

JOYLAND

by Mitchell J. Ward

Mitchell J. Ward
1929 W Irving Park Rd., #3
Chicago
Illinois, U.S.A.
60613
316-214-9831
ward.mitchell@sbcglobal.net

© 2020

Cast of Characters

SAM: Rough and tumble explorer, Female, 19.
JENNA: Sam's high school friend, 19.
AVERY: Jenna's ex-boyfriend, 19.
DOUG: Sam's new fling, Male, 22.
LOUIE THE CLOWN: A child-size wooden clown, Joyland's mascot.

Place

Joyland. An abandoned amusement park. Wichita, Kansas.

Time

Late Summer, 2012

Production Notes

A word in *italics* is emphasized. Words in ALL CAPS are yelled.
Words in *ITALICS AND CAPS* are forceful whispers.

A '/' indicates interruption. Two sets of dialogue side-by-side
are simultaneous.

This play is immersive and interactive.

I refer to the audience as 'Shadows.'

Production History

Joyland (Formerly *Here Lies Joyland*) was originally produced by WMC Productions in Kansas City, MO on July 21st, 2017 in accordance with the Kansas City Fringe Festival where it was awarded 'Best of Fringe' for the Westport Coffee House. The production was directed by Hannah Miller, with sound design by Jae Shanks. The Production Stage Manager was Emily White-Winter. The cast was as follows:

AVERY.....Alex Leondedis
SAM.....Gabby Browne
JENNA.....Bailey Rose Steinke
H.....Darrington Clark

Joyland was produced as a staged reading at the University of Central Missouri in April of 2018. The reading was directed by Emily Bridges. The Stage Directions were read by Emily Dunkeson. The cast was as follows:

AVERY.....Raheem Fielder-Bey
SAM.....Melanie Grantham
JENNA.....Emily Layt
DOUG.....Caleb Eli Gazaway
LOUIE.....Emily Dunkeson

PROLOGUE

Setting: Darkness.

At Rise: Total silence. Then, a BLAST from a firetruck siren behind the audience, or the Shadows, and a gust of wind. A cacophony of audio clips; emergency news broadcasts and police scanners.

T.V. REPORTER 1

A Wichita landmark goes up in flames for the third time in four years. Firefighters have been battling a blaze at the old Joyland Amusement Park since early this evening.

T.V. REPORTER 2

Emergency crews were called at around 4:49 a.m. to a report of shots fired at Joyland in the 2800 block of South Hillside.

POLICE DISPATCHER 1

Is she breathing?

T.V. REPORTER 1

The Eagle is reporting the girl is in critical condition. Authorities say her parents are already pursuing legal action against the park.

POLICE DISPATCHER 2

902. Calling all units. We have a 902 at East Wassel Street. We need all units to a 902 at Joyland Amusement Park.

LIFEGUARD

(whistles)

Everyone get out of the water!

POLICE DISPATCHER 1

Ma'am, I need you to stay calm. What is your emergency?

T.V. REPORTER 2

Late Thursday afternoon, authorities were called to a horrific scene at Joyland Park where the mutilated body of a child was found near the 'The Nightmare' Roller Coaster.

T.V. REPORTER 3

Emergency crews are on the scene of a fire at the old amusement Park in south Wichita near I-135.

WOMAN

He's dead! Oh my god! He's not moving!

T.V. REPORTER 1

A warning; this is a story you might wanna put your kids to bed for.

(Sounds of the fire truck increase. Thunder and Lightning.)

ACT I
Scene 1

Setting: Joyland Amusement Park; Foggy, desolate, overgrown with vegetation and plastered with graffiti. Surrounding the Shadows in the far distance are looming trees and tall, rusted fencing. Towering above are giant decayed remnants of thrill rides; a Roller Coaster, A Ferris Wheel, and a Log Jam water ride. Beneath is cracked asphalt and weeds. A dumpster is to the left. To the right, a Wurlitzer organ. Upstage is the entrance to a dreadful building; the Whacky Shack, slightly obscured by trees and darkness. It is night.

At Rise: All is quiet but a gentle breeze which creaks open the door of the Whacky Shack. As it closes...

SAM (O.S.)

Last one in is a bloated corpse!

SAM jogs in from left in a patent-leather biker jacket, a backpack, and wearing a headlamp. She tosses a giant padlock in the air.)

SAM

What's up, Joyland? Long time no see.

(to Doug)

This is so *freaky* Bro!

(DOUG, an older high-school dropout, enters with a heavy duffle bag and flashlight. He drops the bag by SAM and runs his fingers through his red-streaked hair.)

DOUG

(close to SAM)

Tight lock-picking. You trying to impress me?

SAM

What? No.

DOUG

Didn't know girls could do that.

(SAM punches DOUG in the chest.)