

OIL PANDANGO

by

Matthew S. Hinton

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

*MARLA, daughter, in her late teens**CAROL, her mother**THE MODEL ROCKETS, a garage band made up of three zombies who play instruments*

SETTING

A garage attached to a house. Inside are stacks of cardboard boxes, an abandoned bicycle, a standing toolbox, parts & widgets of various unknown origins, a rug, etc. A tennis ball dangles from the ceiling by a string, presumably used for accurate parking. A standard door somewhere upstage leads to the house, but characters may enter/exit via the main garage door as well.

*Note on the music: The lyrics in this play were written while listening to the likes of legendary songbirds Joan Jett and Patti Smith. As such, it is recommended that the director, the band, and the actress playing MARLA listen to the albums “I Love Rock and Roll” and “Horses”.

**Note on the THE MODEL ROCKETS: The members of the band have no lines, except to repeat the word “time” in unison whenever it is said by the other characters.

Lights up – the figures of a person at a simple drum kit, one with an electric bass, one with an electric guitar, and MARLA, are all in silhouette at rise. They are tuning instruments and checking their gear. They are all a bit grungy, in torn jeans and wearing t-shirts advertising bands you never knew existed. The MODEL ROCKETS wear sunglasses and never talk or show discernable facial expressions. Drums begin rolling, and a light grows on MARLA, poised before the only microphone & stand.

MARLA: *(in a trance-like song opening)*

HE WAS A BANK-ROBBER WITH RAKISH HAIR AND A FIVE-DAY OLD BEARD

THEY PARKED ON THE TRACKS

SOLD SALMON LOUSY WITH TUMORS UNDER THE SHADOW OF A NUCLEAR CHIMNEY

THEY TIED UP PINE TREES IN ROADSIDE LOTS CRUSTED WITH SLUSH

AND SAT ON THE HOOD

WATCHING HIS FATHER

WATCHING THE CENTERFOLD

WAITING FOR SECRETS

AND THE CHANCE FOR BLACKMAIL
...HE WAS BORN OF THE GODS OF CONFLICT
AND SHE WAS JUST ANOTHER HEARTBREAKER-
ONE-TWO-THREE-FOUR!!!

(The band roils to life and MARLA is at the helm. Before she can start singing, CAROL enters in pj's and bathrobe, straining to be heard above the cacophony.)

CAROL: WHOA-WHOA-WHOA-WHOA!

(As many "whoa's" as it takes for the band to stop, and then a few more)

What in the *fuck* is this all about?!

MARLA: Hi Carol. This is practice.

CAROL: I am your mother. So that's what you call me, okay? That, or mom.

MARLA: Or Madre.

CAROL: Okay-

MARLA: Or Mumsy!

CAROL: -Well...-

MARLA: Or materfamilias.

CAROL: -Definitely not, please-

MARLA: (*into microphone, deep voice*) Oooh, mama.

CAROL: -Enough! You know that I don't sleep well. So, whatever you are doing, it's too late. Or too early. Or whatever.

MARLA: It's never a good time.

THE MODEL ROCKETS: "TIME."

Well, we have to practice.

CAROL: You are not in a band.

MARLA: The boys behind me with the pickups and sexy licks say otherwise.

CAROL: Since when are you in a band?

MARLA: (*checking a watch that doesn't exist*) Since ... five minutes ago.

CAROL: So you're not in a band.

MARLA: We're new, but we're old. Especially these guys.

CAROL: I don't ever remember you being in any band. Of any kind. Not a marching band, not a jazz band, especially not a garage band.

MARLA: I don't ever remember you ever remembering anything that I like to do, especially lately. So who are you going to believe: me, or that sleepy brain of yours?

CAROL: Okay, smart-alice, name the bands you've been in.

MARLA: Well, first we were MARLA AND THE AL / IANS.

CAROL: Two first names?

MARLA: You got it, mama. Then we were MARLA AND THE MISSING BROTHERS for about a cuppa coffee, but that seemed a little on the nose.

CAROL: Yeah, I don't like that one.

MARLA: After that we were MARLA AND THE TIME BANDITS ("time"), but it was too Gilliam, and there was the problem of that pesky echo.

CAROL: -ooh, "PESKY ECHO" is a good name-

MARLA: THEN we were MARLA AND THE MURDER KINGS, then we became BITCH EMPORIUM, and then we were just called LATE PERIOD.

CAROL: I hate that. I hate that name. Why would you name your band something so, so ... menstrual?

MARLA: It meant, like, our "late period" of creation. Of our artistry. Anyway, now we're a new band.

CAROL: That doesn't make any sense.

MARLA: We've been together for some time now-

THE MODEL ROCKETS: "TIME."

MARLA: -But whenever a band changes its name, it becomes a new band. Hence, ergo, and so-you-see, I have only been in this band for a short while now. And let me tell you, we need the practice.

CAROL: Doesn't matter. I hate all those names.

MARLA: Doesn't matter, 'cause those aren't our names anymore.

CAROL: So what do you call yourselves now?

MARLA: We now call ourselves MARLA AND THE MODEL ROCKETS.

CAROL: Hm.

MARLA: What, "hm."?

CAROL: Too ... phallic ...

MARLA: Oh Christ, Carol.

CAROL: Mom. To *you*, I am *mom*.

MARLA: And to *you*, we are MARLA AND THE MODEL ROCKETS! ONE-TWO-THREE-FOUR!

(The song starts as before, but is quickly stopped by CAROL)

MARLA: What? What is it?! You don't like music? It's the cosmic dance.

CAROL: Who are these men?

MARLA: The Model Rockets.

CAROL: Who are these "Model Rockets"? I've never seen them before.

MARLA: That doesn't surprise me.

CAROL: They are awfully dirty.

MARLA: Well, yeah.

CAROL: Filthy, even.

MARLA: (*smiling*) Yeah.

CAROL: Grungy.

MARLA: You said it.

CAROL: Who are they?

MARLA: The Model-

CAROL: -ROCKETS, yes, I know! (*To the band*) Who are you? Who are your mothers? Do they know you're here in your dirty clothes? I can do a load of laundry if you have anything you want me to wash. Those doo-rags look awfully dusty. Anyone need a drink? Water? Juice? I think we have some 2% left in the fridge-

MARLA: Carol!

CAROL: Marla!

MARLA: They don't talk, mama.

CAROL: Oh. Usually it's a good thing, when a man shuts up. Three quiet men – now that's music to my ears.

MARLA: 'Cept for saying "time".

THE MODEL ROCKETS: "TIME."

CAROL: Oh. That's a less good thing.

MARLA: They're the band. They back me up.

CAROL: I get that. I know how bands work. I was young once too. But time makes fools of us all.

THE MODEL ROCKETS: "TIME."

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