

Welcome Pie

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

CAST OF CHARACTERS

PETE- male, American, mid thirties, long hair

DAHLIA- female, American, early thirties, glasses

MASON- male, Irish, late twenties, eyepatch on right eye

WILLOW- female, Irish, mid twenties, always writing

SCENE 1

An apartment and its hallway. The apartment is recently moved into and unfurnished. Boxes, a suitcase, and a single table populate the room. At lights up, WILLOW and MASON are inside sorting items. MASON carries a handheld Geiger counter.

PETE and DAHLIA approach the front door from the hallway. DAHLIA is carrying a coconut cream pie along with paper plates and utensils. PETE has a mirror that he periodically checks.

PETE

Every time we do this I get so nervous.

DAHLIA

Don't. You'll do great.

PETE

What if Willow doesn't like us?

DAHLIA

She will.

PETE

We have to do this right. We'll probably see them all the time after this and I really don't want it to be awkward.

DAHLIA headbutts him.

DAHLIA

Don't talk so much. This is why we lose the good ones. Remember Mindy?

PETE

What do we say if she asks about Mason?

MASON approaches the door.

DAHLIA

I'll think of something.

PETE

Were you able to find anything else about him?

DAHLIA

No, just hearsay. I'm sure he's fine.

PETE

(staring into his mirror)

You sure that pie's okay?

DAHLIA

Want another headbutt? Knock the damn door and put that away.

PETE pockets the mirror and raises his fist to knock, but MASON cracks the door.

MASON

(eyeing PETE's fist)

Yeh lookin' for a fight?

PETE

No, we... what?

MASON runs his Geiger counter over both their faces.

DAHLIA

(presenting the pie)

Hi, Mason! Welcome to the building.

MASON

Not dolphinologists... WHO ARE YEH?

DAHLIA

I'm Dahlia and this is my husband Pete. We just wanted to stop by and say hello.

MASON

Well you've done that. Anything else?

PETE

(holding DAHLIA close)

We made you a pie.

MASON

No yeh didn't.

MASON shuts the door. PETE and
DAHLIA look at each other. WILLOW
approaches MASON.

WILLOW

Mason, who is it?

MASON

Secret police.

WILLOW

(wresting the door open)

Mason, stop it.

MASON

Never seen em' before. Think they teleported here!

DAHLIA AND PETE

Hi!

WILLOW

Howarya. So sorry. My brother...

DAHLIA

It's okay.

PETE

We made you a pie.

WILLOW

How thoughtful. Come in, come in!

They all enter the apartment. PETE
and DAHLIA are now super cuddly
with each other.

PETE

Hello Willow, I'm Pete and this is Dahlia. We are man and wife living in the apartment above you.

MASON

No yeh don't.

PETE

Excuse me?

WILLOW

Mason...

MASON

The couple above us are making loud noises all the time-- we can hear em! You two are all soft spoken and the like.

Pause.

DAHLIA

It's probably the furniture you're hearing. We're still moving things around after all these years so we've-- by the way this is a great setup you've got here. Real nice.

WILLOW

Thanks a ton. It's not much- we sold almost everything before moving. I'd offer you a drink but we don't even have glasses yet. Thanks for bringing silverware or I don't know how we'd enjoy the pie.

PETE

What's in the boxes?

WILLOW

That's all Mason. He's a bit more a packer than I am-- most everything I own is in that suitcase. Let me take that pie off your hands. So sweet of yeh to welcome us like this. So sweet of yeh.

WILLOW puts the pie and the utensils on the counter.

PETE

How about a slice now?

WILLOW

Love to. I'm proper famished. Is this coconut cream?

DAHLIA

It is.

MASON

Our favorite.

PETE

Really?

DAHLIA

Allow me.

MASON scans PETE's body with his Geiger Counter and stops at his arm. He scans it several more times.

WILLOW

Mason, say thank yeh.

DAHLIA starts to cut the pie. MASON moves toward her and slaps the pie server out of her hand.

WILLOW

Mason!

MASON

It's poison! It's poison and Peter has a robot arm!

He goes to pick up the pie server.

WILLOW

Mason we're in a new place now-- not everything is secret government tunnels and satellites plotting to kill you.

MASON

I know... I know... real sorry and all--

MASON lunges on top of PETE, holds him down and presses the pie server to his arm.

Dig out the robot arm!

WILLOW

Mason!

MASON

Swear on your mother's grave the pie isn't poisoned!

PETE

I swear on my dead mother that the pie isn't poisoned!

MASON

You swear?

PETE

I swear!

WILLOW

Zero one one two three five eight thirteen twenty-one!

MASON gets off PETE and begins laughing jovially. He helps PETE up.

MASON

Good boy Peter. I hear yeh.

MASON pats PETE on the butt and scans him with the Geiger counter.
WILLOW scolds MASON.

DAHLIA

(quietly to PETE)

How's he know your mother's dead?

PETE

Lucky guess.

WILLOW touches PETE.

WILLOW

Pete, I'm so sorry, are you okay?

PETE

I'm fine, I'm fine. Thanks Willow.

DAHLIA

(pulling WILLOW away)

My Petey-kins can handle himself, don't worry.

DAHLIA kisses PETE.

WILLOW

Mason is-- a good fella. A smart fella. But he's a little paranoid, y'know? Always going on about government conspiracies and man-eating dolphins. Thinks we're under constant surveillance and there's some kinda uprising about.

MASON

When I first saw yeh, yeh knew my name was Mason. How'd yeh know my name is Mason?

PETE

It's on your mailbox.

MASON

Why would yeh look at my mailbox Peter?

PETE

To learn your name.

DAHLIA

We just wanted to be polite when we met you.

MASON

Or is it because yer living on the moon and watching us day and night with yer telescope eyes. What else do yeh know?

PETE

Nothing.

DAHLIA

Our landlord told us you came from a small town outside Belfast.

MASON

Now yeh've got me proper shook. Too much research for a simple greetin'. Too much research!

WILLOW

Mason.

MASON

You two seem as thick as manure and only half as useful. Who bakes a pie for strangers in this day? Even if it's not poison, I bet it'll be knocking us out or something of the like. But we're not yer cattle and with or without that pie you'll never get us to your lunar brainwash facility.

PETE

There's nothing wrong with the pie!

MASON

I think I better hold a sharper object to yeh to be sure...

PETE

Is that a threat?

DAHLIA

Calm down Pete.

WILLOW

Zero one one two three five eight thirteen twenty-one, thirty-four--

MASON

Ahhhh... ahh....

WILLOW

The Fibonacci sequence. Calms him down.

PETE

I'll be right back.

PETE exits to just outside the door.

MASON

Don't you go fetching a brain zapper or nothin' or I'll know!

DAHLIA

So, Willow, what brings you to our fair city? Besides the scenic overpopulation and landfill mountains majesty?

WILLOW

Opportunity. The American Dream and all that. Weren't nothin' left for us back home.

MASON

Why do these people want to harvest our fluids? Willow, it's an important question Willow.

WILLOW

Not now Mason.

MASON

You're clever Willow. Almost as clever as me. You see what's happening, with the mouth twitches and looks of feigned interest?

WILLOW

I don't.

MASON

There's an ulterior motive. They're being coerced here, probably through one of their more persuasive channels. It makes sense. In exchange for his compliance, they gave him his beautiful flowing hair and an ungodly hose of a penis.

DAHLIA

Maybe I should check on Pete.

MASON

Speaking of explosions, didya know Willow builds nuclear fusion devices in her spare time?

DAHLIA

Why?

WILLOW

(perking up)

Oh... I... um, don't tend to get the mental stimulation I need through my work, so over the years I've found ways to challenge myself using various items around the house. It's fascinating really.

Started when I was a wee girl when I took an ordinary battery and separated the electrolyte paste into a nickel-alloy mixture. I was amazed to find--

DAHLIA

Excuse me, Dahlia.

DAHLIA exits outside to PETE who is pacing and taking deep breaths and mumbling to himself.

MASON

Shoulda skipped to the part where yeh blew up our secondary school. Or the part where you rocketed our cat around the town. Yeh take too long to get to the interesting parts Willow.

DAHLIA

(slapping PETE)

Pete, pull it together!

WILLOW

Will you put away your Geiger counter?

MASON

It's not a Geiger counter Willow. Now it's a lie detector.

WILLOW

Oh is it? And have they been lying?

MASON

Not yet... but I'll catch-em!

WILLOW

You're making of a fool of us Mason! Don't go talkin' about my experiments and your conspiracy theories. Can we at least pretend to be half normal? That look of feigned interest you're talking about? That's them trying to be polite and kind while you make in damn near impossible!

PETE

I can't. I can't. Are you listening to-- what's with Mason?

MASON

Oh god you're right. I should have seen. I'm sorry Willow!
I'm sorry I gave away your secrets. Now they gonna take both
our brains and put 'em in cows and start the bovine
apocalypse, Willow. I'm so so sorry!!

MASON begins to cry deeply.

PETE

He knows too much.

WILLOW

Mason, that's not-- ugh, come here, relax. Zero one one
two...

WILLOW holds MASON and continues
softly listing numbers from the
Fibonacci sequence.

PETE

He knows we're here on a recruitment mission, that we've been
watching them, that the moon is involved--

DAHLIA

(slapping PETE)

Will you keep it down!

PETE

(holding his mirror to
DAHLIA)

What do we do about Mason? Can you get a read on him?

DAHLIA

No... he's still too chaotic to algorithm. But I can handle
this.

PETE

Why can't we just call it off and go the Mindy-route?

DAHLIA

That's exactly what we're doing. Ready?

PETE

Ugh... I can't go back in there...

DAHLIA

You have to!

PETE

Okay.

PETE and DAHLIA re-enter. DAHLIA holds PETE intimately again, a stark contrast to their time alone. MASON looks like a sad puppy dog.

DAHLIA

We're back. Sorry about that. My Petey's feeling much better.

WILLOW

(to PETE)

No, we're sorry. I promise if yeh can just ignore Mason for a bit, we'll have a pleasant and fine conversation. Have a seat.

They all sit.

DAHLIA

So Willow, you sound like a very smart young woman. What kind of work are you hoping to find?

WILLOW

Ah, I dunno. We've both got a special talent for numbers, my mum used to say. And language. We traveled a lot as kids.

MASON

(still teary)

Peter has blinked three hundred forty six times since I've met you. She knows. He doesn't.

MASON locks eyes with PETE, who tries to stay silent.

DAHLIA

So maybe a job in international relations? Or finance?

WILLOW

Don't have the school for that sorta thing. Spent a lot of time helping Mason here, and had some other trouble.

But we've got a fair bit of savings and I'll be happy to get any job that'll have me.

DAHLIA

Well I know a cafe nearby that needs a barista. But would that-?

MASON begins to crawl towards PETE.

MASON

(singing to the tune of
"Clint Eastwood" by The
Gorillaz)

She ain't happy, she feeling sad, she got moonshine, in a bag...

WILLOW

A barista? Ahhh... maybe. I'd really love to find a way to use my talents but--

MASON

(singing continues)

... she's useless-

MASON AND PETE

But not for long, the future, is coming on.

MASON

Tellamoonderunnering!

MASON rushes over to PETE, grabs his hand.

Peter! Ipe ipe ipe ipe ipe sineep!

MASON leads PETE outside the apartment and shuts the door. MASON holds his Geiger counter at PETE as though it's a lie detector test. DAHLIA looks at WILLOW. The two conversations carry on in tandem.

WILLOW

Yeh said he can handle himself?

DAHLIA

Yes.

WILLOW

Then he'll be fine. Mason... does this sometimes.

PETE

Look, the pie isn't poisoned, okay? We're here as neighbors and we--

MASON

Peter, do you have a large penis?

WILLOW

So what's your story Dahlia? I've just realized yeh know a heckuva lot bout us, but we don't know a thing about yeh.

PETE

Excuse me?

MASON

If you don't answer my questions, I'll know there's something suspicious about. I'll hurt yeh and your so-called wife.

DAHLIA

I'm in high-end sales. I travel a lot and convince overprivileged people to buy things they don't need.

WILLOW

And Pete seems lovely. What's he have going on?

PETE

I have a large penis.

MASON

Do yeh? What's the worst part of havin' a large penis Peter?

DAHLIA

Something to do with plastics. I don't really understand it.

PETE

The worst part is... obviously not banging enough women...?

WILLOW

And you do this for all your neighbors?

MASON

Wrong! The worst part is when our thingy hangs down into the toilet water, innit?

DAHLIA

What?

WILLOW

Bake them their favorite pie?

MASON

What's your favorite show on the telly? Is it Big Shrimpin'?

DAHLIA

Favorite? No. A lucky guess.

PETE

No. Um, probably Twilight Zone.

MASON

No. Um, the correct answer was The Discovery Channel.

DAHLIA

Wondering about something, Willow?

MASON

When's the last time you got a haircut?

WILLOW

Yesterday when we got here someone stopped me at the door and said strange things that go on in this building, do you know what he was on about?

PETE

Must've been months ago.

MASON

Is there marzipan in the pie?

PETE

No.

MASON cracks the door from the other direction.

MASON

Willow, send the so-called wife out please Willow.

WILLOW

He's just going to ask yeh some weird questions. Don't take 'em personally.

DAHLIA exits to the hallway. While WILLOW has this time alone in the apartment, she goes to the pie, wafts the smell of it, and eventually scrapes a little bit off the top and eats it. She clearly enjoys it. She smooths out the top, making her intrusion less obvious.

PETE

Can I go back inside?

MASON

Course no! Can't have yeh in there alone eyeballing me sister with yer gorgeous flowy hair and ungodly penis.

PETE

I'm married.

MASON

I'm asking the questions! I'll be talkin' to her but I'll be watching your face Peter. Daria, is your real name Daria?

DAHLIA

No, it's Dahlia.

MASON

That's what I said. What's your favorite smell, Daria?

DAHLIA

A pine forest.

MASON

What about gasoline? Do yeh like the smell of gasoline?

DAHLIA

Not really.

MASON

Mine's gasoline.

PETE

What's the point of this?

DAHLIA

Sh.

MASON

(finger over PETE's mouth)

Sh. Sh. Shhh Peter. Daria, if you lived underground for a time and discovered a race of mole people, do you think you or Peter would be the ambassador to their kind?

DAHLIA

Me. Absolutely.

MASON

And what would your first speech to them sound like?

DAHLIA

Mole people. We are not so different, and I am certain we have much to learn from each other. If we were to offer you the human gift of a rocketship, might you teach us how to live a fulfilling and prosperous life beneath the earth?

MASON

Mole people on rockets?!

DAHLIA

Can you imagine what it would feel like if you spent your entire life below earth, and then not only got to see the sky, but ride through it?

PETE

Really, Dahlia?

MASON

I'd just immediately shoot the head mole person, then pick off the rest while they scramble to find a new leader. Your answer's good too though. Willow there built a cat rocket from a tire iron so I see what yeh mean. Daria, is there marzipan in the pie?

PETE

Why, are you allergic?

MASON

Like you don't know all seven and a half of my allergies.

DAHLIA

Yes Mason, there's marzipan in the pie.

MASON forcefully pulls them both
back into the apartment.

MASON

The pie is definitely poisoned. Definitely.

PETE

Excuse me?

DAHLIA

No.

WILLOW

Mason...

MASON

The pie has marzipan in it. Marzipan, is made of almonds.
What else tastes like almonds, eh? Cyanide. Furthermore, when
I asked if the pie had marzipan, they gave different answers.

PETE

I didn't make the pie!

WILLOW

Enough. Pete and Dahlia... what's going on?

DAHLIA

Willow. I made this pie from scratch. I promise on my life I
have no desire to poison you or hurt you in any way.

MASON

Why don't yeh look at me when you say that?

PETE

How about the rest of us eat the pie and you abstain?

MASON

Abstain? Abstain? Look at you using all big fifty dollar words. You think you're smart but you're not smart enough.

WILLOW

Let's not be rude-- you brought it for both of us. Mason, I really don't think the pie is poisoned. How bout havin' a bit with me?

MASON

What if it's a tasteless, odorless, undetectable poison?

PETE

Like iocane powder?

MASON

Exactly.

DAHLIA

Iocane powder isn't real.

MASON

So you looked into it?

PETE

There's also no such thing as an undetectable poison.

MASON

Says the American food and drug administration. Isn't that interesting that *food* and *drugs* are regulated by the same body? Hm. Hm. Hm.

WILLOW

To be fair there are undetectable poisons. I did a study once with a dye where we mixed--

PETE

Sorry Willow but this is very simple. In America, if someone bakes you a pie, the polite thing to do is have some. You trust they are not trying to kill you, you take a bite, then you say something kind like 'this is the best pie I've ever had', then you part ways, and you say hi to each other on the street from there on out. Simple.

WILLOW

I'm sorry, I didn't mean to-

PETE

On behalf of my wife, I'm a little insulted.

MASON

(smacking his lips)

Mm mm! I can't wait to take a big ol' bite of some poison pie! I just love the taste of choking to death on my own frothy vomit!

WILLOW

Stop it, Mason.

PETE

Okay. So it was very nice to meet *you*, but we're going to go. We'll leave the pie here- eat it, throw it away, throw it at a clown, whatever. Happy welcome-to-the-building, don't be a stranger, and if you ever do eat the pie, please, let my poor wife know what you think.

DAHLIA

Don't worry about it. We'll see you soon.

They begin to exit.

WILLOW

Pete. Dahlia! I'm sorry he--

MASON

Ah don't be such a poof. I'm taking the piss outta yeh is all. Let's have a bite of it! Peter, please come back Peter!

PETE

Really?

MASON

Yes! Here, I'll even serve it.

MASON goes to the pie and grabs the serving utensils.

DAHLIA

That's not necessary.

MASON

No no. I insist. I am... truly sorry for my behavior. I was having a bit of fun, but maybe I went too far. I do that sometimes. Don't I do that sometimes, Willow?

WILLOW

You do that sometimes, Mason.

He makes four slices and places each on a plate.

MASON

I hope you'll join us for a *slice*? Mm hmm hm hm...

DAHLIA

Thank you Mason.

PETE

Willow could you please take that out of Mason's hand?

She grabs the server from him.
Everyone grabs a plate.

MASON

Wait put that down! Is that a moon dolphin?

Everyone except DAHLIA turns. MASON switches the plates around while DAHLIA swiftly removes a small bottle from her pocket and squeezes a couple of drops of a liquid onto a fork.

I could've sworn I saw an big ol' moon dolphin just now.

Everyone grabs silverware and prepares to take a bite.

WILLOW

So again, I'm truly sorry for this behavior. We're incredibly grateful for your kindness, and hope to repay it in short order.

MASON

Cheers to good people.

ALL

Cheers.

Everyone grabs a fork and knife and takes a bite except for MASON.

WILLOW

Goodness. Dahlia this is fantastic.

DAHLIA

Thank you, Willow, you're very kind.

MASON sneezes on DAHLIA's piece of pie.

WILLOW

Mason!

MASON

Oh, Darlia, I'm so sorry. So sorry love. Here, I'll trade slices with yeh.

They trade plates. Everyone continues eating except for MASON, who picks his new slice of pie up off of his plate then moves it to another plate. He sniffs it, then finally takes a bite.

PETE

Gross.

WILLOW

See Mason? Not poisoned. Now can you please eat with a fork like a civilized fella?

DAHLIA hands MASON the fork she previously dropped liquid on. He takes a normal bite.

MASON

If I'm being totally fair, it is maybe the best pie I've ever-

MASON goes bug-eyed and falls instantly still, splat sideways into the pie so his face is to the audience. WILLOW screams. PETE and DAHLIA speak the rest of their lines twice as fast normal, as though vigorously rehearsed.

WILLOW

But how--? Not the pie, the silverware--

PETE

Wasn't poisoned-

DAHLIA

-but coated in a benanzodrine-50, a knockout fluid with mind-altering properties.

PETE

Tasteless and odorless.

WILLOW

But he looks--

DAHLIA

He's not dead. But we've altered his consciousness and he no longer remembers who you are.

WILLOW

Why would--

PETE

You've been selected, Willow.

DAHLIA

After a thorough analysis of your personality, motivating factors, and abilities.

PETE

We've been watching you for a long time.

WILLOW

Mason? Mason!

DAHLIA

He won't wake for a few minutes.

WILLOW

What-- what have I been selected for?

PETE

The greatest opportunity of your life.

DAHLIA

The chance to live up to your full potential.

PETE

There is a mass exodus coming.

DAHLIA

Requiring the world's top minds.

PETE

The United States would be thrilled to enlist you as one of the chief architects of this global event.

WILLOW

I'm not going anywhere without Mason.

PETE

When he awakens he will not know you. He may call the police or attempt to hurt you.

DAHLIA

You do have a choice.

PETE

But the correct choice is to come with us.

WILLOW

I can't believe this is happening.

WILLOW hyperventilates and PETE grabs her. She stares longingly at PETE. DAHLIA doesn't intervene.

PETE

Willow, listen to me. We know everything about you. Your childhood, what happened to your family, your test scores, your gifts, and your dreams. You're a wonderful person, and we're going to allow you to make your inner-most desires a reality. I know you, Willow. You'd love to achieve immortality, to be in the history books, to change the world. Am I right?

WILLOW

Yes... Mason said you haven't lied to us... but something feels off.

DAHLIA

How many times have you lay awake at night thinking 'there has to be more to my life than this?' How many times have you felt under-utilized, under-appreciated, under-whelmed by the world knowing in your heart of hearts there must be more.

PETE

We know how eager you are to prove yourself. This is your chance.

WILLOW

A chance to show my quality.

PETE

You'll feel like a mole-person boarding their very first rocketship.

DAHLIA

Really?

PETE

Had to.

DAHLIA stares at MASON.

WILLOW

I can't go.

DAHLIA

We've processed nearly seven trillion simulations of your lives together and in every iteration you hold each other down. The scenario we are guiding you into will be by far the most gratifying option for your life, and his.

WILLOW

What is this, The Matrix?

DAHLIA

A little bit, but with more processing power.

WILLOW

I have so many questions.

DAHLIA

Here's a pamphlet that gives an overview of your role.

DAHLIA hands WILLOW a ten page
booklet. WILLOW reads through it at
one page per second.

WILLOW

Helium-3? Nuclear fusion? What's the application of this?

PETE

There'll be a time for questions later.

WILLOW

Dolphins?

PETE

Later.

WILLOW

Fine, what's next?

DAHLIA

Next, we're going to take you up to our room and place you inside our Transmogrification Displacement Chamber--

PETE

It's a teleporter.

DAHLIA

It takes about fifteen minutes and it's very loud. There's a little bit of discomfort but before you know it you'll be at our headquarters.

WILLOW

Ah, that's what that sound's been. I thought it was... nevermind.

PETE

Did you hear the part where we have a teleporter? And a moon base?

DAHLIA

That's obvious. Only place with this level of Helium-3. Mason told me for years if I wanted to continue my tests at a proper scale, I'd need to go to the moon. I laughed, but honestly, if you knew the lengths I went to in order to perform some of my experiments--

PETE

We do.

WILLOW stares at MASON, tearing up the longer she looks.

WILLOW

(whispering)

Zero one one two three five eight thirteen twenty one thirty four fifty eight nine one forty four... two thirty three...

DAHLIA

We can't be here when he wakes up.

WILLOW

Okay.

DAHLIA and PETE grab her bag, open the door, and lead her out. MASON is motionless. PETE locks the door behind them.

WILLOW

Yeh promise he'll be fine?

PETE

Better than fine.

DAHLIA

We haven't lied to you yet and we never will. In fifteen seconds, Mason will wake. In thirty-two minutes he will feel an unplaceable emptiness as he unpacks without you. At twelve thirty-six tomorrow it will pass, and three minutes later he'll be offered an engineering job at NASA in the Fluids and Propulsion Division. On Tuesday he will receive a promotion after outing a North Korean spy within their ranks. In thirty eight days he'll meet Michaela, the girl of his dreams. In two years and three days he'll invent the Photon Kaleidoscopic Geomatizer, helping third-world nations through-

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As they exit they stage, we are left with nothing but MASON, still lying motionless on the table, a look of terrible sadness on his face as the lights fade to black.

END OF PLAY