

FARCE OF NATURE

BY JESSIE JONES
NICHOLAS HOPE
JAMIE WOOTEN



DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.

FARCE OF NATURE

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*We dedicate this play, with love, to our dear friend
Kathy O'Callaghan.*

AUTHORS' NOTES

We suggest up-tempo music be played pre- and post-show, at intermission, and especially during scene transitions.

Any animal sounds used should never overlap dialogue.

All of the characters portrayed in FARCE OF NATURE are fictional creations, and any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

FARCE OF NATURE received its world premiere at Pintello Comedy Theater in Gilroy, California, on May 9, 2014. It was produced by Rod and Marion Pintello and directed by Marion Pintello; the technical director was Charley Gilmore; the set design was by Whitney Pintello; the house manager was Simon Pintello; and the original Jones Hope Wooten show logo was designed by Joe Connor. The cast was as follows:

WANELLE WILBURN..... April Ouellette
D. GENE WILBURN Jim McCann
JENNA SEALY Sarah Smith
MAXIE WILBURN SUGGS.....Maureen Haney
CARMINE DeLUCA..... Rob Langford
TY WILBURN Tyler Savin
LOLA BARBOSA..... Rachel Perry
SONNY BARBOSA Michael Perry
ROXANNE THORNE Terri Faus

CHARACTERS
(in order of appearance)

WANELLE WILBURN

D. GENE WILBURN

JENNA SEALY

MAXIE WILBURN SUGGS

CARMINE DeLUCA

TY WILBURN

LOLA BARBOSA

SONNY BARBOSA

ROXANNE THORNE

PLACE

Main lobby of a small fishing lodge
in the Ozark Mountains, Arkansas.

TIME

The present.

FARCE OF NATURE

ACT ONE

Scene 1

Lights up on the lobby of the Reel 'Em Inn, a rustic, family-owned fishing lodge on Lake Lorraine in the beautiful Ozarks. The main entrance is upstage center. Upstage left is the door to owners' living quarters. On the stage left wall is a swinging door to the kitchen. A window with floor-length drapery panels on either side is on the stage right wall; "trees" are visible outside. Downstage right a door leads to the guest wing. The registration desk is downstage left; a small, colorful, and very unattractive abstract painting hangs behind it. Downstage left is an easy chair and a small side table. A two-seater couch sits stage right. Wanelle Wilburn, 50s, a determined ball of fire, enters upstage left door humming, dressed in a sexy negligee and matching robe, ready for romance. She squirts perfume into the air, strikes a sexy pose, puts her foot on the couch, exposes her leg, notices a varicose vein, decides against it. She then leans provocatively against the registration desk, gets a cramp in her back, ditches that idea, too. Finally, removes her slippers, places herself across the couch in a "come-hither" pose. Her husband, D. Gene Wilburn, 50s, a beleaguered, good-hearted guy, in full fishing gear, enters the stage left swinging door. He looks toward the couch, stops, gasps.

D. GENE. Wow! Is this my lucky day or what?

WANELLE. (*Pleased.*) It *could* be ... if you play your cards right, Big Fella.

D. GENE. You don't know how bad I've wanted this! *(She perks up as he hurries over, picks up a fishing reel next to Wanelle, admires it, oblivious to Wanelle's intent.)* I've looked all over the place for this little honey! *(Wanelle wilts.)*

WANELLE. *(Frustrated, to herself.)* As usual, not even a nibble.

D. GENE. Say, Babe, did I snore in bed last night?

WANELLE. Trust me, you did absolutely *nothing* in bed last night.

D. GENE. Great! Well, since we're not expecting any guests, I'm going to hit the lake, catch us some lunch. See you in a few. *(Pecks her cheek. Starts out, phone rings.)* I'll get it! *(Races to desk, answers.)*

Reel 'Em Inn, D. Gene Wilburn, proprietor, speaking ... *(Wanelle, discouraged, half-heartedly straightens the room. D. Gene makes sure Wanelle's not listening, lowers his voice.)* I ... I didn't know you were already on your way ... *(Turns his back as Wanelle crosses to him.)*

No, leave it to me. I can handle her ... Yeah ... I'm eager to see you, too, Roxanne. *(Hangs up, turns around, jumps, yelps to see Wanelle face-to-face.)*

WANELLE. Who was that?

D. GENE. Uh ... Avon lady. But I got rid of her 'cause, Baby, your kind of pretty doesn't come in a jar. *(Laughs feebly. Wanelle doesn't respond. He scrambles.)* Hey, how about you go into town and shop a couple of hours? And instead of fishing, I'll clean up outside, cut the grass, spruce up the place. *(Starts for door.)*

WANELLE. In thirty-two years of marriage, you've never once *encouraged* me to go shopping. *(Suspicious.)* What's going on?

D. GENE. You just deserve some time off. And treat yourself to a nice warm flannel nightgown, Wanelle. Shoot, if a guy catches you in that flimsy little thing you've got on, he might get ideas. *(Quickly exits upstage center door.)*

WANELLE. Yeah, I'd sure hate for *that* to happen! *(Kneels in front of couch, searches for her slippers. Jenna Sealy, 30, sweet, fresh-faced, enters stage left swinging door in a paint-splattered work shirt and jeans, carries a partially painted canvas and a can of paint brushes. Wanelle grunts as she hoists herself up from the floor, startles Jenna who screams, flings her paint brushes into the air, frightening Wanelle who also screams.)*

JENNA and WANELLE. What are *you* doing here?

WANELLE. I thought I gave you the day off.

JENNA. You did, but since there are no guests this weekend and I'm in the middle of the woods *alone*, painting seems to be the only

logical thing for me to do. (*Sighs.*) Ty's been gone over six months and I'm beginning to wonder if I'll ever feel a man's arms around me again.

WANELLE. I know *exactly* how you feel. (*Takes the painting, studies it.*) Gee, you're crankin' 'em out, aren't you? And I have to say, Jenna, you've gotten really good at this.

JENNA. At least that's *one* positive thing that's come out of Ty being gone.

WANELLE. (*Puts her arm around Jenna.*) It's all going to work out. Tyler *will* come back for you. Hey, remember what I told you yesterday?

JENNA. Either you love bacon ... or you're *wrong*?

WANELLE. No, the other thing.

JENNA. Oh. That you're positive Ty is going to ask me to marry him.

WANELLE. Absolutely. Just be patient. That baby boy of mine is following a dream. He wants to make something of himself, establish a secure financial future.

JENNA. (*Skeptical.*) As an *actor* ... in *Chicago* ... in a *dinner theatre*?!

WANELLE. Okay, maybe it's not the *best* financial plan, but what matters is that we believe in him. He might even surprise us! (*Exits stage left swinging door.*)

JENNA. (*To herself.*) After all this time, there's not much that *could* surprise me. (*Just then, Maxie Suggs, 60s, D. Gene's sister, hearty, no-nonsense country woman, bursts through upstage center door, wears a security guard uniform and cowboy boots, brandishes a handgun.*)

MAXIE. *Freeze!* (*Jenna screams.*)

JENNA. Miss Maxie! Scare me to death!

MAXIE. Sorry, Little Darlin'. Just practicin' my moves.

JENNA. Why? They retired you last year.

MAXIE. Yep, but once the dim-wit Police Chief finally took a look at the ratio of bad guys to good, he came crawlin' back. They can't do without me.

JENNA. Huh. You sure it wasn't because they needed a sub when half the officers were taken out by the E. coli from their spaghetti supper?

MAXIE. That might've been a *small* part of it, and it's only 'til the boys get well, but still, they *realize* they need a sharp professional such as myself. By the way, if you see a box of bullets, give me a holler. I know they're around here somewhere.

JENNA. Oh, okay. And congratulations on the job. When do you start?

MAXIE. Just did. Witness protection. One Mr. Carmine DeLuca. Feller needed a safe house and I'm thinkin' there's not a safer place than my brother's fishing lodge in Mayhew, Arkansas. I just have to keep this guy alive through the weekend when they're gonna pick him up and take him wherever he's goin' next. Once that's done, it'll get me back on the force *permanent*. So, let me introduce you to — (*Turns around, nobody's there.*) Huh! He *was* right behind me. (*Goes to window, looks out.*) You seen him? Oddball, real nervous type? (*Carmine DeLuca, 40s, jittery, wise-guy from Chicago's West Side, bursts through upstage center door, wild-eyed, horrified. He wears a leather sports jacket, slacks, loafers.*)

CARMINE. What, I turn around, you're gone? I coulda been killed out there! The place is covered with those green — bushy — with the — sticks and little fluttery —

MAXIE. (*Dry.*) Trees?

CARMINE. Yeah! Those! Don't be walkin' off, leavin' me out there in all that —

MAXIE. (*Dry.*) Nature?

CARMINE. Yeah! I *hate* nature. It's *outside*. I don't like *outside*.

MAXIE. Huh. So, what *do* you like?

CARMINE. *Tall buildings, asphalt, civilization!*

JENNA. Maybe this will be a nice change for you, Mr. DeLuca. I'm Jenna Sealy.

CARMINE. (*Exasperated, to Maxie.*) You *told* her my *name*?! What part of "Witness Protection" don't you understand, Mammy Yokum?

MAXIE. I believe, instead of disparagin' remarks, what I *should* be hearin' is, "Thank you, Officer Suggs, for puttin' your life on the line, starin' down death and mayhem to protect me and keep me safe."

CARMINE. Yeah?! Well, what *I* should be hearing is, "They'll have to shoot me first to get to you, Mr. DeLuca!"

MAXIE. You know, I don't believe a Yankee feller who's spent the last five years hidin' out shouldn't be so quick to get up on his high horse.

CARMINE. What can I say, I got good reflexes.

JENNA. (*Idea!*) That's it! Don't worry Mr. DeLuca, your secret's safe with us. We'll just tell people you're a ... a ... *reflex*-ologist!

MAXIE. Wow, good thinkin'! Don't know what that is, but I *like* it! *Reflexologist*. I'll try to remember that ... *and* where I put them bullets.

CARMINE. Wait! Your gun's not even *loaded*?!

MAXIE. Of course it is! (*Looks down the gun barrel.*) I know there's at least *one* of them suckers in there.

CARMINE. May I remind you there's somebody out there who'd like to kill me!

MAXIE. Yep, and I'm startin' to understand *why*!

JENNA. Excuse me, I'll just go see if Room Two's made up. Ooh, this is exciting! Except for when Junior Upchurch was trying to avoid jury duty, no one ever hid out here before. (*Hurries out stage right door.*)

CARMINE. So, this is the South, huh? Tell me something, when a couple gets a divorce down here, are they still first cousins? (*Enjoys his own humor.*)

MAXIE. (*Dry.*) Yeah, I never get tired of *that* one. DeLuca, last thing I want to do is hurt you, but I swear, it's movin' up the list fast.

CARMINE. (*Glances around, shudders.*) Look at this joint. *So much wood!* You people ever heard of *plaster* down here? And ... (*Re: painting above reception desk.*) there! That picture. Who'd stick something like that on a wall?

MAXIE. Hey, my brother gave that to his wife for their anniversary.

CARMINE. What, he doesn't *like* her? (*Anxious. Sits on the couch, head in hands.*) Man, I've got a real bad feelin' about this whole deal.

MAXIE. Relax, Hoss. Illinois' protection program is just a little short of money, and while they get it together, me and Arkansas got your back. Yep, the boys are gonna eat a lotta crow when they see the bang-up job I'm doin'. Too old for the force, kiss my butt! I'll show 'em what a capable woman in uniform can do.

CARMINE. So, you're a *woman*, huh? Could I get that in writing?

MAXIE. And you're tellin' me *you're* some kind of tough guy?

CARMINE. You better believe it! When you grow up on the streets of Chicago, you grow up fast and you grow up hard. *Tough* is my middle name. (*Wanelle, now in slacks and a shirt, bursts in stage left swinging door, carries a bowl of pretzels.*)

WANELLE. Hey, Maxie! (*Carmine squeals, drops to the floor behind the couch.*) What're you doing here?

MAXIE. I brought you a guest. (*Wanelle looks around. Nothing.*) Over here! (*They cross to the couch, lean over it, look down.*) Carmine *Tough* DeLuca, this is my sister-in-law, Wanelle Wilburn. She and my brother own this lodge.

CARMINE. (*Rises sheepishly.*) I ... uh ... had to tie my shoe. How ya doin'?

FARCE OF NATURE

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4M, 5W

The non-stop hilarity of this Southern-fried farce highlights one day in the life of the Wilburn family of Mayhew, Arkansas. Meet D. Gene Wilburn, the owner and proprietor of the Reel 'Em Inn, the finest little fishing lodge in the Ozarks. Well, it used to be, but lately business is down, tourists are few, and the lone guest who's just checked in — an extremely jittery Carmine DeLuca from Chicago — is only there due to a location shift in the Witness Protection Program. Doesn't anybody just want to fish anymore? Certainly not D. Gene's frustrated wife, Wanelle, who's fed up with their lackluster romantic life. She's taken drastic steps to improve it through hypnotic suggestion and, for the life of him, D. Gene cannot understand why his pants keep falling down. D. Gene's feisty sister Maxie has her own problems, chief among them battling ageism to resume her career in law enforcement. She's determined to prove her worth by keeping Carmine DeLuca alive through the weekend — a task that's going to prove to be much harder than she bargained for, since she keeps losing both her gun and the bullets. And she never anticipated the gangster Camine's been dodging for the last five years, Sonny Barbosa, is about to walk through the door, in hot pursuit of his sexy wife, Lola. Seems the headstong Lola has driven hundreds of miles to the lodge to follow her boytoy, D. Gene and Wanelle's son, Ty. But Lola meets her match in Ty's seemingly innocent girlfriend, Jenna, whose patience has reached the breaking point after months of waiting for Ty to come home. In the deliciously funny romp that ensues, they all hide, lie, disguise themselves, cross-dress, and slam doors chasing one another, while trying to figure out the source of an increasingly awful stench. By then it's too late and the lodge is surrounded by vicious critters and hungry varmints that have followed the odor down from the hills. Yet by the delightfully chaotic climax of this one outrageous day, love blossoms, truths are revealed, and the lives of all — family, guests, and gangsters alike — change in incredible and surprising ways. This side-splittingly funny Jones Hope Wooten comedy is guaranteed to win your audiences over — hook, line, and sinker!

Also by Jones, Hope, Wooten

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THE DIXIE SWIM CLUB

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