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# Sirens

by Deborah Zoe Laufer

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION



NEW YORK HOLLYWOOD LONDON TORONTO

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**World Premiere in the 2010 Humana Festival of New American Plays  
At Actors Theatre of Louisville**



**actors** theatre of louisville

**34th annual Humana Festival of New American Plays**  
made possible by a generous grant from The Humana Foundation

## **Sirens**

by **Deborah Zoe Laufer**  
directed by **Casey Stangl**

### **THE CAST**

(in order of appearance)

|                     |                           |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Sam Abrams          | <b>Brian Russell*</b>     |
| Rose Adelle Abrams  | <b>Mimi Lieber*</b>       |
| Leah/Siren/Waitress | <b>Lindsey Wochley*</b>   |
| Richard Miller      | <b>Ben Hollandsworth*</b> |

*Various locations in Manhattan and the Mediterranean Sea.*

Presented by arrangement with William Morris Endeavor Entertainment.

|                         |                                         |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Scenic Designer         | <b>Michael B. Raiford†</b>              |
| Costume Designer        | <b>Sonya Berlovitz†</b>                 |
| Lighting Designer       | <b>Jeff Nellis†</b>                     |
| Sound Designer/Composer | <b>Matt Callahan</b>                    |
| Properties Designer     | <b>Mark Walston</b>                     |
| Wig/Makeup Designer     | <b>Heather Fleming</b>                  |
| Stage Manager           | <b>Stephen Horton*</b>                  |
| Dramaturg               | <b>Julie Felise Dubiner</b>             |
| Casting                 | <b>Emily Ruddock, Zan Sawyer-Dailey</b> |

Developed at Geva Theatre Center, Rochester, N.Y.  
and Florida Stage's 1st Stage New Works Festival, Manalapan, Fla.

\*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers of the United States.

†Designers that are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829 of the IATSE.

## **CHARACTERS**

**SAM ABRAMS** – 40s-50s

**ROSE ADELLE ABRAMS** – 40s-50s, Sam's wife

**SIREN** – Sublimely lovely. Early 20s. (Also plays: **LEAH**, **WAITRESS**)

**RICHARD MILLER** – 40s-50s; Played by an actor in his early 20's

## **A NOTE ON THE MUSIC**

For rights to the music from the original Actors Theatre of Louisville Humana production, please contact composer Matt Callahan at [CallahanMatthew@hotmail.com](mailto:CallahanMatthew@hotmail.com) for more information.



*(At the top of the play, as the audience is settling, we should hear three different versions of Sam's song, "Rose Adelle." And then, with each scene break we should hear another version. Perhaps Billy Joel. Mel Torme. A Japanese version. A cell phone ring tone. Musak. Captain and Tenille. The song is ubiquitous. SAM can't escape it.)*

**ROSE ADELLE.**

ROSE ADELLE, ROSE ADELLE  
LOOKED MY WAY AND HOW I FELL  
BUT JUST ONE KISS FROM YOUR SWEET LIPS AND HOW I  
ROSE ROSE ROSE  
ROSE ADELLE

COME DOWN COME DOWN COME DOWN TO ME BABY  
COME DOWN COME DOWN COME DOWN TO ME BABY  
COME DOWN FROM YOUR SWEET PINK BEDROOM  
DRIVE DOWN TO THE LAKE WITH ME  
DOWN WHERE YOUR PARENTS CAN'T SEE US BABY  
WE'LL UNCOVER SOME MYSTERY  
I'M BURNING UP WHEN I THINK OF YOU BABY  
IT'S DRIVING ME INSANE.  
COME TO THE LAKE TO COOL MY FIRE  
OR SET US BOTH AFLAME.

ROSE ADELLE, ROSE ADELLE  
LOOKED MY WAY AND HOW I FELL  
BUT JUST ONE KISS FROM YOUR SWEET LIPS AND HOW I  
ROSE ROSE ROSE  
ROSE ADELLE

## Scene One

*(SAM and ROSE ADELLE are at a travel agency. The backdrop is saturated with bright island scenes, while they seem small and gray. ROSE is constantly knitting. It is a long train, narrower than a scarf, so long that it winds around and around her.)*

*(Note: SAM and ROSE speak over each other in the way long-married couples might. The /'s reflect when the next character begins speaking.)*

**SAM.** What if Barry decides to come home?

**ROSE.** I told you, he's going to Courtney's house. Her parents.

**SAM.** But what if he changes his mind? And then we're away.

**ROSE.** You're hilarious. We should just wait home by the phone for the next thirty years? I told you she makes the decisions/ now.

**SAM.** It's nice that he's got a girl, hon. When we were in college, remember how great it was /when we...

**ROSE.** All those years of late nights and fevers and term papers and bullies and all the things we worried ourselves sick over. Now "Courtney" decides where he goes.

*(During this, LEAH walks past, perhaps pausing to look through some papers. She is tall and willowy and lovely. There is a faint wisp of music heard. Maybe a harp. SAM is transfixed by the sight of her. He is quietly humming to himself, trying to remember...Everything else disappears.)*

I said, "Didn't you go to Courtney's parents' for Winter break? Don't you think it would be nice to come see your parents this time, let us get to know her?" "Maybe next break," he says.

**LEAH.** *(on her way out)* I'll be with you folks in just a moment!

*(SAM watches her leave, still humming, hungrily, longingly.)*

ROSE. Sam. (*pause*) Sam!

SAM. Right! So...

ROSE. Am I here?

SAM. Huh?

ROSE. Do you see me here? Do you hear me when I talk?

SAM. ...So maybe he'll come next break!

ROSE. Sure.

SAM. She sounds nice. On the phone.

ROSE. How is she going to sound? She's going to say, "Hello Barry's father – piss off"?

SAM. (*looking around self-consciously*) Rose...shhhh.

ROSE. He'll see. He likes the soft part of the bread, so I ate the crusts. You think she'll eat the crusts?

SAM. They can throw away the crusts.

ROSE. You think she'll get him a cup of water in the middle of the night? Rub his cheek when he has a bad dream?

SAM. That was when he was four, /hon.

ROSE. He'll wake up from his bad dream and we'll be on vacation.

SAM. Yeah. Then, maybe we shouldn't /go.

ROSE. It's fine. It'll be fine.

SAM. Why don't we just drive to the Jersey shore again? Remember?

ROSE. That's hilarious.

SAM. When we did that?

ROSE. I did not put up with you for twenty-five years to go to the Jersey/ Shore.

SAM. Maybe Maine? Or D.C. We could drive to D.C.

ROSE. I'm taking three weeks vacation. Peggy's covering/ for me.

SAM. Three weeks? Oh my God.

ROSE. We're going...far. We're doing something special.

(*LEAH reenters. Maybe a harp is heard again.*)

LEAH. Hi. I'm Leah Peters.

ROSE. Hello.

SAM. Leah Peters.

LEAH. What can I help you with today?

SAM. What a beautiful name.

LEAH. You looking for a vacation package?

SAM. You look like you should be in high school.

ROSE. (*sighs, annoyed*) Sam.

LEAH. I assure you, Sir. I'm a qualified travel agent.

ROSE. He didn't mean that, Sweetheart.

LEAH. I've been working professionally for several months.

ROSE. He's flirting with you. Just ignore him. We're looking for something special. For our twenty-fifth wedding anniversary.

LEAH. Twenty-five years! Wow.

ROSE. You're telling me.

LEAH. That's quite an accomplishment.

ROSE. You have no idea.

*(Both women laugh at this.)*

LEAH. I have a fantastic cruise package to the Mediterranean that might interest you. It's really special.

ROSE. We want something special.

LEAH. (*reading off her clipboard*) Let's see...explore the Greek Isles. Chart the journey of Odysseus.

SAM. A cruise?

LEAH. I just got this in. You're the first clients I'm offering this to.

SAM. Aren't there stories...about/ cruises...

ROSE. Nothing. There's nothing. It's fine.

SAM. There was an article. About these cruise ships. Disappearing.

*(There is a pause and then both women burst out laughing.)*

ROSE. Disappearing?! Like...Brigadoon?

LEAH. You're so cute! He's so cute.

ROSE. He's hilarious.

SAM. There were stories. Recently. Online.

ROSE. No, that sounds perfect. The Greek Isles.

LEAH. Ok. So! Let me get some of your information, and then I'll find those brochures. And we'll just agree that you're mine, I mean, my clients, so if you come back in you just ask for Leah Peters, okay?

SAM. Absolutely.

LEAH. Here's my card.

*(SAM reaches for it. ROSE grabs it first.)*

Ok! So...your names are...

SAM. Sam and Rose Abrams.

ROSE. Rose Adelle.

LEAH. Oh! Like the song.

ROSE. Exactly like the song.

SAM. Honey...

*(He sighs, embarrassed already.)*

LEAH. My parents loved that old song. Were you named after it?

ROSE. Actually, it was named after me.

LEAH. What?

ROSE. He – Sam wrote the song. About me.

LEAH. O.M.G.!

ROSE. So I would marry him.

LEAH. Get out of here, you wrote that song? My parents love that song! How awesome! You wrote that song?

ROSE. About me. All those things in that song, about how beautiful the girl was, with the sweet lips...

LEAH. That was some hot love song.

ROSE. That was me.

LEAH. *(calling to a coworker)* Joey, you won't believe who this is.

SAM. No. No, no, no, no. Please. That's all right. That's okay, Joey.

LEAH. And you're so modest.

SAM. (*modestly*) Oh. Well...

ROSE. He's embarrassed. He hasn't written anything since.

SAM. I have so. Written other songs.

ROSE. Hits. Hit songs.

LEAH. Well, I guess if you wrote a song like that, that's enough. Right?

SAM. Thank you, Leah. You're very sweet.

ROSE. Still, twenty-five years. You know. Not to have another song...

SAM. I wrote "Brunch at Katz's."

ROSE. I mean, for me, it's enough.

SAM. "Lady Liberty."

ROSE. We lived very well off that song for twenty-five years. Very well.

SAM. "Sunset on the Hudson."

ROSE. But Sam, he's embarrassed.

SAM. I'm not embarrassed, unless you embarrass me.

LEAH. My parents will totally freak when I tell them I met you.

ROSE. Did you know Mel Torme sang that song? Earth, Wind, and Fire?

LEAH. Ludacris!

ROSE. No really. But lately...he sits at the computer and tries to remember some other song he wrote a million years ago.

LEAH. You know what? I'm /gonna just...

SAM. Rose. This young lady, Leah doesn't need/ to hear...

ROSE. I say, "Forget it! Forget that old song!" But no. He sits there, night and day...

LEAH. Cool!

ROSE. Or that's what he says he's doing, but who really knows, right?

LEAH. So, let me get you those brochures

ROSE. Do you have a boyfriend, Leah?

LEAH. Um, yeah?

ROSE. What do you think he's doing right now?

LEAH. He works for Virgin Airlines. We actually met when I was...

ROSE. That's what he told you, right? That he was going to work today?

SAM. Rose, what are you doing?

*(There is an uncomfortable beat.)*

LEAH. You know what? I'm going to let you fill this out while I go find those brochures.

SAM. Thanks, Leah.

LEAH. I think you're going to love this package.

SAM. That sounds great.

LEAH. Great!

*(She hurries off. SAM watches her leave.)*

ROSE. Pretty girl.

SAM. *(annoyed)* What the hell, Rose?

ROSE. Don't you think she's pretty?

SAM. What's with you today?

ROSE. She has nice teeth.

SAM. I've written other songs.

ROSE. Course she has one of those long thin necks. Makes her look a little pin-headish.

SAM. "Throw Your Arms Around the Moon."

ROSE. You know who she reminds me of?

SAM. No.

ROSE. Guess. Guess who she reminds me of.

SAM. No!

ROSE. Allyson Mendelson.

*(long stunned pause)* She reminds me a bit of Allyson Mendelson.

*(pause)*

SAM. How do you know Allyson Mendelson?

ROSE. How do *you* know Allyson Mendelson?

*(pause)*

SAM. You've been looking at my computer?

ROSE. Facebook. What are you, twelve?

SAM. Rose. That's private./ I mean...

ROSE. Really? It doesn't seem private. You have one hundred thirty-two friends...

SAM. Oh God.

ROSE. Who seem to know everything about you. Your minute by minute change of status all through each day while I think you're working on your song. Sam Abrams is eating a pastrami sandwich is somehow worthy of note.

SAM. I don't look through any /of your...

ROSE. You know everything about me, Sam. I have nothing to hide.

*(silence)* Nice picture.

SAM. *(deeply embarrassed)* Oh God.

ROSE. Isn't that one of our wedding photos?

SAM. Yeah.

ROSE. With me cut out.

SAM. Well, it's you know, *my* profile picture, so...

ROSE. From twenty-five years ago.

SAM. *(sigh)* I can't believe you were spying on me. Looking through my...things.

ROSE. Lot of friends you have.

SAM. Well...

ROSE. All women.

SAM. Derek is my friend.

ROSE. All women and your brother. Who are those women Sam?

SAM. Mostly they're just people I play Scrabulous with. Well, it's called Lexulous now. It's Scrabble really. But there was this copyright lawsuit and ...

ROSE. All these young women you met playing Scrabble.

SAM. Yeah, we just play Scrabble. Mostly. I mean, we don't even chat really. Most of them. I just friended them.

ROSE. Friended them.

SAM. Silly stuff. You know. I might poke them or throw a snowball or a groundhog or something....

ROSE. Poke them.

SAM. But we don't even talk. Really. Just on Scrabble. Chat. It's just a game. Really. It's...

ROSE. You play Scrabble with Allyson Mendelson?

SAM. No! No.

ROSE. Because you can't find her.

SAM. I don't...I don't even know...If she plays Scrabble.

ROSE. Who is she?

SAM. She's just this /girl...

ROSE. Why are you trying to find her?

SAM. I went to high school with. It was...

ROSE. Hundreds of messages.

SAM. Nothing...really.

ROSE. Are you the Allyson Mendelson from Jefferson High?

SAM. Yeah. Aw jeez.

ROSE. You never mentioned her.

SAM. It was...you know. We were teenagers.

ROSE. Did you love her?

SAM. We were kids! She broke my heart. She hurt me. I wrote her this song...

ROSE. Oh my God.

SAM. I'm trying to remember this song I'd written...

ROSE. It was her song?

SAM. Yeah. I thought maybe if I wrote to her...

ROSE. It's her song you've been trying to remember?

SAM. Rose. It was high school. This is thirty years ago/ we're talking. It was nothing.

**ROSE.** One hundred and eight messages. Asking about her.  
Looking for her. Is not nothing. Sam.

**SAM.** Yeah.

*(Pause. Admitting:)* Yeah.

**ROSE.** Are you going to meet up with her?

**SAM.** I can't find her.

**ROSE.** But if you found her. What would you do?

**SAM.** I don't know.

**ROSE.** You don't know?

**SAM.** Rose. Come on. Look, let's go home. Let's talk about  
this at home.

*(He takes her arm.)*

**ROSE.** Don't touch me.

**SAM.** Rose. It's just...It's research.

**ROSE.** That's hilarious. I'm off at the shop, I think you're  
working on your damn song...

**SAM.** I am working on the song. This is part of it.

**ROSE.** Boy, am I an idiot. You're playing games.

**SAM.** No.

**ROSE.** Writing to girls.

**SAM.** No. No, I'm just...I'm trying...

**ROSE.** What?

**SAM.** I'm stuck. Rose. I'm stuck. Everything I write now....  
It's bullshit. I can't write anything...true anymore. I  
can't feel anything true.

*(He sighs deeply.)* I'm trying to remember...what I was  
like...what it felt like...

**ROSE.** To be hurt?

**SAM.** To be...

**ROSE.** I'll hurt you with that lamp.

**SAM.** Come on, honey.

**ROSE.** Why can't you remember what it's like with me?

**SAM.** We've been together for so long.

**ROSE.** Twenty-five years.

SAM. It's not the same now. Of course it isn't.

ROSE. It's the same for me.

SAM. As when we first met? Come on.

ROSE. I still love you as much as when we first met. More. I love you more.

SAM. I love you. Honey. It's just...that huge feeling...I'm trying to remember that huge painful, frantic...

ROSE. Lust. What you feel for Allyson Mendelson. For all these young women. They're everywhere. I hate them. All these /stupid young...

SAM. It's not about the women! Rose. I'm trying to wake up.

ROSE. Oh. So playing Scrabble/ on Facebook...

SAM. It's all...deadened. Don't you feel that? Like we're under water. I go to sleep deadened every night. And I wake up with my heart pounding, that it's all behind us. That it's all over. Every great, thrilling thing that was going to happen to me, to us, every surprise, has happened already.

ROSE. That's nuts. You *make* thrilling things happen.

SAM. I have to do this Rose. Somehow. I have to make something. Feel something. Big. Before it's all gone. I have to find this song. Write this song.

ROSE. Why don't you just get a red convertible? Why don't you ride around in a leather jacket with the top down? Pretend you're young again.

SAM. Don't make fun of me.

*(long pause)*

ROSE. I could have married Richard Miller you know.

SAM. *(sigh)* I know.

ROSE. He was nuts about me. Lusted after me. Big time. I didn't have to marry you, you know.

SAM. I know.

ROSE. There were plenty of guys.

SAM. Richard Miller.

**ROSE.** And others. He was a looker. He had a nice head of hair. Richard Miller.

**SAM.** I had a nice head of hair twenty-five years ago too.

**ROSE.** I remember once he took me to the park. We rented one of those boats in the park. I was wearing this / little pink skirt.

**SAM.** (*said in unison with her*) Little pink skirt.

**ROSE.** So romantic. He was crazy about me.

**SAM.** I was crazy about you...am.

**ROSE.** When we broke up he moved to Italy. Can you imagine? How heartbroken he must have been? To have to move that far away?

**SAM.** I thought he had a job there...

**ROSE.** To have to move so far away to try to forget the pain? Everything he saw must have hurt him – reminded him of the times we'd spent together. And now he had to go on without me.

**SAM.** You told me that he got a /job in...

**ROSE.** I could have been living in Italy if I'd stayed with him. I could be sitting in a travel agency in Rome right now. Who knows where I could have gone. What I would have done with my life if I'd stayed with him.

(*with growing fury*) But you wrote that damn song! You tricked me into marrying you!

**SAM.** I tricked you? Rose...

**ROSE.** If I'd known what would happen. If I'd known you'd be writing to other girls. Allyson Mendelson...

**SAM.** Rosie.

**ROSE.** I would have told you where to put that song.

(*During this LEAH starts toward them, hears the discussion and slinks back away.*)

**SAM.** (*Looking around. Everyone is watching them.*) Let's go home.

(*pause*)

ROSE. Maybe I'll go on Facebook. How about that? Maybe I'll do a MySpace. How would you like that? If you looked at my computer and I was poking Richard Miller?

SAM. I would think you were trying to remember what it was like to be eighteen again. And that that was your ...touchstone to remember it.

ROSE. My ass. You'd be worried sick.

SAM. Okay.

ROSE. Jealous sick.

SAM. Okay.

*(pause)*

ROSE. Or you wouldn't. That's how bad it is. You wouldn't.

*(They sit in silence for a moment.)*

I want you to give it up.

SAM. What?

ROSE. All of it. Facebook. Scrabble. Allyson Mendelson.

SAM. Well...I'm in the middle of games. I can't just...

ROSE. You are out of your mind!!! When we get home I want you to delete it from your computer.

SAM. I will. Once I...I'm trying to write the song. It's helping Rose. It's helping me remember.

ROSE. No. Forget the damn song. Forget it. Delete them.

SAM. I...will. You just have to give me...a little time. To...

ROSE. To what? Time to what, Sam?

SAM. To say goodbye. OK? Just let me...tell them goodbye.

*(Pause. LEAH returns cautiously and sits across from them again.)*

LEAH. So...I found those brochures.

SAM. *(can't even look at her)* Yeah. You know, maybe this isn't a good time.

ROSE. The hell it isn't. Give me those brochures. We're going on that fucking cruise.

## Scene Two

*(The ship. ROSE and SAM are standing at the ship railing, looking out on the Mediterranean. Everything is a brilliant blue. But somehow they still seem small and gray. SAM is trying very hard.)*

ROSE. Isn't it gorgeous? It's so blue.

SAM. It is...incredibly blue.

ROSE. It's blue like in the brochures.

SAM. You're right, Rosie. It really is. It's very, very...blue.

ROSE. Aren't you glad we came?

SAM. Of course. This was a great idea. I'm really glad we did this. Really glad.

*(He puts his arm around her and gives her a kiss on the cheek. She is delighted.)*

ROSE. This is so great! Here! Together!

SAM. *(happy for her happiness)* It is, honey. It's great.

ROSE. Maybe I'll sell the shop!

SAM. What??

ROSE. Maybe I'll sell it. And then we'll be completely free.  
To...you know...

SAM. But...

ROSE. Travel, or...

SAM. But you...

ROSE. We could travel and...do whatever. Whatever we want.

SAM. ...you love the shop.

ROSE. Well, it was good because I could be home with Barry. When he was little.

SAM. But...But...

ROSE. Make my own hours.

SAM. But you...you love...

ROSE. I love to travel!

SAM. The shop...

ROSE. Nobody really knits any more. It's a generation of non-knitters.

SAM. That's not true. You were telling me the other day... about /that group of...

ROSE. I'm going to do it.

SAM. Girls. Young girls who came in.

ROSE. I'm going to do it, Sam.

SAM. To learn...to...

ROSE. I'm going to sell the shop.

SAM. to...knit.

ROSE. I am. And then we can be free.

*(beat)*

SAM. Ok, honey. Whatever you want.

*(We hear a thread of music. SAM is distracted away by a bikini-clad woman passing by them. He begins humming to himself, a little desperately. ROSE takes this in. Determined:)*

ROSE. We've got the late seating tonight.

SAM. Oh?

ROSE. I thought, for our celebration, tonight it would be nice to have the late seating.

SAM. Good thinking.

ROSE. And there will probably be a cake, though I'm not saying for sure.

SAM. That's nice.

ROSE. I switched with the Morganthals. That was nice of them, don't you think? To switch with us?

SAM. Very nice.

*(pause)*

ROSE. You wish you were home.

SAM. No!

ROSE. You wish you were back at your computer. Talking with other people. People you don't even know. You're trapped here with me. And three thousand other people. But really you're trapped here with me.

SAM. Honey, what are you talking about?

ROSE. I love you, Sam. I never stopped loving you.

SAM. I love you, too.

ROSE. But, I don't want to just be tolerated for the next...  
however many years I've got left. I deserve better than  
that.

SAM. Rose, I don't just tolerate you. You're my best friend.

ROSE. I'm your *only* friend. That you actually *know*.

SAM. I came here. Because you wanted me to. I'm here.  
I'm here with you.

ROSE. No you're not. I'm alone. Like always.

SAM. What are you talking about, Rosie?

ROSE. Since Barry left. It's just me.

SAM. I'm with you all the time. When you're not working,  
we're constantly together.

ROSE. That's what it feels like. To you.

SAM. That's what it is.

ROSE. What am I supposed to do now? I did it. He's grown  
up. He's a nice boy. He's off on his own.

SAM. He'll be back. For visits.

ROSE. I don't have a song that I have to write. Barry. He  
was my song. Done.

*(silence)*

SAM. So keep the shop.

ROSE. No!

SAM. Ok! Then you could take an art class. Or...scrapbook-  
ing? Wasn't that what Peggy was doing?

ROSE. Glue things into a book. That's what you think I  
should be doing. For the next forty years.

SAM. Peggy seems happy.

ROSE. You don't know me at all. Do you?

SAM. Sure I do.

ROSE. Forty years. If we're lucky. Forty years left.

SAM. God.

ROSE. Forty years gluing things into a book so that I remember them. And then what?

(*silence*) I want to be adored. Like my song.

SAM. Well...

ROSE. Why don't you adore me any more? Why don't you look at me and want to write your song?

SAM. I don't know. I'm sorry. I don't know how to feel that way any more.

ROSE. I would be a lot of things for you Sam, I would. But I can't be twenty-five again.

SAM. I don't want you to be.

ROSE. And you're not either you know. If those women you played Scrabble with...they think you look like your wedding picture.

SAM. No. I know. Believe me. They take one look at me, and they're horrified.

ROSE. What?

SAM. What?

ROSE. They take one look at you?

SAM. Oh. Well...

ROSE. You've met them?

SAM. No, but that's what I'm saying. No.

ROSE. What?

SAM. I mean...just for coffee.

ROSE. WHAT???

SAM. Just a few of them. Who live in New York. I'd just... You know...we'd meet for coffee.

ROSE. Oh my God.

SAM. But...like you said. I mean, they're expecting the Facebook guy to show up. They take one look at me...

ROSE. You've been meeting with these women?

SAM. No! No, not at all. Not, not any more Rose. I mean... it was nothing. Coffee. That's all.

ROSE. That's it.

SAM. Rosie. No.

**ROSE.** That's IT!

**SAM.** Nothing ever...

**ROSE.** I don't want to know. I don't want to know what you did. I don't want to hear what you hoped might happen with these women.

*(beat)* **WHAT DID YOU HOPE MIGHT HAPPEN WITH THESE WOMEN???**

No. I don't even want to know. It's over. You've flushed twenty-five years down the toilet.

**SAM.** Rosie. Don't say that.

**ROSE.** I mean it. I'm through. You have betrayed me.

**SAM.** I didn't. This is what I'm saying. I never did. Anything. I wouldn't have done...

*(Suddenly, there is the most beautiful music ever played, heard only by SAM. It is his song. It may be singing. It may be a harp. It may be the eerie, sad sound of the theremin. SAM is completely enthralled. ROSE continues to yell at him but he can't even hear her now.)*

**ROSE.** I'll never be able to look at you the same way again.

*(But he can hear nothing but the music. It fills him with all the longing and feeling he's been searching for. And she is so caught up in what she's saying that she doesn't notice he is gone.)*

You have your faults, Sam. God knows. God KNOWS you have your faults. But I hold my tongue. I'm not one to count grievances. Even though you're self-centered, and moody, and helpless around the house and...

*(The music swells, and we can only hear bits of what she says, while SAM hears none of it. He is trying to hum along.)*

you have to be told to put your clothes in the hamper after twenty-five fucking years. What the hell! PUT YOUR FUCKING CLOTHES IN THE HAMPER! But this? Forget it. It's over.

*(The music fades out)*

The marriage is over.

**SAM.** (*coming back*) Did you hear that?

**ROSE.** What?

**SAM.** That was it. That was my song. Oh my God.

(*ROSE stares at him stunned.*)

(*He tries to hum it but it's already lost to him.*)

How did it go, Rose? Oh shit – it's already gone...

Do you remember how it went?

**ROSE.** Oh. My. God.

**SAM.** What?

**ROSE.** (*furious*) Oh my God! I cannot believe...

**SAM.** Rose, don't you understand? That was my song. Didn't you hear it?

**ROSE.** Did you hear ME? CAN you hear me??? I said I'm through! Our marriage is over.

(*The music swells up again and SAM is again transported by it.*)

I gave up all my good years on you. My attractive years. The years I might have had a chance to find someone else. Someone to really love me.

(*SAM is completely swept away. He begins to climb up the railing.*)

**ROSE.** What are you doing? Sam? Don't be an idiot. Get down from there.

**SAM.** I have to remember. Help me. Help me remember.

**ROSE.** Get down off there.

**SAM.** That's the most...Oh God. That's the most beautiful...

(*And he jumps overboard.*)

**ROSE.** SAM!!!

(*Blackout. We hear the splash.*)

HELP!!! Someone...Help! Man...Man overboard!!!  
HELP!

(*We hear ROSE continue to call for help. And the commotion that that creates.*)

### Scene Three

*(Lights up on a small island in the Mediterranean. Saturated with brilliant light and color.)*

*(SAM is lying where he was beached, on a rock, unconscious, drying in the sun. There are bones and fragments of clothes along the shore. Also bits of luggage and small treasures – the debris of thousands of years of mortality.)*

*(On another rock sits the SIREN. She is sublimely lovely. She sits madly playing a hand-held solitaire game, frantically pushing the buttons.)*

*(SAM stirs. Looks around. Disoriented.)*

**SAM.** *(coughing)* Ooof. My back. Ow. Where am I?

*(The SIREN shushes him, sharply.)*

Oh my God!!! Allyson?

**SIREN.** Zeus Almighty.

**SAM.** Allyson, you're here. What are you...?

*(suddenly disoriented)* Wait...where are we? Am I...dead?

**SIREN.** Are you? You were supposed to perish. Did you perish?

**SAM.** Did I...?

**SIREN.** You are not allowed to talk if you are dead.

**SAM.** Uhhhh...

**SIREN.** You are not dead.

*(to the Gods)* Was he sent by Zeus? Hades? Where did you come from?

**SAM.** ...The Carnival Cruise?

**SIREN.** Ughh. Another jumper. I hate when this happens.  
It is so off-story.

**SAM.** Wait...Are you Allyson Mendelson?

**SIREN.** Is she a great and powerful emissary of the Gods?

**SAM.** No. She's a girl from Teaneck.

**SIREN.** Then, no.

**SAM.** You look so much like her. It's unbelievable.

SIREN. Yeah, well...you want me to look like her.

SAM. What is this place?

SIREN. Anthemusa.

SAM. I don't think that was on the itinerary.

SIREN. It is my island. You are on my island.

SAM. Oh God. I jumped, right? Overboard? And swam here?

SIREN. You were supposed to perish.

*(indicating the bones and human remains)*

SAM. *(horrificed)* All those people died here?

SIREN. *(looking at him sternly)* No, most of them washed up dead like the story says. Come on, try again. Go back out, and this time, do not make it.

SAM. I'm sorry, Miss. I'm very confused.

SIREN. Well, you could just wait here and languish. But that would be long and awful. If you choose, you can touch me...

*(She plucks a flower near her rock and all the leaves fall off, or it wilts away.)*

And we can get it over with quickly. But it has to be your choice.

SAM. I think I've been out in the sun too long. I don't feel so well. Is there anything to drink?

*(She indicates the ocean.)*

That's ocean water. That would kill me.

SIREN. Ok.

SAM. *(standing stiffly)* Oof. I must have swum for hours. What was I thinking?

SIREN. You followed the song.

SAM. The song! Yes! You heard it too? Do you remember? How it goes?

SIREN. Yes.

SAM. You do? Can you sing it?

SIREN. No.

**SAM.** Can you... Can you hum it? Anything?

**SIREN.** No.

**SAM.** Come on. Please?

**SIREN.** No. Look, are you going to touch me and get this over with? Or do you want a slow painful death?

**SAM.** I don't want any death. I want to remember.

**SIREN.** Slow and painful then. Suit yourself.

*(He stares at her for a moment.)*

**SAM.** You're so beautiful...it hurts.

**SIREN.** Yeah. That is my thing.

*(She goes back to madly pushing the buttons. He tries to hum. Starting to get it.)*

**SAM.** I'm remembering. Here with you...It'll come back.

*(She wins her game. The horn sounds and applause from the little box.)*

What are you doing? What is that?

**SIREN.** *(finally enjoying the conversation.)* This is my magic box. It was a gift from the Gods! It washed up on shore one day. There are all these numbered boxes, see? And if you put them in just the right order, you triumph.

**SAM.** It's solitaire.

**SIREN.** I am very good. I always triumph. Always. And when I do the Gods rejoice – a little horn sounds and the boxes jump all over the square. It is wonderfully diverting. I cannot seem to do it enough. It is just so wonderfully diverting.

*(There is the sound of a ship's horn in the distance. She sighs.)*

Oh. Wait.

*(The SIREN sings the eerie, beautiful song of the SIREN. It is breathtaking. SAM rises in awe. She sings for a moment and then there is the sound of a ship crashing in the distance. Distant screams. She stops singing and goes back to her solitaire game.)*

**SIREN.** (*cont.*) You probably wonder if every game is winnable. It seems like it would all depend on the layout of the little numbered boxes. But now that I have become an expert...

(*She holds up the game for a moment.*)

Right here. See? It says I am an expert. Now I always triumph.

**SAM.** (*stunned*) That was it – my song for Allyson. How do you know that song?

**SIREN.** Sorry, but that is my song.

**SAM.** No, no, no. That was it. Sing it again.

**SIREN.** I sing it when the boats come.

**SAM.** It's...it's the most...

**SIREN.** ...beautiful thing you have ever heard. Yeah. Here – see my stats? They are very high. I am very very good.

**SAM.** Oh God. I felt it. When you sang. Young. Like I could write again.

(*He tries humming it, but again, can't remember the song.*)

Why can't I get it? What's wrong with me?

**SIREN.** It is not your song. It has been my song for like, thousands of years. I came with that song.

**SAM.** Thousands of...

**SIREN.** When the boat comes I sing that song, and then the men steer the boat into those jagged rocks where it is torn asunder and they perish.

**SAM.** Oh no! Did the boat I was on – did that boat crash?

**SIREN.** When you jumped off they must have been distracted. I want to make that clear.

(*to the Gods*) They did not resist me. He distracted them.

**SAM.** It didn't crash?

**SIREN.** No. That was very bad of you.

**SAM.** Thank God! Rose is on that boat. Ohhhhh. Rose. She's gotta be pretty pissed.

**SIREN.** Why, did she want the boat to crash?

**SAM.** No. We were on our anniversary cruise. She was talking to me, and I jumped. Overboard. And swam away. From her. That's not good.

**SIREN.** You chose the song.

**SAM.** No. I just...I lost my head for a minute. I...I love my wife.

**SIREN.** Uh huh.

**SAM.** I do. I love her. But passion...

**SIREN.** Yeah?

**SAM.** That kind of passion, doesn't last.

**SIREN.** What does it do?

**SAM.** It fades. It turns into something...else.

**SIREN.** What does it turn into?

**SAM.** Comfort, I guess.

**SIREN.** And that is bad.

**SAM.** No. Unless you want passion. You are young. You don't know about all that yet.

**SIREN.** I know that passion crashes the boats.

**SAM.** Why do you sing to crash the boats?

**SIREN.** It is my part of the story.

**SAM.** What story?

**SIREN.** (*exasperated sigh*) My boss, Demeter? Her daughter, Persephone was stolen by Hades.

**SAM.** Wait, this sounds very familiar.

**SIREN.** We were sent to rescue her but there were...complications. Long story short, my boss is seeking revenge on man.

**SAM.** And now you just stay here and lure people to their deaths?

**SIREN.** Men. They cannot resist me. They can tie themselves to the mast, or they can put wax in their ears, but if they hear one note, they go mad with passion.

**SAM.** That's terrible. Sing it again.

**SIREN.** No.

**SAM.** Please.

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