



THE GREAT GOD PAN

BY AMY HERZOG



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Playwrights Horizons, Inc. produced the World Premiere of
THE GREAT GOD PAN Off-Broadway in 2012.

THE GREAT GOD PAN was commissioned
by Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Chicago,
Martha Lavey, Artistic Director, David Hawkanson, Executive Director.

Developed in part by The Orchard Project.

THE GREAT GOD PAN was presented by Playwrights Horizons in New York City, opening on December 17, 2012. It was directed by Carolyn Cantor; the set design was by Mark Wendland; the costume design was by Kaye Voyce; the lighting design was by Japhy Weideman; the sound design was by Darron L West; and the production stage manager was Cole Bonenberger. The cast was as follows:

JAMIEJeremy Strong
FRANK Keith Nobbs
PAIGE Sarah Goldberg
CATHYBecky Ann Baker
DOUG Peter Friedman
JOELLE..... Erin Wilhelmi
POLLY.....Joyce Van Patten

THE GREAT GOD PAN was commissioned by Steppenwolf Theatre and written with the support of The Orchard Project/The Exchange.

CHARACTERS

JAMIE (M, 32)

FRANK (M, 32)

PAIGE (F, 34)

CATHY (F, late 50s/early 60s)

DOUG (M, late 50s/early 60s)

JOELLE (F, late teens/early 20s)

POLLY (F, 80s)

PLACE

Multiple locations in New York City and New Jersey
that need not be realized realistically.

TIME

Spring, the present.

NOTE

A slash (/) indicates where the next speech begins.

THE GREAT GOD PAN

Scene 1

A coffee shop. Two men in their early thirties having coffee. Jamie is a good-looking and fairly clean-cut Brooklynite; Frank is a multiply pierced, somewhat effeminate, wounded soul. They make an unlikely duo.

A short pause where they wonder who will take responsibility for the conversation.

FRANK. ... and have you seen Polly?

JAMIE. I visited her in the home — was it last summer? It might have been two years ago now.

FRANK. The home?

JAMIE. She's in a nursing home.

FRANK. Is she that old?

JAMIE. She's gotta be in her eighties.

FRANK. Really?

JAMIE. Well she was in her fifties when we were little.

FRANK. Was she?

JAMIE. (*Now unsure.*) I think so. Yeah.

FRANK. I think of her as like thirty-five.

JAMIE. Huh. No, she's older than our parents.

FRANK. Is she still ... with it? Or —

JAMIE. Uhh ... (*He makes a comme ci, comme ça gesture.*) She knew who I was, but. It was definitely really sad.

FRANK. She was such a good babysitter.

JAMIE. The best.

FRANK. Do you remember the signs of spring?

JAMIE. The — ?

FRANK. She would point out all the signs of spring, each one, as it ... like the snowdrops, and then the crocuses, and the buds on the — she called it the signs of spring, you don't remember?

JAMIE. I have a terrible memory.

FRANK. I still think about that, every year.

JAMIE. If I visit her — when I visit her again, I'll bring that up, she'll love that. She'll be happy that we saw each other.

FRANK. It's great that you've stayed in touch with her.

JAMIE. Well my parents stayed in touch with her better, especially before she went to the home. You guys moved such a long time ago.

FRANK. I think about that a lot, how my life would have been different if my dad hadn't gotten that job. If I had stayed in Highland Park, kept going to Polly's, gone to school with you.

JAMIE. Who knows.

FRANK. But you were always her favorite.

JAMIE. Uh ...

FRANK. No you were. Smart, and well-behaved.

JAMIE. Well. I don't know. And you're — in Ithaca now?

FRANK. Yup. Yeah. With my boyfriend.

JAMIE. Uh-huh. What do you do?

FRANK. I'm a massage therapist.

JAMIE. Cool. Very cool.

FRANK. Congratulations on being a famous journalist.

JAMIE. I'm — whoa, I'm not a famous journalist.

FRANK. Well you're all over the internet, you were very easy to find.

JAMIE. ... thank you? *(They share an uneasy laugh.)*

FRANK. You did a, a Fulbright, right?

JAMIE. Oh God, almost ten years ago.

FRANK. Well I don't even really know what that is, but I know it's awesome.

JAMIE. Thanks. It's — it was cool, yeah dude, thanks.

FRANK. And you — I don't see a ring, / but —

JAMIE. Not married, no. Haven't done that yet.

FRANK. But I'm sure you have a girlfriend.

JAMIE. I do. Yes. Paige.

FRANK. Paige. I like that name.

JAMIE. Me too.

FRANK. She's a journalist too?

JAMIE. She, no, she used to be a dancer but she got injured so she

had to retire early. Now she's a licensed nutritionist and she's getting her MSW so she can better address the whole / mind-body ...

FRANK. Oh, that's great, that's exactly the kind of thing I'm into.

JAMIE. Right, I'm sure, massage, that's / like —

FRANK. I'd love to talk to her.

JAMIE. Yeah. Yeah. (*Brief pause.*)

FRANK. And you look exactly like — you know those, for missing kids, they use that, like, age-advancing technology?

JAMIE. Uh-huh.

FRANK. That's what I thought when I saw your picture online, I was like, that's exactly what Jamie would look like. (*Brief pause.*) Because the last time we saw each other we were, I think, seven. Sorry, maybe a weird thing to say.

JAMIE. No, no. It's just, you look very different. (*An awkward pause.*)

FRANK. So I mentioned in my email that I needed to tell you something.

JAMIE. Yeah.

FRANK. I'm sorry to be so mysterious about it, but it's the kind of thing I thought you should hear in person.

JAMIE. Okay.

FRANK. I also thought you might have an idea what it is.

JAMIE. Um. No.

FRANK. Really?

JAMIE. I haven't seen you in twenty-five years. I have no idea.

FRANK. Okay. I believe you. (*Frank takes a moment.*) Sorry, this is my first one of these meetings, I haven't figured out how to do this yet. (*Jamie waits, more and more ill at ease. Frank seems to be on the verge of tears.*)

JAMIE. Take your time, dude.

FRANK. Yeah. Thanks. Arright. Rip off the Band-Aid, right? I'm in the process of opening a criminal case. Against my father. (*Long pause. Jamie sits back.*) For sexual / abuse.

JAMIE. Oh, man.

FRANK. So.

JAMIE. Oh, Frank. I'm so sorry, man. Did you just remember, or — ?

FRANK. Yes. Um, well — it's complicated.

JAMIE. Sure.

FRANK. There were things that I remembered that I chose not

to think about, and there were things I didn't remember until recently, and then there are the things that he's recently described to me that I still don't remember. Yet.

JAMIE. He's cooperating, then?

FRANK. That's not exactly the word I would use, but he's copping to it, yeah.

JAMIE. How's your mom?

FRANK. Uhhhhh, not so good. She's divorcing him. After thirty-six years.

JAMIE. She had no idea.

FRANK. Well. That's complicated too. (*Silence.*) So this is the hard part.

JAMIE. Oh. (*Brief pause.*) Oh.

FRANK. We had a meeting, a few months ago, mediated by a — my parents' minister. And I asked my father if he had ever hurt any of my / friends.

JAMIE. Uh-huh. Wow. Wow. (*Pause.*)

FRANK. Which is why I thought you might have some idea what I / wanted to talk to you about.

JAMIE. No, I — no, I gotta be honest, this doesn't really ring a ... I mean. (*He takes a moment to try to remember.*) I'll think more about it, but my first response? Not ... um, familiar. (*Silence.*)

FRANK. I guess just the one thing I would like to say? Is that if you do remember anything, and you would be willing to talk to the detectives? That could really help. Because I want to make sure he can't hurt anyone else, you know? He taught Sunday school for ten years, Jamie. When I was older, and not as ... whatever, not as interesting to him anymore. So I just want to make sure he can't take off and start a new life somewhere else and touch another little kid. You know?

JAMIE. I understand, man, and I think what you're doing is great, and really brave, but I don't remember anything. Sorry. Maybe one of the other, uh — meetings you have, you'll have more luck.

FRANK. Well ... based on what he described, I thought you would be the most likely one to remember. That's all. (*Brief pause.*)

JAMIE. Yeah, sorry, no. I'm so sorry that happened to you, man. (*Pause.*)

FRANK. Thanks. (*Jamie checks his phone.*) If you have to go —

JAMIE. Yeah, shit, I'm, I'm a little late for a meeting.

FRANK. I apologize if I did this — if it was clumsy, or I made you

THE GREAT GOD PAN

by Amy Herzog

3M, 4W

Jamie's life in Brooklyn seems just fine: a beautiful girlfriend, a budding journalism career, and parents who live just far enough away. But when a possible childhood trauma comes to light, lives are thrown into a tailspin. Unsettling and deeply compassionate, *THE GREAT GOD PAN* tells the intimate tale of what is lost and won when a hidden truth is unloosed into the world.

"Haunting, deeply affecting, and unfailingly honest. Amy Herzog is one of the bright theatrical lights of her generation. She writes with a keen sensitivity to the complex weave of feelings embedded in all human relations. THE GREAT GOD PAN is not something I'll soon forget." —**The New York Times**

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ISBN 978-0-8222-2867-7



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