

# PIE TOWN

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A FULL-LENGTH PLAY

BY JOHN HAMAN

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Cast of Characters  
(In Order of Appearance)

<u>SAWYER:</u>	Female, 18, waitress at Lonely Cafe; later, 38 and Eric's mother.
<u>ANNI:</u>	Female, manager at Lonely Cafe. Seen at 25, 45.
<u>MIKE:</u>	Male, 22, college senior; later, 42 and Eric's father.
<u>FATHER DEAN:</u>	Male, Catholic priest, seen at 28, 48.
<u>BUCK:</u>	Male, eventual owner of Buck's BBQ, seen at 35, 55.
<u>BARB:</u>	Female, Buck's wife. Seen at 25, 45.
<u>ERIC:</u>	Male, 19-20, college sophomore. Son of Sawyer and Mike.
<u>LYNETTE:</u>	Female, 45-55 waitress at Lonely Cafe
<u>KAYLA:</u>	Female, 20-25, Lynette's niece
<u>SUZY:</u>	Female, 20, daughter of Buck and Barb, repairs vehicles
<u>TOMMY:</u>	Male, 45, deputy/detective at Sheriff's Office
<u>LAURA:</u>	Female, 40-45, social worker

7 female roles, 5 male.

The play features a working motorcycle -- a two-stroke "cafe-racer" of any make, from the 1980s or 1990s. The first scene takes place in 1998, and the rest of the play happens 20 years later, in 2018.

WE JOIN THE ACTION IN THE MIDST OF ACT 1, SCENE 1....

... Into the restaurant comes FATHER DEAN, wearing his collar with civilian clothes, and a jaunty little white fedora. He walks up to the counter while SAWYER is putting the order on the wheel and turning it into the kitchen. ANNI greets him.

ANNI

Morning, Father! Good to see you again!

FATHER DEAN

Good morning to you, dear.

(Over at the booth, MIKE notices  
FATHER DEAN and is surprised.)

ANNI

Must be visiting your aunt again.

FATHER DEAN

Yes, she's still pretty spry. Gotta make the memories while you can! What sort of pies do you have today? Anything with meringue?

ANNI

No meringue, but we have the peanut-butter chocolate icebox. It's to die for!

FATHER DEAN

That will be the one. Can you box up two slices, please?

ANNI

Coming right up.

MIKE

Father!

FATHER DEAN

(Turning to him)

Mike! What brings you to Beulah! I didn't plan on seeing you today.

MIKE

Just a little camping trip up north. It's good to see you in civilian clothes!

(They shake hands, and FATHER DEAN claps a hand on MIKE's shoulder.)

FATHER DEAN

I hope you've been playing some soccer over the break. I can't wait to get at it again in the fall.

ANNI

You fellows know each other?

MIKE

Sure do! Father Dean is the headmaster at Mercy. He's also a heck of a soccer coach. And he stays fit enough to practice with us.

(FATHER DEAN makes a little move with his feet to demonstrate his skill and then laughs.)

SAWYER

This guy was stealing my motorcycle. I'm sure glad you showed up to keep him in line.

FATHER DEAN

It's all part of the job. But you don't have to worry about Mike.

SAWYER

(Smiles. Looking at MIKE)

Good to know.

FATHER DEAN

Mike, I'm gonna run to the rest room. Hold tight.

(FATHER DEAN crosses to an exit that hasn't been used yet in the scene)

SAWYER

Doesn't he seem nice? And so young!

MIKE

He's the best. Youngest headmaster ever. Every one in the school loves him. He's also a great counselor. The man will take your secrets *to the grave*.

In comes BUCK, trailed by his pregnant girlfriend, BARB. At the sight of BUCK, SAWYER freezes, glaring at him, without BUCK noticing. Though it's summer, BARB wears a long-sleeve shirt under her dress and stockings on her legs. The two of them sit at the counter and ANNI wanders over, reluctantly. BUCK has a big personality and a beaming smile, but something sinister looms underneath. BARB is timid, cowed. SAWYER looks on.

ANNI

(To BARB)

Hey Barb. Back again, huh?

BARB gives a muted smile and avoids eye contact. She examines the pie keeper on the counter.

BUCK

You gonna say Hi to me, too, Anni?

ANNI

Hi, Buck.

BUCK

(Charmingly)

You know, I might be your boss soon! (*Winks*)

BUCK sees MIKE, eyes him for a second or two,  
then goes over.

BUCK (CONT'D)

Well hey there, what are you doin in town? You ain't from here, right?

MIKE

Just camping.

BUCK

College boy, huh? Where do you go?

(FATHER DEAN enters, smiling)

MIKE

Mercy College, sir. It's -

BUCK

*Catholic school.* That's the last place I'd ever be found.

MIKE

Uh, why's that, sir?

BUCK

I was an orphan and I grew up going to a Jesuit school. The nuns ...

(Darkly)

... they whipped me with whatever they could find. They caned my knuckles til they bled.

MIKE

Wow, I'm so sorry.

BUCK

When I was 14, I escaped and went to work as a farm laborer, traveling across the country. Think about that.

(MORE)

BUCK (CONT'D)

Most backbreaking work you can imagine -- *a white boy doing Mexican work* -- was better than facing those nuns.

(Brightly)

But good luck to you! I hope you can take the ass-whipping.

He turns from MIKE.

BUCK (CONT'D)

(lowering voice)

Kinda doubt it.

FATHER DEAN

Greetings.

BUCK

(Seeing FATHER DEAN)

Well, lookie there! Must be that time again. How's your friend?

FATHER DEAN

Sir? Not sure what you mean.

(FATHER DEAN walks around BUCK to get to MIKE, and BUCK eyes him, then he looks back to ANNI. A little cranky.)

BUCK

Anni, let me speak to Big Ed.

(FATHER DEAN is muttering to MIKE, who is smiling.)

ANNI

Sorry. He's still on that fishing trip at Bull Shoals.

BUCK

(Smiling)

He said he'd have a decision on my offer.

ANNI

Guess it'll have to wait.

BUCK

If you know anything about me ... you know I don't wait.

(FATHER DEAN and MIKE look up.)

ANNI

(Trying to keep their conversation private)

Maybe the answer's no.

BUCK

(Leaning in to her, secretively)

I made a good offer. Tell him to sell me this place.

ANNI

Big Ed knows you're filing for a liquor license, Buck.

BUCK

So what?

ANNI

So this is a pie shop. Old ladies bring their grandkids here after church. Dads bring their kids here on the last day of school. People shouldn't drink in a place like this.

BUCK

You could learn some things about business.

ANNI

And you could hold off on the booze til after lunch.

BUCK

I'm starting to think you don't like me, Anni.

SAWYER

Stepping in front of ANNI.

Why don't you get your ass out of here?

BUCK slams his hand on the counter and stands,  
glaring at SAWYER.

BUCK

Who the hell is this? Anni, this one's got a mouth. She might needs a lesson.

SAWYER

A man with a prison record don't need to be handin' out lessons.

(BUCK tenses)

SAWYER (CONT'D)

Don't need to apply for no liquor license, either ... seeing as that's illegal.

BUCK

What's your name?

SAWYER

For you? The name is kiss my--

ANNI

Sawyer ...

BUCK steps back up to the counter.

BUCK

Sawyer, huh? Boy's name, mouth like a sewer. We'll settle this later.

He notices FATHER DEAN and MIKE watching him, bracing for something to happen.

BUCK (CONT'D)

What are you looking at?

(Pause) FATHER DEAN laces his fingers together and kindly, confidently, meets his gaze.)

BUCK (CONT'D)

(To FATHER DEAN)

I guess you don't remember me,

FATHER DEAN

I don't think I do. I'm Father Dean.

(BUCK moves back to charm, smiling)

BUCK

Really?

(There's an awkward pause as they regard each other. FATHER DEAN looks blankly.)

BUCK (CONT'D)

Well, this is embarrassing. Your friend? That person you visit.

ANNI

It's his aunt, Buck.

BUCK

(Good-natured)

Oh! Oh! Okay.

(More darkly)

Then he's got the only "Aunt Tommy" I've ever heard of. You see, I'm the landlord of my cousin Tommy's house. Last year, when I came to get a new lease signed, you were there.

FATHER DEAN

No sir. Sorry.

BUCK

No, it's "yes, sir." (*Smiles*) Yes, sir. It was in summer, right about this time, last year. Right after school got out. Because that's right after Tommy's daddy got killed in the line. (*Beat*) Saving that lying--

ANNI

Buck! Don't you dare!

FATHER DEAN

All that might have happened, just like you say, but there must be another man running around here who looks like me.

BUCK

Sure! Another guy with a collar.

ANNI

Quickly in front of the counter.

Get out, now. Don't you come here again. You hear?  
 (She glares at BUCK)

BUCK raises his hands, questioning, then steps toward her in an intimidating way. FATHER DEAN also steps in.)

BUCK  
 (To FATHER DEAN)

*(Laughs)* You're gonna do something? Let's go, Barb. The food here sucks. Let's open a place next door and put Big Ed outa business.

BUCK leaves. BARB does not. She's in a trance, looking at the pie keeper.

SAWYER

What a piece of work.

ANNI

How'd you know he had a record?

SAWYER

Momma pointed him out to me at the flea market. Told me to steer clear.

ANNI

Jesus, Sawyer. You gotta keep a lock on that mouth.

MIKE pats FATHER DEAN on the back. BARB touches the pie keeper, turning it, looking at its design. She looks up at ANNI with glistening eyes.

BARB

I like the pie keeper. Pretty outside for pretty insides.

SAWYER

Hon? Are you okay?

(BARB smiles and nods her head, slowly, once, but her glance does not break.)

SAWYER (CONT'D)

Is he hurting you?

BARB's eyes blink. SAWYER reaches for BARB's hand, then slides up her sleeve, revealing defense wounds, which FATHER DEAN sees. BARB pulls her hand back. FATHER DEAN walks toward BARB. BUCK pops back through the door again.

BUCK

Hey!

He moves sharply toward SAWYER

Get your hands off her! Barb, I said now!

ANNI

And I said don't come back here.

BARB gathers her purse and exits, passing BUCK. BUCK glares at SAWYER and ANNI, then leaves.

SAWYER

Why is she with him?

ANNI

Baby on the way.

SAWYER

Jesus, what an awful man. Sorry, Father.

FATHER DEAN

Jesus might agree.

SAWYER

I seen this before with Momma's boyfriend. Notice how Barb keeps her skin covered? She'd never tell on him, 'cause then she'd be alone with the baby.

FATHER DEAN

How do you get free of a man like that?

ANNI

Some times you don't.

SAWYER

This ain't one of those times. (*Untying her apron.*) I'm gonna talk to her.

ANNI

No. You need to be careful.

SAWYER

You can't stop me!

ANNI

But Buck can. *Trust me.*

(The bell rings from the kitchen window and the order comes up. SAWYER looks at ANNI, then re-ties her apron.)

SAWYER

If he does, he'll be in jail, mission accomplished.

(Shifting tone, she whirls and picks up the order )

Alright now, Mike. Here comes ya grub!

(FATHER DEAN goes to the counter)

FATHER DEAN

Can I pay for the pie? I need to be going, unfortunately.

ANNI

Sure, father. Here. We have it ready.

SAWYER brings out the meal and includes a beautiful piece of pie for MIKE , who has been watching SAWYER's heroics. He eats a morsel of pie first, then he looks at SAWYER. If a man can fall in love with a dessert and a woman at the same time, this is that moment.

FATHER DEAN

Please keep the change.

MIKE

(Eating the pie and struggling for words)

Ah ... I ... oooh ... mmm

FATHER DEAN

(Putting his hat back on.)

Have a wonderful summer! Don't get up, MIKE. I'm off to see Aunt Stacy.

MIKE

(Mouth full)

Gih huhr mah luh!

SAWYER

(To FATHER DEAN)

Buh bye!

(Turning to the boys, as MIKE is still worshipping the pie.)

So, how much longer do you have at Mercy College?

MIKE

Actually, (*swallowing, in a trance*) I'm putting in for a transfer.

SAWYER

Where y a going?

MIKE

I don't know. (Looks up at her, seriously). Thinking about Arkansas State?

SAWYER cocks her head.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I saw what you did for her, Sawyer.

SAWYER

That was nothing.

MIKE

No, you're pretty special.

Taken off guard, SAWYER smiles awkwardly, and retreats to the counter, where ANNI is looking at her with awe.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(Calling after her)

So ... when do I get the ride?

SAWYER

Closing time, Hoss. That's 2:30. Meantime, more pie.

MIKE

Sounds good to me.

SAWYER

(Smiling)

And it ain't gonna be free, neither.

ANNI

Well. *That* escalated. (*Hands her a bill*) I guess I owe you five dollars.

SAWYER

Nah.

ANNI

Huh?

SAWYER

(Looking back at MIKE, who is in a dream state with the pie.)

Keep it. This one's different.

SAWYER takes off her apron and hands it to ANNI.

SAWYER (CONT'D)

Don't let him leave, okay? I'm gonna find Barb.

ANNI

Watch out for Buck. He's capable of anything.

SAWYER

Mark my words, Anni. Mr. Buck has met his match.

(Blackout.)