEVIN: Just take the pill.

*(KEVIN gives him the water and pill and assists him in taking the medication.)*

WILL: So, do you...have any...sketches to...show me?

KEVIN: What?

WILL: Any...sketches...your work.

*(KEVIN hesitates)*

END OF FREE PREVIEW