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SF PERUSALS

Samuel French Acting Edition

All This Intimacy

by Rajiv Joseph

SAMUEL FRENCH

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ALL THIS INTIMACY premiered in 2006 at the 2econdStage Theatre UPTOWN, Carole Rothman, Artistic Director and Ellen Richard, Interim Executive Director. The production was directed by Giovanna Sardelli with the following cast and production staff:

JEN . . . . . Gretchen Egolf
SETH . . . . . Adam Green
MAUREEN . . . . . .Amy Landecker
FRANNY . . . . . Kate Nowlin
BECCA . . . . . Krysten Ritter
TY . . . . . Thomas Sadoski

Sets by David Newell
Costumes by Amy Clark
Lighting by Rie Ono
Sound Design by Bart Fasbender
Production Stage Manager: Rachel J. Perlman
Stage Manager: Stephanie Atlan

CHARACTERS

TY - 30

JEN - 28

MAUREEN - 42

BECCA - 18

FRANNY - 26

SETH - 30

SETTING

Brooklyn and Manhattan

TIME

Present

For Katherine Berg

ACT I

Scene 1
No Joke

(TY and SETH in Ty's apartment.)

SETH. Please tell me this is a joke.

TY. It's not.

SETH. You're shitting me. I know you. You're shitting me.

TY. Seth, I'm telling you.

SETH. Okay! Okay, *Jen*. And the neighbor? That neighbor you were…? You were…?

TY. Yes. Maureen.

SETH. How *old* is she?

TY. She's forty-two.

SETH. Forty-two? She's *forty-two* years old?

TY. Yes, okay?

SETH. No, Ty, this is not happening. One girl. One girl. Jen.

TY. *Three*, Seth. *Three.*

SETH. No.

TY. Yes.

SETH. Jesus.

TY. I know.

SETH. Fuck!

TY. That's what I'm saying!

SETH. I don't understand. How can this happen?
TY. I don't know. I don't know!
SETH. This is messed up!
TY. What am I going to do?
SETH. And who else? You said three! Who's the third? Who's the third girl?
TY. You don't know her.
SETH. Well who is she?
TY. Why does it matter? I am in serious shit.
SETH. Some random girl? Who? Ty, who is it?
TY. I need you to not freak out on me.
SETH. Who's the third girl? Who's the third girl?!

(Beat)

TY. This girl… She's … this ….

Scene 2
Hot Little Thing

(Lights up across the stage on BECCA who holds a notebook and faces the audience.)

BECCA.
I am standing on the precipice of my life
And life is such a confusion.

Why do I stand upon the edge with such wind around me?
What if I fall?

(Beat; she lowers the paper and looks out.) Thank you.

Scene 3
Cum Laude

(Back to SETH and TY.)

SETH. Your *student!?*
TY. Seth…
SETH. Your *student!?* Ty, your *student?!*
TY. Just calm down.
SETH. How old?
TY. Seth…
SETH. How old?
TY. Eighteen.

(SETH freaks.)

TY. Stop it.
SETH. *Eighteen! Forty-two! Thirty!*
TY. Jen's twenty-eight.
SETH. Whatever!
TY. Listen, Seth…
SETH. Wait! Can you please just… tell me! You had sex

with three different women in one week!?

TY. It wasn't all the same week, it was like over a nine-day period.

SETH. That's dirty. That's extremely dirty.

TY. It just… happened.

SETH. What were you thinking?! Can you tell me that? What were you thinking??

Scene 4
Labyrinth

TY. *(To audience)* Two years ago I published a small book of poetry. It won a lot of awards. For a book of poetry, it did pretty good. It was called *Labyrinth.* People like it, I think, because even though it's a collection of poems, it tells one long narrative story, and the story is about a young man who finds out that he has super powers. But his superpowers are weird. Basically, he can make any place he goes into a labyrinth. If he is in a single hallway, he can create a hundred hallways out of it. If he is in a small house, he can create miles of catacombs and tunnels all around it. It makes no sense, this superpower. It defies all sorts of logic, and even for a made-up superpower, it raises a lot of bothersome questions. Anyhow, it was a cool book of poems. The book made me a little money and got me this teaching position at Columbia University, teaching a poetry workshop to undergraduates. The success of the book, and this pretty cool job, made me

very confident about pretty much everything in general. *(He steps out on to his back porch which is littered with shiny, colorful toys for a small child.)*

And then one day I stepped out on to my back porch in Brooklyn to find a bunch toys lying around for no reason at all.

Scene 5
Little Kid Toys

(TY crouches down, picking up a brightly colored ball. He stares at the ball and the other toys with wonder.
MAUREEN enters from the apartment next door. She sees TY with all the toys.)

MAUREEN. Excuse me. What the hell are you doing?

TY. I'm playing with toys.

MAUREEN. Those toys belong to my son.

TY. I didn't take them, they were here.

MAUREEN. Where'd you get them?!

TY. I'm sorry! I just came out on my porch and I found all these toys here. They were sitting here.

MAUREEN. Oh. I'm sorry… I … I don't know why… My son must have done this. He's being difficult today. I'm sorry. I'm a little crazy.

TY. Here, you can have them back.

MAUREEN. No, I'm sorry I snapped at you.

TY. These are nice toys.

MAUREEN. Yeah, they're nice.

TY. I love this ball!

(MAUREEN looks at the ball. She puts her hands out and TY tosses it to her. She catches it.)

TY. I'm Ty.

MAUREEN. Maureen.

TY. You just moved in here?

MAUREEN. Back in August.

TY. It was really something coming out and finding all these toys here. It was … I don't know, it was magical in a way.

MAUREEN. You like toys, huh?

TY. No, I mean, there was a quality about coming out here and finding a pile of beautiful toys just waiting for me. Like my childhood sitting out here reminding me of something.

I think I had this exact ball. *(Beat)* I'm sorry. I probably sound weird. I get like this a lot these days. These are beautiful, these toys. They're so new.

MAUREEN. We just bought them. We were all set to adopt. A girl. We'd gone through the whole process seven years ago with Augustus, my son. But this time we backed out at the last minute.

TY. I'm sorry. Why'd you back out?

MAUREEN. Well, we kind of came to the conclusion… that… My husband… My husband.

(MAUREEN tosses the ball to him. They play catch.)

TY. It's funny these back porches.

MAUREEN. Why?

TY. We're so close together. It's like we share it. But we never interact. Nobody does, I mean. Nobody ever talks or anything, even though we're all so close.

MAUREEN. It's city life.

TY. I've never met you or your kid. Or your husband…?

MAUREEN. Nick.

TY. I haven't met him either.

MAUREEN. He doesn't really like the back porch. He thinks they're all too close together.

TY. It's city life.

MAUREEN. I don't mind it.

TY. I don't mind it either. It's intimate.

MAUREEN. That's one way of looking at it.

TY. In that distant way.

MAUREEN. The closer you get with someone, the further apart you get. I mean… I don't know what I mean. I'm sorry. I feel a little crazy.

TY. You don't seem that crazy.

MAUREEN. Well, you should get to know me.

TY. I should.

MAUREEN. Soon you'd be running for the hills.

TY. Well, anytime you want to get away from your craziness, hop on over.

MAUREEN. Just hop on over.

TY. Yeah. You know, whatever.

MAUREEN. Just hop on over.

TY. We can defeat the paradox of city life.

MAUREEN. Oh yeah? We can be intimate without being

distant?

TY. We can be anything you want.

MAUREEN. Really.

TY. Sure.

MAUREEN. That's very bold of you, *Ty.* I don't know quite how I feel about that.

TY. I'm just a friendly neighbor.

MAUREEN. You're certainly more than that. Are you always this friendly?

TY. No. But the spirit moves me.

MAUREEN. The spirit, huh? I have to go take care of my kid.

TY. You want your toys back?

MAUREEN. Maybe I'll come get them later.

(She smiles and exits. TY turns to the audience.)

TY. About a week later we were just talking, she was over there, she had been digging in the garden, and she was all sweaty and she came over to the railing and we started talking and I could see right through her shirt. Anyhow, I was smoking a cigarette, and she asked if she could have a drag. She doesn't smoke, she says, but she just wants a drag, but her hands are muddy from the garden, so I take the cigarette in my fingers and hold it to her lips. And … then… God … Damn…

(MAUREEN enters, grabs TY, they have sex.)

MAUREEN. Hey.

TY. Hey. How you doing?

MAUREEN. Fine
TY. Yeah?
MAUREEN. Yeah.
TY. Good.
MAUREEN. Yeah. You?
TY. Fine.
MAUREEN. Good.
TY. Good.

(They finish. MAUREEN exits. TY stumbles downstage, pulling up his pants, finally falling to the ground, spent.)

TY. *(To audience)* Anyhow. Really liked it. Really liked it. I mean. Yeah, it was good.

Scene 6
Laryngitis

(TY's apartment.)

JEN. Ty… I wasn't going to bring this up today, but seeing as you have laryngitis, I figured this might be the best time to have this conversation. Because any inclination you might have to interrupt me, well, that just won't be possible because you can't speak. Ha. Oh well. *(TY gets up, pulls out a notebook, pen,*

and scribbles on a page.)

Okay, okay… Just sit still for a second and let me speak before you start to scribbling away like a madman, jeez! I knew you'd do this or something, just sit and let me say my peace! *(JEN reads what he wrote.)*

Look, I know it is, but I kind of have to seize the moment here. Whenever we talk you always talk me out, you put words in my mouth. *(TY writes again and shows the page. JEN reads.)*

No! That's NOT what I mean! *(TY hits himself in the face with the notebook.)*

Listen. *(TY gestures sarcastically.)*

Okay. Ty. *(Beat)*

So. As you know. As we both well know… There has never been a time in my life, really *ever,* when I haven't been, you know … *in school*. And I know I'm always saying this, okay?

Let me finish! *(JEN reads the notebook. TY scrawls something brief. She reads.)*

You know I don't like that word, and it's rude. *(He scrawls another word, seemingly profane.)*

Nice. Thank you. Shut up.

Okay! God! I can't believe you have laryngitis and you're still interrupting me! Constantly! *(TY scrawls. JEN does not read.)*

Look, I'm going to talk and you can listen or you can not listen, but here it is. When it comes to figuring out what to do with my life, I've been seriously claustrophobic. Because choosing things narrows down your life, it limits you and it freaks me out. I'm not kidding. Every time you make a decision, you narrow your life more and more… I mean that's what you're supposed to do! It's about carving out an identity before you get old

and die! *(TY scrawls.)*

No. NO! I don't want sushi! I'm not *staying* for *dinner*! *(TY scrawls.)*

BREAK UP, Okay? BREAK. UP. Me. Break Up. With You. How about that! Oh, but this has never happened to Ty Greene before because he's too smooth a talker and no one can ever get two words in—*(TY scrawls.)*

I'm not going to read your shit! *(TY writes. Shows her earnestly. She reads it in spite of herself. She looks at him and then away.)*

We've talked about this!

And don't look at me like that! *You* know. You have your book and your job and you're hot shit and all that, so you don't know what I'm talking about. *(TY scrawls "So?!" and shows her.)*

So that's it. And by the way, a year ago you broke up with me. Out of the blue! So don't act all heartbroken. *(TY looks at her, heartbroken.)*

Yeah yeah yeah. *(TY scrawls something, shows her.)*

Very funny.

No! I *don't* want that! That's what we've *been* doing. No more fooling around. No more hooking up. No more having your cake and eating it too. (*TY scrawls.)*

That's what I meant by cake.

It's not you. I just never feel that we're on the same page. *(TY rips a page from the notebook and throws it at JEN. He rips more out and throws them at JEN.)*

This is what I'm talking about, Ty. I'm trying to pull things together. I love you, but when I'm around you, things come apart.

They come apart.

(TY stares at JEN. He writes deliberately in his notebook for a long time. He throws the notebook at JEN, she picks it up, reads it, looks at TY, reads it again, takes out a pen, writes something, throws the book at him.

TY reads it, writes something, throws the notebook at her. Jen reads it, writes, throws the book, hits TY.

He reads, writes, hands her the book.

She reads it, laughs, smiles at him. She writes, throws the book at him.

He picks it up, reads, gets pissed, writes, throws it at her.

She reads, writes, walks over to him, gives the book to him. He reads. He writes something very brief, shows her, she reads, she slaps him.

They look at each other. He writes, she reads, she tosses the notebook aside. They make out.)

Scene 7
Seth Warns of Franny

(Back at Ty's apartment.)

SETH. How does a condom not work?

TY. How does it *ever* work is a better question. I mean they're made of LATEX. Shouldn't it rip? We rub it and roll it and pinch it and squeeze it and slap it around and it's still supposed to protect us!?

SETH. This is a huge mess.

TY. And it's supposed to be *thin.* Thin, so we can feel *through* it. So we can pretend it's not there.

SETH. I came over here, and I thought, *Jen is pregnant. This is a big mess*. But now you drop the other two on me, and I swear to God, Ty, you are so fucked. You are so so so fucked.

TY. I know.

SETH. I'm not going to lie to you.

TY. Thanks.

SETH. Look: Are you 100% certain with each one?

TY. What do you mean?

SETH. A: Do the other girls know for sure they're pregnant? And B: Are you absolutely certain you are the father?

TY. I'm pretty sure.

SETH. Well, "pretty sure" is not 100%.

TY. I'm pretty sure! I'm sure! I'm 100% sure.

SETH. Let me tell you something, man. Franny? Franny is out of her mind.

TY. I know…

SETH. She is frothing at the mouth. She will have your head, man. And guess who's getting the brunt of it every moment of every day?

TY. You are.

SETH. I am! I am getting raked over the coals because you knocked up her big sister and she is one pissed-off bride-to-be right now!

TY. What do you want me to say? Franny's pissed off? *Your* problem. Your problem is a lot smaller than my *problems.* Franny's annoying you? Guess what Seth? News Flash! Franny is an annoying little cooze! She was born that way! And I say this

with all due respect, no offense.

SETH. None taken.

TY. Good. So I could care less as to how mad Franny is, okay? She wants my head, tell her to come and fucking take it. I don't use it anyway.

SETH. I'm just telling you, this is not small potatoes.

TY. Small what?

SETH. Potatoes.

TY. What?

SETH. Forget it. Look, with those other girls? That's your business, deal with them however you want. But I am connected to Jen, okay? She's going to be my sister-in-law.

TY. And I'm your best friend. Who's more important, Seth? Your future sister-in-law or your best friend since the first grade?

SETH. My future wife.

TY. Oh, you are a pussy. Oh my god, you are such a pussy.

SETH. All I'm saying is please *do something.*

TY. Like what?

SETH. Apologize! Start with that! Jen is freaked out, do you get that!? She tells you she's pregnant and you go crazy on her!? I mean the way she explains it, it was like she had turned into some giant mutant worm.

TY. I was freaking out!

SETH. It doesn't matter! She's a mess.

TY. So I apologize! Then what? What do I say? Jen, sweetheart, you should know you're not alone, I knocked up a couple more chicks while I was at it.

SETH. Tell her *something.*

TY. What? What do I say? How do I explain this?

SETH. I don't know. I don't know! *(Beat)* I DON'T KNOW!

Scene 8
Picture of Happiness

(Franny's kitchen.)

JEN. Just give me your blessing, okay?

FRANNY. Oh. You want a *blessing?* Fuck that. I'm not blessing shit. No bless. No bless from me.

JEN. Fine, don't bless.

FRANNY. I'm not.

JEN. Don't then.

FRANNY. Fine.

JEN. Fine.

(Beat)

FRANNY. *(Whines)* Jen…

JEN. *(Mock whines)* Franny…

FRANNY. I'm just saying. Why? Why *this particular… (She gestures to JEN's womb.)* The last thing you want is Ty's kid. His *offspring*.

JEN. It's how the cookie's crumbled.

FRANNY. Wrong! That's wrong and wrong-headed and you're doing this for the wrong reasons!

JEN. You don't know why—

FRANNY. —Defeatist. You're being defeatist.

JEN. No. I'm being optimistic. Life. Newness. Baby. Okay?

FRANNY. That's like the stupidest thing I've ever heard you say in my entire life. What about school?

JEN. What about it?

FRANNY. Jen, you're like the smartest person in the world. You have every degree known to man.

JEN. And? And what? What do I have to show for it? Why do you think I've been in school so long?

FRANNY. I don't know Jen. You love to read. You need therapy. Not a baby.

JEN. I'm embracing life!

FRANNY. Why don't you embrace my ass?

JEN. Franny… I understand that you want the best for me, but what I'd really like is to go eat. I want lunch. I want pad thai.

FRANNY. You're going to be *7 months pregnant* for my wedding. *Showing!*

JEN. So? I'll make you look skinny.

FRANNY. I—*What?*

JEN. What?

FRANNY. So I look *fat?*

JEN. That's not what I—

FRANNY. Oh that is low.

JEN. Fran, that's not—

FRANNY. Fine, go ahead! Get pregnant and get fat and be a fatty.

JEN. Fine! I will!

FRANNY. Fine!

(Beat)

FRANNY. You're gonna ruin my wedding pictures. What's it's going to be like? How is that going to feel to be all bloated up in front of everyone—-in front of Grandma and Grandpa?

JEN. I can deal with it.

FRANNY. And what are you going to say when they ask you who the father is?

JEN. I don't know. I'll tell them it's the best man.

FRANNY. No you won't. If you think Ty is still Seth's best man, you're crazy.

JEN. Why, what happened now?

FRANNY. Ty just got uninvited to the wedding.

JEN. You can't do that. He's Seth's best friend.

FRANNY. I can do whatever I want. It's my wedding. Ty is OUT and Paco is IN.

JEN. Paco?

FRANNY. Seth's new best man. It was my idea.

JEN. He's ten years old!

FRANNY. He's twelve. And his English is getting better.

JEN. *Paco?*

FRANNY. He'll be adorable. He's a splash of color.

JEN. You're nuts.

FRANNY. But you… Jen, my big sis… I don't want you to be pregnant in my wedding pictures. We'll have to get your dress altered and you'll be huge and everything. I just don't want to have to explain you every time I show the pictures to someone.

JEN. What is your fixation with these wedding pictures?

FRANNY. It's not a fixation. It's—

JEN. Yes it is. Every time you open your mouth, you talk about your wedding pictures. You're obsessed or something. Stupid photographs.

FRANNY. They're not stupid. *(Beat)* Why would you say that? They're not stupid.

JEN. *Stupid.* Stupid *pictures.* No one ever looks at wedding

pictures. You know why? They're stupid.

FRANNY. No! You're so negative! Anything that's important to me, you have to shit all over!

JEN. I'm looking for a little support and all you can talk about is how I'm going to look in your stupid wedding pictures.

(Beat)

FRANNY. I have Mom and Dad's wedding pictures.

JEN. *What?*

FRANNY. Mom gave them to me.

JEN. Let me see them.

FRANNY. Mom gave them to me.

JEN. Even if they *did* have pictures Mom would have burned them.

FRANNY. Well she didn't.

JEN. So let's see them.

FRANNY. Oh you want to *see* them?

JEN. Yeah.

FRANNY. Why? They're *stupid.* They're just stupid *pictures.*

JEN. There are no pictures. And Mom would never give you something like that.

(FRANNY goes to a drawer and pulls a large photo out.)

FRANNY. Here it is.

JEN. One? One picture.

FRANNY. Mom and Dad on their wedding day. *(Looking at it)* So happy. So full of hope.

JEN. Let me see it.
FRANNY. No.
JEN. Franny…
FRANNY. *(Mocking) … Jen…*
JEN. *(Losing it) Let me see the fucking picture!*

(FRANNY hands JEN the picture.)

FRANNY. Here. Spaz. *(JEN looks at the picture. Long beat)* I know, right?
JEN. I mean… This is… *Look* at this. *(FRANNY and JEN look at the picture together.)* I can't believe you have this. Look at them.
FRANNY. I know.
JEN. I mean, Look at them, Fran.

(They look at the picture for a beat.)

FRANNY. I know.

(JEN puts the picture down.)

JEN. But it's folly, you know.
FRANNY. It's what?
JEN. Folly.
FRANNY. What the fuck is folly?
JEN. It's just—
FRANNY. What is that, like garnish at Christmas?
JEN. No, that's "Holly." Folly is—
FRANNY. No, forget it! I don't want to know. With your

stupid SAT words and everything. *(Mimicking JEN)* It's *Folly*. Fuck that! Fuck Folly.

JEN. All I'm saying is it's not real! It's just an image!

FRANNY. Oh, is that all?

JEN. Yes.

FRANNY. That's all your saying?

JEN. Jesus, Fran, yes.

FRANNY. Well, all *I'm* saying is you're going to be fat and bloated and ugly at my wedding and if I want to airbrush your fat stomach out of my wedding pictures I will!

Scene 9
The Precipice

(TY sits at a desk at school grading papers. BECCA enters.)

TY. Becca?

BECCA. Hi, Mr. Greene.

TY. Come on in. How's it going?

(BECCA sits down. She looks at him, takes a deep breath, nervous.)

BECCA. I'm sorry.

TY. For what?

BECCA. Everything.

TY. Everything.

BECCA. Yes. Look, you don't have to tell me anything, or like, comfort me. That's not why I'm here. I just wanted to apologize.

TY. Becca, what are you talking about?

BECCA. Look. Mr. Greene? I really—well you know I do—I really respect you.

TY. And I respect *you*.

BECCA. I mean, I've come here before. You've given me so much help and advice on how to be a poet and everything. And I really, I *really* appreciate it. I do. But I feel like I let you down.

TY. Becca… I really don't know what to say… Except that you're a brilliant student. And I have never…. I've always been thrilled to have you in my class.

BECCA. It was a stupid poem.

TY. Your poem… Today? That poem?

BECCA. You don't have to be nice to me. I can take it.

TY. Becca, you put your soul into that poem.

BECCA. Whatev. If that's what my soul sounds like, then I'm in trouble.

TY. What was it called again?

BECCA. "The Precipice."

TY. "The Precipice." Let me see it.

BECCA. Now?

TY. Yeah, now. *(BECCA goes to her bag and pulls out a piece of paper that is crumpled up into a ball.)* Well, this isn't very nice, is it? This isn't a nice way to treat a poem at all.

BECCA. Whatev.

TY. Let me take another look at it, okay? *(TY smoothens it out and reads from it.)*

"I am standing on the precipice of my life…"

Okay, that's a good start. I know where you are. I know what's going on with you. Okay?

BECCA. Okay.

TY.

"And the wind blows.
And life is such a confusion."

Good. Nice images. You're very focused, do you know that?

BECCA. I am?

TY. You're a very focused poet. As a *person*, well, none of us poets are very focused as *people* are we?

BECCA. I guess not.

TY. That's why we write poetry.

BECCA. Why?

TY. Because we're unfocused.

BECCA. Oh, right.

TY. There's a rhythm to this. An insistence. You're searching for something.

BECCA. What?

TY. I don't know. You tell me.

BECCA. Tell you what?

TY. What are you searching for? *(Beat)* In the poem…

BECCA. I don't know.

TY. Exactly. That's why this poem is working.

BECCA. Right.

TY.

"Why do I wait for the stallion that does not ride?"

Okay, the stallion. What is the stallion, exactly?

BECCA. It's a kind of horse.

TY. No, I know. I mean, what does the stallion represent

here? *(BECCA thinks.)* We'll come back to that.
"Why do I stand upon the edge with such wind around me?
What if I fall?
And now I am falling."

Nice repetition.
"Stars and sky and wind and moon. Oh Blackness!
Around me all is blackness, except for stars and moon.
Stars and moon, which are whiteness.
All else which is blackness…"

I like the contrast. Black and white. We're dealing with extremes. There's no gray here is there?

BECCA. No, nothing is gray.

TY. I know. Nothing is. Everything is either something or nothing.

BECCA. I mean, that was like a poem, what you just said.

TY. Nah.

BECCA. No, it was. Everything you say is like a poem.

TY.
"And then impact!
Where have I fallen?
My heart sinks and rises at the same time when I see where I am…
I am on the precipice.
The precipice of my life."

(BECCA and TY look at each other.) I don't want you going around thinking you can't write poetry. I don't want you crumpling these things up. I want you to trust yourself a little bit more. We need poems like these, Becca.

BECCA. I don't really know what to say to that.

TY. Well, it's the truth.

BECCA. Mr. Greene?

TY. *Ty.*

BECCA. Ty?

TY. What?

BECCA. I probably shouldn't tell you this.

TY. What?

BECCA. Your book, *Labyrinth*? I mean, you know I've read it. I mean, you assigned it, so I had to… but, I've never really told you… I think it's… I just think it's kind of remarkable.

TY. Wow. Thank you Becca.

BECCA. I mean… they're not like my poems. My poems are so emo and everything. Your poems are so not emo.

TY. Well thank you, Becca. I'm not sure what "emo" means, but thank you.

(They smile at each other.)

BECCA. You're funny.

TY. No, I'm serious. I don't know what "emo" means.

BECCA. Ha! Okay. I guess I should go.

TY. Okay. Well, keep writing.

BECCA. I will. *(BECCA gets up and goes to leave, but stops and turns to TY.)* Ty?

TY. Yeah?

BECCA. Thanks. I'm sorry I'm such a mess.

TY. It's okay. It's okay to be a mess.

Scene 10
Best Man

(Back at Ty's apartment.)

SETH. You're lucky she is actually 18, you know that?

TY. There's nothing you can tell me that I am not thinking at every moment. I *regret* it, okay? I regretted it before I found out she was pregnant.

SETH. I'm not telling Franny about this. Or Jen. Franny will burst into flames if she hears this shit.

TY. Well, eventually she's going to find out. Right?

SETH. What are you going to do?

TY. I don't know.

(Beat)

SETH. I have to go.

TY. Look. I'll talk to Jen. At some point.

SETH. I know. *(SETH turns to go.)* Oh. Shit. There's one other thing.

TY. What.

SETH. This is… this is just one of those things.

TY. What?

SETH. Franny doesn't want you in the wedding.

TY. What?

SETH. She told me. It's like one of her demands all of a sudden. You can't be in the wedding.

TY. I'm your *Best Man*!

SETH. I know.

TY. Are you kidding me?

SETH. Look, I'm trying.

TY. What do you mean you're trying?

SETH. To get you an invitation. I mean, I still want you there. But the whole Best Man thing… It would be better if you just let that go for now.

TY. *Let it go?*

SETH. I know, I'm sorry, but you know Franny. There's no way she's going to let you be in the wedding party.

TY. She has no say! She has no fucking say!

SETH. She does. You know how girls are about their weddings. She's carrying on and on about *wedding pictures*.

TY. So who's gonna be your best man?

SETH. Paco.

TY. *Paco!?*

SETH. Yeah.

TY. He's twelve years old!

SETH. He's thirteen.

TY. *Paco?!* Little Paco is your best man!?

SETH. Yeah.

TY. You *tutor* him! You're his *tutor!*

SETH. Three times a week.

TY. He doesn't speak *English!*

SETH. No, he's gotten better. He's a sweet kid.

TY. He's got *Down's Syndrome!*

SETH. So?

TY. He's a tiny Mexican kid with Down's Syndrome!

SETH. Whoa! Hold on there, Ty. That's out of line. He's Venezuelan.

TY. Best friends since the first grade and you're booting me from your wedding party because you can't stand up to your wench of a fiancée.

SETH. Look it's not about standing up to her. It's the wedding thing. She's crazy enough about… everything… but this wedding thing, man, I stay out of her way, you know? She's on a rampage.

TY. I hate her.

SETH. I know. But it's just for the time being. Things will mellow as time passes.

TY. Seth, if this goes down—if I am expelled from your wedding, from being your best man, there *is* no going back. It's like Franny saying, "Ty is out of the picture. He's not our friend." It's over between us if this happens. Don't you see that?

SETH. You're being dramatic.

TY. Every other person in the world is about to walk out on me. I need to know you won't. Tell me you have faith in me. I need it. Your faith. I need it right now.

SETH. Why didn't you just stay together with Jen in the first place? You guys were a good couple.

(Beat)

TY. I don't know.

SETH. She loves you, man. She's really… She would marry you right now if you asked her.

TY. I know.

SETH. So?

TY. I don't want to marry her.

SETH. You don't love her.

TY. Come on, man.

SETH. Do you love Maureen or Becca?

TY. No.

SETH. Well, shit. You know, most men would flip over backwards to get Jen, you know that.

TY. Yeah.

SETH. She's hot.

TY. I know.

SETH. She's hotter than Franny and nicer, too. *(TY looks at SETH.)* I'm just saying…

TY. I know, okay?

SETH. I wish you weren't such a fuck up. We could have been brothers-in-law. *(Beat)* I'll call you.

(SETH leaves.)

Scene 11
Two Years Earlier

(TY stands holding a notebook and a plastic cup of wine at reception after a poetry reading. JEN, FRANNY and SETH enter. Also with plastic cups.)

FRANNY. There he is! There he is! The big star!

SETH. Dude that was awesome! That kid's like: I'm making a Labyrinth! Outta nothing!

TY. Hey, thanks for coming you guys.

FRANNY. Ty, this is my sister *Jen.*

TY. Oh my God! I've heard so much… so much about you…

JEN. Hi. Me too. Nice to finally—

FRANNY. —That was so cool! I can't believe you could read like that in front of the whole people like that, the whole crowd!

TY. How's the wine, Franny?

SETH. She's wasted.

FRANNY. I am *not.*

SETH. *Wasted.*

FRANNY. But I tell you what: I am going to *get* wasted. Yes I am. These glasses are like shot glasses cups. Shot cups.

TY. *(To JEN)* So you're in that MFA program, right? Poetry?

FRANNY. *(Stating obvious)* Poet… Poet…

JEN. Um. Yeah. I mean, I was. I just graduated.

FRANNY. Well we're going to go get some more wine and it'll probably take a LONG TIME because of I have to pee. So Okay!

(FRANNY starts to exit. SETH stays with TY, oblivious.)

SETH. Ya know Labyrinth is from the Greek.

FRANNY. *Seth…*

SETH. Oh! Oh, okay. Wine. We'll both get wine!

(They start to leave.)

FRANNY. *(Whisper)* …So dense sometimes!

SETH. *(Whisper)* Sorry!

(They exit. TY and JEN smile at each other.)

TY. Hi.

JEN. That was really great.

TY. Oh, thanks.

JEN. Really great.

TY. Thanks.

JEN. Jeez, I'm sorry. What a stupid… what a stupid thing to say.

TY. No.

JEN. "Really great." How poetic.

TY. Trust me, I'll take what I can get. I mean truth be told, I'm just a dork with a notebook. I haven't published anything or anything.

JEN. Oh, you will.

TY. Nah.

JEN. No, you will!

TY. Have you?

JEN. Published? Oh no way. Not quite. I quit writing poetry. Tonight I quit.

TY. Why?

JEN. I like to quit things. I quit being a lawyer, too.

TY. That's right! Franny told me! You're a lawyer!

JEN. Never took the bar. Went from undergrad to law school to the MFA program…

TY. You're a lawyer poet!

JEN. Poetic Counsel.

TY. What do you do now that you're not lawyering or writing poetry?

JEN. I'm in a doctoral program.

TY. *Higher* education!

JEN. I just really love school.

TY. So you're like super smart.

JEN. Oh yeah. *Super* smart.

TY. How poetic… What's your *dissertation* about?

JEN. Geography. You ever hear of Pangaea?

TY. The one big continent.

JEN. I'm drawing a better map of it. That's my dissertation.

TY. You're mapping a non-existent place.

JEN. In way, it still exists. It's the world. Now, it's just broken up into pieces. Once upon a time, we looked different.

TY. The adolescent earth.

JEN. It was the Garden of Eden you know. One piece of land. Perfect. Untouched. *(They both smile at each other, but JEN breaks the spell.)* Ha! *(Giggles)* I'm sorry. I've had like ten little cups of wine.

TY. *Little* cups.

JEN. Yes, they are little.

TY. And free.

JEN. My favorite kind of wine.

TY. Always a good year.

JEN. Yes. The year free. Two thousand free.

TY. Cheers. *(Beat)* Yeah. I liked… I liked watching you read.

(JEN kisses him, not too long, not too short. They look at each other, smile. Drink their wine.)

Scene 12
Flesh and Blood

(MAUREEN and TY on the porch.)

MAUREEN. Do you sleep with a lot of women?

TY. What?

MAUREEN. Do you?

TY. No! What do you think?

MAUREEN. I think you might.

TY. Do *you*? I mean, have you ever… before?

MAUREEN. No. Me and Nick… I mean, our relationship is different.

TY. But you still love him?

(Beat)

MAUREEN. You know, I can't… I can't *conceive.*

TY . You can't have kids? What about Augie?

MAUREEN. He was adopted.

TY. Right. Wow. Sorry. Kids.

MAUREEN. You think about your kids your whole life, before they even exist, you think about them. You plan who they'll be. You think about what they'll look like. And then… It doesn't work out the way you planned. *(Beat)* I wanted to feel that, you know? I imagine it's about as religious an experience as one can come by. Miraculous. How many things happen to you that are *miraculous*?

TY. I don't know. I mean, the whole world is miraculous

when you think about it.

MAUREEN. Are you religious?

TY. Me? No. Are you?

MAUREEN. No. I'm Catholic.

TY. Really?

MAUREEN. Raised. Lapsed. *(Beat)* I believe in sin.

TY. Well… *yeah.* There's no denying that.

MAUREEN. I mean, I believe in Original Sin. That we need to seek forgiveness and work towards our salvation… which is really a messed up belief to have when you've stopped believing in God.

TY. Are you an atheist?

MAUREEN. I'm worse. I'm atheist who's still pissed off at God for not existing. It's a stressful denomination.

TY. I'd say.

MAUREEN. You're supposed to have faith even if your prayers aren't answered. All I wanted was to give birth, have a child. It's the only thing I ever explicitly asked God for. When I found out it couldn't happen… well that was the end of that.

TY. Do you think what we're doing is a sin?

MAUREEN. Oh yes. But it's a sin I can sink my teeth into.

(Beat)

MAUREEN. Do you have anyone else?

TY. No.

MAUREEN. I don't care if you do, but… I was being foolish. We're *being* foolish. I just want to know, okay?

TY. I haven't had sex with anyone else in a long time.

Scene 13
Growing as a Poet

(TY opens his front door and BECCA enters.)

BECCA. Hi!

TY. Hey there! What a surprise to get your call!

BECCA. I mean was in the neighborhood? I was having brunch. I totally love Brooklyn. It's so retro.

TY. Yeah, it is. So… here you are.

BECCA. I hope I'm not intruding…

TY. No! I was just writing.

BECCA. Wow. Of course. *(She pulls out wine.)* I brought some wine.

TY. Wine!

BECCA. Because my new poem? It's about wine.

TY. Oh. That's good… good material… Well, come on in. Make yourself at home…

BECCA. Awesome! This place is so cool! It's like a writer's lair.

TY. Yep. It is.

BECCA. So are you writing a new book of poetry?

TY. Uh, Yes. That's what I'm trying to do…

BECCA. Is it going to be like *Labyrinth*?

TY. Well, I hope not *too* much like Labyrinth. I mean, I hope I'm growing as a poet.

BECCA. I can't believe you're going to *grow* as a poet.

TY. The things that concern you change. The things that inspire you change.

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