

'TIS NOT ME SHE LOVES

TEN MINUTE PLAY

By Steven Stack

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SYNOPSIS: The feud between the Hatplains and the McCroys has been in a slump for some time now. Both families agree that there's one way to reignite the feud: a forbidden love between Romero McCroy and Julia Hatplain. The only catch: Julia is not in love with Romero and Romero's not in love with Julia. *'Tis Not Me She Loves* is a ridiculously fun ten-minute melodramatic comedy that's half *Romeo and Juliet* and half Hatfields and McCoys.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 MEN, 3 WOMEN, 1 EITHER)

ROMERO MCCROY (m) Julia's best friend *(31 lines)*
JULIA HATPLAIN (f)..... Romero's best friend, in love
with Merc *(29 lines)*
MERC (m) Romero's friend, in love with
Julia *(31 lines)*
TY (m/f) Julia's cousin *(32 lines)*
LADY HATPLAIN (f)..... Julia's mother *(12 lines)*
CAP HATPLAIN (m) Julia's father *(16 lines)*
LADY MCCROY (f) Romero's mother *(27 lines)*
MONTY MCCROY (m) Romero's father *(16 lines)*

SETTING

Eastern Kentucky, near the big Sandy River.

SET

There are three settings for this play and they can be staged as elaborately or as simply as you wish.

1. Romero and Julia: This could easily be a bare stage.
2. Lady McCroy and Merc: A small table and a chair. This scene could take place inside or outside depending on your needs.
3. The Confrontation: This scene takes place at the watering hole. No set pieces are required, so feel free to be creative.

LIGHTS

Only basic lighting needed.

SOUND CUES

Shotgun sound. (A more cartoony sound effect works nicely here.)

PROPS

- Glass (Perhaps with an umbrella.)
- Old-fashioned shot guns. (The more toy-like the better.)

SCENE 1

AT RISE:

ROMERO and JULIA are standing together but JULIA is faced away. She turns suddenly.

JULIA: Romero, I just don't know if I can talk to him today at the waterin' hole. Or anywhere. He's so dreamy. Like one of my pigs.

ROMERO: I wouldn't tell 'im that, Julia. He probably wouldn't find that flatterin'. (*JULIA takes his hands.*)

JULIA: Then can you help me? Help me talk to Merc. So he'll know my feelings and stuff.

ROMERO: How?

JULIA: Maybe you's could faller me and tell me what to say.

ROMERO: Nah, I'm not good on the spot. The only one that I know that could pull that off is ole Cyrano, and he said he wouldn't do it no more after well...you know. (*JULIA nods and then turns away dramatically.*)

JULIA: Well, I don't know what to do. I ain't good at talkin' to humans. Besides you.

ROMERO: I know, maybe you could shock 'im. Be bold or somethin'. The way your pigs are when they go after that mud. (*Gets an idea.*) Hey, maybe we could role play.

JULIA: Role play?

ROMERO: Yeah. You know, like when we was little kids. (*JULIA runs up to him and hugs him.*)

JULIA: That's a wonderful idea. I'll be Merc and you be me.

ROMERO: I think it should be the other way around. I mean, when it really happens, you're gonna be Julia, not Merc.

JULIA: Right. I see what you mean. Now, what do we do?

ROMERO: Well, I'll walk off and you wait right here. And then I'll come back, but I'll be Merc and then we'll start talkin'. Okay? (*JULIA nods and ROMERO walks off. JULIA starts pacing a little. She then starts doing pig snorts. ROMERO peeks his head back out.*) Wait, what are you doing?

JULIA: Pig snorts. That's what I do when I'm waiting. (*ROMERO stares at her.*)

ROMERO: Maybe not this time.

JULIA: But pig snorts relax me.

ROMERO: Right but...no. Just stand there. Looking pretty.

JULIA: You think I look pretty?

ROMERO: Oh, of course, and if we weren't such best friends then—

JULIA: Thank ya for that. I think I can do this now. (*ROMERO smiles and walks off. JULIA waits, looking pretty. ROMERO, now as MERC, reenters.*)

ROMERO: Hi, Julia. (*JULIA turns and smiles.*)

JULIA: Hi, Merc.

ROMERO: So, you wanted to see me?

JULIA: I did. I have something very important to tell you. (*At this point, TY enters and seeing ROMERO and JULIA talking, stops and hides. JULIA stares at ROMERO but is unable to speak.*)

ROMERO: You can do it. (*JULIA smiles.*)

JULIA: I...I... (*She grabs him and "kisses" him. ROMERO and JULIA fall to the ground. JULIA then pulls back.*) I like you. I really like you.

ROMERO: Wow.

JULIA: Was that good?

ROMERO: Yep.

JULIA: You think—

ROMERO: Yep.

JULIA: Good. So four o'clock at the waterin' hole?

ROMERO: Yep. (*JULIA smiles, touches ROMERO on the nose and then leaves. ROMERO stands up.*) Wow. (*ROMERO slowly walks off. TY walks on and watches him go.*)

TY: It finally happened. The forbidden love. This is just what we needed to get the feud goin' again. Once I tell Cap Hatplain that Julia is in love with that rascal McCroy, it'll be on again. And maybe they'll stop making me sleep in the outhouse. I got to go tell 'em.

TY leaves and the lights go low.

SCENE 2

AT RISE:

LADY McCROY is having tea. MERC enters seemingly in a hurry.
LADY McCROY looks up.

LADY McCROY: Hello, Merc. (MERC turns and sees LADY McCROY.)

MERC: Hi, Lady McCroy.

LADY McCROY: You are just the person I was looking for.

MERC: (Nervously.) Really?

LADY McCROY: That's right. You finish cleaning the stables yet?

MERC: Yes 'em. Even gave Romero's mules a bath. Used the oils like he likes.

LADY McCROY: You seem like you're in a hurry.

MERC: Well, me and Romero were gonna go meet Julia—

LADY McCROY: Really?

MERC: Yes'm.

LADY McCROY: Speaking of Julia. Been some gossipin' around town. 'Bout the two of you.

MERC: Gossip about me and Julia? I don't know—

LADY McCROY: Some (Turns to him.) have even said that she likes you.

MERC: What? Who said that? Is it true? (LADY McCROY stares at him.) Not that I would care. Because I know —

LADY McCROY: That's right. You do know. Merc, you're not a member of this family. As my Romero's friend though, you are aware of the importance of our feud with the Hatplains. And lately, that feud's been lacking and our one and only hope for it to continue is a forbidden love. Between Romero and Julia. Why do you think we let them be best friends in the first place?

MERC: 'Cause you figured they would fall in love?

LADY McCROY: That's right. And if someone were to stand in the way of that love, why that person might find themselves at the bottom of the well. You understand?

MERC: Yes'm.

LADY McCROY: Good. Now tell me why you're going to see Julia?

MERC stares at her.

MERC: Actually, it's funny that you mention it cause I think Romero is gonna tell her somethin' important.

LADY McCROY: You don't say? (*MERC nods.*) And what would that somethin' important be?

MERC: I can't. (*LADY McCROY stares at him and he panics.*) he...he's gonna tell her that he wants to be more than friends. (*LADY McCROY eyes grow wide.*)

LADY McCROY: Well, I'll be. (*MERC nods.*) And where's it gonna happen?

MERC: At the--at the--waterin' hole. At four.

LADY McCROY: Very romantic. I'll go and get Monty so we can be there with the Hatplains when our feud erupts again.

MERC: But the Hatplains won't be there.

LADY McCROY: Oh, they'll be there. They would never miss the rekindlin' of our feud. Don't forget to bring your gun.

MERC: But— (*LADY McCROY looks back at him.*) Yes'm. (*LADY McCROY leaves as MERC watches her go.*) What have I done?

He exits.

SCENE 3

AT RISE:

LADY McCROY, MONTY McCROY, and MERC are holding their guns on CAP HATPLAIN, LADY HATPLAIN, and TY HATPLAIN, who also have their guns on them.

MONTY: It's quite a day, Cap Hatplain.

CAP: Any day a feud starts back up is quite a day.

MONTY: I agree. Maybe after it's over, we can go to the saloon and get a drink.

TY: Can I come too, Uncle?

CAP: We didn't even say we're going yet, Ty. (To MONTY.) Now what do you mean by *after*? Do you mean after today ends or after the feud ends? 'Cause I plan on this feud lastin' a long time.

MONTY: I as well. I meant after today.

CAP: Well, you can count me in on that one then.

TY: What about me?

CAP: Unfortunately, you're goin' to die today.

TY: What?

LADY HATPLAIN: I'm sorry, dear. But it's needed for the feud.

TY: I thought Romero liking Julia was needed for the feud.

MONTY: That's to rekindle the feud. But a good death is what's needed to cement the feud.

TY: Oh.

CAP: But you do get that fight you've been wantin'.

MONTY: That's right. Against my son. He'll be the one to kill you.

TY: Why?

CAP: Because you're going to kill Merc today.

TY: I've never liked Merc. (CAP and MONTY nod.)

LADY HATPLAIN: Then it's good you gonna kill him.

LADY McCROY: Dear, is all this happenin' today?

MONTY: Yep.

LADY McCROY: It seems like a lot for one day.

CAP: Well, figured it would be best to not spread it out this time. Jump right into the bucket. (LADY McCROY turns away.) Is that gonna be a problem?

MONTY: Yeah, sweetum', what's wrong? Are you sad about Merc dying?

LADY McCROY: Heaven's no, the feud's more important than him. It's just . . . Merc was going to do my hair today, for the dance tomorrow night, and if he can't do it—

LADY HATPLAIN: I've heard about how good he is with hair.

LADY McCROY: He's wonderful. He told me he had something special planned for my hair tonight. (Silence.) I don't even know if I want to go to the dance anymore.

MONTY: Now, don't say that dear.

LADY HATPLAIN: Well, you know, my cousin Shirley Hatplain, the rather large one, is doing mine tonight and I'm sure she wouldn't mind doing yours too.

LADY McCROY: Really?

LADY HATPLAIN: Of course. And just think, if a Hatplain messes up your hair . . .

LADY McCROY: I just might kill her.

LADY HATPLAIN: That's right. And then I'll come after you 'cause you killed my hairdresser.

CAP: And your cousin, dear.

LADY HATPLAIN: That's right.

LADY McCROY: Thank you. I feel much better now.

MONTY: I have to tell you all. I'm really proud of us. The Hatplains and McCroys haven't a real reason to feud in years. And now, because of our patience and determination to have a meaningful feud, it's gonna happen. I think we should all hug before we start feudin' with each other. *(They all agree and hug. TY does not.)*

CAP: Ty, get over here.

TY: I don't know. Hugging the McCroys just seems wrong somehow.

CAP: And that's what makes it so right.

MONTY: Now get over here before I shoot you early. *(Everyone laughs and TY joins them in a big hug. They hear talking and turn their heads to the sounds.)* All right, they're coming. Now, when they profess their love for each other . . . then it'll start.

TY: When do I—*(Makes shooting gesture.)*

CAP: Oh, you'll know. You'll know. *(They all agree, then more noise.)*
Shhh!

MONTY: Don't shhh me! *(CAP turns to MONTY.)* Just practicing for later. *(They smile and go hide. ROMERO and MERC enters.)*

ROMERO: Now, why did you bring your gun again?

MERC: Lions.

ROMERO: Ain't no lions in Kentucky.

MERC: You never know. *(They hear a sound and look. ROMERO turns one way and MERC turns the other and sees the Hatplains and McCroys, who smile and wave. MERC smiles weakly and turns.)* Probably nothing. So you ready?

ROMERO: Shouldn't I be asking you that?

MERC: No, you shouldn't. This is about you and Julia.

ROMERO: Wait, no— (*JULIA enters and heads straight for MERC, puckered up.*)

JULIA: Hey there, Merc. (*MERC pushes ROMERO into JULIA, who kisses him again. They pull apart and then the Hatplains and McCroys jump out and take their place on opposite sides. JULIA and ROMERO look confused.*)

JULIA/ROMERO: Ma, Pa?

ROMERO: What's goin' on?

CAP: Your forbidden love is what's goin' on.

ROMERO: What you talkin' bout?

LADY McCROY: Merc, get over here. It ain't about you. (*MERC looks at ROMERO and JULIA.*)

MERC: I'm sorry. (*Walks over besides MONTY and lifts up his gun.*)

JULIA: Merc, what did you do?

TY: It's not what he did. It's what you did with your mouth. On Romero. I saw it earlier with my own two eyes. Kissed him right on the mouth.

JULIA: What are you—I wasn't really kissin' Romero. We was just role playin'.

LADY HATPLAIN: Dearie, don't ruin this for us. We know that you are in love with that scoundrel McCroy. (*LADY McCROY moves to LADY HATPLAIN.*)

LADY McCROY: Don't you call my son a scoundrel. Your daughter's a nothin' pig farmer. (*MONTY and CAP move in to separate them.*)

MONTY: Ladies, we're skipping a bit too far ahead. Let's take it back a little. Now, let's say that Ty misunderstood what he saw. All of us saw you kiss Romero just a couple of minutes ago.

ROMERO: That's because Merc pushed me in front of him.

LADY HATPLAIN: That would mean she was trying to kiss—

EVERYONE: (*Except ROMERO, JULIA and MERC.*) Julia. (*They all turn to MERC, who turns to them.*)

MERC: No, she—she—wasn't. She was tryin' to kiss—

JULIA: You, Merc. I was trying to kiss you because I couldn't tell you in words how I felt. But you didn't want to kiss me anyway. Probably like my pigs better.

MERC: No, I did want to kiss you! (*Everyone turns to him.*)

LADY McCROY: Hush your mouth, Merc. Remember the feud.

MERC: I don't care about the feud no more. (*Walks over to JULIA and takes her hand.*) I care about you, Julia.

CAP: But darlin', you got to be in love with Romero.

JULIA: Well, I'm not.

ROMERO: And I'm not in love with Julia.

MONTY: This is just plain awful. (*ROMERO walks over to his father.*)

ROMERO: But Pa, maybe we shouldn't have a feud no more.

Perhaps we can be friends. I mean, you like Cap.

JULIA: And Ma, you like Lady Mccroy.

LADY HATPLAIN: I do like you a little.

LADY McCROY: And I like you a little as well.

TY: What about me? I don't like nobody.

MONTY: Well, that's true, Ty, but at least you don't have to die today. (*Turns to ROMERO.*) You were gonna kill 'im.

ROMERO: Okay.

TY: But if I ain't gonna die, does that mean I get to come to the saloon with you guys?

CAP: I suppose, if Monty don't mind.

MONTY: Fine with me, as long as he sits at another table.

TY: Woo woo! (*Fires gun and shoots MERC in the butt.*)

MERC: Ow!!! (*MERC falls.*)

JULIA: Merc! (*She rushes to him.*)

MERC: I've been shot. In the buttocks. (*ROMERO turns to MERC.*)

ROMERO: How dare you shoot my friend in the buttocks.

TY: I'm sorry. It was a celebratory shot.

CAP: Boy, how many times have I told you? Celebratory shots go in the air. Not straight into the buttocks. (*TY walks over to MERC.*)

TY: I'm sorry I shot you in the buttocks. (*MERC, staring at JULIA, answers without looking away from JULIA.*)

MERC: No need to apologize. I feel no pain.

CAP: Right, then. To the saloon.

MONTY: Yep. You comin' Romero?

ROMERO: You guys okay?

JULIA/MERC: Just perfect.

ROMERO: Well then, all right. (*CAP, MONTY, TY and ROMERO exit. LADY HATPLAIN walks over to LADY MCCROY.*)

LADY HATPLAIN: You still want Shirley to do your hair?

LADY McCROY: Considering mine has been shot in the buttocks, yes.

LADY HATPLAIN: Well, let's go. You're going to love her.

LADY McCROY: I better. *(They take a moment, then start laughing. They exit chatting, leaving only MERC and JULIA.)*

MERC: I'm so happy, Julia.

JULIA: Me too, Merc.

MERC: But I was lyin'. *(She drops him.)*

JULIA: 'Bout wantin' to kiss me?

MERC: No. 'Bout feelin' no pain. I think I'm losing a lot of blood from my buttocks.

JULIA: We should get you to the nurse.

MERC: We should. But before we do...could I have that kiss?

JULIA: Of course, my love. *(Moves in and then does a pig call.)*

MERC: What was that?

JULIA: I always do pig calls before I kiss someone I love.

MERC: Oh. *(They lean in for the kiss as the lights fade.)*

THE END