



# HIM

BY DAISY FOOTE



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HIM was developed in Hartford Stage's 2009 Brand:NEW festival, at the Icicle Creek Theatre Festival and at Pittsburgh City Theater's Momentum Festival.

World Premiere produced by Primary Stages in New York, September 2012  
(Casey Childs, Founder and Executive Producer;  
Andrew Leynse, Artistic Director; Elliot Fox, Managing Director)

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*To Hallie*

HIM received its world premiere at Primary Stages (Casey Childs, Founder and Executive Producer; Andrew Leynse, Artistic Director; Elliot Fox, Managing Director) in New York City on October 9, 2012. It was directed by Evan Yionoulis; the set design was by Marion Williams; the costume design was by Teresa Snider-Stein; the lighting design was by Tyler Micoleau; the original music and sound design were by Broken Chord; and the production stage manager was Marisa Levy. The cast was as follows:

PAULINE ..... Hallie Foote  
HENRY ..... Tim Hopper  
FARLEY ..... Adam LeFevre  
LOUISE ..... Adina Verson

## **CHARACTERS**

PAULINE

HENRY

FARLEY

LOUISE

## **PLACE**

A house attached to a store in a small New Hampshire town.

## **TIME**

A little over a year, beginning in 2003.

# HIM

## ACT ONE

### Scene 1

*Early spring, 2003.*

*A dark house.*

*We hear drunken, raucous laughter from a man and a woman.*

*And then a crash, what sounds like a chair falling over. The woman yells "Goddamnit. Farley's moved the light again." They both continue laughing when the light, a small table lamp, comes on. Henry (46) and Pauline Randolph (53) lie on the floor of their ancient kitchen. Pauline holds the lamp.*

*A long farm table with chairs divides the room in half. There is a stained and torn wing chair in one corner. And hanging down from the ceiling are wires, once a light fixture.*

*There are three doors: one to the store, one to the stairs to the second floor and the last to the basement.*

*Pauline helps her brother off the floor. She returns the lamp.*

PAULINE. You better talk to that brother of ours, Henry. Tell him to stop moving the goddamn light.

HENRY. Farley's still mad. He didn't want to stay with him.

PAULINE. We can't stay here twenty-four hours a day. We'd lose

our minds. *(She plops in a chair at the table.)*

HENRY. I was up there tonight ... giving him his pills. I told him we'd be going out for a couple of hours. That Farley would be here if he needed anything. The way he looked at me, Pauline. He heaved this deep sigh and the look on his face. Like he was trying to tell me something.

PAULINE. You're imagining things.

HENRY. No, his eyes — there was something in his eyes.

PAULINE. Talk to Farley, tell him to stop moving the light ... *(Henry looks at the wires hanging from the ceiling.)*

HENRY. Or maybe just replace that one.

PAULINE. We can't afford it ...

HENRY. How much could it cost?

PAULINE. We can't afford it, Henry. I promise you.

HENRY. I could ask Teddy Faber.

PAULINE. We can't afford him.

HENRY. He might do it for free. *(Pauline has gone to the cupboard and opens it, searching.)*

PAULINE. Goddamnit, Farley.

HENRY. Did you see him tonight? Teddy. He was flirting with me.

PAULINE. Henry, he hid my wine. I will wring his neck ... I swear. *(Henry gets up and hands her a pill.)*

HENRY. Take one of these. *(She takes the pill.)*

PAULINE. How much did these cost?

HENRY. They were free.

PAULINE. From who?

HENRY. No one you know.

PAULINE. One of your fellas? *(He just looks at her.)* I still want my wine. Where the hell did he put it? *(As she searches ...)*

HENRY. I know where it is. I saw him hide it. Right after we told him we were going out. *(Henry takes out the garbage can. Pulls out a bag of garbage and then reaches to the bottom of the can, pulls out a box of wine.)*

PAULINE. And you didn't tell me? *(Henry shrugs. She pours them both drinks.)*

HENRY. Do you think he was flirting with me? *(She just looks at him.)* Teddy. I wasn't sure before. But tonight I definitely think he was.

PAULINE. He's married to Doreen. They have two kids together.

HENRY. He said to me tonight, he said ... "I got so depressed

when I woke up this morning and realized everything was still the same and would be all day long.”

PAULINE. What the hell does that mean?

HENRY. He's depressed about his life.

PAULINE. Why? He's the electrician for three new housing developments in town. He must be rolling in money.

HENRY. That doesn't mean he's happy.

PAULINE. Well he goddamn should be. Teddy Faber gets up in the morning and says I need to be here to do X and then I need to go there to do Y. And when I'm all done, I'll get a big fat check for my efforts. We never did that, Henry. Never found out what we were good at, developed skills, a way to make money. And now look where we are.

HENRY. Pauline, let's not do this tonight. Please ... it's been so nice. I'd like to forget ... for just a little while ... *(But she's off and running.)*

PAULINE. In the tavern tonight ... I looked around at all those familiar faces and I thought ... they have their jobs, families, houses of their own. They have lives.

HENRY. We have lives.

PAULINE. No, dear. Teddy Faber has a life. Budd Starr has a life. We have ... *(Struggling for the word.)* Existences. And we barely exist. *(Topping off her wine.)* Budd Starr asked me tonight, he asked, "What are you and Henry going to do when he dies?" Saying how the store was on its last legs and how much longer did we think we could keep it going.

HENRY. Jesus, Pauline ... why do you ever listen to that guy ... he's an ass ...

PAULINE. Starr Development is responsible for ten of the largest housing developments in this town. Budd in high school was just this fat kid with bad grades. But his father had that building business, a father who cared enough to teach his son a skill. And Budd took that skill, Henry, he took it and he made something of it. And then fifteen years ago, he started buying up cheap land. And now today, 2003, that fat boy who could barely graduate high school is rich. He's so rich, Henry. *(She sits and drinks her wine, lost in her depressing thoughts about her life. Henry starts to sing a song like "I Can't Get No) Satisfaction."\** He gets to his feet and starts to dance as he continues to sing the song.)

\* See Special Note on Songs and Recordings on copyright page.



HENRY. Teddy Faber loves that song. When it played tonight, he sang all the words ... sang them to me. So what if he has a wife and kids. He is singing to me. (*A few beats as he continues to sing and dance, Pauline still lost in thought. And then:*)

PAULINE. My little girl, Henry. I know now why I've been seeing her. (*He stops dancing.*) Last night too. That's four times in the last month. It's always the same. I wake up. Just wake up out of a dead sleep and there she is. Sitting on the floor. I always feel so bad because there are no toys for her to play with. And the floor, it's so cold. But she's there for a reason; I know that now. She's trying to tell me things about my life. How they are now. How they could have been. If I'd just kept her. If I'd just stood up to him, if I'd done that ... If Mikey and I had married, we could have raised our little girl together.

HENRY. Mikey Lawrence?

PAULINE. It happens all the time. A person gets pregnant, she marries the father of the child.

HENRY. You and Mikey Lawrence?

PAULINE. He was nice to me.

HENRY. Because he was drunk; he wanted in your pants.

PAULINE. It wasn't like that.

HENRY. It's what you've always told me, Pauline. How he got you drunk and took you into some field; he wouldn't look at you the next day at school ... (*Cutting him off...*)

PAULINE. I'm talking about my little girl. What she's trying to tell me! That we are in trouble. Big. Big. Trouble. Today I had only one customer, Henry. One goddamn customer. I sold him a carton of milk. That milk was two weeks past due. But I still sold it to him.

HENRY. Because of the Shoprite that opened and the two Walmarts after that. Not because you didn't marry Mikey Lawrence.

PAULINE. This woman the other day, she was buying the last of the mouse traps and she said, "I heard about your father's death, dear. I'm so sorry."

HENRY. Did you tell her he wasn't dead?

PAULINE. It wouldn't have mattered. It was the store she was talking about. The store. It's dead and we're standing over a corpse. What are we going to do, Henry?

HENRY. We'll figure something out.

PAULINE. What?

HENRY. We'll get by. We always have.

PAULINE. We have no money, no skills. HIM!!!

HENRY. SHH ...

PAULINE. I BLAME HIM! I DO. I DO. *(Her head falls on the table. She starts to sob. As she cries, Henry turns to the audience:)*

HENRY/HIM. *October 9, 1969. Pauline's been in the hospital for three days now. Some poison in her body brought on by the birth. The baby was born dead. She kept asking for it. To see it just once. But I didn't see the point. It's been hard enough. This whole year. Pauline being so foolish. How could she be so foolish, to let some boy ... Now the baby's dead and Pauline's in that room. That grey room with its stale air and antiseptic smells that burn the inside of my nose. I ache to make my visits. My feet. My hands. My bones. My head.* *(Now Pauline lifts her head and speaks to the audience:)*

PAULINE/HIM. *I wonder about the birds. Have they started their long journey south? The green heron that I've known for three years now. Always coming back to that same place in the stream. What if he's gone before I return? If next year the stream goes dry or he gets too old to make the journey back? Why do we become trapped? What pulls us to our fate? I married my wife. And then the three children. I never wanted them. Her idea. But still, here I am. Here I am.* *(Pauline's head goes back to the table. And now Henry speaks to the audience:)*

HENRY/HIM. *The mountain. I'll close my eyes and think of it. Take away all these gloomy thoughts. The mountain. Climb to the top. All around me the trees are starting to turn. Burn with yellows, reds, golds, colors I don't know the names of. Coyotes howl and then they stop, and it's quiet, so quiet and still. The stillness. I crave it. Will I go there tomorrow? Pauline is fine. She's a strong girl. Best not to coddle her. Weary. I need nourishment.* *(A bang from upstairs.)*

PAULINE. What the hell was that?

HENRY. Probably Farley going to the bathroom. *(She goes to the door.)*

PAULINE. Or Farley listening at the door ... *(She yanks open the door.)* CAUGHT YOU! *(But there is no one there.)*

HENRY. A ghost.

PAULINE. Of our disappointing lives ...

HENRY. Why don't we just slit our wrists now, dear. *(Pauline sits back at the table.)*

PAULINE. You never should have come back here. You had your chance to get away, but you came back.

HENRY. Ancient history ...

# HIM

by Daisy Foote

2M, 2W

In the tradition of great American plays, Daisy Foote explores the institution of the American family in HIM. Two siblings struggling to keep the family store afloat must decide which is a priority: their father's final wishes or their financial stability. It's a choice that could tear them apart.

*"HIM turns on a surprising revelation about a potential family inheritance that may give Pauline and Henry a reprieve from the none too genteel poverty in which they live ... [Foote's] characters are drawn with a fine focus, and the unfolding of the central plotline is engrossing, as a loving brother and sister find themselves dangerously at odds over the family legacy."* —**The New York Times**

*"[Foote] is a playwright with something extremely perceptive to say and someone to watch in the future."* —**TheaterMania.com**

*"Dramaturgy is not hereditary, but Foote shares her father Horton's sensitive ear for repression and pettiness in the family, as well as his strain of nostalgia that is painful but briskly unsentimental."* —**Time Out New York**

**Also by Daisy Foote**  
BHUTAN

ISBN 978-0-8222-2920-9



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