

~ *Playwrights' Perspective* ~
a preface by John Kuntz

When I was a kid, I used to get up very early every Saturday morning, pour a big bowl of Alpha-bits or Sugar Smacks, and watch cartoons.

Scooby Doo.

Bugs Bunny.

I am one of those adults who can spontaneously begin singing the Preamble from the United States Constitution, thanks to *School House Rock*.

When I was a bit older, maybe 10 or so, a little girl I knew from my class died right in front of me. She was running to catch the school bus with us and tripped over the sprinkler on her lawn.

She fell.

And she didn't get back up.

Her heart had stopped.

It could have happened at any time, we were told.

And still later, as a teen-ager, I listened to *The Cure* and *The Smiths*. I wore a lot of black clothes and eye-liner. My hair seemed to defy gravity. And I discovered that while I liked girls, I felt that boys were, somehow, cuter.

And a few years after that a man down our street shot his whole family and then himself.

But there was also the amusement park in the summer. And the water slide.

Lobsters and fried clams.

And *Star Wars*.

And celery.

And then I became an adult, of sorts, and a lot of wonderful things happened.

And scary things.

And infinitely sad things.

As they do.

And this play is about all that.

Some of the events in the play really happened.

But most of them didn't.

I made them up.

But even the most elaborate invention came from something true, somehow.

And these lies helped me find the truth, somehow, for this lonely man.

Quint.

Who I named after a ghost from a Henry James story.

I began thinking of *The Salt Girl* about five years ago, and mentioned it to Kate Snodgrass while we sat in an airport together.

She said “I want to produce that play, but you have to write it first.”
And now here we are.

It is rare to meet someone who believes in you like that.
I thank Kate from the bottom of my heart.

As a final(ish) draft began to emerge over a year and a half ago, I knew that I wanted David to direct it and design it. We had just finished working together on *Titus Andronicus*, where he had cast me, improbably, as a bald-headed, very masculine Queen Tamora. It was one of my favorite experiences. Ever.

I knew David would translate this play like no one else.
We are both about the same age.
We both like cereal.
We are both gay as wind chimes.

David deeply understands what is funny.
And what is not.
He is a great artist and a great friend.

I want to thank Adam Stone as well, who created the amazing video landscape and sound.
And Jeff Adelberg, who lit this world.
And the stage managers, Adele Traub and Nikki DiLoreto.

I'd like to thank you, as well, for being here.

I tried to write a play that I would want to see if I were in the audience:

I like to be surprised.

I like to be disturbed.

I like to laugh.

I like to cry while I laugh.

And vice versa.

And I like candy.

John Kuntz