SAMUEL FRENCH SAMPLE PERUSAL

This sample is an *excerpt* from a Samuel French title.

This sample is for perusal only and may not be used for performance purposes.

You may not download, print, or distribute this excerpt.

We highly recommend purchasing a copy of the title before considering for performance.

For more information about licensing or about purchasing a play or musical, please visit our website.

www.samuelfrench.com
www.samuelfrench.co.uk

SF PERUSALS

The Sunken Living Room

David Caudle

A Samuel French Acting Edition



SAMUEL FRENCH
FOUNDED 1830

SAMUELFRENCH.COM
SAMUELFRENCH-LONDON.CO.UK

Copyright © 2003, 2008 by David Caudle
All Rights Reserved
Cover photo by Lindsey Sherman and Felicia Cooper
left to right: Jenny Lester, James Daniel Frost, Nik Duggan, Abby Quatro

THE SUNKEN LIVING ROOM is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, the British Commonwealth, including Canada, and all other countries of the Copyright Union. All rights, including professional and amateur stage productions, recitation, lecturing, public reading, motion picture, radio broadcasting, television and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved.

ISBN 978-0-573-66249-2
www.SamuelFrench.com
www.SamuelFrench-London.co.uk

FOR PRODUCTION ENQUIRIES

UNITED STATES AND CANADA
Info@SamuelFrench.com
1-866-598-8449

UNITED KINGDOM AND EUROPE
Theatre@SamuelFrench-London.co.uk
020-7255-4302

Each title is subject to availability from Samuel French, depending upon country of performance. Please be aware that *THE SUNKEN LIVING ROOM* may not be licensed by Samuel French in your territory. Professional and amateur producers should contact the nearest Samuel French office or licensing partner to verify availability.

CAUTION: Professional and amateur producers are hereby warned that *THE SUNKEN LIVING ROOM* is subject to a licensing fee. Publication of this play(s) does not imply availability for performance. Both amateurs and professionals considering a production are strongly advised to apply to Samuel French before starting rehearsals, advertising, or booking a theatre. A licensing fee must be paid whether the title(s) is presented for charity or gain and whether or not admission is charged. Professional/Stock licensing fees are quoted upon application to Samuel French.

No one shall make any changes in this title(s) for the purpose of production. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means, now known or yet to be invented, including mechanical, electronic, photocopying, recording, videotaping, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher. No one shall upload this title(s), or part of this title(s), to any social media websites.

For all enquiries regarding motion picture, television, and other media rights, please contact Samuel French.

MUSIC USE NOTE

Licensees are solely responsible for obtaining formal written permission from copyright owners to use copyrighted music in the performance of this play and are strongly cautioned to do so. If no such permission is obtained by the licensee, then the licensee must use only original music that the licensee owns and controls. Licensees are solely responsible and liable for all music clearances and shall indemnify the copyright owners of the play(s) and their licensing agent, Samuel French, against any costs, expenses, losses and liabilities arising from the use of music by licensees. Please contact the appropriate music licensing authority in your territory for the rights to any incidental music.

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

If you have obtained performance rights to this title, please refer to your licensing agreement for important billing and credit requirements.

THE SUNKEN LIVING ROOM by David Caudle was first presented at the New Theatre in Coral Gables, Florida, on September 27, 2006 as a co-production with Southern Rep in New Orleans. Directed by Ryan Rilette, Artistic Director of Southern Rep; Set Design by Jesse Dreikosen; Costume Design by K. Blair Brown; Lighting by Michael Foster; Sound Design by Ricardo Mungaray; Stage Manager Arienne Pelletier.

WADE. . . . . John Magaro
LYNNETTE . . . . . Pamela Roza
CHIP . . . . . Rudy Mungaray
TAMMY . . . . . Arianne Ellison

The Co-Production re-opened at Southern Rep in New Orleans on January 17, 2007. Directed Ryan Rilette; Set Design by Jesse Dreikosen; Costume Design by Rayna Middleton; Lighting Design by Martin L. Sachs; Sound Design by Ricardo Mungaray; Stage Manager, Desiree Stevenson.

WADE. . . . . John Magaro
LYNNETTE . . . . . Staci Robbins
CHIP . . . . . Rudy Mungaray
TAMMY . . . . . Arianne Ellison

THE SUNKEN LIVING ROOM was originally slotted for a World Premiere at Southern Rep in November of 2005. The production was cast and ready to begin rehearsals when Hurricane Katrina struck. The author wishes to thank and acknowledge Rafael De Acha, then-Artistic Director of New Theatre, and Ricky J. Martinez, current Artistic Director of New Theatre for offering the displaced production a home. The author would also like to acknowledge the original actors cast locally in New Orleans, who were prevented from playing the roles they had auditioned for and won.

LYNNETTE . . . . . Stacy Arton
CHIP . . . . . Nick Gomez
TAMMY . . . . . Mary Cobb

THE SUNKEN LIVING ROOM was developed in part in the Downstage Miami Playwriting Workshop organized by Rem Cabrera of the Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs.

CHARACTERS

(in order of appearance)

LYNNETTE, 40s. The attention-starved wife of an airline pilot.

WADE, 16. Lynnette's youngest son. Slender, effeminate, naive. A bookworm.

CHIP, 17. Wade's older brother. Sexy, athletic, emotionally volatile.

TAMMY, 17. Chip's sexually-experienced pothead girlfriend.

SETTING

The sunken living room of a suburban Miami home. November, 1978.

ACT ONE

Scene One

(Miami, Florida. Around dusk, early November, 1978. Lights up on the sunken living room of a suburban middle-class home. The front door opens onto a tiled foyer containing a small table, a mirror and a cuckoo clock. A hallway leads to the bedrooms offstage. A railing flanks the foyer, then turns along the back edge of the two steps down into the living room proper. The steps and the living room floor are carpeted with a plush shag. An entertainment unit stands in a corner, filled with record albums, a stereo, and posed photos of the family and its individual members. Opposite the foyer, two steps lead back up to the main floor level under an archway leading to the formal dining room, kitchen and master bedroom. How much of the dining room is visible onstage can vary, but its looming presence should be felt, even more formal and less frequented than this museum of a living room. At lights up, the room is deadly still except for the ticking of the cuckoo clock. **LYNNETTE** *enters through the dining room archway. She is in her early forties, quite attractive and stylish but somehow distracted. Her son,* **WADE**, *16, follows eagerly behind her. Bookish and rather effeminate, he is barefoot, in shorts and a t-shirt.)*

WADE. Mom, wait! Turn around a minute.

LYNNETTE. What? I want to get going.

WADE. One of your eyebrows is like, missing.

LYNNETTE. Are you kidding me?

(Lynnette stops at the mirror in the foyer.)

Oh. Christ.

(She sets her purse on the little table and fishes in it.)

Son of a … will you go get me my eyebrow pencil?

WADE. Jawohl, Herr Kommandant!

(She begins other touch-ups to her make-up.)

LYNNETTE. I might have dropped it somewhere in the master bedroom.

WADE. I've been sent to the Rrrussian Frrront!

LYNNETTE. *(to herself)* That's one way to describe it.

WADE. On Hogan's Heroes the other day, there was this –

LYNNETTE. Will you go get the pencil? I don't want to hear about Hogan's Heroes. I don't know how anybody can laugh about war. You watch entirely too much TV.

(beat)

Listen to me. I say one thing and the whole repertoire comes spilling out. No more TV. Eat your vegetables. You'll go blind.

(realizing the sensitive allusion)

…Oh…

*(***CHIP** *enters from the hall. He's 17, charismatic and rock star sexy. Though only a year older than Wade, he is physically much more developed.*

He wears bell-bottom jeans and no shirt, and vigorously takes a towel to his wet, shoulder-length hair.)

CHIP. Even if he did go blind, he'd still find it.

*(***LYNNETTE** *laughs in spite of herself. Turning bright red,* **WADE** *exits through the dining room.)*

LYNNETTE. Going somewhere?

CHIP. I'm gonna go pick up Tammy and we're gonna see a movie or something. So…

LYNNETTE. No.

CHIP. Just, like, thirty bucks. I need to get gas, and we might want to grab McDonalds after.

LYNNETTE. Shouldn't twenty be enough?

CHIP. C'mon, mom. Don't you know what gas costs now? Plus, I need a quart of oil and some washer fluid.

LYNNETTE. Have you been neglecting that car?

CHIP. No. That's what I'm *not* doin. That's why I need the bread.

LYNNETTE. I hope you'll go to the filling station before you pick up Tammy. Unless you want to dazzle her with your automotive maintenance skills. Not that she's the particular type, wisely for her.

CHIP. She's not like you, if that's what you mean. But hey, I gave up tryin to find a gal – how does that old song go? Like the gal that dear old dad – that caved to dear old dad, or somethin.

LYNNETTE. Don't try to sweet-talk me, boy. I'm onto your tricks. I'll give you twenty dollars and not a penny more.

CHIP. Mom, please believe me. Thirty bucks is barely enough these days.

LYNNETTE. Well… Let me see your eyes.

CHIP. Aw, c'mon, mom. I ain't doin' that sh – stuff anymore.

LYNNETTE. You better not be. How come the yard's not mowed?

CHIP. Duh! It rained. The grass is wet.

LYNNETTE. When the grass is mowed, you can have thirty bucks. Your father told me not to give you a penny until it was done.

CHIP. That's not fair! I couldn't stop the goddamn rain!

LYNNETTE. Keep talking like that, Mister, and you'll be grounded.

CHIP. Oh, like you don't cuss?

LYNNETTE. Wade! Where are you with that pencil?

CHIP. Maybe he ducked into the bathroom for a quickie.

LYNNETTE. Stop!

CHIP. C'mon, mama. Yo, hot mama, lookin' fine, just slide me thirty and I'll stay in line.

LYNNETTE. *(succumbing to his charms)* Alright, but you have to get that yard done tomorrow. Your father will be home the day after, and if it's not done, he'll crap a cupcake.

(She hands him the bills.

CHIP *slaps her a high five, and exits back down the hallway.)*

LYNNETTE *(cont.) (calling after him)* When your father calls at nine, you better be here! You and Tammy can go to McDonald's after that, if need be. Chip? Did you hear me?

*(***WADE** *returns with an eyebrow pencil. She goes to work at the mirror.)*

Great. Thanks, honey.

WADE. Where's *he* going?

LYNNETTE. To the movies with Tammy.

WADE. Is she back?

LYNNETTE. From where?

WADE. I thought she moved to Massachusetts with her mom.

LYNNETTE. Moved? No, you must be mistaken.

WADE. She probably wanted to get as far away from him as possible.

LYNNETTE. If she moved to Massachusetts, how could he be going to the movies with her?

WADE. Exactly my point. He's such a stupid, lying, stupid jerk.

LYNNETTE. That's enough of that. Your brother is not stupid.

WADE. What college did he get into? Or is he waiting to see if he actually *graduates?*

LYNNETTE. Not everybody is a scholar. It doesn't mean he's stupid. You need to stop saying that.

WADE. Oh, I can't say he's stupid, which he is, but it's okay for him to give me a hard time about every other single thing on earth?

LYNNETTE. You need to develop a thicker skin, my boy.

WADE. What about *his* skin? He's doing 'ludes again.

LYNNETTE. He says he's not.

WADE. C'mon, mom. Some other stuff, too. He's on something right now, I think.

LYNNETTE. Wade, just mind your own business. Your tattling is not attractive.

WADE. I'm not trying to be attractive. He's just… lying to everybody. How can you think he's telling the truth? How can you let him drive? Give him money?

LYNNETTE. I don't want to hear one more fucking word, pardon my French!

(beat)

Your father and I are satisfied that he's learned his lesson. The car is still drive-able. It's not your concern.

(beat)

How do I look now? Am I not byooootiful?

WADE. Yes…

(She smiles.)

…you are not byooootiful.

*(***LYNNETTE** *slaps his arm with mock annoyance.*

Suddenly, the cuckoo clock comes to life. The little door opens and the bird pops out on his perch, cuckooing six times.)

LYNNETTE. You heard the bird. I'll see you later.

(She heads for the door. **WADE** *tags along, pulling on her purse strap.)*

WADE. Oh, I forgot to tell you what I said in French class today. It was really funny. This girl Nina, she –

LYNNETTE. Wade, quit! How will I ever get to be a Life Master if you don't let me out of the house?

WADE. Why do they call it Life Master? Why not just, Bridge Master? Don't they think there's more to life than Bridge? I mean, what if your life sucks? Who wants to be Master of a sucky life?

LYNNETTE. I don't have time to discuss this now, and I don't like your language. Goodbye. Do your homework.

WADE. I got an A on my history paper.

(Beat; **LYNNETTE** *casts him a look of sincere disappointment.)*

LYNNETTE. *(gently admonishing)* You always get an A, and you always brag. It's really not very attractive.

*(***LYNNETTE** *exits.*

WADE *hangs in the open doorway, watching until the car is heard pulling away.*

He closes the front door. Starts toward the hallway, but thinks better of it, to avoid Chip. He turns on the radio, and exits into the dining room. A DJ's voice fills the empty room.)

DJ (V.O.) That was Peter Frampton sayin' "Show me the way," baby. But if you ask me, he could show us the way – to get all those foxy mamas. Shazam! So, for all you hot mamas and Frampton disciples out there who just joined us… You are listening to the new sound of Y-100, bringing South Florida the best of the best new tunes. And, we got the fewest commercial interruptions. But let's face it. The commercials gotta come sometime, right? And looks like that time is… now. A super tune from Supertramp, some Average White Band and some Kansas comin' at ya after a few words from –

CHIP (O.S., *simultaneous with Radio* **DJ)** ....Hey!…. Wade! …. Turn that down!… I'm listenin to 96-X!…… Wade?

*(***WADE** *hurries in with a bowl of Froot Loops. Turns off the radio.*

CHIP *appears in the hallway, half-dressed.)*

CHIP *(cont.)* Did you hear me?

WADE. Sorry. I didn't know how loud it was.

CHIP. You don't have to turn it off. Just turn it down or put it on 96-X.

*(***CHIP** *exits.*

WADE *pulls an album out of the stack and puts it on the turntable to play. An instrumental song starts, slow and folksy.)*

CHIP (O.S.) *(cont.)* What the hell is that?

*(***WADE** *plugs in head phones, so the music is no longer audible to the audience. He puts the head phones on, sits on the floor in front of the stereo and eats, reading lyrics from the album sleeve.*

CHIP *enters, now fully dressed, ultra-cool and totally hot. He looks at the album on the stereo, yanks the head phones out, and turns the radio on.*

He turns the knob and finds a hard-rocking instrumental. Cranks it up and plays air guitar.)

WADE. Cut it out!

CHIP. *Cut it out!*

WADE. I was listening to that!

*(***WADE** *turns off the radio.)*

CHIP. *I was listening to that!* You're such a fairy.

WADE. Shut up!

CHIP. *Shut up!* Ooh, I'm quakin in my boots! Look at you, sittin there eatin your Froot Loops, listenin to that folky shit. You are such a fuckin fairy.

WADE. *(struggling for a snappy comeback)* The situation is reversed!

CHIP. *(laughing) The situation is reversed!* Oooh, burn! You really got me, man. That's a good one. I gotta remember that. *The situation is reversed!*

WADE. You better leave me alone, or I'm gonna tell mom you're lying about Tammy.

CHIP. What the hell are you talkin about?

WADE. I know she went to Massachusetts.

CHIP. Yeah, she fuckin went to Massachusetts, and now she's fuckin back, you fuckin pudwacker.

WADE. She is not! You're the fucking pudwacker!

CHIP. See, that's what separates the cool dudes from the pudwackers. You gotta say fuckin, not fucking. You don't pronounce the 'g.' That takes all the balls out of it. 'slike sayin gosh-darn.

(mockingly effeminate)

Oh, you gosh-darn pudwacker man, you just make me oh so very very mad!

WADE. I don't talk like that.

CHIP. The hell you don't.

*(***WADE** *plugs the head phones in and starts the folk album again. He puts on the headphones with defiance.)*

CHIP *(cont.)* Whatever, man. I don't care what you do when I'm not around. Just don't break your arm jerkin off.

*(***CHIP** *heads for the door, but stops. He goes back to* **WADE**. *Grabs the album sleeve and calmly reads some of the lyrics.)*

CHIP *(cont.) (loudly, so Wade can hear through the headphones)* It's pretty cool, I guess. The chick knows how to rhyme.

WADE. This was Allison's record. Not that you care.

CHIP. What do you mean? She's my sister too. Look, you're not really mad at me are you? C'mon. Take those things off. You know I was just kiddin ya. Just tryin to get you toughened up for the big bad world.

WADE. So far, you're the worst part of it, so what's the point?

CHIP. Look, I ain't on the debate squad. I can't talk things around in circles like you can. I've just got common sense, which is what you need in life. What *you* don't have.

*(***WADE** *starts to take off the headphones, but won't give Chip that satisfaction.)*

WADE. Dad said that *one time*. That you can be book smart without having common sense. I was there. I heard

him. He didn't mean everyone who's book smart has no common sense, and everyone who's *not* book smart *does* have common sense. I have common sense, Chip. And book smarts. You don't have either one.

CHIP. Alright, then. You're so smart, you tell me what to do. I got a big problem, man. Come on.

*(***WADE** *slowly takes off the headphones and stops the record.)*

CHIP *(cont.)* It's Tammy. I knocked her up.

WADE. She's pregnant?

CHIP. No, she's fuckin European, what do you think? Yes, she's fuckin pregnant.

WADE. Wow.

CHIP. So? What should I do?

WADE. Are you gonna marry her?

CHIP. How can I marry her? What kinda common sense is that? I'm seventeen years old, man. So is she.

WADE. Are you sure she's not staying in Massachusetts?

CHIP. She ain't stayin in no Massachussetts. I don't know where you get this shit. She's here in Miami right now, knocked up. Jesus! What should we do?

WADE. Well, I guess she could put the baby up for adoption.

CHIP. Adoption? She can't have this baby, man.

WADE. An abortion?

CHIP. So, you're sayin she should get an abortion?

WADE. Well, is that what you meant?

CHIP. I don't know, I'm askin you.

WADE. Maybe you better tell mom.

CHIP. She'll tell dad. You want me to get killed?

WADE. Dad wouldn't –

CHIP. Look what happened to Allison, man. We can't even fuckin say her name anymore. You wish it was me instead of her, don't you?

WADE. It would never be you.

CHIP. You'll see. If dad finds out about this, you'll be the only one left standin. 'Sprobly what you want anyway.

WADE. When school lets out this summer, I'm gonna go find her. I'm gonna pay my own way. I don't care what dad says.

CHIP. How much money you got now?

WADE. I don't know, exactly.

CHIP. 'Cuz I think you're right. I think an abortion is the only way. Thanks, man.

WADE. I didn't say –

CHIP. But if I ask mom and dad for the money, they'll figure it out. You gotta help me, man.

WADE. Chip, I can't give you any money.

CHIP. You got to. I need it, little bro. You gotta help me.

WADE. Get your own job.

CHIP. I can't work at fuckin Burger King, man. Wearin those dorky polyester uniforms and those pussy paper hats.

WADE. Good. I don't want you working with me anyway. But you could work at a gas station or something. Would that be cool enough for you? Paula Doogan's dad owns a gas station, and she's, like, a cool girl. A lot of people think she's pretty and, like, stacked, and stuff.

CHIP. I got to third base with her once. Maybe I could talk to her. Get her to ask her dad.

WADE. Sounds good.

CHIP. Yeah, but I gotta have the money now. Now that you've brought up the abortion thing, you know, that kind of thing is supposed to happen early, or it could be dangerous for Tammy. By the time I start workin and get paid, it might be too late. Why don't you just front me the money now, and I'll pay you back with my first paycheck. Yeah, that's what we better do.

WADE. You don't even have this job yet. How do I know you're gonna even get one?

CHIP. Alright, man. You don't want to help out your only brother, that's cool. What about Tammy? She's gonna be in huge trouble. It could ruin her life.

WADE. I didn't say I wouldn't help. I just… don't know… Besides, my money's all in the bank, and the banks are closed. So for tonight, you just have to forget it.

CHIP. Put a man on the moon, but they can't keep a bank open at night? You don't have any cash on you?

WADE. No. Tammy couldn't get … an abortion tonight anyway.

CHIP. Yeah, but we'd be ready in the morning. Come on, man. I know you must have a stash here somewhere. Are you gonna help me out, or are you gonna be a pudwacker?

WADE. You just want drug money, is what you want. Tammy's in Massachusetts.

CHIP. That's great. That's just great. I love you, too.

*(***CHIP** *storms out, slamming the front door behind him. Lights fade.)*

Scene Two

(An hour or so later. It is now totally dark outside. **WADE** *sits on the living room carpet, using the coffee table as a desk. He reads E.M. Forster's* A Passage to India *and takes notes in a spiral pad. The door flies open.* **TAMMY**, *17, enters, as if pushed. She grabs the railing and stumbles down the two steps, into the living room. Her jeans and halter top hug a terrific bod, offset by unconventional features and scraggly, unflattering hair.* **CHIP** *enters behind her.)*

CHIP. Do you know who this is, douchebag?

WADE. Hi Tammy.

CHIP. Are we in Massachusetts here?

WADE. I'm sorry. I thought you moved there.

CHIP. Is this Massachusetts, or Miami?

WADE. It's Miami.

CHIP. Alright, then. Tammy, go wait in the car.

TAMMY. God.

*(***TAMMY** *exits.)*

CHIP. See?

WADE. Yes, I see. I'm sorry.

CHIP. So, you gonna help me out? Help her out? I got nobody else I can ask.

WADE. Alright, Chip. I will. I'll help you.

CHIP. Thanks, man. I heard it costs, like, two hundred and fifty. You got that much?

WADE. I can get it for you tomorrow.

CHIP. Aw, c'mon, man. You know she's here. I proved it.

WADE. I know. I believe you. But I still don't have any money here. I'll get it for you tomorrow. I promise.

(Beat; Chip is stymied.)

CHIP. Fine!

*(***CHIP** *exits. Wade hears Chip and Tammy argue outside.*

He peers out the window but can't make out their words. The voices come closer. **WADE** *quickly takes up his book.* **CHIP** *and* **TAMMY** *enter.)*

CHIP. Go wait in the room.

TAMMY. God.

*(***TAMMY** *exits down the hall.)*

WADE. What's wrong?

CHIP. She's not feeling good.

WADE. Morning sickness?

CHIP. Or evening, whatever. I gotta go get her some medicine. It's pretty expensive, though.

WADE. Didn't mom give you any money?

CHIP. Yeah, but I used most of it for the car. Don't you have *anything* in your wallet?

*(***WADE** *heads for the hallway.)*

Where you goin?

WADE. It's in my Burger King pants.

CHIP. I'll bring 'em out here. Tammy might be…

*(***CHIP** *exits down the hall and reappears with a pair of dark brown polyester slacks.* **WADE** *fishes his wallet out. Removes a few bills.)*

WADE. Twenty-two. That's all I have. It should be more than enough.

CHIP. I don't know, I hope so. I'll be back.

WADE. Should I do anything?

CHIP. No. No, you just stay out here. She's totally wrecked right now.

WADE. I hate to think of her back there alone, all miserable.

CHIP. She's better off by herself. Remember when Scheherazade got leukemia? She stopped eating, and she was always hiding, and wouldn't let anybody pick her up or pet her or anything? That's how Tammy feels. The best thing you can do is just leave her totally alone. But,

whatever you do, don't mention anything about what I told you. You gotta promise me that.

WADE. What if she brings it up?

CHIP. That ain't gonna happen. Promise me.

WADE. Okay. I promise. I wouldn't know how to talk about that anyway.

CHIP. You're alright, you know that?

WADE. Gee, I wasn't sure. What a relief.

CHIP. I'm being serious, man.

WADE. I know. And Chip?

CHIP. Yeah?

WADE. I'm kinda glad. Not that this is happening, but. You know. That you… we… you know…

CHIP. I know. Me, too.

*(***CHIP** *exits. His car is heard peeling out.*

WADE *stares down the hallway for a long time, and finally goes back to his book.*

Soon, **TAMMY** *enters from the hallway and lingers in the foyer.)*

TAMMY. You think I could have something to drink?

WADE. *(in awe of her pregnancy)* Sure. So… how are you? You can sit out here if you want.

TAMMY. Nah. If you could get me a Tab or something, I'll just go wait in you guys's room.

WADE. No problem. Just sit down a minute. Go on. Sit.

(Beat; she hesitates.)

TAMMY. Chip said this room is, like, off limits except for fancy guests.

WADE. Well, we never have any.

TAMMY. It just looks so… clean.

WADE. That's because nobody ever sits on this couch. Nobody ever uses this room. Except to walk through, or turn on the stereo. When it's just me at home I like to give this room something to do. I think of it as my

room. I don't like to do anything in mine and Chip's room but sleep. It's impossible to study in there. I mean, he's always –

TAMMY. I can't believe you guys still share a room at this age. What's that office back there for?

WADE. It's my dad's.

TAMMY. But what does a pilot need an office for?

WADE. To study. The airplane manuals are like phone books, they're so thick. He has them for DC-8s, 9s,10s, and 727s, 737s, 747s, and I don't know what all. Every once in a while he has to take a test.

TAMMY. Even though he already has the job? That sucks.

WADE. He gets a lot of headaches. Didn't Chip tell you this?

TAMMY. He told me that was your sister's room before, right?

WADE. Yep.

TAMMY. They should give it to you or Chip.

WADE. That's okay. This is my room, like I said. By default, as it were. Except when I'm sleeping. Go on. Sit down.

(She goes into the living room but doesn't sit.)

WADE *(cont.) (glancing at her midsection)* You don't *look*… tired.

TAMMY. That's 'cuz I'm not. Nice stereo. Could I see what you guys have?

WADE. Yeah. We have tons of records. Go on. Check it out. I'll rake the carpet afterward. Nobody'll ever know.

TAMMY. *(referring to his books)* I'm not keeping you from, like, studying?

WADE. There are headphones right there. You can use those.

TAMMY. Oh. Okay. Cool.

(She looks through the albums as **WADE** *goes back to his book.)*

WADE. I feel bad. I kept saying you were in Massachusetts.

TAMMY. I was. But just for a couple of weeks. I can't believe it's still this hot down here.

WADE. I know. I'm hoping for a cold front, but they usually don't get down this far until December. Hey, was it snowing in Massachusetts?

TAMMY. No, but it was pretty cold. There were no leaves on the trees.

WADE. Wow. I've never seen snow, in real life, I mean. Have you?

TAMMY. Yeah, it's okay. I wouldn't mind eating a handful of it right about now. Listen, do you want me to go get that drink myself?

WADE. Oh, man. I'm sorry. I'm such a space cadet. I'll be right back.

*(***WADE** *runs out, and shortly re-enters.)*

WADE *(cont.)* My mom drank all the Tab. Is Seven-Up okay? Or do you think milk would be… better?

TAMMY. Milk? I said I was *thirsty.*

WADE. Oh, right. So… Seven-Up, then? Seven-Up. Coming right, well, Up.

(With a chuckle, **WADE** *rushes off through the dining room.*

TAMMY *pulls a pack of cigarettes and a lighter out of her pocket, lights a cigarette.*

WADE *returns with two tall glasses of Seven-Up with ice.* **TAMMY** *takes hers without ceremony.)*

TAMMY. It's okay if I smoke, right? There's this gargantuan ashtray here, so I figured…

WADE. *(it's not really okay)* Yeah, it's okay. My mom smokes all the time. Just, not usually in here. Just… be careful with the ashes, okay?

TAMMY. Want one?

WADE. No, thanks. I don't smoke. You… didn't find anything you wanted to listen to?

TAMMY. Nah, not right now.

WADE. Oh… okay…

(He starts toward his book. **TAMMY** *picks it up first. Reads the synopsis on the back.)*

TAMMY. *(gesturing to the book)* So… who's Mrs. Moore?

WADE. Oh. She's an English lady who goes to India and dies.

TAMMY. How does she die?

WADE. Heart attack, I guess. She's actually on a boat on her way home, but doesn't make it. People say her name a lot. They just keep repeating her name over and over, "Mrs. Moore, Mrs. Moore…"

TAMMY. What, was she, like Farrah Fawcett or something?

WADE. No, she was old, but people just really liked her. This Indian wise man said she had an "old soul."

TAMMY. A lot of good it did her. I like reading about *real* people. Like Isadora Duncan. Know who she was?

WADE. I've heard the name.

TAMMY. She was this amazing dancer in, around, the turn of the century. She was really famous, but she did drugs and had kids without bein married. She was, like, the first hippy. Her life was full of tragedy and she croaked before her time.

WADE. How did she croak?

TAMMY. She used to wear these long flowing scarves, and one time she was in a convertible, because they had cars back then too, and her scarf got caught in the wheel and snapped her neck. Just goes to show.

WADE. What?

TAMMY. I'm not sure, but if *that* doesn't go to show something, I don't know what would.

WADE. See, that's why I like reading novels. You can tell what they go to show. When I start getting it, you know, understanding things, like about people, it's great. It's like I'm learning things I didn't know I knew.

TAMMY. There's only one thing to learn about people. They suck.

WADE. There are plenty of good people. Chip –

TAMMY. Chip just wants a piece. That's all I am to him. A walking twat.

WADE. *(suppressing his shock at her language)* He doesn't know how to admit his feelings. He's kind of spoiled.

TAMMY. What do you mean? Has he said anything to you about me?

WADE. No, it's just, my mom and dad both like him best. They always did. It's so obvious. He's always been used to people liking him. Just because he's – I mean, he's good-looking and good at sports. He knows it feels good to be liked, but he doesn't know it feels even better to like people back.

TAMMY. Sometimes he can be soooo fun. And then he just goes off. For no reason.

WADE. He's just a little volatile sometimes.

TAMMY. What?

WADE. You know, high-strung.

TAMMY. You're so much smarter than he is.

WADE. I'm in all Honors classes.

TAMMY. Wow.

WADE. I have a 3.8 average. The only things that wreck it are P.E. and Driver's Ed. I hit a lot of cones. But I'm in the top five percentile.

TAMMY. That's… amazing. Yeah, I know, you're a brain.

WADE. Well, you could be, too.

TAMMY. No, I'm a freak. Because I smoke pot and have sex and skip school. There's one freak in student government, but she's really a brain, who's just a drug addict with mental problems. Mostly freaks don't go in for student government. I think some of the *brains* have sex, too, and drink a little beer sometimes but they're in *a lot* of clubs and student government. The rednecks drink beer and have sex and skip school, but some of *them* are in student government. The *jocks* drink beer, smoke pot and have sex and skip school, but still some of *them* are in student government.

(beat)

That's what Chip is. A freak-jock. If he didn't have black friends he'd be a freak-jock-redneck, 'cuz he's also friends with some of *them*, and I know he's bagged a few of the *brain* chicks, so actually you could say he's a freak-jock-redneck-brain, pretty much just across-the-board kinda guy.

(beat)

Except he's not in student government.

(beat)

Me, I'm just a freak. And you're just a brain, right?

WADE. I went to a Jefferson Starship concert once.

TAMMY. Yeah, but… I mean, you don't smoke or drink or skip school or… any of that, do you?

WADE. Not really.

TAMMY. Don't you ever wanna know what it feels like?

WADE. Not really.

TAMMY. I guess that's good in a way, but aren't you supposed to be, like, trying things out, and *testing boundaries*? That's what the guidance counselor says I'm doing. She says it'll be good for me in the long run. But she said I shouldn't tell anyone that she said that.

WADE. Ms. Wilkins?

TAMMY. Don't tell anybody I told you that. I don't want to get her in trouble. She's really cool. I think she smokes weed, actually. Once I thought she was about to offer me some, but the vice principal came in. I actually think she digs me. You know, like "lezzz be friends." It's cool, though.

WADE. I guess I don't know. I don't really go to the guidance counselors.

TAMMY. Well, if you did, she'd be the first to tell you, it's not so good to be all polite and perfect all the time.

WADE. She doesn't know my family. Allison and Ch – well, Allison already got so messed up –

TAMMY. You were gonna say Chip, too, right? It's okay. You can say what you want about him. I won't tell him. Besides, I know better than anybody how fucked up he is.

(She lights another cigarette off the first one, stubbing the butt out in the ashtray.)

WADE. So, don't you see? I'm the only one left. If I get messed up too, my parents'll probably just go crazy.

TAMMY. Do you think so? They don't seem like wimps to me.

WADE. I don't mean they're wimps, I just mean –

TAMMY. I don't think there are *any* wimps in your family.

(beat; flirtatious now)

I know you're kinda gentle and everything, but I bet you're full of surprises when you wanna be.

WADE. *(oblivious to her tone)* Today, in French class, I said the funniest thing to this girl, Nina. She was –

TAMMY. I'm a fox, right? Don't you think I'm a fox? If you saw me walking down the street and didn't know me, wouldn't you say, "Wow, she's a fox?"

WADE. Yeah.

TAMMY. Don't sound so enthusiastic. What? What's wrong with me?

WADE. Nothing.

TAMMY. If you put a bag over my head, right?

WADE. No!

TAMMY. That's what your brother thinks.

WADE. No, I'm sure he doesn't.

TAMMY. Why do you stick up for him? You should hear what he says about you.

WADE. Couldn't be any worse than what he tells me to my face every single stupid day.

TAMMY. Why does he have to be such a great lay? I fuckin hate the guy but he's such a great lay. God, look how red you are. What's the matter? You think I'm a slut, don't you?

WADE. *(collecting his thoughts)* I think you must be really upset.

TAMMY. You wouldn't tell me what you really think anyway.

WADE. Well, I mean, you're always with Chip. It's not really my place, you know? But I guess, now that I'm kinda involved… I mean, you can tell me, you know. If you need to talk about it…

TAMMY. Talk about what?

WADE. Well, I'm not supposed to say…

TAMMY. Oh, my God! He told you?! I'm gonna kill that bastard!

(She slams her cigarette butt in the ashtray and paces the room with furious strides. **WADE** *makes sure the butt is out.)*

WADE. Don't worry! I won't tell anyone! Tammy, calm down! I told him I'd help. I will. Whatever you decide to do, I'll help.

TAMMY. Help? How the hell can you help?

WADE. I have money! I work after school. I can do something.

TAMMY. But there's nothing to do now. It's all done already.

WADE. What's done?

TAMMY. I already got rid of it!

(beat; quieter)

Why the hell do you think I went to Massachusetts?

WADE. Does Chip know?

TAMMY. What do you think? So does your friggin father. He's the one who paid for it.

WADE. My father?

TAMMY. Damn right. Your father gave my mom five hundred bucks, and she took me to Massachusetts, to the doctor she used to use.

WADE. Your mom?

TAMMY. Yeah. She went to that doctor four times before she had me and came down here.

*(***WADE** *gapes at her, confused and horrified.)*

TAMMY *(cont.)* It happens. What, you don't believe me? Yeah, sometimes you can't have kids after that many, but I'm a miracle baby. I'm gonna find the cure for cancer. What is your problem? Why are you looking at me like that?

WADE. Chip just asked me for money tonight, for … an abortion.

TAMMY. Well, it's not for me. He must have knocked up some other bitch. Or he just wanted some cash to get high.

WADE. He *is* doing drugs, isn't he? I mean, besides pot?

TAMMY. Where do you think he went right now?

WADE. He's such a liar!

TAMMY. Don't tell me you're that gullible? Son of a bitch! Don't you see what he did? He didn't just lie! He used me – our baby – our dead fuckin baby – as an excuse to con you out of money for friggin dope! And you're all, *I can help, I have a job!* I thought you were supposed to be the smart one!

WADE. You wanna talk about smart? I'm not the one who's hanging around with Chip because I *want* to.

TAMMY. *(aggressively)* Well, I'm hanging around with you, now.

WADE. Why? We've never said more than five words to each other before tonight. Why, all of a sudden? You come over. He drops you off and leaves us alone. You're supposed to help him get money from me, aren't you? That's why you spent all this time talking to me. You never did before. What went wrong? He didn't tell you what the story was supposed to be? Anyway, it doesn't matter. I told him I don't keep a stash at home, and that's the truth, so you can just give it up.

TAMMY. We were supposed to go to the movies, to see Seargent Pepper's. Then he brings me here for that stupid Massachusetts moment, and then he tells me he's gonna score some 'ludes. I got mad and told him

I wasn't going. Grass mellows him out. But on 'ludes, he's really cranky. I told him to take me back to my stepdad's house, but he wouldn't, so… I refused to get back in the car.

WADE. Took you awhile to come up with that.

TAMMY. It's true. I just… can't believe you think I'd do something that mean.

WADE. Why should you care what I think?

TAMMY. You're one of the only people I know who has, you know, *room to talk.*

(The compliment catches **WADE** *off guard.* **TAMMY** *pulls an album from the shelf.)*

TAMMY *(cont.)* Joni Mitchell? I love her. She's so artistic.

WADE. That's my sister's record.

TAMMY. Do you mind if I play it?

WADE. Kinda.

TAMMY. Oh. Okay. How about this?

(She holds up Heart's Dreamboat Annie *album.)*

Magic Man. Crazy on You. These chicks rock, man. I just really feel like I need to rock out with some chicks right now. You know? Can I?

WADE. I'd rather you didn't.

TAMMY. Was that your sister's, too?

WADE. No, but –

TAMMY. Don't tell me you don't like Heart? I mean, I know everybody's entitled to their opinions, but how can anybody not agree about Heart? What? Did your sister not like them? I can't believe a chick wouldn't like Heart.

WADE. I don't wanna talk about Heart!

TAMMY. Okay! Geez.

(beat)

You know, I never actually met your sister, like, to talk to, but I saw her around school some. Then she left.

Then she was back. Then she left again, and that was before I started going with Chip, so there was never any reason… I know it's considered, like, a family tragedy or something around here. But that's so retarded. People are starting to shack up all over the place now. And not just the hippies. It's no big deal anymore. Helluva lot better than bein in the friggin *Moonies*.

WADE. Children of God.

TAMMY. Yeah, right. Children of some creep who makes his kids beg on the highway so he can have a limo and a mansion on Star Island. They gave me their pamphlets once, at Dadeland Mall. Moses Somebody-or-other. Gimme a break. If I was gonna join a cult, it would be the Children of Granny Feelgood. "Do it if it feels good." Yeah, I'll worship her, man.

*(***WADE** *quietly takes the Heart album from* **TAMMY** *and puts it away.)*

TAMMY *(cont.)* Hey, I'm on her side. That's what I'm saying. Compared to what she was into before, your parents should be *glad* now.

WADE. They don't want us to even talk about her.

TAMMY. That's so… out of proportion, man.

WADE. Well, they're on drugs, too. I mean, Allison and Steve. I like to imagine they're living somewhere where it snows. Somewhere that looks old-fashioned and real, not like Miami. And that they're trying to go clean. But now Chip does all the same stuff, and even worse –

TAMMY. And your parents couldn't give a shit, right? That's such a double standard. My mom said that your dad almost acted like he thought it was *funny*. It's okay for his son, the man, to knock up some slut, but it's not okay for his precious daughter to fuckin shack up with her boyfriend? That stinks to high heaven, if you ask me. What is this supposed to be, like, the *fifties*?

WADE. I know.

TAMMY. It's great for you, though.

FINISH READING THIS SCRIPT

Visit our website to purchase the full script or to explore other titles.

www.samuelfrench.com
www.samuelfrench.co.uk

To stay up to date on all that we are doing, follow us on social media:



*Titles for licensing are subject to availability depending on your territory.

SF PERUSALS