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SF PERUSALS

The Submission

by Jeff Talbott

A Samuel French Acting Edition



SAMUEL FRENCH
FOUNDED 1830

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ISBN 978-0-573-70043-9 Printed in U.S.A. #20266

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World Premiere at the MCC Theater, September 8, 2011
Artistic Directors: Robert Lupone, Bernard Telsey & William Cantler
Executive Director: Blake West

THE SUBMISSION received its world premiere at MCC Theater, opening September 27, 2011, at the Lucille Lortel Theater, in New York City, presented by artistic directors Robert LuPone, Bernard Telsey, and William Cantler, with set design by David Zinn, costume design by Anita Yavich, lighting design by David Weiner, music by Ryan Rumery and Christian Frederickson, sound design by Ryan Rumery, projections by Darrel Maloney, production management by B. D. White, production stage management by Timothy R. Semon, and general management by Ted Rounsaville. The director was Walter Bobbie. The cast was as follows:

DANNY . . . . . Jonathan Groff
TREVOR . . . . . Will Rogers
PETE . . . . . Eddie Kaye Thomas
EMILIE . . . . . Rutina Wesley

THE SUBMISSION was the winner of the 2011 Laurents/Hatcher Award for Best New Play.

THE SUBMISSION was the winner of the 2012 Outer Critics Circle John Gassner Award for a New American Play.

CHARACTERS

DANNY – 27. White.

TREVOR – 27. White.

PETE – 27. White.

EMILIE – 27. Black.

TIME

The play spans one year, September–September.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

The play is performed without an intermission.

Transitions into/out of scenes should be fast and punchy, lights snapping up full at top of scenes, snapping to black at the end; music (if used) should be percussive and sharp, possibly even abrasive; scenery should be minimal to make transitions short. Many of the scenes take place in a popular coffee chain. Unless otherwise indicated, each of these scenes is in a different location of the same chain; they look almost identical. Almost.

DANNY's script is always in sight.

A "(Beat.)" is like a rest in music; its length depends on what surrounds it. This is particularly true in the last scene (Scene 11).

With deep gratitude to Stephen Willems, Terrence McNally, Walter Bobbie, MCC Theater, The Laurents/Hatcher Foundation, Jonathan Lomma and Kenneth Jones, this play is dedicated to Arthur Laurents.

A great debt of thanks is owed to the following actors who gave their time and talent to the development of this play: of course the amazing Jonathan Groff, Will Rogers, Eddie Kaye Thomas and Rutina Wesley; and also Nathan Anderson, Kelli Colaco, Will Connell, Jessiee Datino, Michael Esper, Reg Flowers, Enid Graham, Brendan Griffin, Lucas Hall, Brad Heberlee, Robert Henry, Haskell King, Stephen Kunken, Zachary Quinto, Johnny Russell, Blaine Smith, Brian J. Smith, Jenn Thompson, Owen Thompson and Wayne Wilcox, with a note of particular thanks to Afton Williamson.

Scene 1

(A Coffee Chain)

(September. Jackets, sweaters. **DANNY** *and* **TREVOR** *sit at a table, several empty coffee cups around them.* **DANNY** *is typing on his laptop.* **TREVOR** *is reading loose pages of a script.* **DANNY** *stops to watch* **TREVOR** *reading, then goes back to typing. Beat.* **DANNY** *stops typing.)*

DANNY. Yo, muthahfuckah, are you–?

TREVOR. Shhh.

DANNY. OK.

(Beat. **DANNY** *types.* **TREVOR** *reads.)*

Are you almost–?

TREVOR. Could you not?

DANNY. Sorry.

TREVOR. Just do your–

DANNY. OK, OK.

(Beat. **TREVOR** *reads.* **DANNY** *tries to type, eventually giving up and shutting his laptop.)*

Should I go and–?

TREVOR. Danny, sit still and just, like, shut up, OK?

DANNY. Cool.

*(***DANNY** *sits and watches* **TREVOR** *read.* **TREVOR** *turns one last page and finishes. He looks at* **DANNY.** *Beat.)*

Seriously, you're killing me.

TREVOR. It's…

DANNY. Yeah?

TREVOR. I don't know…

DANNY. Oh, Jesus. Just say.

TREVOR. It makes me want to, like, donkey punch you.

DANNY. Yeah?

TREVOR. Yeah.

DANNY. Oh, man. Oh fuck, oh man. I honestly had no idea. I mean, no idea.

TREVOR. Well, get one. It's effin' awesome.

DANNY. Oh my god.

TREVOR. Did you show Pete?

DANNY. Nope.

TREVOR. You didn't show Pete?

DANNY. No, sir. You're first.

TREVOR. Why'm I first?

DANNY. You just are.

TREVOR. Pete's gonna be pissed.

DANNY. He might. Fuck 'im. You're first.

TREVOR. Oooo, he's gonna kill me.

DANNY. He's gonna kill *me*.

TREVOR. Why didn't you show Pete?

DANNY. He's next, don't worry. I needed to show you.

TREVOR. Danny…

DANNY. I was a total girl about it.

TREVOR. Well, show Pete.

DANNY. I will, I will!

(Beat.)

So?

TREVOR. Just give me a second. I'm still, you know, processing?

DANNY. Well, could you process with, like, words and shit?

TREVOR. OK. It's not… It's not like anything you've done.

DANNY. I know.

TREVOR. At all.

DANNY. Yeah.

TREVOR. I don't mean just the obvious.

DANNY. No, I know.

TREVOR. It's so lean. It's so… produce-able.

DANNY. Really?

TREVOR *(imitating him)* "Really?" C'mon. That *is* girly.

DANNY. OK.

TREVOR. Four characters? One set? I mean, it could be *done*, you know?

DANNY. I know.

TREVOR. That's almost beside the point though. It's taut. It's mean. It feels very… I hate this word… authentic.

DANNY. As in…?

TREVOR. As in, like, right now. You know?

DANNY. I think it might be good.

TREVOR. I think it might be, too.

DANNY. Oh, man.

*(***TREVOR** *laughs.)*

I mean, god. I was so freakin' nervous. That's why I couldn't show Pete.

TREVOR. Well don't be. Show 'im.

DANNY. I will.

(Beat.)

TREVOR. Danny, this is…

DANNY. Yeah, I know.

TREVOR. How did you…?

DANNY. I have no clue. It just happened. You know that thing where people say, "I didn't write it, it wrote itself"? Those assholes? It's such bullshit.

TREVOR. It's bullshit.

DANNY. Well, I didn't write it. It wrote itself.

TREVOR. You're an asshole.

DANNY. I know!

TREVOR. You have literally no experience to inform it.

DANNY. No shit.

TREVOR. It'll be the first thing people ask.

DANNY. It will?

TREVOR. Um, yeah.

DANNY. So I'll have to come up with a clever answer.

TREVOR. Is there one?

DANNY. I'm a clever little fella.

(Beat.)

Thanks, Trev.

TREVOR. Oh, jeez, no charge, man.

DANNY. No, you don't know.

TREVOR. I might.

DANNY. It's been…

TREVOR. Yeah.

DANNY. You know, the readings, the dirty basements, four years. Four fuckin' years.

TREVOR. I know, I know.

DANNY. If I get one more well-intentioned you-almost-made-it, we-almost-would-maybe-think-about-doing-it-at-some-unforseeable-point-in-the-not-to-be-delineated-future letter, I'll start taking out old ladies in the park.

TREVOR. OK.

DANNY. I'm serious. I thought this would be much easier.

TREVOR. You did?

DANNY. Yeah.

TREVOR. Then you're a dickhead. You've been pretty lucky.

DANNY. Lucky?

TREVOR. Yeah.

DANNY. Three readings in four years? That's not luck, that's a deathwatch.

TREVOR. Jesus, Danny, you just had a reading at–

DANNY. They fuckin'–

TREVOR. So they passed. Boo fuckin' hoo.

DANNY. But a reading is so pathetic. I want people to, I don't know, *see* one of the fuckers, OK?

TREVOR. It's not like you're forty or thirty-five or whatever. It's gonna happen.

DANNY. But I don't wanna turn, you know… I'm gonna be fuckin'–

TREVOR. Dude, you make the path. You make it. Remember?

DANNY. OK.

TREVOR. Just sayin'.

DANNY. Thanks, man.

TREVOR. Whatever.

DANNY. For all the… Ah, shit, you–

TREVOR. Danny. Whatever. OK?

DANNY. OK.

(Beat.)

TREVOR. Hey, what's it called?

DANNY. Oh. Yeah.

(He takes a title page out of his pocket, clips it to the script and sets it back down on the table. **TREVOR** *looks at it. Beat.)*

TREVOR. Jesus Herbert Walker Christ.

DANNY. Yeah. I know.

TREVOR. That's, that's… Dude, you're gonna hafta be a little more than clever.

DANNY. No shit.

(Beat.)

I was thinking of sending it out. If you thought it was OK. You know, resident theatres. Festivals. Dialogue sample. Synopsis. Blind fuckin' hope. The usual.

TREVOR. Well, I thought it was OK.

DANNY. So I should… submit it?

TREVOR. Yup.

DANNY. Submit this bitch?

(Beat.)

TREVOR. I think you should submit the fuck out of it.

(Blackout.)

Scene 2

(Danny and Pete's Apartment)

*(***DANNY** *and* **PETE** *sit on the couch, the script on the coffee table in front of them.)*

DANNY. You should be less pissed.

PETE. Oh yeah?

DANNY. Yeah. Less pissed and more… happy. Or something.

PETE. OK, I'm less pissed. I'm more something.

DANNY. OK.

PETE. How long?

DANNY. Petey…

PETE. How long?

DANNY. Two months. But if you'd just–

PETE. You showed him two–

DANNY. Maybe three.

PETE. Three months?

DANNY. Maybe.

PETE. Well, gee, let's start right off with fuck you. You showed him three months ago?

DANNY. Yeah. But I–

PETE. Well, I'm so goddamn relieved it's legal for you kids to get married now. Where ya registered? Sur la Table? Fuckin' Crate and–

DANNY. Babe, just–

PETE. OK. OK.

(Beat.)

OK. I'll let that go.

DANNY. Good.

PETE. I said I'll let *that* go.

DANNY. Ugh.

PETE. Because it's really just the tip of the, you know, the fuckin' polar ice cap.

DANNY. Pete, I didn't show you because I thought you'd be… un… uncomfortable?

PETE. I'd be uncomfortable?

DANNY. Yeah.

PETE. Well, the news flash is I wasn't even the littlest bit uncomfortable until you just said you thought I might be uncomfortable. Now? I'm a little uncomfortable.

DANNY. Then I take it back!

PETE. I mean, I wouldn't have been uncomfortable two, three months ago, but being bumped to second on the list of interested readers makes me reconsider my position.

DANNY. Well, technically–

PETE. Technically?

DANNY. I mean, on *my* list, yeah, second.

PETE. What other goddamn list is there?

DANNY. It's a theoretical list.

PETE. What the fuck does that even–

DANNY. Can I just–

PETE. The list of people you may or may not have sent your wonderful new–

DANNY. Wonderful?

PETE. No, no, you shut up. This list is somehow theoretical?

DANNY. You think it's wonderful.

PETE. I think it's less wonderful the more you open your yap, so be careful.

DANNY. Petey, I… submitted it places.

PETE. Ah.

DANNY. And now–

PETE. No, no. Let me just… So, you write this–

DANNY. Wonder–

PETE. Danny.

DANNY. Sorry.

PETE. You write this thing, you show it to your boyfriend Trevor, you submit it to god knows where–

DANNY. Several places. Good places.

PETE. Whatever. And then, then, at the end of all this, you stoop, you deign to show it to me. I'm… I'm touched, baby. I'm really touched.

DANNY. Look.

PETE. No, you look.

DANNY. Look, babe, just let me–

PETE. It's humiliating, you know?

DANNY. How is it humiliating? You're the only person in the wide stupid galaxy that knows I didn't show you first. I didn't–

PETE. Everybody–

DANNY. Oh my god, you shut up now. You. Shut up. OK? Shut up.

PETE. But you–

DANNY. Shut up! I didn't show you first because I was scared. OK?

PETE. That's the most–

DANNY. I was scared. Not of your reaction to the obvious shit. That's not it. I was scared it wasn't good.

PETE. Oh, baby–

DANNY. Or not good enough. That you wouldn't think I was good. Or that you might think I was… I dunno. You know. And that *was* because of the obvious shit. And then I showed Trev, because I had to show it to somebody, and he said it was good, and then I couldn't show you because I decided to start sending it around and I didn't want to have this very conversation and

then a week went by and another week and then a month, and I just let it go.

PETE. You let it–

DANNY. And by then I hadn't shown it to you so I couldn't show it to you, and that's where I made my mistake.

PETE. *That's* where?

DANNY. OK, that's one of the places–

PETE. Many places–

DANNY. Many places I made a mistake. OK? But now I had to show you. And you already said it's–

PETE. Wait.

DANNY. What?

PETE. Why?

DANNY. Why what?

PETE. Why now?

(Beat.)

Danny, why now?

DANNY. Because it got…

PETE. Danny?

DANNY. It got accepted.

PETE. What?

DANNY. It got accepted.

PETE. Baby…

DANNY. They called today, it got accepted. So maybe stop being pissed and, like, kiss me or something.

PETE. For a reading?

DANNY. No. No. No. Not for a goddamn reading. It got accepted for a goddamn production at the goddamn Humana Festival–

PETE. Is that a big deal?

DANNY. Are you fucking— Petey, they're going to produce my goddamn, goddamn, goddamn play, so could you stop being pissed for just long enough to jump up and down a little with me? Please?

(Beat. **PETE** *and* **DANNY** *jump up and down.)*

PETE. Oh Jesus, oh Jesus, oh god!

DANNY. I know! I know!

PETE. Danny, that's…

DANNY. I know!

PETE. I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I was thinking about–

DANNY. No, you're right, I should've shown you right away. But they're going to do it, babe, they're going to do it. With people in it, with people watching it, with sets and costumes and ticket takers and ushers and fucktard critics and shit.

PETE. Oh my god.

DANNY. I know!

*(***PETE** *kisses* **DANNY**. *They settle onto the couch. Beat.* **PETE** *picks up the script for a moment and looks at the title page.)*

PETE. You're gonna get shit about this.

DANNY. Um…

PETE. You know?

DANNY. Yeah, that's not actually the title page.

PETE. That's not the title?

DANNY. Well, that's the title, but that's not the title page I submitted to Humana.

PETE. Whaddya mean?

*(***DANNY** *pulls out a new title page from his pocket and smoothes it onto the script. Beat.)*

You're a fuckin' idiot.

DANNY. Yeah.

PETE. You are.

DANNY. I know.

PETE. What are you going to do?

DANNY. I don't have a fuckin' clue.

(Blackout.)

Scene 3

(Another Coffee Chain)

(December. Coats, hats. **DANNY** *and* **EMILIE** *sit at a small table that only has room for one cup of coffee and the script, which lies between them.)*

EMILIE. I don't understand.

DANNY. Well, let me–

EMILIE. You're the director?

DANNY. No.

EMILIE. You're not the director?

DANNY. No. Who told you I was the director?

EMILIE. You did, didn't you?

DANNY. No.

EMILIE. You didn't?

DANNY. No.

EMILIE. I really don't under–

DANNY. I'm sorry. Let's start again.

EMILIE. That's OK. I misunderstood.

DANNY. Probably not.

EMILIE. I'm not right for this anyway.

DANNY. You're perfect. Look, I saw you in that Donatella Frazetti thing at New Georges last year, I think you're great.

EMILIE. Thank you.

DANNY. You're perfect for this.

EMILIE. I'm not. The mother is maybe twenty years older than me. I couldn't play it. It would be weird.

DANNY. It's not for the play.

EMILIE. Obviously.

DANNY. It's for the playwright.

(Beat.)

EMILIE. Excuse me?

DANNY. It's for the playwright. I told your agent it was for the play because I didn't know how else to get you to meet with me. It's a little bit of a misrepresentation–

EMILIE. A little bit?

DANNY. I'm sorry.

EMILIE. I should go. This is too weird.

(She gets up to go.)

DANNY. Wait. Emilie, please. Please.

(Beat.)

Let me explain. Just let me explain and then you can go. But it's nothing weird, or at least not the kind of weird you should leave because of. I'm gay. I'm very gay. So, there's nothing weird here.

EMILIE. Very gay?

DANNY. Well, yeah.

(She inches back to the table; she doesn't sit back down.)

EMILIE. So you're not the director.

DANNY. No.

EMILIE. And I'm not right for the part.

DANNY. No.

EMILIE. All right, you've got two minutes. But then I'm going.

DANNY. Fair enough.

EMILIE. So…

DANNY. Sorry. So I wrote this play.

EMILIE. You're the playwright?

DANNY. Yeah.

EMILIE. So who's this?

(She points to the title page.)

DANNY. Hopefully you.

EMILIE. OK, you're not making any–

DANNY. I wrote the play. But I think it's pretty clear why I'd be a little… um… unsure about people's response to

me being the author. And so when I sent it out into the world, out for people to look at, I put another name on it. I put this name on it. Because I thought, and this is where I'm pretty sure I'm looking like a big big tool, that if it wasn't some name like "Danny Larson" on this play, this particular play, people might actually read it. Might think about reading it. So I put this name on it. And I never expected, I mean hoped, certainly, but never expected anybody to pick up the thing, because it's my fifth full-length and nobody's jumped at anything yet, so I had no idea how that would feel, how that would go. And when the phone call came, I panicked and said I was the playwright's cousin and I'd give her the message and that was a week ago and I haven't… had the balls to call them back and tell them the truth, and they've been emailing me… well, emailing her to start scheduling meetings with directors and things and I think that if I show up, if this who-the-fuck-is-he white guy shows up they'll pull the plug on the whole thing and I think that might leave me completely unable to write another word. Forever. So I looked through old Playbills, because I save them all, because I think I mentioned I'm very gay…

EMILIE. Uh-huh…

DANNY. And remembered you and found your agent, because your union may be the Island of Misfit Toys, but handing out phone numbers they apparently can do, and got to you. And here you are. And I was hoping you would let me try to talk you into a little acting job. For pay. And that's the whole thing and you can go now if you want.

(Beat.)

EMILIE. That's–

DANNY. I know.

EMILIE. That's whacked out, that's… But it seems to me you should just tell them you wrote the thing. Whoever "them" is.

DANNY. It's the Humana Festival.

EMILIE. What?

DANNY. Humana.

EMILIE. Oh my god.

DANNY. It could truly make me. And if I tell them I pulled the wool over their eyes and they take a dump on me, it would probably break me.

(She sits back down.)

EMILIE. But they're going to find out.

DANNY. I know.

EMILIE. I mean, they'd have to.

DANNY. I want them to. But not before they've produced the thing.

EMILIE. That's not–

DANNY. I know. I know. It's cocoa puffs, I know, I know it, but I honestly think they'll scuttle the whole thing if I tell them now. But if the show is a success and then I tell them… Or *we* tell them…

EMILIE. And they–

DANNY. It's not about publicity, although I'm sure it would generate that. It's about legitimizing the play.

EMILIE. Huh.

DANNY. Which I think, I know it's good. It's–

EMILIE. It's very good.

DANNY. And I don't want to screw this up.

EMILIE. Any more than you have.

DANNY. Um… yeah.

EMILIE. So what would I do?

DANNY. Well, you'd be her.

(He points to the script.)

EMILIE. OK. If I do this–

DANNY. Oh, Jesus, that's–

EMILIE. *If* I do this.

DANNY. OK.

EMILIE. I'm not her. I mean, I'm no star, but I do have a career, or am starting to have one. I haven't worked at Humana, but I've auditioned for them and last year I was called back twice for one of the plays, so they know who I am.

DANNY. All the better.

EMILIE. How do you figure?

DANNY. Easy for you to say you put another name on it because as an actress you didn't want to get dismissed as another actress-turned-writer.

EMILIE. As opposed to…?

DANNY. A white dude writing a play about an alcoholic black mother and her card-sharp son trying to get out of the Projects.

EMILIE. And the title of his play is… *Call A Spade.*

DANNY. And the title of his play is *Call A Spade.* And he is very much afraid his play would be immediately dismissed because he is a white, white dude.

EMILIE. So you wanna pull some *Freaky Friday* shit with me.

DANNY. More like some *Victor/Victoria* shit, I think.

EMILIE. Huh. You are very gay.

DANNY. Yes, ma'am.

EMILIE. God.

DANNY. I know.

EMILIE. Well, first of all…

DANNY. Yeah?

(She points to the script.)

EMILIE. This isn't even a real name.

DANNY. It's not supposed to be your real name.

EMILIE. I mean, it's not a name. I don't even know how you'd say it. Shaleeha Nahgoa… What?

DANNY. Shaleeha G'ntamobi. *(sha-LEE-ya guh-NAH-ta-MOH-bee)*

EMILIE. Shaleeha G'ntamobi.

DANNY. Yeah.

EMILIE. You said it so easily.

DANNY. I've been practicing.

EMILIE. That's not a name. It's just a bunch of sounds put together. Where'd you get it?

DANNY. I just tried to think of a name that sounded kind of…

(Beat.)

EMILIE. Black.

DANNY. Yeah. Is that bad?

EMILIE. It ain't good.

DANNY. Yeah… Well…

EMILIE. And what happens to me?

DANNY. When?

EMILIE. When you are revealed to be the white dude who pretended to be Shaleeha Nohgoh–

DANNY. G'Ntamobi.

EMILIE. Whatever. What happens to me?

DANNY. Well, I haven't figured that out. But on top of whatever you get in a salary-type way for the next couple months, you get points in the show. When it gets produced. Hopefully all over the fuckin' world.

EMILIE. I get points?

DANNY. Sure.

EMILIE. In writing?

DANNY. Of course. I mean, we're not animals.

EMILIE. And then what?

DANNY. And we both quit our day jobs, not to assume you've got a day job…

EMILIE. Assume away.

DANNY. And get royalty checks for the rest of our days. Or at least some of our days.

EMILIE. Does that really happen?

DANNY. It better.

(Beat.)

EMILIE. It's just… It's good. People should see it.

DANNY. So…

EMILIE. But this is fucked up.

DANNY. A little bit.

EMILIE. And…

DANNY. And…?

EMILIE. Are we talking googobs of money?

DANNY. Oh, Emilie. I certainly fuckin' hope so.

(Blackout.)

Scene 4

(Danny and Pete's Apartment)

*(***EMILIE** *is on the phone, holding the script.* **DANNY** *is sitting close by, intent on her.* **PETE** *and* **TREVOR** *are watching the whole thing, in horror or amusement or some strange combination.)*

EMILIE. No. No. It's pronounced G'Ntamobi… Yeah, I guess pronunciation isn't so important if it's not real.

DANNY. Careful.

PETE. *(to* **DANNY***)* Shut up, babe.

EMILIE. Huh. That's a good… Uh… I was scared, I guess. I mean, I thought it was OK, but I figured anybody who knew me would think I was just another dumb actress who decided writing a play must be easy.

TREVOR. You mean it isn't?

DANNY. Fuck off.

EMILIE. Yeah, well… I can't believe it was selected.

DANNY. Excuse me?

PETE. Babe, just–

EMILIE. I'm such a fan, you know? All of my favorite American plays in the last ten years have started with you guys, it seems.

DANNY. Well, Jesus, don't go crazy.

*(***EMILIE** *gestures to* **DANNY** *to get away.)*

PETE. Danny, heel.

DANNY. But–

EMILIE. Thanks. I can't wait to meet him. And I'll see you next month. Anything else you need from me, you can call me on my cell.

DANNY. Or here.

EMILIE. *(to* **PETE***)* Could you…?

*(***PETE** *puts his hand over* **DANNY***'s mouth.* **EMILIE** *goes back to the phone.)*

EMILIE. Or this number, I guess, but my cell is where you can reach me— Oh, that's… that's— Thanks so much, Mister Thomp— OK. Barry.

DANNY. *(muffled)* Barry?

EMILIE. Talk to you soon. Bye.

(She hangs up. **PETE** *lets* **DANNY** *go. They all stare at her. Beat..)*

DANNY. Well?

EMILIE. You're not going to believe it.

DANNY. What?

EMILIE. This is nuts.

DANNY. What already?

EMILIE. All right. You want a director?

DANNY. Yes, please.

EMILIE. How about Lawrence James?

DANNY. No way.

PETE. Who?

TREVOR. Oh shit.

PETE. Who is—?

DANNY. Oh shit. Oh shit.

EMILIE. Yeah.

PETE. Who the hell is—?

DANNY. Lawrence James directed that thing about Booker T. Washington at The Public last year.

TREVOR. Went to Broadway.

EMILIE. Yup.

TREVOR. He won a–

DANNY. It was on PBS last month.

PETE. Oh. Well, I love PBS.

DANNY. Holy shit! Holy holy shit!

EMILIE. He was very understanding about–

DANNY. Lawrence Ja—?

EMILIE. No. Sorry. Barry Thompson was understanding about–

PETE. Oh, c'mon, who is Barry—?

DANNY. From Humana.

TREVOR. Literary guy.

DANNY. He's in charge of–

TREVOR. Choosing.

DANNY. Choosing. Judging. Crippling writers with doubt and worry.

TREVOR. British accent. Born in Topeka.

PETE. All right, all right.

EMILIE Said he totally understood about the actress thing. And since they're about to announce they just need to figure out the best way to put out my name. They may wait until it's closer.

DANNY. Wow.

EMILIE. They just don't want any inkling of impropriety, he said.

TREVOR. Inkling?

EMILIE. Inkling.

TREVOR. He said inkling?

EMILIE. He said inkling.

TREVOR. Say it again.

EMILIE. Inkling.

TREVOR. Inkling.

EMILIE. Inkling.

TREVOR. Ink–

DANNY. Um, hello?

EMILIE. Sorry.

TREVOR. Sorry.

(Beat.)

Inkling.

*(***EMILIE** *and* **TREVOR** *laugh)*

DANNY. C'mon.

EMILIE. *(To* **TREVOR***)* You're funny.

TREVOR. Well, shucks.

DANNY. Oh my god. Can we–?

EMILIE. Sorry.

TREVOR. Sorry.

DANNY. So what–

EMILIE. Nothing. Nothing for now. They'll call in a couple weeks to set up auditions, press will start calling then too, they're announcing the line-up next week, so he said I should get ready.

PETE. Get ready?

EMILIE. "Get ready to get famous."

(Beat.)

Is what he said.

DANNY. Get ready to get famous?

EMILIE. Yeah.

TREVOR. Oh my god, it's a freakin' disaster movie.

DANNY. It's all gonna be fine. It's all gonna–

EMILIE. Yeah.

PETE. Uh-huh.

(Beat.)

EMILIE. I'm so fucking excited about this!

DANNY. Right?

PETE. This is good, isn't it?

DANNY. It's very–

TREVOR. It's good.

PETE. Well, it's about time. I'm all for early retirement.

DANNY. Fuck, yeah.

PETE. You're cute when you're successful.

DANNY. That's right I am.

EMILIE. *(to* **DANNY***)* He's funny, too. *(to* **PETE***)* You're all quiet and Brooks Brothers and then look out. I like it.

PETE. *(imitating* **TREVOR***)* Well, shucks.

*(***TREVOR** *laughs.)*

EMILIE. You sure you're not an actor?

PETE. God, no.

EMILIE. What do you–

PETE. I make money for people who already have money.

EMILIE. Oh, you're a monster.

PETE. Nah. Just a realist.

EMILIE. Wow. You guys are, like, hardly gay at all.

(Beat.)

PETE. You'd be surprised.

EMILIE. *(re:* **DANNY** *and* **TREVOR***)* And you two met—?

TREVOR. Grad school.

EMILIE. Gotcha. Which was where?

TREVOR. In New Haven.

DANNY. Jesus. He can't even say the word.

TREVOR. It's so braggy.

DANNY. See?

EMILIE. *(to* **TREVOR***)* You know, I've met you before.

TREVOR. You have? **DANNY**. You know him?

EMILIE. I was your reader for that thing at the–

TREVOR. Oh, shit. I thought you looked–

EMILIE. You know? For that–

TREVOR. That was so epically stupid.

EMILIE. I thought you got it.

TREVOR. So did I.

EMILIE. Fuckers.

TREVOR. Yeah. Fuckers.

EMILIE. Yeah.

*(***EMILIE** *stares at* **TREVOR**. *Beat. Then, still looking at* **TREVOR**.*)*

I… gotta go.

DANNY. You do?

EMILIE. Yeah. *(to* **TREVOR***)* You wanna split a cab?

TREVOR. I do.

PETE. *(grabbing* **DANNY***)* Cabs! Baby, our early retirement is gonna be full of cabs.

EMILIE. *(to* **DANNY***)* So, Friday?

DANNY. Yeah, Friday.

TREVOR. What's Friday?

DANNY. We gotta start figuring out–

PETE. 'enry 'iggins here has to get Eliza Doolittle all ready for the ball. The ball! Oh my god. The ball! *(He sings a bit.)* "I could've danced all night. I could've–" *(to* **DANNY***)* Baby! We're in a fuckin' musical!

EMILIE. *(to* **DANNY***)* I take it back. He's very gay, too.

DANNY. God I hope so.

*(***DANNY** *and* **PETE** *kiss.)*

EMILIE. Oh my god, get a fuckin' room.

PETE. Look around. We did.

DANNY. So, see you–

EMILIE. Yeah.

PETE. You got your…?

EMILIE. Got it. Thanks for… you know… including me in your strange little crime.

DANNY. It's not a–

EMILIE. Kidding, Danny, kidding. *(to* **TREVOR***)* You comin'?

TREVOR. Hey, I'm walking, too– Hold on.

EMILIE. All right, c'mon.

TREVOR. I'm comin', I'm comin. Bah.

DANNY. Bah.

EMILIE. Night.

PETE. Bye.

*(***TREVOR, DANNY,** *and* **PETE** *exchange hugs, whatever.* **EMILIE** *and* **TREVOR** *exit. Beat.)*

Is it a—?

DANNY. It's not a crime!

PETE. Danny…

DANNY. Crime is a big word. Crime is robbing a child. Strangling your mom and gutting her puppy. Invading a country without cause. This is not a crime.

PETE. Then why'd she—?

DANNY. It's not a fuckin' crime!

*(***DANNY** *takes* **PETE** *in his arms)*

It's just a fuckin' play.

(Blackout.)

Scene 5

(Another Coffee Chain)

(January. Still coats, hats. **DANNY** *and* **EMILIE** *sit at a medium-sized table, coffee and pages from the script all over the table between them.)*

DANNY. I think you just say "I don't know."

EMILIE. Oh, c'mon.

DANNY. I do.

EMILIE. I can't.

DANNY. I think you say something along the lines of "I don't know" or "hopefully the play answers that question" or something like that.

EMILIE. But that's so pretentious.

DANNY. Exactly.

EMILIE. I'm not kidding.

DANNY. I'm not either. You're the writer. You just refer them back to the play and get all humbly and tongue-tied and they'll think you're smart.

EMILIE. So I'm supposed to sit in some production meeting–

DANNY. Yes.

EMILIE. or some one-on-one with the director–

DANNY. Yeah. Yes.

EMILIE. and say, "Gosh, I hope the play answers that question" and that'll shut them up?

DANNY. If you try to explain the thing to 'em, they'll start to hold you up to your explanation, and I gotta tell you, Em, if they do that you're absolutely fucked.

EMILIE. And when I bring the questions back to you?

DANNY. I'll say I think the play answers the question.

EMILIE. That is such tremendous horseshit!

DANNY. I know! Isn't it awesome?

EMILIE. You should never've told me the secret, you know?

DANNY. I'll just have to trust you.

EMILIE. Guess so.

DANNY. Yup.

(They both laugh. Beat. She shuffles through the pages in front of them.)

EMILIE. Danny?

DANNY. Hmm?

EMILIE. Really, where'd this come from?

DANNY. I don't–

EMILIE. Yeah, yeah. I'm in the club now, Danny.

DANNY. Well, shit. You really wanna–?

EMILIE. Yes!

DANNY. All right, all right. So, I'm sitting on the subway with Pete last year just, you know, going home.

EMILIE. Your subway?

DANNY. Which subway would it be?

EMILIE. Sorry.

DANNY. And there's these kids, maybe tweleve, thirteen, talking real loud, real instrusive-like, and everybody's trying hard not to notice them.

EMILIE. Black kids?

DANNY. Well, yeah.

EMILIE. OK.

DANNY. Why?

EMILIE. Just getting the picture.

DANNY. OK. And one of them, I see, is pointing to my shoes, and my shoes are, I think, kinda cool. And kinda like the shoes one of them is wearing, I guess. So I think they're noticing that I'm kinda cool. Which makes me look up and maybe more actively notice them, you know?

EMILIE. Sure.

DANNY. And then I hear the one kid say something about "shoes a homo would wear" and I'm, like, stunned. I can't believe it. And I look at Pete and he's trying real hard–

EMILIE. Not to notice.

DANNY. Not to notice, yeah. And I'm fascinated by them, but now I'm pissed, too. And I want to take more of this in, because that thing in my head, that there's-an-idea-over-there-try-not-to-scare-it-away thing that happens when I want to write starts making loud alarm-type sounds, but I can't stop myself and I get all, "Hey, kid, that is so not cool."

EMILIE. You go, girl.

DANNY. And he gets a little up in my face, not a lot, but enough, and I try to stand my ground, and Pete keeps trying not to notice and eventually they move further down the car.

EMILIE. Uh-huh.

DANNY. And now this kid is in my head, his voice, what he said, how he looked, his friends, what they said, the feel of it all, the way it… I dunno, grabbed me, and for the next week I can't get away from it, and I think it's because I got my feelings a little banged up, because I don't wanna be the homo with the shoes, but the truth is, I want to know about that kid, and that's fuckin' death for me. Because once I want to know about somebody, then I gotta sit down and stare at my angry little computer and I'm totally, completely and utterly fucked. Because I sit down and the cursor goes blink, blink and it's this kid that I know absolutely nothing about who wants to talk, and, Emilie, I won't lie to you, it was completely terrifying, but I couldn't stop. Because he had stuff to say, and then his mom, and his brother and that little girl from down the block, and then, when everybody's done talking, I've got this play. That nobody is going to look at. Ever. And, Jesus Christ, what now?

EMILIE. Huh.

DANNY. Yeah.

(Beat.)

You know, you can say what you think about it.

EMILIE. What?

DANNY. About the play, I can take it.

EMILIE. I did say. I like it.

DANNY. I'm a big boy.

EMILIE. Danny, I like it.

DANNY. Really, I'm tough.

EMILIE. I love it.

DANNY. Oh thank god.

EMILIE. I really do. It's beyond me how you did it, but it's so, so good.

DANNY. It's actually beyond me too.

EMILIE. And it pisses me off a little, I think.

DANNY. Yeah?

EMILIE. Because you got it so right.

DANNY. Oh.

EMILIE. That's all.

DANNY. Oh.

EMILIE. And you should be, whatever… I think you should maybe be a little more…

DANNY. Look, however not freaked out about this you think I am, I'm about, I don't know, four hundred and sisty-seven times more freaked out than you think.

EMILIE. Yeah?

DANNY. Hand to god.

EMILIE. Good.

(Beat. They both thumb through the play.)

EMILIE. I wasn't kidding, you know.

DANNY. What?

EMILIE. I love it.

DANNY. Aw…

EMILIE. It's… There's so much… This little girl stuff here, she's so–

DANNY. Thanks.

EMILIE. The thing with the dog. God, that scene where the–

DANNY. Which–

EMILIE. The mom takes the knife away from him, but puts it in a drawer–

DANNY. Oh, yeah.

EMILIE. Just within reach because it's "important to know what you're capable of."

DANNY. You don't think that's a little–

EMILIE. Oh, god no.

DANNY. Well, thanks.

EMILIE. It's important to… where'd you…?

DANNY. I told you. I. Don't. Know.

EMILIE. C'mon.

DANNY. No! That's why it's so good to use, because, like, seven times out of twelve, it's just fuckin' true. That's a tip I'm passin' along in case you ever write somethin' of your own.

EMILIE. Me? Please.

DANNY. It could happen.

EMILIE. I'm full up on rejection, but thanks. Although… Oh, fuck it.

DANNY. What?

EMILIE. No, no. Fuck it.

DANNY. Emilie, what?

EMILIE. OK. Are we… I dunno.

DANNY. Honestly no idea what's going on right now.

EMILIE. I just… I thought it would be…

DANNY. Oh my god, are you having, like, a stroke or something?

EMILIE. What if the little girl walked in right then?

(Beat.)

DANNY. Oh.

EMILIE. Forget it.

DANNY. No, no…

EMILIE. I don't–

DANNY. I just–

EMILIE. Look. I'm either sitting here like some weird, whatever, some fuckin' puppet, or–

DANNY. You're not a–

EMILIE. Or I'm part of this. You know?

DANNY. Yeah…

EMILIE. And I'd rather be part of it.

DANNY. OK.

EMILIE. And I don't know thing number one about puttin' pen to paper, or what goes on in you or anybody when that happens but–

DANNY. It's OK. I… Here's the thing, right? This… this… It happens alone. I mean that's my… I dunno… That's my experience of it…

EMILIE. Sorry, I didn't–

DANNY. No, no, no, I… It's gotta come from me, is all. Like it's my only chance, now, before anybody says it out loud, it's the only time it's all mine. And I… I… I like that.

EMILIE. OK, so I should–

DANNY. I really like it. But that time might be gone now, is my point. It might be gone. So…

EMILIE. What?

DANNY. So maybe the little girl walks in right then.

EMILIE. Oh.

DANNY. Maybe.

EMILIE. Maybe.

DANNY. Maybe.

(Beat.)

EMILIE. Danny?

DANNY. Yeah?

EMILIE. This is fuckin' great.

DANNY. Yeah.

EMILIE. Oh my god. This is–

DANNY. Welcome to the club.

EMILIE. What happens when it's all over?

DANNY. Whaddya mean?

EMILIE. After the festival?

DANNY. We get famous, right? You're so awesome being… well… me, that somebody notices you and whisks you away and you win a Blony for some stupid revival and I get a–

EMILIE. What?

DANNY. You know, a remount of some forgotten 30's social–

EMILIE. Wait, wait. My what?

DANNY. Your what what?

EMILIE. I win my what?

DANNY. Your Blony! You know, the Tony somebody wins, usually some supporting actor or actress or whatever, the award they win that seems a little suspect, like they won it maybe because everybody else was all–

EMILIE. A black Tony?

DANNY. Yeah! There are Blonys, Bloscars, you know… Some reality show reject sings a sad, sad song and it's "the envelope please!"

EMILIE. Danny, that's–

DANNY. Or if somebody is all "whatchoo talkin' about" in some play or movie, they're doin' some real Blacting, you know? Or my play, you know, I need four Blactors to be in it.

(Beat.)

What? Did I say somethin' wrong?

EMILIE. Um…

DANNY. What?

EMILIE. Do you think you didn't?

DANNY. C'mon, you've heard that before.

EMILIE. Not from…

DANNY. Yeah, yeah, I know, but it's funny, right?

EMILIE. It's pretty much not funny at all.

DANNY. Oh, jeez, c'mon. C'mon Emilie, funny's funny. No harm, no… you know.

EMILIE. Um, OK, but reducing, I dunno, let's say… you talking last year?

DANNY. OK, sure, last year.

EMILIE. Reducing that life-changing award that woman won last year for her beautiful, terrific work–

DANNY. It was a seven-minute–

EMILIE. Wait a–

DANNY. A seven-minute scene in a two-and-a-half hour play, Emilie.

EMILIE. So?

DANNY. So a seven-minute scene with a big freaky monologue about a circus clown and all sorts of portents of mumbo-jumbo doom and speechifying and poof: Tony!

EMILIE. That's fuckin' right.

DANNY. It's a Blony!

EMILIE. You saying she didn't deserve it? She was amazing.

DANNY. Well, I dunno. I guess she did. She was good, sure.

EMILIE. But it was a Blony?

DANNY. Well, she's black, she won a Tony, it was… a… Blony.

(Beat.)

OK. But you've never said it? Heard it? I don't believe that for a second.

EMILIE. I've heard it, sure, but there's a… whatever you… there's a code, you know?

DANNY. Oh, Jesus.

EMILIE. There is!

DANNY. You can say it but I can't.

EMILIE. Fuckin' right.

DANNY. See, that's bullshit.

EMILIE. OK. So, like, every time a gay guy wins a choreography award over some straight choreographer–

DANNY. What's a straight choreographer?

EMILIE. or some really deserving, amazing, female choreographer, it's not at all because he's in the gay mafia or anything.

DANNY. Here we go.

EMILIE. You started it.

DANNY. OK. Maybe. But that's such an old-timey way of thinking about things.

EMILIE. Are you serious now?

DANNY. And besides, it's not the same thing at all.

EMILIE. What I just said is not the same as what you just said.

DANNY. No.

EMILIE. At all.

DANNY. No. No.

EMILIE. You are so full of shit your eyes are brown! I don't even know what to–

DANNY. Look, Emilie, I know what it's like.

EMILIE. You what?

DANNY. I know what it's like to be all, you know, all ghettoized, I know it. I've been there. I've felt it every day of my life since I figured out I was gay.

EMILIE. OK. Wait. We should stop. You're about to get yourself in some bad, bad trouble, and I think we should stop.

DANNY. No, no, listen, I'm just saying I know what it's like. Prejudice, you know? The big world and all that, turning against you, against me. I've been there. I'm there. We're the same.

EMILIE. Danny, if you're going to sit there and tell me that my life as a black woman in this society, in this particular society, the United States of Whatever, is somehow, in some way, in *any* way, comparable to your middle-class realization that you like dick more than not, then you are living in a ridiculously large world of crazy and I'm kind of, I can't even think of a big enough word, flabbergasted. Seriously.

DANNY. OK. We're not the same. That was the wrong thing to say.

EMILIE. You think?

DANNY. But I'm saying I know some of what you know.

EMILIE. Kid, you don't know a single thing I know.

DANNY. Now, c'mon.

EMILIE. No, you can't.

DANNY. Now who's being stubborn?

EMILIE. Stubborn?

DANNY. You're gonna tell me that when I was eighteen and some guy followed me out of a bar near my dorm and told me to not come back, because they "don't serve no fags no drinks not ever" that I didn't get some itty bitty window into what it's like to have people hate you just 'cuz of who you are?

EMILIE. No. Because it's not who you are.

DANNY. Excuse me?

EMILIE. Who you sleep with isn't who you are.

DANNY. Well, of course it isn't. Christ.

EMILIE. Who you sleep with is who you sleep with.

DANNY. And being gay isn't who you sleep with. It's who you are.

EMILIE. Oh, man.

DANNY. What?

EMILIE. Take away what happens in your bedroom, and what are you, Danny? Just another white guy walking around telling the world what to do.

DANNY. That's crazy!

EMILIE. And knowing good and goddamn well that the world is probably gonna do it, because you're just another white guy walking around saying it.

DANNY. Well, now I'm getting a little pissed.

EMILIE. Oh, no. Oh, that's terrible. Poor, poor white guy is getting pissed because two minutes of his life stopped going his way. Jesus.

DANNY. I'm not all those guys, Emilie.

EMILIE. No, but you're one of 'em.

DANNY. C'mon.

EMILIE. No, you c'mon. You're a really nice guy, Danny, I know, and I'm gonna give you points for trying, and I'll even give you points for people being mean to you, because I know that gay can't always be easy, I get that, but a gay white guy telling a black woman he gets her pain is a little like Adolf Hitler eating a piece of

fuckin' kugel and saying he understands the plight of the Jews. So back off, OK? And quit while you're just a little bit behind, because now I actually am starting to get mad, and that's not good for either one of us. And it's certainly not good for this play. And I know you care more about that than us, so let's stop for the sake of the baby.

(Beat.)

DANNY. OK.

(Beat.)

But can I ask you one thing?

EMILIE. Danny…

DANNY. One thing.

(Beat.)

EMILIE. All right. Shoot.

DANNY. Earlier, when I was telling you about that shoe thing on the subway, right?

EMILIE. Yeah…

DANNY. Not even one second into the story you wanted clarification.

EMILIE. What?

DANNY. I told you there were some boys and you wanted to know if they were black. You wanted to know. I just said they were boys and you wanted to know what we looked like on that train, me and those boys, from a pigment-oriented standpoint.

EMILIE. So?

DANNY. So, I'm not the one who spelled that out, you were. You needed to know. So. Before you get all crazier-than-thou, don't accuse me of not noticing the way the world works. Racially, I mean. Because you made the same assumptions anybody would about that story, and that is because we're all the same. Not because we want to be. But because we are. And the thing that freaks you out, the reason you're even here, because I

know it's going to freak more than just you out, is that some guy might be able to sit in his middle-class apartment and imagine a life that isn't his, a life that you think you have some ownership of, and the thing that freaks *me* out is that I think, I'm starting to think we all have ownership of it, and I don't quite know what to do with that. But I'm not wrong about it. I'm not completely wrong about it. At least not yet.

(Beat.)

OK?

EMILIE. I don't know.

DANNY. OK?

EMILIE. Danny…

DANNY. OK?

(Beat.)

EMILIE. OK.

DANNY. OK.

(Beat.)

EMILIE. For now.

(Blackout.)

Scene 6

(A Hallway)

*(***DANNY** *and* **TREVOR** *sit in two chairs [or on a bench] against a blank wall, looking offstage to an unseen door.* **DANNY** *is texting on his cell phone. The script is on his lap.)*

DANNY. Shit. This fucking–

TREVOR. Stop doing it so fast, that–

DANNY. Shut up. Shit. Shit.

TREVOR. Dude, you're doing it too–

DANNY. Shut up.

*(***TREVOR** *looks around while* **DANNY** *finishes up and sends his text.)*

DANNY. *(cont.)* Sorry.

TREVOR. Whatever, ya dick.

DANNY. Fuckin' smart text totally blows.

TREVOR. It's because you do it too fast.

DANNY. It fucking blows.

TREVOR. OK… And what do they think when Emilie's getting all these texts?

DANNY. They can think whatever they want. It's not like she's responding to all of 'em.

TREVOR. True, but this is all a little douchey, don't you think?

DANNY. It's a best-solution situation.

TREVOR. It's mayonnaise and relish on a poop sandwich. The sandwich is still primarily shit, you know?

DANNY. Hilarious. I just– Oh, hold on.

*(***DANNY** *looks off.)*

There goes another one.

*(***TREVOR** *looks off.)*

Huh.

TREVOR. What?

DANNY. I gotta look at him when he comes out. He's, like…

TREVOR. What?

DANNY. You know, a little fat I think, a little three-cheeseburgers-away-from-a-medical-intervention, so…

TREVOR. Can I say something a little controversial?

DANNY. Sure.

TREVOR. I'm all in favor of you getting your play done, right?

DANNY. Right.

TREVOR. And this Emilie thing is… I dunno… it is what it is, I guess.

DANNY. OK…

TREVOR. But sitting out here sending texts about your physical impression of poor little actor-bots who are just trying to get a job without even seeing them audition makes me think this whole thing is maybe not gonna go so well.

DANNY. Right. And what about Emilie?

TREVOR. Whaddya mean?

DANNY. What does she think–

TREVOR. How would I know?

DANNY. I dunno. How would you know?

TREVOR. I wouldn't.

DANNY. Really?

TREVOR. Really. What are you–

DANNY. OK, OK.

TREVOR. Look, I don't wanna harsh on you.

DANNY. Do you have a better idea? Like, I mean, I just mean if you have some super fantastic suggestion that might let me be part of the auditions for my skit without having to go in there and announce my honky cracker existence, I'm completely, really, completely open to it. The floor is, like, procedurally, parliamentarily open to the membership giving ideas. So, you got any?

(Beat.)

TREVOR. You don't have to be a total dick about it.

DANNY. I wasn't.

TREVOR. I think I just get to say every once in a while when I, like, disagree, don't I?

DANNY. Of course.

TREVOR. So don't be a total dick when I tell you I'm not in 100 percent agreement with something that I think seems more than a little on the not-healthy side, OK?

DANNY. I'm sorry.

TREVOR. OK?

DANNY. I'm sorry, Trev.

TREVOR. Whatever.

DANNY. Trevor?

TREVOR. What?

DANNY. I'm sorry.

TREVOR. OK.

DANNY. I didn't mean to be a fuckwad.

TREVOR. You just couldn't help it, I guess.

DANNY. I couldn't.

(Beat.)

I'm really glad you're here.

TREVOR. I know.

DANNY. Pete gets so, you know, so bummed he can't get time off to come with me when I'm–

TREVOR. Doing stupid, stupid things?

DANNY. Exactly.

TREVOR. Because this is…

DANNY. I know.

TREVOR. Like trying to… stuff a… doberman pincher into a… freakin'… Scooby Doo lunchbox. Or somethin'.

(Beat. They both laugh.)

DANNY. Wow.

TREVOR. Yeah, yeah.

DANNY. Just… wow.

TREVOR. Look, joking aside, I just… Fuck… I mean, Pete's not here, you know? I don't wanna get all weird about this, but… Fuck, now I feel stupid.

DANNY. Trev–

TREVOR. No, I mean, you know, I'm the one is what I… I'm the one sitting in this effin' hallway with you and I can see how somebody might think that's, you know, but who else is gonna do it, is kind of how I see it, so I gotta be the one, you know? It's a shitty job, actually. But you're so pathetic. So it's… it's more pity than friendship is how I see you, is the… the thing. I feel

all this, you know, all this pity for you and I just think somebody should keep an eye on you. It's kinda like having a mentally challenged little brother.

(Beat.)

I just–

DANNY. Trev?

TREVOR. Yeah?

DANNY. Me too.

(Beat. **DANNY** *touches him.)*

OK?

TREVOR. OK.

DANNY. OK. Fuck! Hold on.

*(***DANNY** *looks off.)*

Look at him.

*(***TREVOR** *looks off.)*

I just think…

TREVOR. What?

DANNY. Wait.

*(***DANNY** *takes out his cell and starts texting.)*

Shit. Goddamn…

TREVOR. Go a little–

DANNY. Will you shut up?

*(***TREVOR** *reads what* **DANNY** *is writing.)*

TREVOR. Don't you fucking send that.

DANNY. Why?

*(***TREVOR** *grabs the phone before* **DANNY** *can press send.)*

Hey!

TREVOR. Danny, you can't send a three word text to her that says "He's too African-y."

DANNY. C'mon…

*(***DANNY** *tries to grab the phone back.)*

TREVOR. No, you can't.

*(***TREVOR** *erases the text and hands the phone back to* **DANNY.***)*

DANNY Jesus.

TREVOR. You're the writer. Find better words.

DANNY. I just mean he's so, you know…

TREVOR. What?

DANNY. He doesn't pass the, whatever, the paper bag–

TREVOR. Oh my god, you–

DANNY. I just mean he's… just that he's a little darker than I thought he should–

TREVOR. Dude, find better words.

DANNY. You know what I–

TREVOR. Danny.

DANNY. Right.

TREVOR. OK?

DANNY. OK.

*(***DANNY** *starts to write another text.* **TREVOR***'s phone rings with a text notification.* **TREVOR** *takes out his phone and reads it and laughs.)*

Who's that?

TREVOR. What?

DANNY. Who's on your–

TREVOR. Oh, nobody. Just work.

DANNY. Oh yeah?

TREVOR. It is.

DANNY. Uh-huh.

TREVOR. You know, we got some shit going down there, it's just work.

DANNY. You got a very demanding temp job.

TREVOR. Very.

DANNY. Uh-huh.

TREVOR. So…

DANNY. OK.

TREVOR. OK.

*(***TREVOR** *and* **DANNY** *both turn away from each other and write their texts. They both hit send. Beat.)*

TREVOR. What'd you write?

DANNY. What'd *you* write?

TREVOR. I just told them I'd be there a little early. To fix the shit. At work.

DANNY. Oh.

TREVOR. What'd you write?

DANNY. Basically the same thing. Except that it wasn't about being early, or fixing any shit or going to work. But otherwise, basically it was the same.

(Beat.)

I said it better, OK?

TREVOR. You did?

DANNY. I swear. And I wasn't gonna send that other one.

TREVOR. Sure.

DANNY. I would never! Jesus.

TREVOR. OK.

DANNY. I'm not some… Hold on.

*(***DANNY** *looks off)*

There goes another one.

*(***TREVOR** *looks off. Beat.)*

Wow. Well, I hope *he's* good.

*(***DANNY** *looks back at* **TREVOR**. **TREVOR** *stares at* **DANNY**.*)*

(Blackout.)

Scene 7

(Danny and Pete's Apartment)

*(***TREVOR** *sits checking his cell phone while* **DANNY** *and* **PETE** *are moving in and out of the room, packing a suitcase around him. The script is on top of a small pile of to-be-packed clothes.)*

PETE. Danny, is this the shirt?

DANNY. No, it's gonna be warm there. The stripey one.

PETE. In the wash.

DANNY. In the wash?

PETE. Yeah. You wore it two days ago. Did you think it took a bath all on its own?

DANNY. But I wanna take the stripey one.

TREVOR. They have, like, laundromats there, you know.

PETE. Have you ever seen him do laundry?

TREVOR. I must've.

PETE. You haven't.

DANNY. Sure he has.

TREVOR. Oh my god, I don't think I've ever seen it.

PETE. He's like the Dorian Gray of clean clothes. There's an attic somewhere out there with a handsome young man in an outfit that just gets filthier and filthier.

*(***PETE** *cuts off* **DANNY***'s response with a kiss.)*

DANNY. Nice move.

PETE. Oh I got moves, babe.

*(***TREVOR***'s text notification rings. He checks his phone.)*

DANNY. Who's calling?

TREVOR. Nobody. Text.

(He answers the text.)

What time's your flight?

DANNY. Ten or eleven or something in the morning.

PETE. She's at eight. He has to not be on her flight. It's all so spy-tastic. Here's the shirt.

DANNY. But it's all wrinkled.

PETE. Danny, so help me Krishna I'm gonna–

TREVOR. Pack the g.d. shirt.

DANNY. All right, jeez.

TREVOR. It's just–

(His text notification rings. He checks his phone and laughs while typing a response. **DANNY** *and* **PETE** *stare at him until he finishes and looks up at them.)*

What?

DANNY. You know, you can just talk to her on the phone in front of us.

TREVOR. Who?

PETE. Oh, please.

TREVOR. That was this guy from work, had a question about–

DANNY. Work has been a real bitch lately, huh?

TREVOR. It was!

PETE. We approve, Trevor. We like her.

TREVOR. Who?

DANNY. We like her.

TREVOR. Ah, shit. How long've you known?

DANNY. I dunno, like five minutes before you did.

TREVOR. Shit.

PETE. It was a little on the obvious side.

DANNY. She's awesome, Trev.

PETE. Will she hate that we know?

TREVOR. No. She thinks not telling you was bullshit. I just thought you'd be mad.

DANNY. Why the hell–?

TREVOR. It just seemed like I was moving in on your, whatever, territory.

PETE. You're nuts, white boy.

TREVOR. Yeah, yeah.

DANNY. Look, T, she's great, and a humonculous improvement on every single woman you've brought home since you and Crazy broke–

TREVOR. Shelby.

DANNY. Since you and crazy Shelby broke up. Emilie's great, she's smart, funny, we were just saying–

PETE. Oh, yeah, last night–

DANNY. *(sincerely)* You know, if nothing else, this whole thing has been great, we got a new friend. And bonus-round, we didn't have any black friends, so she's a two-for-one.

TREVOR. What?

DANNY. You know, everybody we know is so Euro-mutt. I was starting to feel like we were always gonna be this vanilla milk shake club, this–

PETE. You know what he means.

TREVOR. I guess…

DANNY. And you guys are super cute together. Like a sweet little Oreo cookie.

TREVOR. Dude…

DANNY. Oh, Jesus, wait a minute, I was joking. Can't I–

TREVOR. Not really.

DANNY. C'mon, it's just us, can't I–

TREVOR. It's kinda not–

*(***TREVOR***'s phone buzzes.)*

PETE. Oh, for Christ's sake, give me the thing.

(He grabs **TREVOR***'s phone and dials.)*

No, no. Sorry, it's Pete. Yeah. Yes, we sleuthed it all out. I know. He was an idiot. Let's hate him. OK. See you in a couple weeks. *(to* **DANNY***)* She wants to talk to you.

*(***DANNY** *takes the phone.)*

DANNY. Hey, Em. Yeah. Uh-huh.

(He covers the receiver, to **PETE.***)*

Where're those grey socks with the black stripe?

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