

THE BACKYARD STONEHENGE INCIDENT

by Jacquelyn Priskorn

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CHARACTERS

TJ *Kendra's spouse*

KENDRA *TJ's wife*

MRS. FERRIA *TJ and Kendra's somewhat intimidating neighbor*

JUDE *Mrs. Ferria's younger relative/caretaker*

SETTING

The suburban back yard of TJ and Kendra

SYNOPSIS

TJ has stolen Mrs. Ferria's landscaping stones to create a magical "Stonehenge" in the backyard to surprise Kendra. This "Stonehenge" is an apology for ruining their trip to the real Stonehenge. Mrs. Ferria just wants things to stay the same, in her yard and her life. But the stress of caring for an aging relative is getting to be too much for Jude. These "magic" stones will bring out truth, love and hopefully some understanding.

This is an original and unpublished play by Jacquelyn Priskorn.

Jacquelyn Priskorn has been writing plays since she took her first class with playwright Kitty Dubin in 1997. She is now a member of The Dramatists Guild and has had several plays and screenplays produced and published since that first class, including the movie **Love & Plutonium**, which is currently available on Amazon. As an actor and member of Actor's Equity, Ms. Priskorn began writing, mostly to create roles for anyone and everyone.
<https://www.jacquiefloyd.com/writing>

1. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

TJ enters with a bucket full of stones and proceeds to set up a stone circle in the middle of the stage. TJ mutters quietly as they work, proud of the artistry. Kendra enters.

KENDRA

What are you doing?

TJ

Kendra! You scared me!

KENDRA

Sorry. But seriously, TJ, what are you doing?

TJ

I wanted this to be a surprise.

KENDRA

Oh, I'm surprised.

TJ

Really?

KENDRA

You're in our backyard, in the middle of the night, putting...are those Mrs. Ferria's landscaping stones? You're putting stones in a circle in our yard. That's pretty surprising, yeah.

TJ

I didn't think you were coming home for another hour.

KENDRA

No one was coming to the bar, so we closed up early.

TJ

Oh.

KENDRA

Sorry.

2. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

TJ

What? Why are you sorry?

KENDRA

I don't know. It's just weird to talk about the bar after-

TJ

Hey, it's your job. You should be able to talk about your job around me.

KENDRA

I guess.

TJ

It's fine.

KENDRA

It still feels weird.

TJ

Okay.

KENDRA

Sorry.

TJ

I'm fine.

KENDRA

Are you?

TJ

Totally!

KENDRA

Then what are you doing out here?

TJ

Again, this was supposed to be a surprise.

KENDRA

Again, I am definitely surprised.

3. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

TJ

Yeah, but I wanted to surprise you tomorrow.

KENDRA

What's the difference?

TJ

Well, first, it's not finished...

KENDRA

So, what are you doing? Maybe I can help?

TJ

I'm making us a Stonehenge.

KENDRA

A what?

TJ

Stonehenge. We were supposed to be there tomorrow.

KENDRA

Oh.

TJ

And it's my fault we're not.

KENDRA

Don't--

TJ

It is. It's okay to say it.

KENDRA

I don't want to say it.

TJ

Okay.

A pause.

TJ

Anyway, I wanted to...well, maybe bring Stonehenge to us.

4. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

KENDRA

By stealing the neighbor's landscape rocks?

TJ

Not stealing. Borrowing.

KENDRA

Did you ASK to borrow them?

TJ

No. Mrs. Ferria is scary. Why do you think I'm doing this at night?

KENDRA

Okay. Well, I'm going to go inside, get something to eat and get ready for bed.

TJ

You don't like it.

KENDRA

No. I don't like that we had to cancel our trip to England because you got a DUI and have to go to court. And--

TJ

There it is.

KENDRA

What? You've been poking at me and poking at me to yell at you about this! Well, here you go, TJ! I'm yelling at you! Are you happy?

TJ

No.

KENDRA

Well, neither am I!

TJ

I know.

KENDRA

I've been trying so hard, TJ--

5. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

TJ

Well, you shouldn't have to.

KENDRA

You're right. I shouldn't. But here we are.

TJ

I'm trying, too, Kendra.

KENDRA

A bucket of stolen rocks isn't going to cut it.

TJ

Wow.

KENDRA

Yeah. Wow.

TJ

No. Go ahead. Let it all out.

KENDRA

I don't want to, though, TJ! I don't want to let anything out! I don't want to yell at you. I don't want to cry about missing our trip because you have a court date for being an idiot! I just want...I want things to be normal. That's all.

TJ

What's normal?

KENDRA

I don't know! Whatever life was before you got arrested.

TJ laughs.

TJ

That wasn't normal.

KENDRA

Well, we were happy.

6. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

TJ

Were we?

KENDRA

We weren't?

TJ

Okay, I won't speak for you, but I'm pretty sure I wasn't happy.

KENDRA

With me?

TJ

No! God, no, Kendra! I love you. I love you so much. I just...what kind of happy person drinks six beers and three G & Ts every night?

KENDRA

The kind of person who likes to hang out with their wife while she worked at the bar every night?

TJ

I mean, sure...But, I didn't HAVE to drink ALL of that EVERY night.

KENDRA

So it's my fault?

TJ

I'm not saying that.

KENDRA

Then what are you saying? Should I quit my job?

TJ

No. I don't know. But that isn't...We're not...I'm not blaming you or your discount drinks and heavy pours.

KENDRA

But you weren't happy.

TJ

No. I don't think I was.

7. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

KENDRA

Why? We have a good marriage. You have a good job.

TJ

I have a job. I wouldn't say it's good. But it's good I have a job, I guess.

KENDRA

Well, it's not supposed to be fun. That's why it's called "work."

TJ

I get that.

KENDRA

TJ. What is happening? To us?

TJ

I don't know. But I'm here to put in the work.

KENDRA

Wow. Is that something you got from Dr. Glass?

TJ

Yeah. She says that a lot. "TJ, you've got to be willing to put in the work."

KENDRA

Damn. That sounds exhausting.

TJ laughs.

TJ

Kinda. Yeah.

KENDRA

Was this backyard Stonehenge Dr. Glass's idea?

TJ

Not really. She inspired it, I guess, in our last session. But she didn't say, "Go steal your neighbor's rocks and make a circle in your back yard.."

KENDRA

I was really looking forward to seeing Stonehenge.

8. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

TJ

I know. So was I.

KENDRA

They say it looks smaller in person.

TJ

Probably not this small, though.

KENDRA

Probably.

TJ

We'll get there.

KENDRA

Yeah. I know.

Kendra takes a rock from the bucket and places it on the ground, continuing the circle TJ started. TJ smiles and helps her complete the circle. They finish the task in silence, but enjoy working together.

KENDRA

I'll look for another job if it's going to be a trigger for you.

TJ

I heard if you stand in the middle of Stonehenge, in the dark of night, and kiss your true love, you can travel through space and time.

KENDRA

No way. I read everything there is about Stonehenge and I never saw that one.

TJ

Oh, you read everything about the OLD Stonehenge. This only works at the NEW Stonehenge.

KENDRA

You mean, this one right here?

9. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

TJ

Whoa! Check it out! It's THE Backyard Stonehenge! I have heard so much about this place!

KENDRA

Should we try it out?

TJ

You mean...the...kissing and travel through space and time thing?

Kendra nods and takes TJ's hand, leading them into the center of the circle. They look at each other, really taking in the moment, as well as everything they've been through together. Kendra takes TJ's face in her hands, gently pulling in for a kiss. It is sweet, romantic and almost cathartic. Suddenly a light shines on them. It's almost magical. Ethereal. Then, the offstage voice of Mrs. Ferria booms out, freezing them in place.

MRS. FERRIA (OFF STAGE)

Hey! Are those my landscaping stones?!

TJ & KENDRA

Sorry, Mrs. Ferria.

LIGHTS FADE OUT.

LIGHTS UP. It is the next morning.

MRS. FERRIA, an older woman, comfortably dressed, enters. She sees a circle of stones in the middle of the stage and is irritated.

MRS. FERRIA

Why am I not surprised?

She picks up a stone with some effort and carries it off stage. She returns again to retrieve another stone, struggling and grumbling as she carries it off stage. Mrs. Ferria makes her way back on stage as we hear JUDE following behind her.

10. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

JUDE

Aunt Faye, what are you doing?

MRS. FERRIA

What does it look like?

JUDE

It looks like you're stealing rocks from the neighbor's yard.

MRS. FERRIA

That's where you're wrong, Jude! I'm taking back MY rocks!

JUDE

What? You're not making sense.

MRS. FERRIA

I'm making perfect sense. You're just not understanding.

JUDE

Will you stop with the rocks?

MRS. FERRIA

Well, they're not going to walk themselves back into my yard, are they?

JUDE

Why are they even in the neighbor's yard?

MRS. FERRIA

They stole them from me!

JUDE

You're kidding? Why would they steal your rocks?

MRS. FERRIA

Who knows why criminals do crimes? And they are definitely criminals!

JUDE

How do you know this? Don't pick up that rock!

Mrs. Ferria looks at Jude as if to say, "This is all the evidence you need."

11. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

MRS. FERRIA

I caught them red-handed last night. And they promised they would return them to my yard first thing in the morning. Well, here it is, first thing in the morning and my rocks are still here.

JUDE

Aunt Faye, it's 6:30 a.m. Not everyone starts the day as early as you.

MRS. FERRIA

The morning starts when the morning starts. They said, "First thing in the morning." It's morning. They lied. Now, either help me retrieve my stolen property or get out of the way.

JUDE

You shouldn't be lifting these rocks.

MRS. FERRIA

No, I shouldn't. But here we are.

JUDE

Does this have to be done right now?

MRS. FERRIA

It's the principle of the matter, Jude. They looked me right in the eye and said, "First thing in the morning, Mrs. Ferria. You'll have them back. I promise." They greater fool, I, for believing them. Criminals.

JUDE

If they're really criminals, maybe we shouldn't be standing here arguing in their back yard before seven in the morning.

MRS. FERRIA

Oh, they don't scare me.

JUDE

Still, shouldn't we just go--

MRS. FERRIA

No! I want them to see me back here! You hear that, TJ? Kendra? Are you happy you're making an old woman haul her own landscaping stones back home?

12. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

JUDE

Aunt Faye!

MRS. FERRIA

Oh, please, Jude! What are you so embarrassed for? This is justice!

JUDE

Look, I'm here to take you to your doctor's appointment. Can we just go and deal with this later?

MRS. FERRIA

Oh, that old man can wait to see me. He makes me wait enough as it is. Justice!

JUDE

Should I call-- Would you stop picking up those rocks!?

MRS. FERRIA

Either help me or move.

JUDE

That's why I'm here, Aunt Faye. I'm here to help you.

MRS. FERRIA

Clearly.

JUDE

Stop. Stop!

MRS. FERRIA

Jude. It's not even 7 a.m. You're making a scene.

JUDE

I'm--?! You've got to be kidding me.

MRS. FERRIA

This is a quiet neighborhood, Jude.

JUDE

See, I can't do this anymore.

13. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

MRS. FERRIA

If they're too heavy, I'm sure there's a wheelbarrow around here somewhere.

JUDE

Not the stupid rocks! C'mon, Aunt Faye! It's always something! But it's never your fault. It's everyone else.

MRS. FERRIA

What are you going on about, Jude?

JUDE

Aunt Faye, I don't mind running errands for you. I don't mind getting up stupid early to take you to your doctor appointments. You don't have anyone else. I get it. But honestly, Aunt Faye, you know I can't do this forever. You know it.

MRS. FERRIA

Jude, Jude! Why are you so upset?

JUDE

Because, I've tried to talk to you about this. So many times. But you always--

MRS. FERRIA

I "always?" I always what?

JUDE

Do something like this.

MRS. FERRIA

Were you not listening before? My *neighbors* did this. Kendra and TJ stole my stones. I'm just--

JUDE

You're just the neighborhood justice patrol. There's always someone doing you wrong! Last week it was the neighbor across the street who parked on your lawn.

MRS. FERRIA

If I'm too much of a burden for you, that's fine. I'll figure things out without you.

JUDE

No! That's not what I'm saying! Where are you going?

14. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

MRS. FERRIA

To get that wheelbarrow so I can finish moving these stones back.

JUDE

Stop. I'll get it. Geez.

Jude exits to retrieve the wheelbarrow. Mrs. Ferria smiles a little, seeing she is getting her way. Jude returns with the wheelbarrow and begins to load the remaining stones.

JUDE

Aunt Faye, I'm just saying, you push everyone away. And...And I worry about you being here. Alone all of the time. No friends.

MRS. FERRIA

I have friends.

JUDE

I don't count.

MRS. FERRIA

There's--

JUDE

And Doctor Atell doesn't count, either.

MRS. FERRIA

Why? What did he tell you? That smug, old--

JUDE

Aunt Faye, you need more help than I can give you alone. Did you even look at that senior community website I sent you?

MRS. FERRIA

That's for old people.

Jude looks at Mrs. Ferria, incredulous.

MRS. FERRIA

That's where old people go to be forgotten. Don't just toss those stones in there like they're trash. What if you break one?

15. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

JUDE

They're stone.

MRS. FERRIA

Do you know how much I paid for those stones?

JUDE

If you move to the village, it won't matter!

MRS. FERRIA

But it does matter! It has to matter! Or I don't matter.

JUDE

Aunt Faye. Is that what you think?

MRS. FERRIA

That's what you think.

JUDE

That is absolutely NOT what I think. You matter, Aunt Faye. You do.

MRS. FERRIA

Then why do you want to throw me out of my own house and in to that...old people zoo?

JUDE

"Old people zoo?"

MRS. FERRIA

People staring at you all day and all night? "Did you eat, Mrs. Ferria?" "Did you poop, Mrs. Ferria?" No, thank you!

JUDE

Ok, so you *didn't* look at the website I sent.

MRS. FERRIA

I don't click strange links.

JUDE

But *I* sent it to you!

16. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

MRS. FERRIA

How do I know that for sure?

JUDE

Okay, look...Let me get these stones back in your yard, we'll go see Doctor Atell, get some breakfast and then maybe we can go look at the village in person?

MRS. FERRIA

So you can dump me there?

JUDE

No! Why would I do all this manual labor for you here, just to dump you someplace else?

MRS. FERRIA

To help sell my house from under me. Those stones really up the curb appeal.

JUDE

I'm sure they do. You really have an eye for that kind of thing.

MRS. FERRIA

I do.

JUDE

You know all I want to do is help you.

MRS. FERRIA

I do.

JUDE

And it kills me that I can't always be there to help right when you need me.

MRS. FERRIA

I don't mind waiting for you, Jude. I understand you have a busy life outside of my stupid life.

JUDE

Your life isn't stupid. You matter. This is how I can show you how much you matter. Please let me show you.

MRS. FERRIA

Okay.

17. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

JUDE

Okay?

MRS. FERRIA

Yes, okay. I can see how important this is to you.

JUDE

How important YOU are to me.

MRS. FERRIA

Don't have to lay it on that thick, kid.

JUDE

Thank you, Aunt Faye. And seriously, you don't need to make any decisions now. I just want you to see you have options.

MRS. FERRIA

Fine. Fine.

JUDE

Okay. I'll get the rest of these back in your yard and then we have to hurry to the doctor's office. We're going to be late.

MRS. FERRIA

Bah! Let that smug, old Doctor Atell wait for me for a change.

JUDE

I think they charge you \$25 for a missed appointment.

MRS. FERRIA

What's taking you so long? Push those rocks! Go!

Jude laughs, exiting with the full wheelbarrow. Before Mrs. Ferria can follow, TJ enters, yawning. Upon seeing Mrs. Ferria, TJ freezes in terror. Mrs. Ferria simply shakes her head disdainfully at TJ before following Jude off stage.

18. The Backyard Stonehenge Incident

TJ

(Calling off)

Kendra? Did you move the Stonehenge back to Mrs. Ferria's yard?

KENDRA

(Off stage)

What? No! I just woke up!

TJ

Well, someone moved them back already.

KENDRA

Good. Then we can go back to sleep.

TJ thinks a moment.

TJ

Cool.

TJ exits.

End of play.