



The Wonderful Ice Cream Suit, And Other Plays For Today, Tomorrow, And Beyond Tomorrow

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Tomorrow, And Beyond Tomorrow Ray Bradbury**

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Falina says

I feel like these were supposed to be profound and they just weren't for me...I was unimpressed. This is what happens when you choose a book because it has "Ice Cream" in the title (N.B. "The Wonderful Ice Cream Suit" has nothing to do with ice cream). I did like "The Veldt", though.

Alexa says

Ray Bradbury is absolutely brilliant. I thought the Ice Cream Suit was very poignant. The statement at the end about losing the gang if they were rich was so powerful. The Veldt was AMAZING and creepy and I would absolutely love to see it performed. It reminded me a lot of Smarthouse, that Disney Channel Original Movie, but much better and clearly quite dystopian. I also enjoyed and was saddened by the Chicago Abyss, but I preferred the first two plays to the last one.

Kevin says

I quite enjoyed reading these plays. Ray Bradbury is always a great writer, and these are no exception.

Dev Sodagar says

Ray Bradbury is not my favorite Sci Fi author, however this is an excellent series of short quirky plays, well written and easy to read. It would be interesting to perform some of these.

Tristan MacAvery says

Bradbury is in rare form when writing these plays, as his description of action between spoken lines rings with his passion and his praternaturally eerie evocation of feeling. Some actors may feel that this limits their performance; I would disagree. To tell a Bradbury story through the medium of the stage or the screen is to take on the task of bringing forth every nuance of emotion, of reaction to what we, the audience, can see only in the theater of our minds. This, fellow thespians, is one of the greatest challenges you could take on -- a mixture of minimal stage setting, of skillful manipulations of lights and sounds, of reader's theater morphed into a live performance to grip an audience in the sweaty palm of fear and wonder...

For readers of Bradbury, you won't be disappointed either. Those of you who may find it difficult to follow reading scripts will find plenty of narrative and dialog to keep you mesmerized, particularly if you have already read the original story and watch how the Master uses the stage to bring to life "The Veldt". An excellent addition to any Bradbury fan's library.

Tony says

Bradbury, Ray. THE WONDERFUL ICE CREAM SUIT: AND OTHER PLAYS FOR TODAY, TOMORROW AND BEYOND TOMORROW. (first staged 1964 (?), this edition 1972). ****. When you hear the name Ray Bradbury, you think science fiction: "The Martian Chronicles," "The Illustrated Man," "Dandelion Wine," etc. Turns out he wrote a few plays, too. Included in this edition are three one-act plays that he and his production company presented together in a set using a repertory company in the mid-1960s. The first play is "The Wonderful Ice Cream Suit." This is about six down and out Latinos living in L.A. who come upon a marvelous bright white suit in a mens' store and decide that they have to have it. They each scrape up ten dollars and manage to buy it from a surprised store owner. It is fortuitous that all of the six are built closely the same and can each wear the suit in turns. The wearing of the suit lifts each of the men above the poverty and anonymity that they live in. They take turns wearing the suit and manage to turn the hearts of the women in the tenements and gain the respect of their neighbors. The suit acts as the cement that holds the six young men together and causes them to act for the common good. The second play is "The Veldt." This is set in the future – 1991 – and recounts the story of a family who has been taken over by a variety of mechanical devices that do all the work for them. Unfortunately, paying for these marvels causes the husband and wife to be away from the home for long periods; in the process ignoring their children, Peter and Wendy. In order to provide some sort of amusement for the children and to make up for their absences, the father has a state-of-the-art playroom built into the house. The playroom responds to the wishes of the children and duplicates any portion of the globe that they might be interested in: Paris, Cairo, etc. The children settle on having the room transformed into an African veldt. The results of that transformation have a profound effect on the family relationships – one that you don't expect early on in the play. The final drama – actually, the best – is "To The Chicago Abyss." It is set in a post-Apocalyptic America, where the main character is an Old Man who remembers the trivia from the past. He is hunted down by the police, but revered by the survivors for his knowledge. He is fully conversant with the jingles of the past and the products that they boosted. He can recount the pleasures of cigarettes and candy bars and extinct foods. His survival in this new world is precarious, at best, but his secret friends manage to keep him safe. Recommended.

Bev says

The Wonderful Ice Cream Suit & Other Plays for Today, Tomorrow & Beyond Tomorrow (1972) is a small collection of plays based on three of Ray Bradbury's short stories. Bradbury was one of the most celebrated science fiction authors of his time. The plays featured are the titular "Ice Cream Suit," as well as "The Veldt" and "To the Chicago Abyss." I had read the short story versions of the last two but not "Suit."

In the titular story, six down-on-their-luck fellows pool their money to buy a spectacular, white (vanilla ice cream colored) suit that they all can share to impress the ladies, win new friends, and, hopefully, turn their luck around. They learn that there's much more to be gained in the friendship they develop with each other.

"The Veldt" is a very creepy story of the future. A future where two doting parents provide their children with every new gadget possible--including a playroom that can make the kids' every thought and dream come to 3-D life. When the children change their playroom to the African veldt, complete with hungry lions, the parents learn, too late, that gadgets can't take the place of love.

And, finally, "To the Chicago Abyss" takes the reader to a bleak dystopian future where all is rubble and there are few pleasures left. One old man can remember only the pleasures of the past as broadcast through the media or in the trivialities of everyday life--advertisements for coffee, cigarettes, kazoos for children, thimbles and imitation flowers. Speaking about the past--of things that no one can have now--is outlawed and the man must avoid the police and seek out those willing to listen to his memories.

The stories make for short, quirky plays and Bradbury does an excellent job adapting them. I, however, prefer the works in short story form. ★★★ and a half for the wonderful stories by a master.

First posted on my blog My Reader's Block. Please request permission before reposting. Thanks.

Julia says

This is three short plays that Bradbury adapted from his short stories. My favorite is "The Veldt," perhaps because of Stephen Colbert's reading of it on "Selected Shorts," or because it's my favorite. I bought this used somewhere, it says for \$1.00.

Raj says

This is a small collection of three short one-act plays that Bradbury wrote in the 1970s that I was completely unaware of, although in saying that, I recognise both the title play (*The Wonderful Ice Cream Suit*) and one other (*The Veldt*) as short stories. I don't know if they started off as plays and were converted, or the other way around but both still work very well as plays. I'm not so experienced at reading plays but it does feel like there's dialogue but not much in the way of stage direction.

The title play follows six young Latino immigrant workers who pool their resources and buy a single white suit that they share out amongst themselves. It's about friendship and poverty and what can be learned through sharing and is a sweet little play. *The Veldt* is an altogether darker affair. It has themes of parental affection, misuse of technology and the tension between work and family life. The final play, *To the Chicago Abyss* has elements of Fahrenheit 451, although from a different perspective.

I would love to see these performed, just to see how they'd work on stage, rather than on the page, especially the technological magic of *The Veldt*. Even without that, though, they're still very enjoyable to read.

Kim says

I had read the Wonderful Ice Cream Suit and the Veldt, the last story was new to me...out of the 3 stories/plays, the Veldt is one of my favorites. It is about a home of the future (sort of like the Jetsons) where the home does everything for you, like make your meals, clean your floors, turn on and off the lights, make the beds, and in the case of the children's playroom, entertain your children. The father of the house, with 2 children seems to work a lot and puts work over family time. To appease his children, especially the boy who just wants to fish and spend time with his dad, he buys an interactive playroom, with 3D walls that can show you anything you think of...Paris, the Sphinx in Egypt, AND the African veldt, complete with hungry lions...I won't spoil the ending.

Mark Oppenlander says

This is a collection of three plays that Bradbury wrote for his own Pandemonium Theatre Company. They are all based on short stories, stories which I have read before. In light of that previous experience with these stories, I was surprised by how much I liked re-reading each of them in this format. Bradbury is smart enough to realize the inherent strengths and weaknesses of a theatrical production as compared to a prose story and makes some smart decisions on how to tweak this material. Although the conventions are a bit dated now (Bradbury treats unit sets and the use of evocative sound and lighting cues as if they are brave, new innovations), this is still an enjoyable read - and these plays would likely still make an enjoyable evening of live theatre.

Allison says

The Veldt is very good. The other two plays included leave something to be desired.

David Allen says

Superfluous, since the three plays are adaptations of well-known RB stories. But they read well, especially the delightful title piece, about six poor men of similar build who pool their money to buy a beautiful white suit to share.
