

# SAMUEL FRENCH SAMPLE PERUSAL

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# Octopus

Steve Yockey

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION

**SAMUEL  
FRENCH**  
FOUNDED 1830

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### **IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS**

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The World Premiere of ***OCTOPUS*** opened January 27, 2008 at the King Plow Arts Center in Atlanta, GA. Produced by Actor's Express Theatre Company with Artistic Director Freddie Ashley and Managing Director Zak Topor. Directed by Kate Warner.

Stage Manager . . . . . Jude Futral  
Scenic Design . . . . . Kat Conley  
Lighting Design . . . . . Joseph P. Monaghan  
Sound Design . . . . . Joseph P. Monaghan  
Costume Design . . . . . English Benning

With the following cast:

**KEVIN** . . . . . Joe Sykes  
**BLAKE** . . . . . Tony Larkin  
**MAX** . . . . . John Benzinger  
**ANDY** . . . . . Mitchell Anderson  
**TELEGRAM DELIVERY BOY** . . . . . Brian Crawford

The West Coast Premiere of ***OCTOPUS*** opened May 17, 2008 in the Magic Theatre's Sam Shepard Theater in San Francisco, CA. Co-produced by Encore Theatre Company with Artistic Director Lisa Steindler and Magic Theatre with Managing Director David Jobin. Directed by Kate Warner.

Stage Manager . . . . . Angela Nostrand  
Scenic Design . . . . . Erik Flatmo  
Lighting Design . . . . . Jarrod Fischer  
Sound Design . . . . . Sara Huddleston  
Costumes Design . . . . . Alexae Visel

With the following cast:

**KEVIN** . . . . . Eric Kerr  
**BLAKE** . . . . . Patrick Alparone  
**MAX** . . . . . Liam Vincent  
**ANDY** . . . . . Brad Erickson  
**TELEGRAM DELIVERY BOY** . . . . . Rowan Brooks

## LIST OF PLAYERS

**KEVIN** – A man, 20s, handsome, bright, rational, arrogant, reckless

**BLAKE** – A man, 20s, witty, innocence and care, maybe a bit hipster

**MAX** – A man, 30s, all charm and somewhat like a predatory cat

**ANDY** – A man, 40s, fit, confident, aging well and suspending disbelief

**TELEGRAM DELIVERY BOY** – A younger man, an idea of youth, beauty and vitality all wrapped in a tight, snappy outfit. A slice of Americana, but there is something darker underneath.

## NOTES

[ ] indicate overlapping dialogue.

The play should be performed without an intermission.

The ROAR is the sound of a huge beast trapped underwater, the sounds of an immense, graceful undersea animal twisted into something ferocious and ravenous. Somehow muted, dense and distant, except for scene 5 when it achieves deafening levels.



1

*(Waves of blue light illuminate a small apartment. An area stage right is in darkness. A sunken living room sits down stage center with a couch, a chair and a small table. There are French doors stage right that lead to an unseen kitchen. Two steps lead up to a front door stage left. A bedroom area is upstage center, raised higher. The bed is central, sitting in front of looming factory windows. BLAKE leans against the couch staring at the front door, foot tapping. KEVIN enters with a wine bottle and two glasses, The blue light fades, interior light prevails...)*

**BLAKE.** When did you tell them to come?

*(Pause. KEVIN sets the wine and glasses down on the table.)*

Kevin, when did you tell them to be here?

**KEVIN.** 8:30.

**BLAKE.** Well it's 8:35.

**KEVIN.** By your watch.

*(KEVIN exits.)*

**BLAKE.** It's after 8:30. They're late.

**KEVIN.** *(Entering again with two more glasses and a bottle opener. He puts the corkscrew in and begins to try to remove the cork from the wine bottle.)* So?

**BLAKE.** So they're not here yet, they're late.

**KEVIN.** So?

**BLAKE.** Maybe they're not coming.

**KEVIN.** I'm pretty sure they're coming, Baby.

**BLAKE.** Maybe they decided to do something else.

**KEVIN.** Maybe they're gonna' hook up with some other couple?

**BLAKE.** You don't know.

**KEVIN.** They'll be here Blake, take it easy. Jesus, I can't get this cork out.

**BLAKE.** White wine?

**KEVIN.** It's a Riesling. Um... "Bishop."

**BLAKE.** I don't even know what that means.

**KEVIN.** It means it was cheap. It's a dessert wine, or, I don't know, something like that. It's sweet.

**BLAKE.** Nice. Dessert. I get it.

**KEVIN.** It's all we have and they were both drinking white wine at the bar the other night, okay?

**BLAKE.** I'm just a little nervous. Not just a little, [maybe...]

**KEVIN.** [You gotta'] take a breath or something, okay? We agreed [and...]

**BLAKE.** [I only] [agreed to...]

**KEVIN.** [Ah ah, we] agreed and it's gonna' be fun and it's gonna' be fine and you're gonna' be great so...

*(He moves in close to BLAKE and gives him a deliberate kiss.)*

Take a breath.

*(KEVIN returns to trying to get the cork out of the bottle. Pause)*

**BLAKE.** I look okay?

**KEVIN.** You look amazing. You always look amazing.

**BLAKE.** You look good too.

**KEVIN.** I know.

**BLAKE.** I thought maybe I should wear khakis, but the jeans look better with this shirt and I didn't know if we were supposed to dress up, ya' know? What time did you tell them to come?

**KEVIN.** Blake, don't ask me that again.

*(The cork suddenly pops out, surprising KEVIN. He hops back holding the wine away, spilling a bit. He licks it off his fingers.)*

Got it!

**BLAKE.** Can we not do this?

*(pause)*

**KEVIN.** I thought you wanted to do this, right, Baby?

**BLAKE.** You want to do this and I said [okay.]

**KEVIN.** [Wait a] minute, that's not [how...]

**BLAKE.** [I want to] do it if you want to do it, but I don't really want to, unless you really do.

**KEVIN.** Wait, what?

**BLAKE.** That made sense.

**KEVIN.** They seem like really nice guys, right? And they're good looking and they've been committed forever, so it's not gonna' get all 'fatal attraction' or whatever. And they're on the way here. They're practically here.

**BLAKE.** I know.

**KEVIN.** I mean they're practically here and you don't wanna' go through with it?

**BLAKE.** Look, I'm, I don't know.

**KEVIN.** Well that's gonna' be awkward.

**BLAKE.** It's going to be awkward either way Kevin, don't be all dreamy about it. I don't want to go through with it and have it fuck things up.

**KEVIN.** It's just for fun, it's exciting, it's not gonna' fuck anything up.

**BLAKE.** Right, you know because you've done this before?

**KEVIN.** No, because...there is no one I could love or enjoy more than you. This can't touch that, this is, this'll just be an excellent story one day.

**BLAKE.** That's sweet and just really adorable and stupid.

**KEVIN.** Hey!

**BLAKE.** Seriously, Andy and Max have been together for, like, ever; we haven't. There's a big difference there, you know? Those guys are more...established with each other.

**KEVIN.** They've got nothing on us.

**BLAKE.** Age and experience.

**KEVIN.** Here we go...

**BLAKE.** Look, okay, I know it's just, I know it's not technically a big deal. It's something fun for us and I do like [them...]

**KEVIN.** [And...?]

**BLAKE.** And I feel like we might not be ready to sleep with other guys.

**KEVIN.** Only one way to find out.

**BLAKE.** Stop trying to be cute.

**KEVIN.** You're just doing your freak out thing. I love you and I know you, better than probably anyone, right? You're just doing your thing. It's like when I wanted to get a puppy.

**BLAKE.** It is so not like that.

**KEVIN.** It's just like that. And so we didn't get a puppy, did we? No really cute Weimaraner puppy, no adorable Weimaraner puppy. Think about how happy we'd be coming home to a fun little Weimaraner, but look around and no Weimaraner to [be found.]

**BLAKE.** [Stop] saying Weimaraner. And this isn't a puppy.

**KEVIN.** That's right! It's better. We don't have to train them or feed them or walk them. We just get to fuck them and then they leave.

**BLAKE.** (*crashing onto the couch*) Oh God.

**KEVIN.** That's it. That's all it is. It's just sex.

**BLAKE.** You're not gonna' call it off are you?

**KEVIN.** Only if you really, really want me to call it off. If you really want me to, I'll tell these attractive, charming, probably really, huh, really good in bed guys to go home.

(**BLAKE** smiles, then shakes it off...)

**BLAKE.** Doesn't it say something about, I don't know, us? I don't want to be all, it just seems like a big thing to try.

**KEVIN.** Better that we try it together, right?

**BLAKE.** As opposed to what?

(KEVIN is caught, he hands BLAKE a glass of wine.)

KEVIN. I don't know, just...better that we try it together, right?

(pause)

Okay, okay look, what if, what if we come up with some kind of signal? Like if either one of us wants to call it off once they're here, so it won't be obvious and we can get out of it.

BLAKE. What kind of signal?

KEVIN. Like a word, something we don't usually say. And if things get scary or you start to feel uncomfortable, you can just say it and we'll stop.

BLAKE. No matter what?

KEVIN. No matter what.

BLAKE. Okay, all right, that sounds okay.

KEVIN. Good! Good, okay, what word? You pick the word.

BLAKE. I don't know, um... "Palomino."

KEVIN. Like...the horses?

BLAKE. Fine, you pick something.

KEVIN. No, no, no, "Palomino" is fine.

BLAKE. Good.

KEVIN. Good.

BLAKE. (*sipping the wine...*) Oh, it is sweet.

(*There's a knock at the door.*)

KEVIN. So whaddya' think?

BLAKE. And we can stop any [time?]

KEVIN. [Come on] baby, whaddya' want me to do?

(*another knock at the door*)

BLAKE. Okay. It's an adventure. I mean, they're here, we're here, let's do it.

KEVIN. Okay, okay?

BLAKE. Okay. I love you, Kevin.

KEVIN. (KEVIN bounces back to BLAKE, gives him a kiss...) I love

you too, Baby.

*(KEVIN opens the door. ANDY and MAX are waiting. They are a photo from an upscale catalogue; casual dress but very nice and totally at ease. ANDY has a bottle of wine. They enter, hugging KEVIN.)*

ANDY. Listen, I know we're a little late, I wanted to pick up something to bring you guys and like a total dunce I waited 'til the [last minute.]

MAX. [Ah, ah,] he got something good though. Hey.

KEVIN. You didn't have to do that.

ANDY. It's only wine, I hope you like Pinot Grigio, I didn't know [if you...]

KEVIN. [That's great,] we love it.

BLAKE. Hey Andy. Hey Max.

MAX. You're looking good tonight, Blake.

BLAKE. Thanks.

*(ANDY notices the open bottle of wine.)*

ANDY. Good, I'm glad you guys already started.

KEVIN. He already had a whole bottle.

BLAKE. I did not.

KEVIN. We did, before this one. You know, to relax a little [and kinda'...]

BLAKE. [It's no big] deal.

MAX. No, no, it's our fault for being late. Sorry.

ANDY. *(Setting down his bottle and picking up the open one. He examines the label.)* You guys are roughing it, huh?

KEVIN. Huh?

MAX. Andy's a wine snob, just ignore him.

ANDY. I am not a snob, I just have...

*(pause)*

MAX. Yes? We're waiting, you have...?

ANDY. I enjoy specific tastes.

MAX. Ah, me too.

*(an awkward silence)*

**BLAKE.** I'm glad you could make it tonight, this is good, I think it's gonna' be good, right?

*(Another silence. They all slowly begin to laugh at their own awkwardness.)*

**MAX.** Listen guys, it's going to be fine. It's not a big deal.

**KEVIN.** That's what I was saying to Blake before you [got...]

**BLAKE.** [Kevin.]

**ANDY.** Max is just like that, everything's fine.

**MAX.** And it is.

**ANDY.** And I always get a little, you know...

**BLAKE.** Nervous?

**ANDY.** I don't know, something like that.

**KEVIN.** Why don't I put on some music?

**MAX.** Good plan.

**KEVIN.** I'm not sure what we have exactly...

*(KEVIN crosses to the stereo and finds something to play.)*

**BLAKE.** Do you do this a lot?

**KEVIN.** He doesn't [mean...]

**BLAKE.** [No, it's] just, we never talked about that I guess, at the bar, and I wanted to know. I feel like we, we kinda' talked around it, so...

**MAX.** Did we talk around it? I thought Kevin was pretty well [versed in...]

**ANDY.** [Blake, you] can ask us whatever you want.

**BLAKE.** So, okay, do you do this a lot?

**MAX.** We do it sometimes.

**ANDY.** Really, it used to be a lark, you know, seems like more [lately.]

**MAX.** [Now Andy,] they'll think [we...]

**ANDY.** [Now] whenever Max starts to feel [a little...]

**MAX.** [We do it] every once in a while. And it's never a big deal, is it? No. Everything's fine.

**KEVIN.** Right.

*(Soft music fills the space as KEVIN returns to the group. The sounds of Bjork's "Possibly, Maybe" or something like it.)*

**MAX.** Listen, here's the thing, it's something guys do. It's something people do. All the time. And I really hope it's something we're going to do. Tonight.

**BLAKE.** Okay...I need some more wine.

**KEVIN.** Got it.

*(Grabs the bottle from ANDY, pours more into BLAKE's waiting glass. He then pours a glass for himself. He turns to ANDY...)*

Wine?

**ANDY.** Um...maybe I'll open this bottle?

**MAX.** I told you.

**ANDY.** I just, um, don't like Rieslings is all.

**MAX.** He loves Rieslings.

**ANDY.** Stop it.

**BLAKE.** Kevin thought a dessert wine would be kind of appropriate.

**MAX.** I get that.

**ANDY.** Can I just grab the bottle opener?

*(He snaps it up, cracking into opening his bottle.)*

**KEVIN.** I really am sorry, Andy, it's all we had.

**MAX.** I'll take a glass of yours, Kevin.

**ANDY.** Oh that's right, I'm the bad guy.

**MAX.** *(He rubs his hand through BLAKE's hair...)* I just want the sweet one.

**ANDY.** Uh huh.

*(ANDY pops his bottle open and pours himself a glass.)*

Well I will proudly be the lone friend to this bottle.

*(another silence, longer, furtive glances, darting eyes)*

**MAX.** Jesus, we're so fucking awkward.

*(Everyone laughs weakly. MAX takes off his coat. He then pulls his shirt up over his head and throws it at BLAKE.)*

**BLAKE.** Um...

**ANDY.** Just leave him; he's in his element. Max is always the first person to get undressed at any occasion.

**MAX.** That's right. And proud of it.

**ANDY.** We're both proud.

*(MAX laughs. BLAKE holds MAX's shirt and sets it to the side.)*

**BLAKE.** Definitely need to drink more.

**KEVIN.** Maybe you should finish that glass first, Baby?

**BLAKE.** Oh.

*(He drinks the glass of wine. MAX takes off his pants, standing in front of the men in briefs.)*

**ANDY.** And here we go.

**MAX.** All right, come on. We can drink wine in any attire. Come on. Kevin?

*(KEVIN gets up and begins taking off his clothes. BLAKE follows suit shortly. MAX "assists" BLAKE. They all watch each other. ANDY takes it in, eyes on MAX and sipping his wine.)*

**MAX.** Now we've got a party.

*(KEVIN reaches his underwear quickly. He stops.)*

**KEVIN.** Andy, are you gonna'...?

**ANDY.** Absolutely.

*(Pause. Like BLAKE before him, he drinks his entire glass of wine at once. He then gets up and begins to undress. MAX begins kissing BLAKE as he finishes undressing him down to nothing. KEVIN crosses over to ANDY and begins taking off ANDY's clothes. They too begin to kiss. MAX*

*breaks from **BLAKE**, now naked, and quickly strips off his own underwear, as **BLAKE** looks back at **KEVIN**, who is now kissing **ANDY**. **MAX** takes **BLAKE** in and grapples him into a deeper kiss.)*

*(**ANDY** breaks from **KEVIN** and leads him over to **BLAKE** and **MAX**. **ANDY** strips off his underwear and steps up behind them as **BLAKE** and **MAX** continue to embrace. He joins them. Just for a moment, **KEVIN** is left outside the scene, the only man still wearing something. He takes in the moment.)*

*(**BLAKE** breaks away from between **MAX** and **ANDY** and pulls **KEVIN** into the mix. He is quickly stripped of his underwear. The men consume each other, melding into one flesh.)*

*(The music begins to rise with the intensity of the scene.)*

*(After a moment, **MAX** breaks away, tugging **BLAKE** by the hand towards the bed. **BLAKE** in turn pulls **ANDY** by the hand and **ANDY** pulls **KEVIN** by the hand; a chain of men moving around the living room and up to the bed. One by one they fall into each other on the bed, becoming something else all together, a mix of bodies and roaming arms and hands as the lights fade to the wavy blues and then to dark.)*

## End Scene

## 2

*(Waves of blue light again illuminate the apartment. All evidence of the gathering is gone. BLAKE is in bed, in his underwear, twisted up in the sheets. The blue light gives way to interior lighting in the apartment and sun floods in through the windows.)*

*(Keys are heard and KEVIN enters through the front door carrying groceries.)*

*(BLAKE rolls over. He sits up in bed, rubs his eyes.)*

BLAKE. Good morning.

KEVIN. It's 12:30.

BLAKE. 12:30?

*(KEVIN moves through the room without stopping to talk to BLAKE, crossing into the kitchen.)*

Do we have any tea?

*(Pause. Then louder...)*

Did you make tea this morning, is there any left?

KEVIN. *(crossing back into the room, but standing just inside the door)* What?

BLAKE. *(sleepy, sweet...)* Is there any tea?

KEVIN. It's 12:30.

BLAKE. It's Saturday.

KEVIN. It's 12:30.

BLAKE. Okay...?

KEVIN. So do you want me to make you tea, Blake?

BLAKE. What is wrong with you?

KEVIN. I'll make you some tea.

BLAKE. I'm serious, I...

*(He disappears again into the kitchen.)*

Listen...

*(pause, then louder:)*

Listen, I don't know what's wrong with you but I'm getting pretty sick of it. Did you hear me?

(KEVIN *reappears in the doorway. Pause.*)

BLAKE. (*continued*) I said that I'm getting [pretty...]

KEVIN. [I heard] you Blake. I was in there making some nice afternoon tea for you to help you get your day started and I could hear you just fine, Blake.

BLAKE. Stop saying my name like it doesn't taste good.

KEVIN. I'm not.

BLAKE. Like you have to spit it out.

KEVIN. Is that what I'm doing...Blake?

(KEVIN *disappears into the kitchen again.*)

BLAKE. Jesus, why are you being such an asshole? I know it's not because I slept late, I always sleep late on Saturday and you've been acting like this for weeks now. Ever since you orchestrated your little jamboree with the wine connoisseurs, and it wasn't even my idea, so I'm not [sure what the...]

(KEVIN *reappears suddenly.*)

KEVIN. [My little] jamboree?

BLAKE. Party, event, foursome, you pick.

KEVIN. Sure, I planned it, fine. But you were the star, right?

BLAKE. How can you be the star of group sex?

KEVIN. You don't know because you were the star.

BLAKE. And what, you weren't? Max was all over you.

KEVIN. I was all over Max.

BLAKE. Super.

KEVIN. No, I was on the outside.

BLAKE. Come on.

KEVIN. I was on the outside.

BLAKE. That's bad geography, that's not my fault; I was just going with the flow. I was just trying to have an adventure, right?

KEVIN. You sure did.

BLAKE. Fuck you. Fuck. You. It was your idea, I did it for you, so you could [feel like...]

**KEVIN.** [You may have] agreed to it for me, but you sure seemed to get into [it once...]

**BLAKE.** (*laughing in disbelief...*) [Um,] yeah! It's sex. It feels good.

**KEVIN.** Look, I'm making the fucking tea; do we need to talk about this now?

**BLAKE.** Yes. You don't get to stomp around here with your big judgment boots feeling like you've somehow been wronged when I was trying to call the thing off and I felt self-conscious and dumb when they showed up dressed nice and radiating 'couple-hood.'

**KEVIN.** (*stuck...*) Judgment boots?

**BLAKE.** That's what I said: judgment boots.

**KEVIN.** What the fuck is a judgment boot?

**BLAKE.** I didn't do anything to make you feel bad, Kevin, I wouldn't do that and I don't want you to be mad at me so stop it.

**KEVIN.** It was supposed to be our adventure, Baby.

**BLAKE.** Right, our adventure?

**KEVIN.** Turned out as your adventure.

**BLAKE.** Is that what it was?

(*He gets up out of the bed.*)

Because it's not the one I would have picked.

(*He grabs the comforter off the bed and wraps it around himself.*)

I would have picked white water rafting, or skydiving... no, that's a lie. That's a lie. I'm just trying to sound rugged. I would have picked Disneyland for an adventure. That Mad Hatter thing, the spinning teacups, that's about my speed. And you know it. You know it. Not sex with some other guys we just met at a local bar.

(*KEVIN softens...*)

**KEVIN.** We didn't just meet them.

**BLAKE.** I can't believe I was so, I mean, those guys could've been anyone.

**KEVIN.** That was supposed to be the exciting part. Or something like that.

**BLAKE.** That was the exciting part?

**KEVIN.** Or something like that.

**BLAKE.** Spinning teacups, Kevin. Go fuck yourself.

*(He passes KEVIN on the way into the kitchen; still wrapped in the comforter. KEVIN goes to the bed and examines it.)*

**KEVIN.** I think I'm gonna' wash the sheets again.

*(He straightens the pillows and fixes the sheet a little. Then to the bed, to himself...)*

Stupid sheets.

*(BLAKE comes back in with two mugs. He sets one down on the end table and takes the other with him to sit in the chair, the comforter around him.)*

Is that mine?

**BLAKE.** If you want it I guess.

**KEVIN.** Thanks.

**BLAKE.** You pretty much made it.

*(KEVIN sits on the couch. They both pout a little.)*

**KEVIN.** Well this doesn't feel very good.

**BLAKE.** Nope.

**KEVIN.** So...

**BLAKE.** So stop being angry at me. On a Saturday.

**KEVIN.** I know.

**BLAKE.** I know you know. And unless you want me to break out the Sigur Rós albums, you better start being nice again.

**KEVIN.** *(with a smile)* You can't threaten me.

**BLAKE.** Electric strings and sky-high vocals.

**KEVIN.** I'm not afraid.

**BLAKE.** I will go over there right now and put on a bootleg, all B-sides EP of the most experimental [music.]

**KEVIN.** [Okay you] win. I don't know, Baby, it just wasn't what I thought is all. I thought it would be all sexy and feel good and, I don't know, but the whole time it just felt weird. And then, after a while, I kinda' became aware that I wasn't even touching you.

**BLAKE.** Well I mean, what did you expect?

*(Pause. He puts his hand on KEVIN's leg...)*

You wanted other guys, so other guys were here. Not me, other guys. With fancy wine.

*(There is a knock at the door.)*

**KEVIN.** Are you expecting anyone?

**BLAKE.** *(He pulls the blanket up around his head.)* I'm wearing a comforter.

**KEVIN.** It looks like a parka.

**BLAKE.** It doesn't look like a parka.

**KEVIN.** Like a little Eskimo.

*(KEVIN kisses BLAKE. Another knock.)*

**BLAKE.** Ugh, I'm not expecting anyone.

*(KEVIN goes to the door, opens it. In the doorway stands a bright, young TELEGRAM DELIVERY BOY in a form-fitting shirt and pants; shades of blue and a matching hat. He is soaking wet, entirely, water visibly dripping from him. He holds a yellow envelope.)*

**TELEGRAM DELIVERY BOY.** Good afternoon sir.

**KEVIN.** Um...

**TELEGRAM DELIVERY BOY.** I have a telegram for Mr. Blake Fields.

**KEVIN.** A telegram?

**BLAKE.** I'm Blake.

**TELEGRAM DELIVERY BOY.** Then this is for you.

**KEVIN.** You're soaking wet.

**TELEGRAM DELIVERY BOY.** Yes. Oh, I mean, darn this crazy weather. Never can tell what's coming.

*(He hands **BLAKE** the yellow envelope. The ROAR sounds from far away, the **TELEGRAM DELIVERY BOY** looks over his shoulder.)*

**KEVIN.** What the hell was that?

**TELEGRAM DELIVERY BOY.** Thunder?

**BLAKE.** It didn't sound like thunder?

**TELEGRAM DELIVERY BOY.** Have a nice day sir.

*(He exits with a smile, whistling a little tune.)*

**KEVIN.** It was clear, was there like a flash shower or something?

*(He looks up at the sky then closes the door as **BLAKE** crosses to the couch.)*

**BLAKE.** I didn't even know you could still send telegrams.

**KEVIN.** Mostly for money orders and stuff I think.

**BLAKE.** Money? Nice.

*(He opens the envelope and pulls out the carbon paper telegram. He reads:)*

8:08 AM "We regret to inform you that [Andy] has gone to live at the bottom of the ocean. Stop. Please accept his deepest apologies, but he will no longer be in contact. Stop. Should you wish to see him, you unfortunately cannot. Stop."

*(Pause. He looks up...)*

**KEVIN.** So...it's from Andy?

**BLAKE.** It's about Andy anyway.

**KEVIN.** And that's it?

**BLAKE.** That's it.

**KEVIN.** There's got to be more.

**BLAKE.** *(**BLAKE** checks the back of the telegram with a shrug.)*  
Nope.

**KEVIN.** Why is Andy sending you a telegram?

**BLAKE.** It doesn't say who it's from.

**KEVIN.** Well maybe Andy was impressed, maybe he thinks you're pretty [special?]

**BLAKE.** [Oh, don't] start again with the stupid jealousy [stuff.]

**KEVIN.** [Well why] is Andy sending you little messages?

**BLAKE.** Okay, does this sound like a love note to you?

**KEVIN.** Not exactly.

**BLAKE.** No. No, it doesn't.

**KEVIN.** Fine. I'm sorry.

**BLAKE.** I really wish you could hear what you sound like when you say that. I don't think it comes out the way you think it does. Good thing I'm so patient.

**KEVIN.** In your cute little comforter.

**BLAKE.** Alright, okay, I'm getting dressed.

*(He rises, pulling the comforter up around himself again.*

**KEVIN** *grabs the edge of the comforter and pulls it off of*  
**BLAKE** *as he walks away.)*

**KEVIN.** I kinda' like this look.

**BLAKE.** Uh huh. Make the bed.

*(BLAKE exits towards the kitchen. KEVIN picks up the telegram and calls after him.)*

**KEVIN.** For a minute, I really thought it might be money.

**BLAKE.** *(from off)* What?

**KEVIN.** Nothing.

*(Examining the telegram. To himself...)*

I'm sure we'll figure it out.

**End Scene**

## 3

*(Lights rise on the darkened stage right area to reveal MAX waiting, drinking coffee from a paper to-go cup. He stares into the cup.)*

*(The sounds of a crowded coffee shop fill the space.)*

*(KEVIN enters the stage with his own paper cup. He spots MAX and heads over towards him.)*

KEVIN. There you are.

MAX. *(startled from his thoughts, but quick to put on a show...)*  
Here I am.

KEVIN. I didn't even know this little corner was back here.

MAX. I should have been on the look out. My head is kinda' all over the place. So what's up, I was surprised to hear from you actually?

KEVIN. I've been leaving you messages for over [a week.]

MAX. [Because I] haven't seen you at the bar, in a while?

KEVIN. Oh...you know, things have just been kinda' crazy the past couple weeks, haven't been going out much.

MAX. Uh huh.

KEVIN. And Blake has been really irritable lately, so going out [has been...]

MAX. [We're] all adults, I know how it works. No excuses, you're off the hook.

KEVIN. But I'm [not...]

MAX. [You] said it was important?

KEVIN. Okay, okay I called you because we got, no, Blake got this, I don't know what to call it, weird? I keep calling it weird, this weird message delivered by some guy. I don't know if it's "important" exactly. He just showed up at the door, soaking wet and said [something...]

MAX. [Wet?]

KEVIN. Yep. Strange, right?

MAX. Strange.

KEVIN. Well I know I was kinda' cryptic on the phone, but it is kind of...

MAX. Weird.

**KEVIN.** Sure. And I just wanted to see if you guys could shed some light on it, but you sounded [so...]

**MAX.** [It's just] a little rough right now is all.

**KEVIN.** What's that?

**MAX.** Well I'm glad you called, I needed to get out of the house anyway. There's some kind of, some kind of problem with the pipes. Water everywhere, it's ridiculous, can't figure out where it's coming from. We just refinished the floors and they're ruined. Everything's ruined.

**KEVIN.** That's awful.

**MAX.** What?

**KEVIN.** That's awful, about the water.

**MAX.** Oh yes, no, it'll be fine. It's fine, it's nothing...I like it more here anyway.

**KEVIN.** The coffee shop?

**MAX.** Well not necessarily this coffee shop; you don't like this place?

**KEVIN.** No, I like it. It's really...rustic.

**MAX.** Huh.

**KEVIN.** Or I don't know, but it's nice.

**MAX.** No, it is sort of warm and rustic.

**KEVIN.** I think Blake would like it; he's drawn to anything remotely pastoral and these paintings [are just...]

**MAX.** [Well it's] not, it doesn't have to be this place in particular, just in public, around people.

**KEVIN.** Are you all right?

**MAX.** Sure, absolutely.

**KEVIN.** Okay.

**MAX.** I just feel better around people right now.

**KEVIN.** What's going on Max?

**MAX.** Nothing. Nothing. You look good. When you guys stopped coming to the, when you "got busy," I kinda' thought I wouldn't see you again, but here you are.

*(MAX touches KEVIN's hands, but KEVIN pulls them away with a self-conscious grin. )*

Oh...you already ordered, okay, what'd you get? I always get a black coffee. That's it, nothing extra, but Andy always got some thing that took ten minutes to order and had six kinds of whip cream and nonsense on top, you've seen those, with the foam and syrup and all the layers, like some kind of insane, caffeinated yard sale in a cup, he said it was a texture thing but, I mean, Jesus it's just fucking coffee.

**KEVIN.** Um...right.

**MAX.** So Andy and I broke up.

**KEVIN.** What?

**MAX.** I broke up with Andy actually, it doesn't feel like that, but that's what happened. I left him, or I told him to leave.

**KEVIN.** But you guys were together [for so...]

**MAX.** [Well] nothing lasts forever and all that other stuff you're supposed to say. But we just decided, I decided that I, you never really know how you're gonna' react to things, you know?

**KEVIN.** I don't know, like what?

**MAX.** Oh you know, he's just...Andy has very specific ideas about what "things" mean. Actually mean. Everything means something; everything's so serious. Frankly, he's always been older on the inside, even before he started actually getting older. You know what I mean, right?

**KEVIN.** I kinda' thought you guys were about the same age?

*(Pause. MAX takes long look at KEVIN, takes a breath, but then drinks his coffee instead of speaking.)*

**MAX.** You needed something, wanted to ask, right, about this wet guy leaving a message for you?

**KEVIN.** Well, okay, this is a little touchier now, but it's about Andy actually; I was hoping you could help [explain it.]

**MAX.** [What] about Andy?

**KEVIN.** I think maybe it's from Andy. Something about the ocean [and...?]

**MAX.** [What do you,] what kind of message?

KEVIN. Believe it or not, it's a telegram.

*(Producing the telegram, KEVIN hands it to MAX. MAX takes the telegram hesitantly, as if it might hurt him to touch it. MAX reads the telegram out loud.)*

MAX. 8:08 AM "We regret to inform you that [Andy] has gone to live at the bottom of the ocean. Stop.

*(MAX trails off, reading the telegram to himself.)*

KEVIN. So we really didn't know what to make of it. And it seemed kinda' off to me that Andy would be sending Blake messages.

MAX. Off?

KEVIN. That Andy would be sending something to Blake.

MAX. Doesn't look like it's from him.

KEVIN. Who else would have [sent it?]

MAX. [I got] one like this; no, not like this. But I got a telegram. I guess the guy was wet now that I think about it, I guess I didn't notice, I just, I can't believe you got this.

KEVIN. Well can we ask Andy?

*(Pause. MAX is transfixed by the telegram.)*

Max?

MAX. What?

KEVIN. I know you guys, look I know it's not the best timing and maybe you're not on the best of terms right now, but this is bizarre right? This is not a normal thing. So can we ask him?

MAX. What's wrong with you?

KEVIN. What do you [mean?]

MAX. [What's] wrong with you?

KEVIN. Nothing.

MAX. I can't ask him. Ask him? Did you read this, you fucking little kid; did you read this? How the fuck am I supposed to ask him if he's at the bottom of the God damn ocean?!

KEVIN. Jesus, calm [down.]

MAX. [How am] I supposed to ask him [anything?]

KEVIN. [Look, I] didn't mean [to...]

MAX. [You didn't.]

KEVIN. Keep your voice down man, [people are...]

MAX. [Fuck!]

*(pause)*

Fuck, I shouldn't have...lost my temper. Fuck. I'm sorry.

KEVIN. It's, just, it's okay.

MAX. I hate when I get all...ugh, it's just awkward. It's not...

*(Pause. MAX tries to pull himself together.)*

What, what kind of coffee did you get?

KEVIN. It's, um...it's tea.

MAX. Tea.

KEVIN. Green tea. We, um, don't really do coffee.

MAX. *(Laughing to himself, a bitter sound...)* Perfect.

KEVIN. It makes us both jittery.

MAX. Listen, I don't know why you got that telegram. If I knew, I'd...tell you. Are we done now, can we be done?

KEVIN. If you hear from him [will you...]

MAX. [If I hear] from him.

KEVIN. All right. Sorry if I...just, sorry.

*(KEVIN awkwardly begins to hug MAX, then decides against it and begins to exit. He gets half way across the stage as MAX recovers, putting his charmer routine back on...)*

MAX. Kevin. Kevin, come back for a second. Please?

*(KEVIN turns and crosses back to MAX.)*

KEVIN. Uh huh?

MAX. Look, I know I'm kinda' all over the place right now.

KEVIN. I understand man.

MAX. No. No. I think you and Blake are great and I don't want you to think that Andy and I just do that kind of

thing all the time. I mean we do that kind of thing, did that kind of thing, but not all the time. So don't think [we're...]

KEVIN. [Oh, I] didn't [think that.]

MAX. [Andy's sick,] he's sick.

KEVIN. I don't [understand.]

MAX. [We get, ya'] know, tested pretty regularly, it's never a big...it was never a big deal. He just got the results, right after, well after that night with you guys. Needless to say it was unexpected.

KEVIN. He got [the...?]

MAX. [So you] should get tested. There were all kinds of things we, I mean, it was a good night, but you guys should get tested.

KEVIN. He's sick?

MAX. Well, I mean, not "sick," not yet anyway, look, I'm sure it's nothing for you to...well, that's a stupid thing to say. I'm sure you're fine. Just to be safe. And whatever the other thing is...conscientious. But I thought I should tell you. Or, no, I decided to tell you. Just now.

KEVIN. Okay.

MAX. I'm sure you guys are fine. I'm not sure, but we were pretty safe.

KEVIN. Pretty safe.

MAX. You know, nothing's for sure. I should get going.

KEVIN. How's, I mean, how is Andy doing with...all this?

MAX. I don't know Kevin. He's at the bottom of the fucking ocean.

(MAX exits.)

(KEVIN stand with his cup, unable to move. He drops the cup, spilling his tea on the floor. This jars him out of his thoughts, the liquid splashing on his feet snapping him back into the moment.)

End Scene

## 4

*(Waves of blue lights again illuminate the apartment. BLAKE enters and sits on the couch with a bowl of cereal. He is in pajama bottoms and a t-shirt. The blue light gives way to interior lighting in the apartment as KEVIN enters...)*

BLAKE. Where've you been?

KEVIN. I got coffee.

BLAKE. Coffee?

KEVIN. Tea.

BLAKE. You've been gone forever.

KEVIN. I had some other, had some errands.

BLAKE. Want some cereal?

KEVIN. No.

BLAKE. Are you sure? It's Captain Crunch...fresh from the ocean floor.

*(He laughs at his own joke. KEVIN does not. They share a look...)*

Oh come on, that was funny.

KEVIN. It wasn't funny, okay?

BLAKE. No really, I've been thinking about this: how the fuck does someone go to the ocean floor? Unless they have one of those mini-sub, like in that documentary we saw, but I doubt that's what's going on and if it's not just a lame prank then maybe Andy's crazy, like one of those weirdo guys that [can't let...]

KEVIN. [Shut-up.]

BLAKE. Um, ouch.

KEVIN. Sorry.

BLAKE. You're letting this telegram thing get to you too much. It's just some kind of joke.

KEVIN. I don't know.

BLAKE. Okay smarty pants, what is it then?

KEVIN. Andy tested positive.

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