

Ms. O'Tooley

A play in one act

By Alex Coulombe

Contact:
Alex Coulombe
462 Lexington Ave
Apt 2L
Brooklyn, NY 11221
(603) 348-8702
alex.coulombe@gmail.com

CHARACTERS

SPOOLS: British, upright, mid-twenties.

MS. O'TOOLEY: American, attractive, early-thirties.

SETTING

The present day. Evening. A penthouse flat in London, England.

Penthouse. A dining table with chairs, a counter, vegetables, a bowl of salad. SPOOLS hums a half-composed tune, refining it as he goes. He hops up and down, knife in hand. With this knife he chops carrots then puts them into a bowl. He picks up a head of broccoli, considers it, looks at his knife. He puts the knife down and takes a large bite out of the broccoli and spits it into the bowl. He smiles. He repeats this action several times, looks at his watch, then doubles his pace. His energy is astounding. He places the bowl on a table, then two wine glasses. A buzzer rings. A pause.

He hits a button on the wall. He grabs a bottle of wine, uncorks it, and pours the two glasses. He pulls out a pill bottle. A knock at the door. He considers the two glasses. He drops a couple pills into one glass, then one into the other. He stirs both glasses with his fingers, but realizes it will be a minute before they are completely dissolved.

More knocks. He turns on the stereo and runs to open the door. In enters MS. O'TOOLEY. SPOOLS blocks her view from the table with the still-fizzing wine. His manner is no longer impassioned but rather considered.

MS. O'TOOLEY

(mock British accent)

Spoolsy, how good to see you.

She attempts to get in but is blocked by Spools. After a few more attempts, she strikes a pose.

SPOOLS

You as well, Ms. O'Tooley. Let me take your coat.

MS. O'TOOLEY

(American accent)

Why didn't you greet me at the door?

SPOOLS

My deepest regrets, Ms. O'Tooley. I was detained.

MS. O'TOOLEY

You can say you were pissing. Now kiss my foot.

SPOOLS

No gentlemen caller tonight?

MS. O'TOOLEY

Kiss my foot.

SPOOLS

(kissing her foot)

Michael isn't coming?

MS. O'TOOLEY

How's dinner? I'm starving.

SPOOLS

Unfortunately only the salad is prepared. Please, let me take your coat, your gloves, your purse?

MS. O'TOOLEY

No, thanks, I'm cold. Kiss my foot.

He does.

SPOOLS

Allow me to remove the other place setting. Shall I leave the second glass of wine?

MS. O'TOOLEY

Actually Spoolsy, I was hoping we might dine together. You'd like that, wouldn't you?

SPOOLS

Oh. Kind of you, but I have eaten. And I have yet to prepare the main course.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Spools. You've prepared a beautiful meal, as always. Would it be so terrible to enjoy it, just this once?

SPOOLS

I-- I don't believe this is proper. I've never sat at this table, let alone eaten at it.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Look at those gears spinning in your head-- I know you're already wondering how much extra work you'll have to do to clean up. I bet you'll wipe down the chair and blow-torch where you put your elbows on the table you little OCD shit.

SPOOLS

Elbows and tables, never the two have met. Nor shall they ever. Ha ha.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Goddamn it you fucking tight-ass sit down with me and enjoy a nice dinner. Cheers.

She pulls him into a seat. She raises her glass. She notices residue at the bottom. He raises his glass and they toast, then both drink.

MS. O'TOOLEY

There! Was that so bad? I know I usually say your face looks like a wet scrunchy, but tonight you look rather dashing.

She eats the salad. He refrains.

SPOOLS

Thank you Ms. O'Tooley.

MS. O'TOOLEY

And how do I look?

SPOOLS

As usual you are the pinnacle of grace and beauty.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Awww. Sweet.

She puts a hand to his face, though
her gloves are still on.

What's another word for the poor?

SPOOLS

Poor as in... low income? Working class.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Boring. Another.

SPOOLS

The great unwashed.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Ohhh... I like that. Tonight, tell me a story about the great
unwashed and their macabre bohemian lives.

SPOOLS

I have no such stories.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Uhhh you're so boring. Why are there so many boring people in
my life? Hey, what was going on with my wine-- did you poison
it? Tell me you poisoned it.

SPOOLS

I would... never... not to you. Why bring this up again when--

MS. O'TOOLEY

Relax! I was pretending that you were killing me for my fortune. See, I can imagine interesting stories. You know there's nothing for you in my will.

SPOOLS

Of course there isn't.

Beat.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Come on. I'm not mad. I don't blame you. By poisoning that guy you saved me... and now we have a dirty little secret. And you're right, Leo was a bad guy. You're a good guy.

She touches him again with one hand. With the other, she reaches into her purse.

SPOOLS

I'd really prefer not to talk about this.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Remind me why you killed Leo?

SPOOLS

You thought *you* had killed him. He was attacking you and--

MS. O'TOOLEY

Michael wasn't!

She pulls out a gun and points it directly at Spools.

SPOOLS

What?

MS. O'TOOLEY

You killed him. That's why he stopped returning my calls.

SPOOLS

Michael? Miss O'Tooley, please, this is absurd.

MS. O'TOOLEY

I was out in the garden this morning and I was in this wonderful mood because, thanks my magic touch, my new blood orchid finally bloomed-- thanks for asking --and I wanted to call Michael and celebrate. But no answer. But Michael always answers!

SPOOLS

Put down the gun. What medications have you taken?

MS. O'TOOLEY

Fuck you.

SPOOLS

Maybe Michael is busy or out of town? Have you checked your text messages?

MS. O'TOOLEY

Funny you should bring that up. Text messages. It just so happens he sent me a text saying he didn't want to see me anymore.

SPOOLS

Oh. I'm sorry to hear that but... there's your answer, yes?

MS. O'TOOLEY

A text? Michael, my Michael, a text message break-upper? That wasn't him. He's the most polite sweet perfect guy I've ever--

SPOOLS

I am so pleased your orchid finally bloomed. This is the one that hasn't flowered in over a century, yes?

MS. O'TOOLEY

You coward. Last time he was here for dinner you shot me the same look you had the night you killed Leo. Jealous, greedy, arrogant, prick-face.

She holds the gun closer to him.

SPOOLS

You killed Leo-- enough of this. I don't make messes, I clean yours up. Now if it's all right with you I'm going to retire for the evening.

MS. O'TOOLEY

(cocking the gun)

Stay! There is something fucked up with you. No one is as clean or as put together or... boring as you are. That's gotta make something snap. Your commitment to me is infuriating.

SPOOLS

Miss O'Tooley, how much alcohol have you consumed tonight? And have you taken your sleep prescription?

She drains the rest of his drink.

MS. O'TOOLEY

My rohypnol? Yes, I've taken my roofie. Are you gonna take advantage of me? You've wanted me since you first laid eyes on me, and you can't stand the thought of me with all those other men. I saw your reaction at the Citizens Banquet. When I let Mister Satowitz, oh how do the 'great unwashed' say it-- 'comp a feel?'

SPOOLS

I don't even remember... and it's 'cop' a feel.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Even now, you're staring at my crotch.

SPOOLS

Men do not often stare at a woman's crotch.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Well I'm special. And you're strange.

SPOOLS

Miss O'Tooley, let's keep this professional. I only want--

MS. O'TOOLEY

You were jealous of Mister Satowitz, I could telllll. Do you want to touch me? You've killed in my name before, but would you do it again?

SPOOLS

I remain loyal to my job, which includes qualifications in tidiness, culinary skill, poise, grammar, and a willingness to serve you however you wish.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Give me oral pleasure. Right now.

Beat. Her gun presses closer to him.

Why won't you blush?! That's all I'm fucking after here is a blush. Jesus, you're boring. Cock biscuit! Give me something. Penis dick johnson sargeant cum. Pussy turbulence!

SPOOLS chuckles. MS. O'TOOLEY pockets the gun. She takes her jacket off, but leaves her gloves on.

MS. O'TOOLEY

A little humanity. Remember when we argued about the definition is of the middle of the month? I said it was, you know, the middle, and you said--

SPOOLS

The eleventh through the twentieth.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Don't interrupt. But seriously, it's like, the thirteenth to the sixteenth, at most. That's as relaxed as things get with you. So where'd you hide the body?

She pulls the gun back out.

SPOOLS

Alright! I killed him! Is that what you want to hear!? I couldn't stand the thought of you and him visiting gem galleries or being in your garden all day performing botanical masturbation so I... I just had to do something about it. Can you ever forgive me?

MS. O'TOOLEY

How'd you do it?

SPOOLS

I chopped him up into little pieces and fed him to a gang of street orphans.

She is looking away from him. He attempts to grab the gun from her but fails.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Hah, 'the great unwashed.' Oh come on. I know you didn't kill him. I'm kidding... 'You don't make messes, you clean them up.' Nyah. He's probably with that whore with water balloon tits. I'm hungry.

SPOOLS

Let me cook you the main course.

MS. O'TOOLEY

No-- I refuse to let you cook. You do too many things like... being perfect and... cooking.

SPOOLS

I could order a... pizza pie?

MS. O'TOOLEY

Pizza night! That would be lovely You know I-- I--I-- Spools. I really do feel funny.

She grabs a chair. She drops the gun on the floor.

SPOOLS

Oh no-- you are burning up. Here, take your clothes off.

He pulls her gloves and another layer of clothing off.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Haha, Yeahhh you like that don't you.

SPOOLS tries to reach the gun but she is standing on it.

SPOOLS

Miss O'Tooley, I have a terrible confession to make.

MS. O'TOOLEY

I find that hard to believe. Let's hear it.

A beat. He sits her down. The gun
is in reach.

SPOOLS

I... 'roofied' you.

A pause. She bursts out laughing.

MS. O'TOOLEY

You roofied me? Oh, god, that's not good. Was that what was
in the wine? Wait-- doesn't that mean you took--

SPOOLS

I cannot tell you how awful and ashamed I feel, Ms. O'Tooley.
I thought Michael would be here tonight, and I was going to
find a way to make him leave, then I was going to... have my
way with you. But now I honestly do not think I can go
through with it.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Spoolsy. I'm confused. That's the sweetest thing you've ever
said. I am truly flattered. But I saw you drink the wine
too... you won't remember this and... come here and hug me.

Slowly, he approaches her. They
hug. She kisses him. Suddenly she
bursts out laughing and pushes him
to the ground.

I'm sorry! Oh, I see the wet scrunchy face again! My little
wet scrunchy monkey, no I could never fuck you. You're too
boring and... scrunchy! I'm just not attracted to you, like,
at all. I mean, god, I think I have to fire you. Haha. I
mean, you can't roofie your employer. I better write this all
down.

SPOOLS

Miss O'Tooley I am so terribly sorry... it will not happen
again.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Forget about it. All I really care about right now is eating some cheesy weezy poor people pizza. How's about that?

SPOOLS

Yes, of course. I'll order it right now.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Just like 'the great unwashed' have. I feel greatly unwashed right now, so that's rather fitting. Send for the most expensive pizza you can find! We shall celebrate your departure from my services with a worthy token of your worth! While we wait though, I demand you tell me a story. Please?

SPOOLS retrieves a phone and dials.

MS. O'TOOLEY is writing herself a note.

SPOOLS

In a moment.

MS. O'TOOLEY

Spoolsy, I want you to know I am so sorry to lose you. Even though you roofied me, I promise to give you a really really good recommendation. You are of some import. To me. But I'm sorry to say, you were actually a big part of my will because that's how much you meant to---

SPOOLS speaks on the phone. He puts on MS. O'TOOLEY's glove and picks up her gun with it. He approaches her.

SPOOLS

Hi I'd like to order a large pizza for delivery. The address is 462 Marsham Street. The Penthouse Suite. Ah, what kind of pizza? What would be the limit? Then, I'll get-- Ms. O'Tooley, hold this please--

MS. O'TOOLEY absentmindedly grasps the gun. SPOOLS positions it at her head.

Meatlovers. All the toppings.

He fires the gun but her loose hold causes the shot to go through her neck. She collapses and starts to bleed out. He shrieks.

Oh god! Oh god! Ms. O'Tooley has just shot herself. Oh god... please... call the police. This is... terrible. I can't believe...

He hangs up. MS. O'TOOLEY tries to speak, but cannot. She puts pressure on her neck. During the following, both MS. O'TOOLEY and SPOOLS seem inextricably linked in their decaying life-force. A siren blare starts out faint and grows louder.

SPOOLS

(calmly)

Once upon a time there was a man who fell in love with a beautiful, wealthy woman, only to find her existence noncontributing, spurious, and boring. Soon he dreamt not of a life with her, but life instead of her. None of her acquaintances-- for she had no true friends-- were surprised to hear that one night, she killed herself. After all, she had just experienced a painful breakup involving her favorite lover being informed of her many other simultaneous relationships, and abandoned their romance forthwith. And while the prescription drugs found in her blood should have been enough to kill her, she also managed to shoot herself-- just to be safe. With no other friends, she left her entire fortune to her manservant, Spools. What she never knew was that Spools, despite all logic, remained quite taken with her, to the very end. He took rohypnol as well that night, to save himself the terrible memory of all that was done. Because, you see, he wished to stay with her as she passed on. He did not wish her to die all alone.

Dropping off, SPOOLS begins to once again hum the tune from the opening sequence.

And his music... with all that money he had time to practice piano and composing and became quite... remarkable. And he found a wife, who helped him forget all about Miss O'Tooley, and... he...

His words trail off. MISS O'TOOLEY falls to his feet. The siren blare is now louder than he can speak as the lights fade to black.

END OF PLAY