

# The 20-Year Crush

*A Two-Act Comedy*

By  
Carl L. Williams

## **Performance Rights**

It is an infringement of the federal copyright law to copy this script in any way or to perform this play without royalty payment. All rights are controlled by Eldridge Publishing Co. Inc. Call the publisher for additional scripts and further licensing information. The author's name must appear on all programs and advertising with the notice: "Produced by special arrangements with Eldridge Publishing Co."

**ELDRIDGE PUBLISHING COMPANY**

*www.hiStage.com*

© 2006 by Carl L. Williams

Download your complete script from Eldridge Publishing

<https://histage.com/20-year-crush-the>

## STORY OF THE PLAY

Martie's idyllic memories of a poet from her college years rise again when he reappears, willing and able to continue the romance. Her regular-guy husband, who'd rather bowl than read poetry, seems a poor match against the dashing, artistic Brook Oliphant. Martie's best friend Janice, who also knew the suave poet when he was a teaching assistant, is drawn to Brook again as well, especially now that she is recently divorced. Suddenly, their nostalgic used-to-be's contend with the ordinary here-and-now – until the women meet one of the professor's current students. They discover that Brook uses the same old poem to romance all his lady friends and students. Will they separate his iambic from his pentameter or, at the very least, have him arrested for the reckless use of a concealed poem? Ultimately, Martie realizes the four rhyming lines Tom writes are much sweeter than Brook's "poetic license" will ever be.

## ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

*The 20-Year Crush*, originally entitled *Poetic License*, won the 2002 Fort Bend (TX) Theatre New Play Contest and premiered there July 5 - August 3, 2002.

### CAST:

Martie Kyle ..... Debra Powell  
Janice Starkwell ..... S. Riley  
Tom Kyle ..... Adam Kaminsky  
Brook Oliphant..... Don Gunther  
Samantha Uberhausen ..... Ashley Heathcock  
Directed by Steve Carpentier.

## **CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(2 m, 3 w)*

**MARTIE KYLE:** Publisher's editor, 40, attractive, bored with her life.

**JANICE STARKWELL:** Martie's best friend and neighbor, 40, slightly overweight, low self-esteem.

**TOM KYLE:** Martie's husband, 40, construction foreman, a big sort of guy, good-natured.

**BROOK OLIPHANT:** College professor and poet, 40s, attractive, charming, unethical in romance.

**SAMANTHA UBERHAUSEN:** A college student, 20, serious and self-possessed.

## **SYNOPSIS OF SCENES**

### **ACT I**

Scene 1: Living room in suburbia, Saturday afternoon.

Scene 2: The same, eight o'clock that evening.

Scene 3: The same, two hours later.

### **ACT II**

Scene 1: The same, one week later, Saturday afternoon.

Scene 2: The same, two hours later.

## **PROPS**

Keys and purse	Book of poetry
Bowling ball and bag	Phone
Serving tray	Glasses, ice bucket
Liquor bottle	Cokes
Magazines	Laundry and basket
Typed poem	Printed T-shirt

**ACT I**  
**Scene 1**

*(AT RISE: MARTIE sits reading a slim volume of poetry. Emotionally touched, she closes the book.)*

**MARTIE:** So wonderful.

*(A sudden KNOCK causes her to pull herself together. JANICE, dressed sloppily, opens the front door, sticks her head in.)*

**JANICE:** Martie? Martie!

**MARTIE:** *(Excited.)* Janice, come in!

**JANICE:** I saw you drive in a while ago, and I just couldn't wait to hear. Did you see him?

**MARTIE:** *(Rises, eager to talk.)* I saw him, I talked with him, I bought his book!

**JANICE:** Let me see, let me see!

**MARTIE:** A genuine first edition. *(Hands HER the book.)*

**JANICE:** *(Reads cover.)* "Whispers from the Farthest, Whispers in the Near."

**MARTIE:** The title's from the first poem.

**JANICE:** By Brook Oliphant. Does it have his picture?

**MARTIE:** Inside the cover.

**JANICE:** *(Opens the book.)* Ooooo. He still looks *good* after twenty years. Is it touched up?

**MARTIE:** He looks the same as his picture.

**JANICE:** I wish I could've gone with you, but when the plumber is coming, you gotta stay by your sewer line.

**MARTIE:** Did he get it fixed?

**JANICE:** Yeah, but he tells me I've got aggressive roots. That is, my tree has aggressive roots.

**MARTIE:** That means they'll grow back and cause more trouble.

**JANICE:** I don't want to hear about trouble. I want to hear about Brook.

*The 20-Year Crush*

- 5 -

**MARTIE:** There weren't that many people in line at the bookstore. I guess poetry's not a big seller.

**JANICE:** Did he recognize you?

**MARTIE:** Of course he recognized me--what do you think? Turn the flyleaf.

**JANICE:** An inscription!

**MARTIE:** *(Self-deprecating.)* Yeah, well ....

**JANICE:** "To Martie Montgomery, the brightest of students and the dearest of friends." Montgomery? Not Martie Kyle?

**MARTIE:** He knew me as Montgomery in class.

**JANICE:** I wonder if he'd still recognize *me*. After all, I've added a few pounds ... five or ten ... okay, twenty or thirty.

**MARTIE:** You were way too thin in college.

**JANICE:** That's the great thing about friends ... they know just when to lie. So tell me what he's like. Is he still ...? *(Makes a wordless, all-encompassing gesture.)*

**MARTIE:** Charming? Intelligent? Thoughtful? Yes, all those things.

**JANICE:** And married by now, I suppose.

**MARTIE:** I didn't ask him.

**JANICE:** Hmmmm.

**MARTIE:** I just didn't think of it. I told him I was married.

**JANICE:** How did that come up? "Hello, I'm married"?

**MARTIE:** He asked me.

**JANICE:** Hmmmm.

**MARTIE:** Will you stop that?

**JANICE:** So, did you tell Tom where you were going this afternoon?

**MARTIE:** Why shouldn't I tell him?

**JANICE:** No reason at all not to tell him.

**MARTIE:** He knows I like poetry.

**JANICE:** Does he know you like poets?

**MARTIE:** Janice, enough. Read.

*(JANICE opens the book to the first poem. MARTIE looks transported as Janice reads.)*

*The 20-Year Crush*

- 6 -

**JANICE:** "Crescent wishes on silver midnights,  
dreaming past the dying  
and aware.  
Unseen fires behind the lights,  
stirring through the blackness,  
everywhere between.  
Whispers from the farthest,  
then whispers in the near,  
all one whisper, beckoning.  
Unheard answers, longed for  
in promises of forever.  
Falling thoughts from rising too high,  
reaching toward wonders--  
what sleep? what dawn?"

**MARTIE:** Brook was always so good with language.

**JANICE:** And not just language.

**MARTIE:** You should be ashamed.

**JANICE:** Well? It's true. At least everyone said it was true.  
Not that I would know, of course.

**MARTIE:** Campus rumors. I doubt if there was a girl in class  
who wasn't infatuated with him.

**JANICE:** Men like Brook are hard to find, and don't think I  
haven't looked.

**MARTIE:** Lately you seem to have developed a one-track  
mind.

**JANICE:** With no train in sight. Eligible men our age are an  
endangered species.

**MARTIE:** I don't know why you're complaining. I see men  
coming in and out of your house all the time. Plumbers,  
electricians, painters ....

**JANICE:** Oh, ha ha ha. I should've taken cash instead of the  
house when Frank divorced me. Nothing but one repair after  
another, and I have to pay all these guys. But dating ...  
that's a different story. A short story.

**MARTIE:** How about that guy who moved in down the street?  
He's single and looks able-bodied, always out working in his  
yard. Maybe you could casually walk by and ask him about  
fertilizer or something.

## **End of Freeview**

Download your complete script from Eldridge Publishing

<https://histage.com/20-year-crush-the>

Eldridge Publishing, a leading drama play publisher since 1906, offers more than a thousand full-length plays, one-act plays, melodramas, holiday plays, religious plays, children's theatre plays and musicals of all kinds.

For more than a hundred years, our family-owned business has had the privilege of publishing some of the finest playwrights, allowing their work to come alive on stages worldwide.

We look forward to being a part of your next theatrical production.

Eldridge Publishing... for the start of your theatre experience!