

Everything Is Not Enough

By

SANDRA FENICHEL ASHER



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our Web site: www.dramaticpublishing.com, or we may be contacted by mail at: DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, P.O. Box 129, Woodstock IL 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.

For performance of any songs, music and recordings mentioned in this play which are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain substituted.

©MMVI by
SANDRA FENICHEL ASHER
Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved
(EVERYTHING IS NOT ENOUGH)

ISBN: 1-58342-342-7

For John D. Newman
courageous champion of students, teachers, playwrights
and new plays

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the Play *must* give credit to the Author of the Play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the Play and in all instances in which the title of the Play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the Play and/or a production. The name of the Author *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent (50%) the size of the title type. Biographical information on the Author, if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY of Woodstock, Illinois”

EVERYTHING IS NOT ENOUGH was developed in Salt Lake City, Utah, with the assistance of Highland High School and West High School faculty and students through a rehearsed reading in the winter of 2004 and a workshop at the national conference of the American Alliance for Theatre and Education in the summer of 2004.

The world premiere was presented at Highland High School on September 10–13, 2004, as part of the 21st Century Play Festival, sponsored by the Kennedy Center Imagination Celebration of Salt Lake City. It was directed by John D. Newman and featured the following cast and crew:

RADIO ANNOUNCER Aubrey Hostetter
MICHAEL PAEGLIS Colin Crebs
BUDDY Luke Leclair-Marzolf
STATE TROOPER Tyler Follett
POP Mr. Kevin Smith
INTERVIEWERS 1, 3 Janeice Murray
INTERVIEWERS 2, 4 Amber Allred
INTERVIEWER 5 Tatiana Garcia
MR. MacELROY Mr. John D. Newman
LINDA Jessie Mulvey
PETE Dan Hansen
TRACI Breanne Hoskisson
RUNNING CREW/UNDERSTUDIES Lexi Brazier,
Meggan Campbell, Joey Marengo, Arian Mohajer
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE Mr. John Caldwell,
Ms. Ramona Crebs, Mr. Robert Curry, Mr. Paul Cutrer,
Ms. Sue Tice

Theme song written and performed by Chad Cannon.

Playwrights note: For more information about date abuse, please see www.loveisnotabuse.com. The “Just for Teens” information is particularly recommended.

EVERYTHING IS NOT ENOUGH

A Full-length Play
For 5m., 2w., 6m. or w.

CHARACTERS

MICHAEL PAEGLIS (Pie AY gleez) . . . 17, slender build,
restless, kindhearted

BUDDY his friend, 17, funny, easy-going, relaxed

STATE TROOPER

POP . . Michael's father, early 50s, immigrated from Latvia
as a teenager, slight accent

INTERVIEWERS – 5 (may be played by one person or as
amplified offstage voices)

MR. MacELROY (MAC uhl roy) . . . Michael's boss, mid-
dle-aged, high-energy, upbeat

LINDA a co-worker, 19, beautiful, tough, reserved

PETE . . . a co-worker, 19, former high-school quarterback,
angry and abusive

TRACI . . Pete's girlfriend, 18, pretty, timid, devoted to Pete

NOTE: State Trooper and Interviewers may be played by
any combination of the actors playing characters other than
Michael, for a total cast of 5m, 2w.

TIME: The present, the summer before Michael's senior
year.

PLACE: Braden's Port, a resort town on the Jersey Shore.
Scenes from Michael's 17th summer—in his car, in his liv-

ing room, in and around a restaurant, at the beach, and at an ice cream parlor—are played with minimal sets and props, including several chairs, one or two tables and a freestanding, working door. Scene changes should be kept as simple and brief as possible and mostly indicated by music and lighting.

PLAYING TIME: About 80 minutes. Intermission is optional.

EVERYTHING IS NOT ENOUGH

Scene 1

TIME and PLACE: *Saturday evening, early summer. MICHAEL's car, indicated by two chairs facing the audience, on a road and highway in and around the resort town of Braden's Port, New Jersey.*

BEFORE RISE: *ROCK MUSIC is heard playing loudly on MICHAEL's car radio.*

AT RISE: *MICHAEL and BUDDY, lifelong friends who have just finished their junior year of high school, sit in the "front seat" of MICHAEL's car. MICHAEL is driving, headed nowhere in particular, looking glum. BUDDY sings along with the radio or lip-syncs, pretending to perform the song. As soon as it ends, he turns volume way down.*

BUDDY (*sighing happily*). Another Saturday night in Braden's Port! What could be finer?

MICHAEL (*less than enthusiastic*). What, indeed?

BUDDY (*looks suspiciously at MICHAEL*). Something wrong with another Saturday night in Braden's Port? Recently voted "Best Beach on the Jersey Shore" by none other than the loyal listeners of WBPJ?

MICHAEL. No. (*A pause, then—*) Yes.

BUDDY. Maybe? All of the above? None of the above?

Finals are over, Paeglis. Summer vacation is not a multiple-choice question.

MICHAEL. I know. It's just— (*He pauses, unable to find the words.*)

BUDDY. What?

MICHAEL (*a beat, then—*). When you've seen one Saturday night in Braden's Port, you've seen them all.

BUDDY. Meaning?

MICHAEL. Meaning first we cruise around town or take in a movie. Then we go to Sweet Polly's for a hot-fudge sundae. Then we cruise around town some more and stop at somebody's house to see what's up.

BUDDY (*all for it*). Yeah! I wonder what's up?

MICHAEL. What's up is a bunch of guys sitting around talking about baseball and girls. Couple of girls show up and haul off a couple of guys. Somebody gets drunk and loud. Somebody else gets drunk and throws up. The rest of us send out for pizza.

BUDDY. Sounds good to me.

MICHAEL. Everything sounds good to you, Buddy.

BUDDY. Not everything—*this*. *This* sounds good. Well, maybe not the barfing, but the rest of it. Since when is contentment a crime? (*MICHAEL hits the accelerator hard. BUDDY's head is jolted back with the thrust.*)

Hey, what's your hurry? (*MICHAEL ignores him, glares straight ahead.*) What're we doing on the highway? (*Still no answer.*) Michael! Where are you going?

MICHAEL (*without letting up on the intensity of his driving*). Nowhere. Same as always.

BUDDY. What's eating you, Paeglis? It's *June*, man. Haven't you noticed?

MICHAEL. Look: We've been coming to Braden's Port with our folks every summer since we were kids, right?

BUDDY. Yup! Great life if you can get it, and *we* got it!

MICHAEL. But it *never changes*. *We* never change.

BUDDY. We didn't cruise when we were seven. We didn't even send out for our own pizza.

MICHAEL. Buddy, if you want me to explain what's bothering me, you're going to have to listen for more than five seconds at a time without cracking a joke.

BUDDY. Sorry. Force of habit. But my point remains: Things *have* changed, and they're still changing. For the *better*. We're going to be *seniors* in the fall, man. We're going to *college*. And *then*—

MICHAEL. And then it's more of the same. We major in business. We work with our families. We end up living their lives all over again. Winters in the suburbs, summers at the beach. How did we get locked in this way?

BUDDY (*amazed that this scenario bothers MICHAEL*). Don't you mean "How did we get so *lucky*?"

MICHAEL. I don't feel lucky. I feel like my life's closing in on me. Don't you ever wish you could—oh, I don't know—go out and—seek your fortune?

BUDDY. Slaughter dragons, you mean? Rescue damsels in distress? Is that what you're after?

MICHAEL. Something like that.

BUDDY. You read too much, Paeglis. Check out reality. You've got it so good, you don't know how good you've got it. (*MICHAEL shakes his head ruefully. BUDDY goes to turn up RADIO MUSIC but notices a SIREN in the distance. He swivels his head and listens as it grows louder. MICHAEL is lost in thought.*) Paeglis? (*Turns off RADIO.*) Michael? (*Realizes SIREN*

and now FLASHING RED LIGHTS are for them.) HEY!
Earth to Michael Paeglis! The state troopers in your
rearview mirror are closer than they appear!

MICHAEL (*mimes putting on brakes and pulling off road*).

Oh, man!

BUDDY. Nice work, pal. Found yourself a dragon!

*(SIREN cuts off. Red LIGHT continues flashing as
TROOPER, tough and humorless, approaches MI-
CHAEL's side of car.)*

TROOPER. Name?

MICHAEL (*mumbling nervously*). Paeglis, sir.

TROOPER. What? What did you just say to me?

MICHAEL (*really nervous now, but louder*). Michael
Pie-AY- gleeze, sir.

TROOPER. Oh. How old are you, *Pie-AY- gleeze*?

MICHAEL. Seventeen, sir. Eighteen in November, sir. No-
vember twenty-third, sir.

TROOPER. Let's see the driver's license. (*MICHAEL fum-
bles a wallet out of his pocket, opens it and hands it to
TROOPER, who looks back and forth between MI-
CHAEL and license several times, points to license.*)
What's this say?

MICHAEL. Paeglis. Sir.

TROOPER. Unusual name.

MICHAEL. It's Latvian. Sir.

TROOPER. Latvian?

MICHAEL (*babbling*). One of three Baltic countries, sir:
Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania. Formerly part of the Soviet
Union. My father immigrated with his parents as a kid.

That is, my father was the kid. His parents were—fully grown.

BUDDY (*in a stage whisper*). Michael—*enough*.

MICHAEL (*deflated; to TROOPER*). Sir.

TROOPER. Ever been in trouble before, Paeglis?

MICHAEL. No, sir, sir!

(*BUDDY snorts; MICHAEL throws him an angry look. TROOPER looks in at BUDDY, who backs off.*)

TROOPER (*nods thoughtfully; passes wallet back to MICHAEL*). Pay attention now, Michael. I'm going to let you off this time. Slow down, son. That's a warning. One warning to a customer. Got it?

MICHAEL. Yes...sir.

TROOPER. Be careful getting off this shoulder. Drive safely, son.

MICHAEL (*greatly relieved*). I will, sir. Thank you, sir.

(*TROOPER exits. Red LIGHT stops flashing. BUDDY watches TROOPER's car as MICHAEL stares at his wallet.*)

BUDDY. He's gone. (*To MICHAEL.*) Where'd all those "sirs" come from?

MICHAEL (*shrugs*). Must've been the uniform. Brought back every war movie I've ever seen.

BUDDY. Man, that was close! Ah, well, not to worry. Your dad would've paid the ticket anyway. Remember the time you backed out of your driveway into a garbage truck—?

MICHAEL (*exasperated*). That does it. I quit!

BUDDY. Quit what?

MICHAEL. My whole life! I can't stand it anymore! I'm a teenage boy who can't even get a speeding ticket! I'm so clean, I *squeak*! State troopers call me "son."

BUDDY. He wasn't planning to adopt you—

MICHAEL (*not amused*). I'm going through life in a plastic bubble. Don't you see? Like that kid on TV who couldn't fight off disease. All he ever wanted was to walk barefoot in the grass, did you know that? And he never got the chance.

BUDDY. And all you ever wanted was a speeding ticket? Get back on the highway. Find that cop. I'm sure you could talk him into it.

MICHAEL. I don't know what I want, Buddy. I want to *find out* what I want. *Out there*—in the real world. I want to find out how it works.

BUDDY (*turning serious for the moment*). Do you really?

MICHAEL. Yes!

BUDDY (*shaking his head sadly*). Then you're a fool, Michael. A lot of "out there" is out of order. That's why we have doors and windows that lock. Not to mention state troopers. Why take chances?

MICHAEL. You think you can hide behind locked doors and windows forever?

BUDDY. I intend to try!

MICHAEL. And you're sure *I'm* the fool here?

(BUDDY and MICHAEL exchange a look, but do not reconcile. Disgusted, MICHAEL turns up the radio volume. MUSIC plays. MICHAEL pulls car back onto highway. BOTH stare ahead, cruising into the night. LIGHTS

fade. MUSIC bridges transition into next scene as “car” seats are rearranged to create MICHAEL’s living room.)

Scene 2

TIME and PLACE: *Evening of the next day. The living room of MICHAEL’s house, indicated by one easy chair.*

AT RISE: *LIGHTS up on POP, working newspaper crossword puzzle. MICHAEL paces impatiently nearby, going over the Help Wanted section of the paper. MUSIC fades.*

POP. Seven letters. Starts with “r,” ends with “e.” Means “to send out.”

MICHAEL (*a beat, then—*). Radiate.

POP (*fills in the blanks*). Ra-di-ate. Yah. That is it! Very good.

MICHAEL (*growing more impatient*). Pop. Could you hold off on the crossword puzzle for a couple of minutes and *listen* to me?

POP (*without looking up*). I *am* listening. I hear every word you say. You want to find job.

MICHAEL. Yes. I do. And—?

POP (*looks at MICHAEL*). And I am thinking: What kind of job are you going to find, boy your age? Frying hamburgers? Washing dishes?

MICHAEL. Maybe.

POP. Who needs that? You want to work? Take nice, clean job in my store.

MICHAEL. I want to find my *own* job, Pop.

POP. I worked for my poppa; you work for me. What could be simpler?

MICHAEL. That's the problem, don't you see? My whole life is *too simple*.

POP. Now there is complaint I do not hear often.

MICHAEL (*puts down his section of paper*). Pop, I don't want to hurt you—

POP (*obviously hurt; goes back to his crossword puzzle*). Who is hurt? Nobody is hurt.

MICHAEL. Will you please try to understand?

POP. I understand very well: I make good life for you; you want different life. So? That is what is.

MICHAEL. Pop, *please*—

POP (*feigning intense interest in crossword puzzle*).

“Re-pug-nance.” Eight letters. A, V, something.

MICHAEL (*a beat, then*—). Aversion.

POP (*unfamiliar with the word*). Ah-ver-sion?

MICHAEL. A-v-e—

POP (*hurrying to get the letters written*). Hold on! Not so fast!

MICHAEL (*slower*). A-v-e-r-s-i-o-n.

POP. A-ver-sion. (*Pleased with filled-in blanks.*) Thank you very much. (*Pointedly, but focusing on puzzle.*) A-ver-sion. Means re-pug-nance. Huh! Ugly words.

(MICHAEL throws up his hands and starts off, then turns back and snatches up Help Wanted section of the paper. He and POP exchange a quick glance, then POP goes stubbornly back to his crossword puzzle, and MICHAEL hurries off. MUSIC. LIGHTS dim on living room. MUSIC bridges transition into next scene as chairs are removed, leaving stage bare.)

Scene 3

TIME and PLACE: *Various times over the next few days. Various locations, indicated only by lights on different areas of stage.*

AT RISE: *MUSIC continues to play throughout the following scene, loudly between interviews, softly under each interview. MICHAEL enters with a pen and the Help Wanted section, intently checking the ads and circling possibilities.*

FIRST INTERVIEWER (*enters in his/her own light as MUSIC softens*). Michael?

MICHAEL (*spins to face INTERVIEWER eagerly*). Yes!

FIRST INTERVIEWER (*offering a hand to shake*). How's it going, Michael?

MICHAEL (*hides paper and pen behind him with one hand, shakes with the other*). Great! It's going great!

FIRST INTERVIEWER. Glad to hear it. So...what sort of experience do you have?

MICHAEL. Experience?

FIRST INTERVIEWER. In fast food?

MICHAEL (*hesitating—*). Oh...

FIRST INTERVIEWER (*waits a beat between each question, lowering his/her expectations each time as MICHAEL fails to respond*). Managing?... Cooking?... Waiting tables? (*A slightly longer pause, and then—*) Busing tables—?

MICHAEL (*blurts it out, although not meaning to be flip-pant*). I eat quite a bit!

FIRST INTERVIEWER (*not amused*). Sorry.

(MUSIC up. LIGHTS fade on FIRST INTERVIEWER, who exits. MICHAEL grimaces and crosses off some of the ads he's circled.)

SECOND INTERVIEWER *(enters another area of stage as MUSIC softens and LIGHTS come up)*. Speed?

MICHAEL *(spins around to face SECOND INTERVIEWER)*. Excuse me?

SECOND INTERVIEWER *(waves an employment application form at MICHAEL)*. Keyboarding speed. I don't see anything on this application form about your keyboarding speed.

MICHAEL. Oh...well...I thought we might talk about that.

SECOND INTERVIEWER. Talk?

MICHAEL. Uh-huh. *(Indicating two-fingered typing style.)*

Because "speed" wouldn't exactly describe what I do—

SECOND INTERVIEWER *(not amused)*. Sorry.

(MUSIC up. LIGHTS fade on SECOND INTERVIEWER who exits. A bit frustrated, but still hopeful, MICHAEL crosses a few more possibilities off his list.)

THIRD INTERVIEWER *(enters, consulting a notepad, as MUSIC fades and LIGHTS come up)*. All right, Mitchell—

MICHAEL *(spins to face INTERVIEWER)*. "Michael."

THIRD INTERVIEWER *(confused)*. No. I'm Jesse.

MICHAEL. I meant *me*.

THIRD INTERVIEWER *(consulting notepad)*. You're...
Mitchell.

MICHAEL. No, I'm not—

THIRD INTERVIEWER. You're not Mitchell?