

LICKING POLLOCK

TEN-MINUTE PLAY

By Toni Wilson

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SYNOPSIS: A pair of friends, Lily and Peter, break into the art museum Peter worked at so she can lick the Pollock mural. In the ten minutes they have before the alarm resets itself, both Peter and Lily come to a better understanding of the mural, and of their feelings for each other.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

PETER Early twenties, just graduated from college, about to leave for grad school. Looks ordinary, could be considered dorky by some. Recently worked as a museum guard. He is the voice of reason—most of the time.

LILY Early twenties, uninhibited, fun loving, she is as crazy as Peter is ordinary. She is always daring Peter to do things he wouldn't normally do, which is how the play happens in the first place.

PROPS

- A bench
- A set of velvet ropes in front of the Pollock mural

SETTING

An art museum at 2 a.m. The Pollock mural is on the invisible fourth wall. The lights are subdued with a brighter light on the mural area.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Lily wears all black as described, no stocking cap, but lots of black make-up around her eyes. Peter wears a suit jacket over his t-shirt and jeans. There is a flashing light and siren at the end of the play.

AT RISE:

Lights up on a museum. The Jackson Pollock mural is on the fourth wall facing the audience. The mural is roped off to keep spectators a good distance. There is a bench in front of the mural, at center stage. Everything is quiet and the lights, except for those in the area near the mural are muted.

Enter PETER, upstage. He is wearing jeans, a t-shirt, and tennis shoes. He looks ordinary and could be considered dorky by some. He goes to the panel on the wall and turns off the alarm system. Enter LILY a few seconds behind PETER, also upstage. She is wearing black pants, a black tank top, a black stocking cap, and black make-up smeared around her eyes. She is being all sneaky, like she's trying to rob the place. She's "doo doo doo"-ing the "Mission Impossible" theme. PETER tries not to be amused and shakes his head.

LILY: (In a conspiratorial tone.) Is the coast clear, Foxfire One?
Over.

PETER: You are so ridiculous.

LILY: I repeat, is the coast clear, Foxfire One? Over.

PETER: You are totally insane.

LILY: Come on, it's no fun if you don't play along.

PETER: (Takes out a stop watch.) We don't have much time. So if you wouldn't mind stopping your whole *James Bond* shtick, I would like to - -

LILY: *Mission Impossible!*

PETER: *James Bond, Mission Impossible*, who cares? The alarm will reset itself in ten minutes.

LILY: I care! There is a **huge** difference between *James Bond* and *Mission Impossible!* First of all—

PETER: (Interrupting.) This is not a big deal. Come on. We have to be out of here before - -

LILY: (Interrupting.) I can't **believe** you're acting like this is not a big deal.

PETER: It isn't.

LILY: If I got your gaming stuff all wrong, you would get all huffy.

PETER: All right, all right. Can we have this conversation later?
Time's a wasting.

LILY: Okay, so this is where I do the back flips and roll under the bench to get over to the painting - -

PETER: (Laughing.) You're such a nut.

LILY: It's why you love me.

PETER: No, I just have a weakness for women who look like raccoons.

LILY: Shut up, it's part of my costume. It helps me feel like I'm really breaking the law.

PETER: Lily, I hate to burst your bubble, but you **are** breaking the law.

LILY: It doesn't feel like it. Look at how easy it was for you to turn the alarm system off. Aren't there millions of millions of dollars of paintings in here?

PETER: Yes, and I think what you are about to do should really cost you several thousand.

LILY: The point is, there's no one to dodge. Just me and you and the Pollock.

PETER: Yeah, speaking of the Pollock, let's do this, okay?

LILY: What's wrong, nervous?

PETER: A bit. I mean, this was my job until earlier tonight.

LILY: Yeah, and this is the perfect way to go out with a bang.

PETER: For you! I might not get a reference from them if I get caught—

LILY: Is there ever a time where you don't take everything so deathly seriously?

PETER: Is there ever a time where you do?

LILY: Life is too short for that sort of thing.

PETER: Uh huh.

LILY: What's the use of being young if you don't have stories to tell the grandkids to embarrass them? Why shouldn't I just have fun and do wild things while I can?

PETER: That would explain your arrest record.

LILY: Come on, it was only trespassing. Besides, it was a dare.

PETER: And now we are about to add vandalism to the list.

LILY: This is not vandalism. It's an expression of love.

PETER: Sometimes I wonder how we're even friends.

LILY: Because you needed a trickster to your serious nature. Come on, we only have ten minutes.

PETER: Five.

LILY: Who's counting?

PETER: Me! I don't want to get caught.

LILY: Okay then, let's do this.

PETER: Aren't you worried about lead poisoning or something?

LILY: You worry too much.

PETER: I mean, come on. What kind of paint did he use?

LILY: Mostly oils I think. I mean, what does that little box over there say? It's not like I'm going to eat the painting. It's not like it's wet.

PETER: True.

LILY steps toward the Pollock and stops.

PETER: Do it. You have four minutes.

LILY: Isn't it beautiful?

PETER: I guess.

LILY: You guess?

PETER: Yeah. It looks like any Pollock I have ever seen.

LILY: Oh – my - God!

PETER: What?

LILY: How can you say that? Haven't you ever looked at it?

PETER: Every day for the past four years.

LILY: But have you ever really looked at it? Look at it!

PETER steps forward and stares at it for a beat.

LILY: Well?

PETER: It's just a mess of paint splatters, it doesn't look like anything.

LILY: Oh my God! Can't you see it?

PETER: What? Are you telling me that Pollock was a precursor to those magic eye pictures?

LILY: No! It's everything! Life, love, chaos, peace, war, beauty, ugliness, happiness, sadness, all dancing on the canvas! It's a picture of the most beautiful music, the most tragic events, it shows the fragility and strength of humanity!

PETER laughs.

LILY: What's so funny?

PETER: Nothing. Just do it.

LILY: No, I want to know.

PETER: Nothing.

LILY: Come on, or I will stand here until the alarm goes off and be carted away to jail. And so will you, because you would never leave me stranded.

PETER: Why are you doing this?

LILY: I want it to be a part of me. After I'm finished, part of the painting will live in my body, and no one can take it away from me. I love it that much. What?

PETER: What what?

LILY: You're looking at me all weird.

PETER: Four minutes.

LILY: If you don't explain yourself by the end of the night, I swear to God - - (*LILY walks toward the painting and squares herself to lick the painting and stops.*)

PETER: What is it?

LILY: I don't think I can do it.

PETER: Lily! For God's sake!

LILY: Okay, okay. I just have never been this close to one. I can smell it.

LILY starts again and PETER suddenly blurts out.

PETER: Lily, there's a problem.

LILY: What? Did you miscalculate how much time we had?

PETER: No. Lily, I'm - - I'm really falling for you.

LILY: What?

PETER: I'm falling for you, and I don't know what to do. There, I said it.

LILY: I don't understand - -

PETER: God, you are so dumb sometimes. You have made me have fun and be relaxed and not take things so seriously, and tomorrow, I'm going to be half way across the country and I don't know when I will see you again, but - - I'm falling for you. Why else do you think I would let you into the museum to lick this Pollock?

LILY: Because you have a weird fetish?

PETER: No, you dope. It's because I would do anything to make you happy.

LILY: Do you understand what you're saying?

PETER: I do.

LILY: You leave tomorrow!

PETER: I know.

LILY: Why are you telling me?

PETER: Because we're standing here, doing something illegal and I really want to kiss you right now.

LILY: I - - don't know - - what to say - -

PETER: I'm sorry, it's bad timing - -

LILY: No, it's just, you're going to be far away and - - I don't know - - God, this is real, Peter! Just as real as this painting! This painting, it's never seemed so real. I can see it pulsing now, blood rushing through the paint splatters.

PETER: Lily, we have a minute to get out of here.

LILY: Right.

LILY squares herself to lick the painting. She stops, looking back at Peter.

LILY: Thank you.

PETER: Do it!

LILY licks the painting and stands up, looking happy with herself.

PETER: Well?

LILY: Tastes like chicken.

PETER: What?

LILY: Nothing, I'm being dumb. So, are you going to kiss me?

PETER: Let's - - what?

LILY: No. I came here to lick the Pollock. You came here to kiss me. So do it.

PETER: Lily, the alarm - -

LILY cuts him off by pulling PETER to him and kissing him. They break apart.

LILY: That was different than I thought it was going to be.

PETER: Bad?

LILY: No, good.

PETER: (*Looking at the Pollock.*) Now I understand this painting.

LILY: How so?

PETER: It's a painting of you.

LILY: What?

PETER kisses LILY again. The alarm goes off. BLACKOUT.

THE END