

# **WAITING: An Existential Cry of Despair**

## **By John Ott**

Copyright © 2002 by John Ott, All rights reserved.

ISBN 1-931805-47-4

**CAUTION:** Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

**RIGHTS RESERVED:** All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

**PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS:** All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work 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. 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.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

**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*

**COPYING:** Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

## **WAITING: AN EXISTENTIAL CRY OF DESPAIR**

By John Ott

**SCENE:** *In front of a wall, outside a hospital. September 11.*

**RUNNING TIME:** 10 minutes

**CHARACTERS:**

**(2 EITHER SEX)**

*\*see note in opening stage directions*

**TWO-THOUSAND-ONE-HUNDRED-AND-EIGHTY-SIX**, *missing her father.*

**FOUR-THOUSAND-THREE-HUNDRED-AND-FORTY-THREE**, *missing her fiancé.*

**SETTING:** *This play has two central characters who can be either male or female, of any race, religion or sexual orientation.*

*For sake of ease, we will assume these characters are both female. Pronouns may be altered unobtrusively, as needed. Changing the word "fiancé" to "lover" is also permitted.*

**(TWO-THOUSAND-ONE-HUNDRED-AND-EIGHTY-SIX and FOUR-THOUSAND-THREE-HUNDRED-AND-FORTY-THREE stand or sit out of doors, in front of a wall, the wall of a hospital, although this need not be made clear from the set.)**

**(Two-Thousand One-Hundred and Eighty-Six is missing her father. Four-Thousand Three-Hundred and Forty-Three is missing her fiancé. All characters in the play are in a deliberate, trance-like state.)**

TWO-THOUSAND: You know anything?

FOUR-THOUSAND: I know nothing.

TWO-THOUSAND: Who was it? Can I ask?

FOUR-THOUSAND: My fiancé. You?

TWO-THOUSAND: My dad?

FOUR-THOUSAND: How... Where?

TWO-THOUSAND: Ninety-first floor.

FOUR-THOUSAND: Ninety-first floor?

TWO-THOUSAND: North Tower.

FOUR-THOUSAND: Man. My... he worked in the lower... coffee-shop.

TWO-THOUSAND: A lot of them got out real quick.

FOUR-THOUSAND: I know.

TWO-THOUSAND: But you...?

FOUR-THOUSAND: I haven't heard anything.

TWO-THOUSAND: Yeah. Me either. **(Their eyes follow an unseen nurse.)** Any news?

FOUR-THOUSAND: **(overlapping)** Can you say...?

**(Their reactions make plain the nurse has no news. Pause. TWO-THOUSAND and FOUR-THOUSAND shift in body posture, indicating a passage of time.)**

TWO-THOUSAND: It would have been a nice day.

FOUR-THOUSAND: You mean the weather?

TWO-THOUSAND: Yeah, the weather.

FOUR-THOUSAND: I don't even remember.

TWO-THOUSAND: Sunny this morning.

FOUR-THOUSAND: I don't even remember.

**(Pause.)**

TWO-THOUSAND: You got posters?

FOUR-THOUSAND: His friend is out. Parks and lamp-posts. Anywhere, you know?

TWO-THOUSAND: Yeah, get the face...

FOUR-THOUSAND: The face is what's...

TWO-THOUSAND: We got free copies.

FOUR-THOUSAND: That's nice.

TWO-THOUSAND: The place, they said, "On us."

FOUR-THOUSAND: That's nice. You?

TWO-THOUSAND: Huh?

FOUR-THOUSAND: You got posters?

TWO-THOUSAND: Yeah. Free copies.

FOUR-THOUSAND: Oh, right. **(Pause. They shift in posture.)** What will you do when you find out?

TWO-THOUSAND: I'll be relieved.

FOUR-THOUSAND: I guess what you do depends on what you hear.

TWO-THOUSAND: I'm gonna hear good news.

FOUR-THOUSAND: Me too. **(pause)** But what are you going to do when you find out?

TWO-THOUSAND: I don't know. What are *you* going to do?

FOUR-THOUSAND: Go home and have a drink.

TWO-THOUSAND: Yeah, a drink. **(pause)** I hope it's not bad news.

FOUR-THOUSAND: Yeah.

***(Pause. They shift in posture.)***

FOUR-THOUSAND: Waiting, huh?

TWO-THOUSAND: I just... I want to know, you know?

FOUR-THOUSAND: Sure, sure. Waiting.

***(Pause.)***

TWO-THOUSAND: I wonder if someplace...

FOUR-THOUSAND: Will you do me a favor?

TWO-THOUSAND: What?

FOUR-THOUSAND: If anyone comes by-- Will you?

TWO-THOUSAND: Yeah. What?

FOUR-THOUSAND: If anyone comes by, don't let them go around the corner.

TWO-THOUSAND: Yeah, but-- Okay. ***(pause, shift in posture)***  
Waiting.

FOUR-THOUSAND: I know what we're doing. There's no need to narrate.

TWO-THOUSAND: You don't have to stand here.

FOUR-THOUSAND: Sure I do, 'cause this is where the news comes.

TWO-THOUSAND: I'm not sure this is where the news comes.

FOUR-THOUSAND: I think it is.

TWO-THOUSAND: So stand here or don't.

***Thank you for reading this free excerpt from WAITING: AN EXISTENTIAL CRY OF DESPAIR by John Ott. For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script, please contact us at:***

**Brooklyn Publishers, LLC**

**P.O. Box 248 • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406**

**Toll Free: 1-888-473-8521 • Fax (319) 368-8011**

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