



STOREFRONT CHURCH

BY JOHN PATRICK SHANLEY



DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.



STOREFRONT CHURCH
Copyright © 2013, John Patrick Shanley

All Rights Reserved

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that performance of STOREFRONT CHURCH is subject to payment of a royalty. It is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, and of all countries covered by the International Copyright Union (including the Dominion of Canada and the rest of the British Commonwealth), and of all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention, the Berne Convention, and of all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations. All rights, including without limitation professional/amateur stage rights, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all other forms of mechanical, electronic and digital reproduction, transmission and distribution, such as CD, DVD, the Internet, private and file-sharing networks, information storage and retrieval systems, photocopying, and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved. Particular emphasis is placed upon the matter of readings, permission for which must be secured from the Author's agent in writing.

The English language stock and amateur stage performance rights in the United States, its territories, possessions and Canada for STOREFRONT CHURCH are controlled exclusively by DRAMATISTS PLAY SERVICE, INC., 440 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016. No professional or nonprofessional performance of the Play may be given without obtaining in advance the written permission of DRAMATISTS PLAY SERVICE, INC., and paying the requisite fee.

Inquiries concerning all other rights should be addressed to Creative Artists Agency, 162 Fifth Avenue, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10010. Attn: George Lane.

SPECIAL NOTE

Anyone receiving permission to produce STOREFRONT CHURCH is required to give credit to the Author as sole and exclusive Author of the Play on the title page of all programs distributed in connection with performances of the Play and in all instances in which the title of the Play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the Play and/or a production thereof. The name of the Author must appear on a separate line, in which no other name appears, immediately beneath the title and in size of type equal to 50% of the size of the largest, most prominent letter used for the title of the Play. No person, firm or entity may receive credit larger or more prominent than that accorded the Author. The following acknowledgment must appear on the title page in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the Play:

World Premiere Presented by Atlantic Theater Company, New York City, 2012.

SPECIAL NOTE ON SONGS AND RECORDINGS

For performances of copyrighted songs, arrangements or recordings mentioned in this Play, the permission of the copyright owner(s) must be obtained. Other songs, arrangements or recordings may be substituted provided permission from the copyright owner(s) of such songs, arrangements or recordings is obtained; or songs, arrangements or recordings in the public domain may be substituted.

STOREFRONT CHURCH was presented by the Atlantic Theater Company (Neil Pepe, Artistic Director; Jeffery Lawson, Managing Director), at the Linda Gross Theater in New York City, opening on June 11, 2012. It was directed by John Patrick Shanley; the set design was by Takeshi Kata; the costume design was by Alejo Vietti; the lighting design was by Matthew Richards; the sound design was by Bart Fاسبender; the production stage manager was Alison DeSantis; and the production manager was Michael Wade. The cast was as follows:

| | | |
|------------------|-------|--------------------|
| ETHAN GOLDKLANG | | Bob Dishy |
| DONALDO CALDERON | | Giancarlo Esposito |
| REED VAN DRUYTEN | | Zach Grenier |
| CHESTER KIMMICH | | Ron Cephas Jones |
| TOM RAIDENBERG | | Jordan Lage |
| JESSIE CORTEZ | | Tonya Pinkins |

CHARACTERS

ETHAN

REED

JESSIE

DONALDO

CHESTER

TOM

If your church is sacred, our sister is, too. If our sister is not sacred, neither is your church.

—*Victor Hugo*, Notre-Dame de Paris

STOREFRONT CHURCH

ACT ONE

Scene 1

December 2009.

A loan officer's cubicle. Ethan Goldklang, a threadbare Jewish accountant in his 60s, sits with a loan officer named Reed Van Druyten. Reed is in his mid-40s or so. His face is stiff on one side. He's deaf in one ear, partially blind in one eye. In addition, he has a tic in his speech. He makes involuntary sounds occasionally.

On the desk, in addition to financial materials, is a thick, well-thumbed paperback and a cardboard cake box.

ETHAN. Here you go.

REED. Aa. What's this?

ETHAN. My wife made it. It's a chocolate cake.

REED. I'm an officer of the bank. We can't accept gifts.

ETHAN. Relax, Kimosabe. You'll live longer. Has anybody ever told you that you're the spitting image of Alexander Hamilton?

REED. No.

ETHAN. When I walked in, I thought you were a ten-dollar bill holding a pencil.

REED. Please take that off my desk.

ETHAN. Let me ask you a question. What do you think makes somebody great?

REED. I have no idea.

ETHAN. Have you ever read *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*?

REED. No. I'm not allowed to accept gifts.

ETHAN. What's the big deal? It's a cake. It's perishable. Do you read?

REED. Yes.

ETHAN. You oughta read *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*. I'd lend it to you but I'm not done.

REED. That's all right.

ETHAN. Tells the story of this one nobody and you get everything. It's amazing how a story can make you feel the time. I mean, we're living in a time, right? This country was built by giants. They died and midgets moved in. Tiny people. We're walking around inside this republic like a nine-year-old boy wearing his father's suit. When the tiny people got in power, they changed what was taught in school. No great books, no big people. Everybody's tiny now. Well, let me tell you something. Greatness is real. And giants come along. You might be one. The opportunity is there, right now.

REED. I'm an officer of the bank. I can't be compromised by accepting gifts.

ETHAN. You're still on the cake? It's a cake. My wife made it for you. I can't eat it. With my arteries. You're stuck with it.

REED. Let's take a look at the numbers, shall we?

ETHAN. My best quarter's coming up.

REED. Obviously we go by what's here.

ETHAN. Right. We're the numbers people. But arithmetic is a limited language, my friend. Is it hot in here?

REED. I don't know.

ETHAN. You don't know if you're hot?!

REED. Any other documentation you want to include?

ETHAN. I'd just like to say, this picture's going to improve.

REED. You're the homeowner's spouse.

ETHAN. I'm her husband and her accountant.

REED. But the notes are in your wife's name.

ETHAN. I have a power of attorney. I can make a deal.

REED. What kind of offer can you make?

ETHAN. Here's the situation. Tax season's coming up. That's when I make my big money. I do taxes.

REED. Yes. I have your returns here ...

ETHAN. See, I did those. I've been doing tax prep for forty years. I'll tell you my philosophy. My advice is my currency. When I give

bad advice, it's a breach. People come to me 'cause I'm supposed to know. Bad advice is a debt.

REED. Ms. Cortez was fully informed of the terms before she signed these loans.

ETHAN. You know that? Were you there?

REED. The box is checked.

ETHAN. You don't know that.

REED. The box is checked.

ETHAN. Come on. Remember, you're talking to an accountant.

REED. Mr. Goldklang, let's call things by their right name. Accounting is a hobby for you.

ETHAN. What do you mean, a hobby?

REED. It's inconsequential. You're eligible for food stamps.

ETHAN. I don't get food stamps.

REED. You could. You're impoverished.

ETHAN. Fine. I'm poor. Help me.

REED. There are institutions for that.

ETHAN. This is an institution.

REED. Not that kind.

ETHAN. Do you have a family?

REED. I thought you were here to make an offer?

ETHAN. You don't have enough money? She needs an extension. I'll go into overdrive for tax season and catch her up. You can wait till April fifteenth for Chrissakes.

REED. Mmm. I'm not authorized to indefinitely postpone payment ...

ETHAN. There's nothing indefinite about April fifteenth. She's been making payments for fourteen years. We're talking about four months.

REED. The account is already significantly in arrears.

ETHAN. So she's late. Haven't you ever been late for anything?

REED. I don't matter. It's the bank.

ETHAN. What do you mean, you don't matter? You're a human being. You matter.

REED. No. It's the bank.

ETHAN. What are you talking about? The bank matters but you don't? What kind of statement is that?

REED. Aaa. Mr. Goldklang ...

ETHAN. Do you have any beliefs?

REED. All right. This isn't going anywhere.

ETHAN. Can you relate to me as a human being?

REED. It doesn't matter how I relate to you.

ETHAN. What do you mean, it doesn't matter? What else is there?

REED. This is about the bank's point of view. Not mine.

ETHAN. Wake up. Banks don't have a point of view. Banks don't have eyes. They don't have skin. They don't have kidneys. There's only us.

REED. There's a bank. It's a business. And the business has rights.

ETHAN. It's been my experience when people say business, they mean brutality.

REED. There's no point in making this a confrontation.

ETHAN. Are you insane? You're throwing us out of our house!

REED. Not me.

ETHAN. Yes, you. Wake up.

REED. Eviction proceedings are outside my purview.

ETHAN. Be a man at least.

REED. Look. Don't assume things.

ETHAN. Do you have a cock in your pants?

REED. Aaa. Mr. Goldklang.

ETHAN. You will pay a price for this in the court of human truth, mister! That court convenes in a man's soul and nothing can stop it! You will wake up in pain for the things you do! I've lived long enough to know that!

REED. (*Re: cake.*) Please take this and go. (*Ethan stands up.*)

ETHAN. You take the goddamn cake! You're stuck with it! You're a flunky. You're a slave! When did you sign away your ass? When did you give up being a man?

REED. YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT I'VE GIVEN UP, MR. GOLDKLANG! YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT I'VE GIVEN UP! (*Ethan looks odd.*)

ETHAN. What? Aaahhh ...

REED. What is it?

ETHAN. Nothing. Call my wife. Call my wife. (*Ethan slowly collapses, knocking over stuff.*)

REED. Mr. Goldklang? (*Ethan gives Reed the finger as he passes out on the floor. Reed picks up a phone.*) I think I need an ambulance. (*Sound of an ambulance. Lights.*)

STOREFRONT CHURCH

by John Patrick Shanley

5M, 1W

When a Bronx Borough President is forced by the mortgage crisis into a confrontation with a local minister, the question they confront is one that faces us all: What is the relationship between spiritual experience and social action?

"[An] affecting new play about a handful of Bronx dwellers whose lives become tangled in unexpected ways when a mortgage goes sour ... Mr. Shanley's intense engagement with questions of religion and ethics, and how they shape the way people with different perspectives interact, remains distinctive and invigorating ... some of Mr. Shanley's sharpest comic writing in years."

—The New York Times

"John Patrick Shanley has the gift, always rare among playwrights, of writing scenes that convey both shape and spontaneity ... [STOREFRONT CHURCH is] a portrait of our puzzling time, when one's beliefs and one's sense of self must live under constant pressure from forces not wholly seen and not yet fully arrived."

—The Village Voice

Also by John Patrick Shanley

DOUBT, A PARABLE
PSYCHOPATHIA SEXUALIS
SAVAGE IN LIMBO
WOMEN OF MANHATTAN
and many others

DRAMATISTS PLAY SERVICE, INC.

ISBN 978-0-8222-2764-9



9 780822 227649