

PERUSAL SCRIPT

TEMPS

A Short Play
(from the play, "Peculiarities")

by
Eric Samuelson



Newport, Maine

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TEMPS

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PECULIARITIES by Eric Samuelsen. 5w 3m. *Peculiarities* is an exploration of LDS attitudes toward sexuality, in particular situations in which moral rigidity and sexuality collide in Mormon culture. A collection of 4 plays TAHOE, PIZZA AND A MOVIE, NCMO and TEMPS (plus two adjunct plays developed later and available separately) KISS, and BISHOP! *Peculiarities* interweaves the 4 plays together, however, they are also available as separately, through-plotted Short Plays. **ORDER #2091**

Tahoe — Two BYU students go to Nevada to get civilly married for a weekend so they can see what sex is like. The play takes place in Ted's car while he and Kendra are traveling back to Utah from a weekend in Tahoe. **ORDER #2092**

Pizza and a Movie — Two roommates, Carlene and Courtney, spend an evening watching questionable content, wondering about men, and eating pizza in their BYU-approved housing apartment in Provo, Utah. **ORDER #2093**

NCMO — The play takes place inside a BYU-approved housing apartment in Provo, Utah where Kim and Trent ... **ORDER #2094**

Temps — Each has been dating someone else, but due to a situation where they work, they are now inside Jason's car on their way to.... **ORDER #2095**
(**KISS #2096, Bishop! #2097**) no longer included in *Peculiarities*.

Eric Samuelsen taught at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio before joining the faculty at Brigham Young University in 1992. He became head of the Playwriting program at BYU in 1999. He has also taught as an adjunct faculty member in the Religion department. He retired from BYU in 2012.

As a playwright, Samuelsen has had twenty-seven plays professionally produced in Utah, Indiana, Louisiana, New York, and California. Some of his plays include *Gadianton*, which has seen three professional productions across the country, *A Love Affair with Electrons*, *Family*, *The Plan*, and *The Way We're Wired*. He is resident playwright at Plan-B Theatre Company in Salt Lake City, who designated their 2013-14 season a 'Season of Eric', including productions of six of his plays.

He is a member of the Playwrights' Circle, and the Dramatists Guild. He is three-time winner of the Annual Award in Playwriting offered by the Association for Mormon Letters (AML) and he became president of AML in 2007. In 2013 the organization awarded him the Smith Pettit Award for his lifetime work as a playwright.

He has been a staff writer for the on-line satirical magazine *The Sugarbeet*. He was also featured in the book *Conversations with Mormon Authors*, edited by Chris Bigelow. He is a noted Ibsen translator, and has also published scholarly articles on 19th and 20th century Scandanavian Theatre, and more recently, on LDS drama and film. He blogged at *Mormoniconoclast.com*. Eric died in September of 2019 after a long battle with polymyositis. This has left a huge hole in the Theatre Community within, and outside of, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Peculiarities was first produced in 2001, in Springville, at the Springville Playhouse. Tony Gunn directed.

Kendra was played by *Sarah Ratliff*

Ted was played by *Ben Sampson*

Carlene was played by *Shelley Burton*

Courtney was played by *Sarah Nielsen*

Trent was played by *Jesse Harward*

Kim was played by *Susanna Florence*

Alexis was played by *Diane Rane*

Jason was played by *Jeremy Selim*

In 2005, *Plan B Theatre* in Salt Lake City did a production, again called *Peculiarities*, but it only included three of the stories: Tahoe, Temps, and Kiss. (not included here) The three in cars. Directed by Jerry Rapier. Later filmed. Here it is on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x3jfgsYE0IY>

CAST OF CHARACTERS

TAHOE

KENDRA (*BYU co-ed, early twenties*)

TED (*BYU student, early twenties*)

PIZZA AND A MOVIE

CARLENE (*BYU co-ed, early twenties*)

COURTNEY (*BYU co-ed, early twenties*)

NCMO*

KIM (*BYU co-ed, early twenties, single*)

TRENT (*BYU student, Returned missionary, early twenties, single*)

TEMPS

ALEXIS (*Mid-20s. married*)

JASON (*Mid-20s, single*)

*** (*non-committal make-out*)**

Each play is also available as a separate Short Play , and able to be produced independently including KISS and BISHOP!

TEMPS

SCENE ONE

(LIGHTS up immediately on ALEXIS and JASON in the car.)

JASON: *(Singing along with the radio.)* “If you love my body, and you think I’m sexy--”

ALEXIS: *(Laughing.)* That is so--

JASON: “Baby won’t you . . . “ I don’t know how it goes after that.

ALEXIS: “Come on baby let me know”

JASON: Is that how it--?

ALEXIS: “If you think you need me--“

JASON: Right. “Just reach out and touch me, come on baby--”

ALEXIS: Something something know--?

JASON: Go. . . And then the instrumental.

ALEXIS: I can’t believe this came on.

JASON: It’s such crap!

ALEXIS: I mean, this station--

JASON: Totally.

ALEXIS: Aside from playing, like, Crosby Stills Nash and Young. And, like, “Horse with No Name--“

JASON: And “Sweet Home Alabama” 85 times a day.

ALEXIS: They do!

JASON: Never “Free Bird,” no. But “Sweet Home--”

ALEXIS: Totally. But now, this--

JASON: This disco--

ALEXIS: It was disco, wasn’t it?

JASON: I know I know, it’s like Rod’s going “the Bee Gees are making a bundle off this--”

ALEXIS: This disco--

JASON: Disco-- Anyone else’s career, it woulda killed it dead.

ALEXIS: Totally. I mean, it was a joke song even back then.

JASON: I loved it though. I got the CD, Rod’s greatest hits--

ALEXIS: I taped it off my brother’s.

JASON: It’s like one of those songs, you hate it, but you--

ALEXIS: Okay okay okay, who was his guitarist?

JASON: What, you mean . . . I mean Ron Wood from the Small Faces years.

ALEXIS: No. I mean, sure, Ron Wood, but--

JASON: You mean--?

ALEXIS: Jeff. Beck.

JASON: Rod never played with Jeff Beck.

ALEXIS: Sure he did.

JASON: No. Really? Jeff Beck.

ALEXIS: What was that one video, sort of gospelly, with the train and--?

JASON: That was Jeff Beck?

ALEXIS: “People Get Ready.” Sure. Jeff Beck. Wasn’t it?

JASON: I don’t remember.

(A pause.)

ALEXIS: Left here.

JASON: Oh, yeah.

ALEXIS: Why did we even like him?

JASON: Oh, well. Some great tunes. “Maggie Mae.”

ALEXIS: Okay, sure.

JASON: “You wear it well.”

ALEXIS: “You are so beautiful.”

JASON: No, that was Joe Cocker.

ALEXIS: Oh, right. Right just after that service station—

JASON: Right.

ALEXIS: See, that’s the thing about Steve. I mean he just doesn’t . . . he likes music and all, but he doesn’t even think about—

JASON: Is he, like, what, country?

ALEXIS: Oh, no, same stuff as us, I mean oldies, CCR and Bread and like that. And, you know, Sheryl Crow. Indigo Girls. But he doesn’t. . . . he just—

JASON: Does he like Rod?

ALEXIS: He probably doesn’t even remember that it’s Rod. I mean, you’ll be playing something; example: the other day “Sharp Dressed Man” comes on?

JASON: *(Singing.)* “The girls they go crazy ‘bout a sharp dressed”—

ALEXIS: He didn’t even get that it was ZZ Top. Totally didn’t remember.

JASON: Well, you know, he’s—

ALEXIS: Oh, yeah, I know. It’s not that.

JASON: No.

ALEXIS: He’s . . . he’s . . . I mean, the master’s thesis and all. Up to his

JASON: That’s all it is.

ALEXIS: Sure. Totally.

JASON: So—

ALEXIS: Okay, second left here. It’s just . . . singing along and all.

JASON: I know.

ALEXIS: Remembering who did what. Groups and—

JASON: No, listen, you don’t have to explain—

ALEXIS: I mean, I love him and all, it’s not—

JASON: Of course not.

ALEXIS: This is fun.

JASON: Sure.

(A pause.)

ALEXIS: Listen, I gotta thank you.

JASON: Oh, that was noth—

ALEXIS: I mean standing up for me. To Rita and all.

JASON: No problem.

(Joke.)

I'd do the same for someone I liked.

ALEXIS: *(Playfully smacking him.)* You.

JASON: I figure, we temps gotta stick together.

ALEXIS: Oh, totally.

JASON: I mean, Rita. What can you say?

ALEXIS: I am *so* trying.

JASON: Well, I mean, what can you—?

ALEXIS: I am *so* making an effort to—

JASON: She's just—

ALEXIS: You know she clocks bathroom breaks? I am totally not kidding. And then she's all "you were seven minutes this morning, and twelve"—

JASON: You're kidding.

ALEXIS: Not even.

JASON: You have got to be—

ALEXIS: So I told her. Straight out. "It's my period." Right to her face.

JASON: That's great!

ALEXIS: I mean, what's that about? I mean, a stop watch? Hello!

JASON: I don't even blame—

ALEXIS: Anyway. It's the green—

JASON: With the porch?

ALEXIS: Hey. Thanks.

JASON: Any time.

(He stops driving. They sit together in companionable silence. He sings.)

"If you love my body, and you think I'm sexy"

ALEXIS: You are such a —!

JASON: "If you think you need me"

(He starts coughing.)

ALEXIS: Jason? Are you okay?

JASON: It hurts my throat to even try it.

ALEXIS: I'm sorry.

JASON: It's okay.

ALEXIS: How did he do that?

JASON: Like, ten packs of cigarettes a day.

ALEXIS: Really?

JASON: That's what I heard.

ALEXIS: Wow.

(Another companionable pause.)

This is just so great of you.

JASON: Really, it's on my way. Besides, I enjoy it. Like I said.

ALEXIS: What?

JASON: We temps gotta stick together.

(BLACKOUT)

SCENE TWO

(ALEXIS and JASON in the car.)

ALEXIS: . . . And I just feel terrible about it. I really do. But what are we gonna do?

JASON: No, it's a real dilemma.

ALEXIS: We were just not making it. You know? Steve's got that lab assistant job . . . but. Rent the first of the month. Groceries.

JASON: Totally.

ALEXIS: And so. You know? Just like we said we'd never do. Put the kids in day care, and there I am.

JASON: Do you have good—

ALEXIS: Pretty good I think.

JASON: Child care can be such a—

ALEXIS: This lady from the ward. She's got like nine in there, and it's pretty small, but she seems to do okay. She has activities and stuff.

JASON: That's good.

ALEXIS: But.

JASON: Oh sure. I'm sure it can be such an emotional thin—

ALEXIS: You have no idea. I mean, little Bryony: "don't go, Mommy." Clingy. I'm in tears before I get out the door.

JASON: That must be hard.

ALEXIS: You have no idea. You have no idea.

JASON: Where are they. . . ?

ALEXIS: She's still there, I really gotta go, I said five and it's already—

JASON: I understand.

ALEXIS: What time is it now, five of?

JASON: Seven of.

ALEXIS: I really gotta go.

(Pause.)

And then Rita. Rita!

JASON: Seriously, she's—

ALEXIS: Driving me—

JASON: She's psychotic, I'm serious.

ALEXIS: Totally.

JASON: Some of the things she does—

ALEXIS: Oh, like the supplies cabinet?

JASON: Did you get that too?

ALEXIS: Hello? Like I want to steal your precious, whatever, paper clips?

JASON: I'm just sure!

ALEXIS: Used toner. And, like, white-out! From 1978. Who uses white-out?

JASON: There's just this fundamental—

ALEXIS: And paper, okay, I can see paper, but why do we need twenty five colors?

JASON: Just this fundamental lack—

ALEXIS: But she won't buy three hole punch, no, you have to use the puncher thing and then if you get those little paper dots on the floor she just—

JASON: Fundamental lack of trus—

ALEXIS: Those beady eyes.

JASON: She's even scary looking.

ALEXIS: She is.

JASON: Women who shave their eyebrows and then paint them back in, what's that abo—?

ALEXIS: (*Crowing.*) Oh, that is so true! She does that, she really—

JASON: I swear. Psycho lady.

ALEXIS: You're so right. You're so right.

(*Pause.*)

JASON: But it helps to have friends.

ALEXIS: (*She smiles at him warmly. He takes her hand, gives it a little squeeze.*) So true.

SCENE THREE

(*JASON and ALEXIS.*)

ALEXIS: Okay, so, we're temps. I mean, that's true, we're temps.

JASON: Well, yeah, but—

ALEXIS: But that doesn't mean . . . she doesn't have to treat us like . . . we're nothing. You know.

JASON: I totally know what you're saying.

ALEXIS: Listen. Jason. Could you . . . people in the neighborhood start coming home about now. If you could pull your car . . . if you could, like, park. . . .

JASON: Seriously?

ALEXIS: I would just hate. . . . you know next thing you know the Relief Society President's coming over 'expressing concern.'

JASON: Maybe under those trees.

ALEXIS: That'd be great.

JASON: Are you sure? I thought you had to get your—

ALEXIS: Oh, it's okay if they stay with the sitter a few more minutes.

JASON: Are you sure?

ALEXIS: I didn't say any definite time, just before six.

JASON: Okay. I don't think they can see us from here.

ALEXIS: Thanks. It's just so good to, you know, have a friend to talk to.

JASON: I understand.

ALEXIS: Steve . . . I mean, Steve's great. And all that. But—

JASON: I understand. It's okay. We're friends.

ALEXIS: Okay.

(A companionable silence.)

JASON: So. Anyway.

ALEXIS: I know what I was going to ask you. Do you get how to do those invoices?

JASON: Which ones, the SS-9 whatever's?

ALEXIS: Yeah, I read the memo, but I was totally baffled.

JASON: Oh, yeah, it's not that big a deal. They just want us to cross-file 'em with the accounts receivables.

ALEXIS: How do I . . . oh you mean on the compu—?

JASON: Yeah, just get into the main frame and follow those steps. It's pretty easy.

ALEXIS: See, that's the thing. Just because we're temps—

JASON: *(Nodding.)* Totally.

ALEXIS: . . . doesn't mean we don't want to do a good job.

JASON: That's absolutely right.

FOUR MORE PAGES TO THE END