

The
Vermont Plays

Annie Baker

THEATRE COMMUNICATIONS GROUP
NEW YORK
2012

The Aliens

*With original music and lyrics by Michael Chermus,
Patch Darragh and Erin Gann*

Production History

The Aliens was developed, in part, with assistance from the Orchard Project, a program of The Exchange (www.exchangencyc.org). *The Aliens* received its world premiere by Rattlestick Playwrights Theater in New York City (David Van Asselt, Artistic Director) on April 22, 2010. The production was directed by Sam Gold with original music and lyrics by Michael Chernus, Patch Darragh and Erin Gann. The set design was by Andrew Lieberman, the costume design was by Bobby Frederick Tilley II, the lighting design was by Tyler Micoletau, the sound design was by Bart Fasbender, the prop design was by Eugenia Furneaux-Arends and the production stage manager was Nicole Bouclier. It was performed by:

JASPER
KJ
EVAN

Erin Gann
Michael Chernus
Dane DeHaan

Characters

JASPER, thirty-one
KJ, thirty
EVAN, seventeen

About the Pauses and the Silences

All numbers in third—if not half—of this play is silence. Pauses should last at least three seconds long. Silences should last from five to ten seconds. Long pauses and long silences should, of course, be even longer.

All intermission is necessary for about ten different reasons. Each act should run around fifty to fifty-five minutes.

Two More Things

"Andrew" is pronounced "Ahn-DREY-a."
A slash (/) indicates where the next speech begins.

Act One

Scene One

The desolate back patio of a coffee shop in Vermont. A new trash bin. A PLEASE USE THE FRONT ENTRANCE sign. Jasper and KJ are sitting in the sun at a lone picnic table, their feet up on plastic chairs. KJ has a beard and long hair pulled up in a messy bun. Jasper has shorter hair and simmers with quiet rage. He wears sweatpants and sandals.

Jasper is smoking. KJ is drinking a to-go cup of tea. A long silence.

Eventually KJ starts singing to himself.

KJ

I WON'T

WASTE AWAY

WONDERING WHY

I WON'T GO DOWN LIKE THAT

IF I DIE

TIME MACHINES WERE MADE FOR ME

I BELIEVE

IMPOSSIBILITIES

ARE WHAT YOU PERCEIVE
TRIPLE DIMENSIONAL, SUPERSTAR
TRIPLE DIMENSIONAL, SUPERSTAR
TRIPLE DIMENSIONAL, SUPERSTAR

Jasper smokes. A pause.

KJ
I'M A MARTIAN MASTERPIECE
FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION
TIME AND SPACE WEREN'T MEANT FOR ME.
NO I'M NOT DOWN WITH THAT.
TRIPLE DIMENSIONAL, SUPERSTAR
TRIPLE DIMENSIONAL, SUPERSTAR
TRIPLE DIMENSIONAL, SUPERSTAR

Jasper smokes. A long silence. KJ drinks his tea. Then:

KJ
Remember Orion?

Jasper nods.

KJ
He started a wind farm.
Near Marshfield.

Jasper exhales.

JASPER
What does that mean he started a wind farm?

KJ
He started a wind farm. He lives on a wind farm.

JASPER
Wind farm like the big / white—

KJ

The big white spinnny things.
(pause)

With like the—on top of a mountain or something.

JASPER

Aren't those owned by the government?

KJ

I don't know. He lives on one.

JASPER

Youh, but it's not . . . it's just like a bunch of wheels by the side
of the road.

KJ

Youh,

Pause.

JASPER

So how does he live on one?

KJ

He just does.

JASPER

Who told you that?

KJ

. . . Eli.

Jasper sighs and stubs out his cigarette. KJ watches him. Another long silence.

KJ

I hey. Uh. Do you wanna talk about it? Or would you
uh . . .

KJ trails off.

JASPER

Andrea?

KJ nods.

JASPER

Not really.

KJ nods again. A pause.

JASPER

She's crazy, man.

KJ nods again. A pause.

JASPER

It's sad. I mean, it's really fucking sad.

A pause.

JASPER

There's actually something wrong with her.

KJ

Like—

JASPER

Like borderline paranoia or something. Some kind of psychological issue.

KJ nods.

JASPER

So it's actually kind of a relief. It feels like a relief.

KJ

Cool.

JASPER

And uh . . . I don't know. She played games, you know? She went into that shit. She was into Power. And like . . . part of me found it attractive but it was also really / uh—

KJ

That's not good, man.

JASPER

And uh . . . you know, her thing was like . . . that she didn't have a personality anymore? That she'd like "lost her personality." In the shadow of my . . .

But the hilarious thing is that she was the one who like fucking blamed herself to my hip. I didn't need that, man. Necessarily. But she made us that. While like still attempting to fuck with my head the whole time and make feel like shit.

A pause. KJ nods again, at a loss. Jasper lights another cigarette.

KJ

I'm sorry.

JASPER

Don't say you're sorry. It's a good thing.

(pause)

I don't need to talk about it.

(pause)

I actually feel bad for her.

KJ watches Jasper, who smokes and refuses to look at KJ. After a while KJ starts squinting up at the sun and opening his mouth a little.

JASPER

What're you doing?

KJ

(still squinting)

Trying to sneeze.

JASPER

What is that / supposed to—

KJ

It helps you sneeze.

Looking at the sun helps you sneeze.

Jasper watches KJ try to sneeze for a while. KJ is unsuccessful. Eventually he goes back to sipping his tea.

A long silence.

Jasper suddenly kicks a chair over. It makes a terrible noise.

KJ

Whoa.

Five seconds later, the back door to the coffee shop opens. Evan peeks his head out the door, sees them, then steps outside, in his white apron. Evan is seventeen and in a constant state of humiliation.

EVAN

Hey.

Um . . .

Jasper and KJ regard him coldly.

EVAN

Hey.

We're not allowed to, uh . . .

(pause)

Did you guys just kick that chair over?

Jasper and KJ do not respond. Evan waits, in agony, then:

EVAN

Um. So. We're not allowed to . . . people aren't actually supposed to sit out here.

It's uh, it's like a staff area. You're supposed to sit at the tables out front.

JASPER

Are you?

EVAN

Um. Um.

JASPER

How here?

EVAN

Um. Um.

KJ

Um. Um.

EVAN

Um. Um.

Um.

KJ

Um. Um.

EVAN

Um. Um.

Um. Um. I was told that we should not, um . . . that under no /

circumstances . . .

JASPER

What's your last name?

EVAN

Um. Um.

KJ

Um. Um.

Annie Baker

JASPER

... Cause you look like this girl I know. You look like you could be her younger brother.

Evan doesn't know what to say.

JASPER

Emily.

EVAN

Okay. Cool. Yeah, I don't have a sister named Emily.

JASPER

Her last name is Spencer.

Pause.

EVAN

Um... would it be okay with you guys to move out front? Cause it's my second day working here, and I really don't want to get in, um, trouble.

They both look at him and do not move. Evan stands there for a while. Like ten seconds. Everyone is very still. Finally Evan turns around and walks back inside. After a while:

KJ

Does it feel hot to you?
Like especially hot?

Jasper doesn't respond.

KJ

Is it supposed to be this hot in June?

JASPER

It's July.

KJ

JASPER

KJ

He shrugs. That kid.

KJ

That makes sense.

He shrugs. That kid. The other night I heard like... preparations or whatever. They were like setting off fireworks in their backyard.

That makes sense. You noticed that? That everybody always starts practicing like that before the Fourth of July? Why do they need to practice? They just light it?

He shrugs. That kid. The other night I heard like... preparations or whatever. They were like setting off fireworks in their backyard.

That makes sense. You noticed that? That everybody always starts practicing like that before the Fourth of July? Why do they need to practice? They just light it?

Scene Two

Next day, KJ is sitting by himself at the table. He has another to-go cup of tea. He removes his tea bag from his cup, opens it, pours a little bit of the tea onto the plastic table, removes a tiny packet from his pocket, and refills the tea bag with the contents of the tiny