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Birthday & Nobody

Two Plays by
Crystal Skillman

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION



NEW YORK HOLLYWOOD LONDON TORONTO

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BIRTHDAY was first presented by Rising Phoenix Rep (Daniel Talbott, Artistic Director) April 2, 2009 at Seventh Street Small Stage at Jimmy's No. 43, New York City. It was directed by Daniel Talbott. The cast was as follows:

LEILA Julie Kline
KYLE Denis Butkus

BIRTHDAY received it's U.K. premiere on August 10, 2010 at Waterloo East Theatre (Gerald Armin, Artistic Director) in it's Best of Festivals (Dominic Lindesay-Bethune, producer). It was directed by Sharon Willems. The cast was as follows:

LEILA Katy Federman
KYLE Andrew Glen

NOBODY was first presented by Rising Phoenix Rep (Daniel Talbott, Artistic Director) February 19, 2009 at Seventh Street Small Stage at Jimmy's No. 43, New York City. It was directed by Daniel Talbott. The cast was as follows:

KAT Jessica Dickey
ALEX Haynes Thigpen
KASH MacLeod Andrews
ILONA Polly Lee
LOUISE Kathryn Kates
ANNA Molly Ward

FOREWARD

Whenever I walk down East 7th street towards the Small Stage theatre at 2nd Avenue and Jimmy's, I think of Crystal. That's really not an exaggeration—she always pops into my head and is with me when I make the walk there, and I love it. That hyper-real, claustrophobic, backroom bar space is such a homebase for all of us at Rising Phoenix and for everybody that we've ever gotten to work with there, but Crystal was the first, and her openness, fearlessness and extraordinary love of adventure is one of the first memories I have of Jimmy's. I can't even begin to say how thankful I am for that.

I remember calling Crystal when we lived a few blocks from each other in Boerum Hill, Brooklyn and asking her what she was up to and if she wanted to take a walk with me. It was an early fall night and we walked up Dean Street towards Court and talked about theatre, ghosts, urban folk tales, and the occult, and I asked her if she wanted to write a play for Jimmy's or The Seventh Street Small Stage. She said yes, and a few weeks later we started rehearsal on her play *The Telling*. It's now 2011, and we've gotten to work on five plays together at Jimmy's, including the plays in this collection, and she's not only one of my closest friends and collaborators but also someone who I've grown up with as a theatre artist—I've stood behind her and she's stood behind me. Jimmy's has an extraordinary way of doing that for you, both personally and in the work. It forces you to reach out, to get honest without losing a sense of theatre and imagination, and it doesn't ever allow you to drop back and play it safe.

I love Crystal's enormous and explosive imagination paired with her deep deep love of the theatre, and these two beautiful plays, *Birthday* and *Nobody*, are such wonderful examples of both. Jimmy's is such a great foundation for anybody working in the theatre, and with Crystal it forces her to bring all of that gorgeous theatrical madness (in the best sense of the word) to the table and then ground it in relationship and honesty. I actually can't remember exactly why or what the impetus was to start writing both *Nobody* and *Birthday*, or if she ever really told me, all I know is that I feel so lucky to have gotten to work with her and all of those stunning and incredible folks on both of them, and that getting to do them back to back was insanely special and enlightening. Getting to experience the diversity of the worlds, language, and beauty of both plays next to each other is something I'll never forget.

I really hope if you're reading this that you're getting to work on both *Nobody* and *Birthday*, or one or the other, and that you're getting the chance to enter into Crystal's beautifully skewed and huge hearted world. She is a person and playwright who believes in the power of theatre and of love, and I think we would all live in a much better and more wonderfully wacky and supportive place if we could move through the world like her and her writing.

– Daniel Talbott
Director, *Birthday* and *Nobody*

INTRODUCTION

For me, directing *Birthday* was like slow dancing with a new love for the first time. I was full of hope and excitement, and sometimes fear, yes, but despite this I wanted to take my time and enjoy the dance. Likewise, I wanted my production to affect the audience with the same truth and tenderness I felt when I first read *Birthday*. More than anything, I didn't want the audience to feel like they were just sitting in a black box politely seeing a play any more than I wanted my actors to feel they were simply performing them. The challenge for me was to gently guide my actors and the audience to feel like they were really in the play together. Sounds simple, doesn't it?

In truth, the rehearsal process was a search for simplicity. I fought the urge to overcomplicate things with fancy staging or design. In some ways the story is so familiar, two strangers meeting by chance, each with a secret that is revealed by the curtain's fall. But this is only the beginning of the story. There's so much going on with each of these people: questions of love and regret and disappointment and hope. Big things. To really free ourselves to dance, we had to look at the basics of how these characters share the space and how we share it with the audience. Through solving this, I felt we could really begin to bring the world to life.

For our production, it was important for us to establish the back room as Kyle's space from the onset. We exposed the theatre's brick walls and included artefacts from his life everywhere, cds, a book of Bukowski poetry, a guitar in the corner, photos half-hung up. When we later learn that this isn't just the back room of any bar, but Kyle's place, it's as if the audience is told a secret they already know. A big part of subtly deteriorating the constructed separation of spectator and performer came from including them in moments like these. Like Leila, we invited the audience to look at the space with fresh eyes.

By giving Kyle control of the space, we began an unspoken game of permission and acceptance. As he accepted Leila and began to open the space to her, my hope was the audience would feel accepted as well. In rehearsal we found that both Andrew and Katy were naturally drawn to certain parts of the room, and as we staged the piece, these spots were like safety blankets for the characters. We toyed with which moments felt appropriate to leave them and allow the safety zones to evolve and overlap. This way the room could continue to have a life and not simply be a stage in a theatre.

By the end of *Birthday*, all of the space was a safe haven for each character equally. As we worked, I began to envision it almost like a circle. Nothing existed inside but these two people, the audience and our honesty with each other. For the final image of Leila and Kyle with the candle, I knew I wanted us all to see nothing but these two people saving each other. One

of our mantras throughout rehearsal and performance was 'Be in the room.' It's so simple, but sometimes it's those simple things that prove most effective.

Directing *Birthday* was a beautiful time for me. The joy of working with Crystal's beautiful text and my actors was an amazing gift, and I hope your time with the play is just as rewarding. As you read *Birthday* and begin to imagine your own world for Leila and Kyle, I encourage you to trust your instincts, have fun, and remember to dance.

– Sharon Willems
Director, *Birthday* (UK Premiere)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Daniel Talbott whose direction taught me so much and who always pushed me and my work in all the right ways, to all the Rising Phoenix Rep actors who always made the work the best it could be, to Jimmy who gave us a home (and beer!), to Sharon Willems and her wonderful actors who staged the production in London and made my first trip there truly magical, to my husband Fred who loves and believes in me and makes sure I always know this is true, to my mom and dad and their crazy idea to encourage anything I wanted to do, to anyone passing by the front desk while I wrote these plays, to those who came to see these plays, to those that will stage and read and see them next – thank you.

-Crystal Skillman

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BIRTHDAY

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SETTING

A bar

TIME

Now, spring.

(The back room of a local bar.)

(Boxing poster in the corner, memorabilia hangs on the orange walls.)

(The sounds of a party in the next room bleeds through.)

(Loud music, laughter, a girl squealing.)

(KYLE drinks alone in the corner of the room, listening to a album like Neil Young's Harvest, which is playing on his iPhone, plugged into the backroom speakers.)*

(LEILA, upset, enters abruptly, holding her beer awkwardly.)

(She's clearly been crying.)

(She sees KYLE, turns away.)

(breathes heavily)

(uses some toilet paper from her pocket or in her hands to blow her nose, wipe her eyes)

(KYLE, who's been watching, shifts uncomfortably, turns down music, tries to say something.)

KYLE. Can I help you?

LEILA. I'm sorry.

I'm sorry.

You don't have to –

I'm sorry.

Oh my god I must look like a fucking idiot.

(Loud laughter bleeds through the walls from the party in the next room.)

*Please see Music Use Note on Page 3.

LEILA. (*cont.*) They sound like an earthquake. Don't they?

Erupting.

I mean volcano.

Earthquakes are silent.

Brokers, so any chance to celebrate.

They took their ties off.

Shirts all hanging out.

Sweating.

I mean, they're seriously...

This is embarrassing, but I can't stop —

KYLE. Should I leave?

LEILA. No I'm fine, stay, stay.

You were here.

(*looking for a place to throw out her tissue*)

Is there a...?

KYLE. Oh if you go back - back around.

(*He gestures to a little alcove offstage where the garbage can is. LEILA follows his directions, disappears for a second.*)

LEILA. (*off*) Is there a light?

KYLE. Yeah to the right.

LEILA. (*off*) Thank you.

(*LEILA comes back out.*)

Do you mind telling me...?

My makeup? I must look...

KYLE. Fine.

(*LEILA gives him a look.*)

LEILA. Great really means okay.

Good means you've got gunk somewhere.

Fine means you look like shit.

KYLE. You look great.

LEILA. Yeah.

Leila.

KYLE. Kyle.

LEILA. Hi.

KYLE. Hi.

LEILA. What?

KYLE. Leila. You don't hear it often.

LEILA. Seventies parents.

You know that Simon & Garfunkel song about the boxer.

"I am just a poor boy though my story's seldom told"
yadayadayada.

They go in the chorus, "Li, Li, Li"

There was this friend I had in middle school, big fan,
went nuts – kept saying, "They're not saying your
name, they're just going Li, li, li."

But I don't know, I believed it.

I like that song.

It's a depressing fucking song but, uh, I like it.

My last name is Wood.

Leila Wood.

So there goes pretty.

*(LEILA looks at the wall, where noise from the party keeps
seeping in.)*

It's so packed – it's so full – no one can hear what
you're saying.

You're like an ant.

There's been all these birthday parties.

Everyone's born in the spring I guess.

KYLE. I guess.

LEILA. It's dark back here.

KYLE. It's a good place. To just be...

LEILA. They're like kids when they go out.

"What did you do last night?"

"What movie did you see?"

"Who got laid where?"

Just dumb, boring-ass shit.

(beat)

LEILA. *(cont.)* When I'm at the front desk it's like I'm on a stage.

Everyone's passing by you to get in and out.

I don't know why I came.

The way they talk, makes my headache.

KYLE. People like them. Birthday parties.

LEILA. It's prehistoric.

The cake, candles.

People singing.

Presents.

KYLE. "The world doesn't encounter us until we meet it alone."

LEILA. *(pointing to him)* Writer.

KYLE. No. Heard it somewhere.

(They drink.)

(KYLE drinks more.)

LEILA. You like your stout.

I never know what to get here - I just got mine because of the name.

Old Speckled Hen.

I think because I'm obsessed with farms.

All that driving through fields and passing barns all the time when I was a kid.

I did 4-H and all that, and I was, I was shit at it.

Animals kinda hate me actually, I think.

I was like in high school coming back from some Thanksgiving thing with my parents - and there was this horse in the middle of the road.

No one else around.

And instead of, I don't know calling someone, my mom gets like, "We've got to help it."

This horse is like a baby elephant.

Huge to me.

Somehow my mom's shrill voice (which would probably make me run into ongoing traffic) seems to be coxing the horse over to the park.

I'm just following behind, my head low like please God don't let anybody see my stupid-ass mom talking to a horse on Sheafe Road.

But we do get him off the road.

It's like a miracle.

It worked.

And then I'm like, you know I feel something for this horse we saved, his eyes are like gleaming and it seems like there's a connection, you know?

And I want to touch him.

I take like one step and he rears up.

It's like unreal - the setting sun behind - blinding off the snow - and thank god I totally remembered how in Ghandi Ben Kinsley threw his boney ass to the ground to save everyone from these charging horses.

And it works - the horse settles, trots toward the barn.

When we get home and I go the bathroom and I don't know how but somehow when it raised up, the horse totally grazed me and so there's like a cut on...

(motions to her breast)

I mean I'm like kill me now.

I tell my mom and then she's calling the doctor and like,

"Yes, I know it's Thanksgiving but I'm calling because my daughter got bitten on her breast by a horse."

And later I thought, of course this happened.

Because any time you try too hard. Reach out. Help. This is what happens. You get -

Yeah, I'm telling you. All the good stuff. Classic tit chomping horse stories.

LEILA. (*cont*) Christ - do you know that I recount my life to homeless people on the street. I go to the tops of towers and scream out my life.

MTA guys.

Waitresses.

Cab drivers they try to tell me their shit but I cut them off and tell them what happened to me.

Fuck...

I'm going to shut up. I'm shutting up now.

(*beat*)

I should.

I really should –

You see all the decorations?

My decorations?

When they sent me out to get shit they had specific requests.

Like little fucking flowers and happy faces.

Pink and yellow balloons.

A Happy Birthday banner.

In Duane Reade staring at aisles of this stuff.

“What would Joan like?”

KYLE. She's a friend of yours?

LEILA. I'd like to tell you she's a quiet girl.

I mean shy and...like a spinster in one of those movies.

Like sewing and waiting.

Like the Heiress and it's raining and she runs out to meet him even though everyone's like – wait – your big dress is going to get rained on and she goes out and looks like shit but he doesn't care and then – well it's spring so she has a shitload of kids.

KYLE. You don't know her.

LEILA. The truth is Joan is big and fat and eats all the bagels on bagel Fridays.

KYLE. Good for her.

LEILA. Why?

KYLE. I mean you come to a bar for what?
To celebrate or drown your mistakes.
Forget.

LEILA. I can't forget anything.
You come here a lot?

KYLE. I haven't been here in a while.
I'm going back tonight.

LEILA. Where?

KYLE. California.

LEILA. Just a short trip.

KYLE. Right.

(Beat. They listen to the music.)

LEILA. I love this song.
I write songs.

KYLE. Yeah?

LEILA. They're stupid, silly songs. I make them up at the front desk.

(beat)

It was my dad's fault – got me into it – got me the guitar.
On one of my birthdays, actually.
Made me keep my eyes closed, drove up to the strip mall.

And I'm getting kind of excited.

Thinking of the possibilities.

I open my eyes and there's Dunkin' Donuts.

And he's like not there.

Points next door to Mike's Music Orama.

I'd never asked for one.

Didn't want to play.

It was kinda horrible really because then I had to take all these lessons.

I would make my teachers cry because I never practiced.

KYLE. I played drums in high school.

LEILA. No shit.

KYLE. (*name of band:*) The Skinny Dicks.

(*raises glass to her*)

High school.

(*She laughs.*)

LEILA. High School.

(*They laugh.*)

(*They drink.*)

Where did you go to college?

KYLE. Where didn't I go?

LEILA. Sarah Lawrence. Scholarship.

(*She toasts him back.*)

What do you do now?

KYLE. I don't know.

Anything.

Nothing.

It doesn't matter.

LEILA. You're married.

KYLE. Yeah.

(*beat*)

LEILA. You want to hear something real stupid?

I can remember like all these old birthdays my mom threw.

The cakes, my dresses.

I make fun of it but I used to take it really seriously.

My wishes.

I really closed my eyes.

Like I really believed...

KYLE. Only child.

LEILA. How do you know?

KYLE. I wasn't.

LEILA. How many?

KYLE. Two brothers, one sister.

LEILA. You're close?

KYLE. We're family.

LEILA. My folks call me at the front desk all the time.

They ask me so many questions, most I can't answer, as if I know what's going to happen.

"Do you think they're ever gonna hire you for real?"

"What do you think you're gonna to do next?"

"Do you think you're gonna meet someone?"

"Where are the babies??"

They didn't call today.

(KYLE *drinks*. LEILA *studies him*.)

I don't want you to feel bad for me.

(*Beat.*)

Do you know that an old, old man – like white hair, nice looking guy but old – like 93 years old comes up to me real close in midtown.

"Me no speak English."

I think he's going to ask for like directions to Macy's. But he leans in and if he wasn't so old maybe I'd be worried but as it is he's so old I could breath and he'd fall over.

He leans in:

"Me looking for sex."

I'm just standing there, trying to figure out where to go for lunch you know.

And my first reaction is to laugh, but for some reason I don't want to offend him.

So I tell him, "Not me. But many others."

And his eyes, he got so excited – looking up and down the street full of so many possibilities.

Like a kid in a candy store.

And I didn't know what to do.

We shook hands, I left.

KYLE. Okay.

LEILA. Strangers ask for directions, sex apparently all the time, but...

I don't know.

It's not often you meet someone, who would take the time...

Take the time to...

I don't know.

KYLE. This city can be great that way.

LEILA. It's just I see someone like you and I wish I was.
More...

KYLE. More?

LEILA. I don't know.

Together?

(beat)

I bet she's opening the presents now.

KYLE. Joan.

LEILA. Joan.

Bet they're funny stuff, like fake post its.

You put them places, they say like, "Meet me at the Water Cooler," you know.

It's crazy. Giving this crap.

I still remember some Pretty Pink Pony thing that I got – Rainbow Star.

If you can believe it.

My friend in 7th grade made her into a bong.

Could take off the head, a little pipe in the body, water in the legs.

It was probably toxic but we smoked the shit out of Rainbow Star.

We smoked her in the JC Penney parking lot.

KYLE. I was always obsessed with comics but my parents always bought me cars.

LEILA. You like comics?

Guys like jerk off to those things – like all over Wonder Woman's tits.

KYLE. That's a myth. Seriously. Graphic novels are an art form.

LEILA. I guess that's why that guy was spouging in the Virgin Megastore.

KYLE. No.

LEILA. He was defiantly ogling.

KYLE. Isn't it the same thing? Women reading erotic mysteries on the plane?

LEILA. No.

No.

KYLE. It isn't?

LEILA. No.

KYLE. (*reciting titles:*) Desire In The Grass?
Find Me In the Shade.
Promise of Passion Paradise.

LEILA. You seem to know a lot about middle age female erotica.

KYLE. I fly a lot.

LEILA. You and Joan could trade titles.

KYLE. I think she's got more experience than me.

LEILA. Poor Joan.

(*They smile.*)

She's been there for years.

She knows where everything is.

What everyone wants.

I've only been there a year.

I'm a temp.

Just a temp.

Saying it I feel like...

It's just getting older - you expect things to start to make sense.

(*beat*)

Where's your wife?

KYLE. Anguilla.

LEILA. I don't even know where that is.

(She laughs.)

(They drink.)

KYLE. It's all...the same.

Beaches, boats, cars.

LEILA. That's where you live.

KYLE. That's where we stay. Sometimes. Her mother's there.

LEILA. Everyone at work talks about going scuba diving or skiing. Sometimes they send their pictures out to the whole staff.

One guy, sent like a million – at the end there's this picture of him underwater in his little banana hammock just...waving at the camera.

It was, it was embarrassing. —And then to see him after, in the hall.

You don't get that out of your head.

KYLE. I imagine not.

LEILA. I don't do any of that. I don't do anything.

KYLE. Just write songs.

(She bows.)

What did you study?

LEILA. What didn't I study?

(He smiles.)

But I settled on English lit.

KYLE. I wanted to be a chef. Well, first an architect, then a chef.

(LEILA smiles.)

Jesus, that sounds.

LEILA. No, it doesn't.

KYLE. Yeah, it does, but it's true.

My family thought I was crazy. When I told them I wanted to buy this place, you should have seen my dad. He was like stuttering it out: A b-b-bar?

It's like falling in love.

Like I'm here.

Put on my music.

I can just listen.

LEILA. To crazy nuts like me.

KYLE. To all sorts of things.

LEILA. Like broker boys going insane.

(Beat, then she can't contain herself:)

Oh my god, you own this place?

KYLE. Yeah, it's a little weird.

LEILA. *(Smiling – like “wow”)* It's fucking insane.

(Beat.)

I bet they're whacking the piñata.

Yeah, they asked for one.

They didn't have any birthday ones so I found one in the Easter aisle.

It's like an egg.

They're beating a giant crepe paper egg.

My mom – she used to dress up like the Easter Bunny.

The Lucky Charms lady on St. Patty's Day.

I'm not shitting you.

Our house was holiday central.

KYLE. We don't do anything like that.

LEILA. You're lucky. It makes things easier. No expectations.

KYLE. What do you expect?

LEILA. What do you mean?

KYLE. I don't know.

LEILA. Oh god. It'll make you sick.

It's just like fantasy.

KYLE. So.

LEILA. It's typical Good Living Martha Stewart Magazine layout shit.

LEILA. *(cont)* The house.

Kids.

Like an unrealistic amount of kids I don't even want.

Lots of animals.

Dogs, cats, turtles, ferrets, the whole thing.

KYLE. *(smiling)* Sounds reasonable I –

(Holds up her hand. More to come:)

LEILA. A backyard.

A tree house.

Next door neighbors.

And even though this seems out of the city.

It's in the city.

Next to all the buildings, just a few trees on the street.

Tire swing.

A shitload of flowers.

Grass.

Someone to help clean and take care of things.

A guy?

Maybe?

Paid enough so it's respectable.

A fucking amazing husband.

Who wants to go to bars and sing karaoke and smoke pot once in a while.

KYLE. Out of Rainbow Star.

LEILA. No more horses. A bong would do just fine.

And you know he could be tall.

KYLE. Like a tall, dark, bulging tit handsome guy.

LEILA. Look, you've got Wonder Woman.

KYLE. Touché.

LEILA. And Mr. Tall, dark and VERY handsome bulging tit guy and I would get married and there would be a car with a bunch of dumb-ass shit tied to it and signs.

KYLE. Sounds like a beautiful wedding.

LEILA. Has it all been what you expected?

KYLE. What?

LEILA. Being married?

KYLE. You learn to stop expecting.

(beat)

LEILA. My friend from high school, she turned born again Christian.

So she would write me letters about waking up and the devil would be at the bottom of her bed.

And when she met her husband, she prayed to God to see if they should kiss.

So there, at the wedding, when she was crying like crazy, I realized it had to be her thinking of what it would be like for the first time.

With this guy she never...

And she's scared but no one cares.

Her family was so happy.

Throwing her into the car.

With the cans and the signs, even with her crying.

They were just so happy that she was...

That she'd be taken care of.

KYLE. Was she?

LEILA. They couldn't have kids.

I didn't ask why.

But there was a part of me that wondered – maybe they just didn't figure it out.

How it all works.

Horrible, I know.

But the good news is she got a baby from China that someone wrapped in a butcher apron and left on the steps of some orphanage.

She's so into it she wants to adopt another one but ran out of money so she's fundraising.

KYLE. People get...people get crazy.

LEILA. Yeah.

KYLE. When my wife got pregnant, you should have seen my mom's eyes.

To get us married.

LEILA. Girl?

KYLE. Boy.

LEILA. How old?

KYLE. Four.

LEILA. Do you have pictures?

(KYLE unplugs iPhone, goes over to her, scrolls through pictures on it, showing her.)

He's cute.

KYLE. You could say that.

(He continues to scroll.)

LEILA. Is that...your wife?

She's beautiful.

KYLE. Yeah.

She doesn't even know I'm here.

(KYLE gets up, goes back to his corner, plugs the iPhone back in, the music comes back on.)

(Long beat: LEILA looks at KYLE. He's silent, looking down.)

(Then LEILA goes to the area where music or variety acts play in this backroom. It might be a little stage in the corner, or just an area with a microphone set up.)

LEILA. I should have a puppet and a ukulele.

(KYLE watches her, curious.)

Don't get excited. This is not like. This is not a show.

KYLE. Um. Yes. It is.

LEILA. No.

Just a little song.

KYLE. Should I cheer like – "Li-li-li".

LEILA. Cute but please - no.

KYLE. I could do the drums.

(LEILA starts singing along to the song that's playing, softly at first, then gets into it.)

(Sings fully, beautifully free, then stops herself.)

Oh god you hate it.

KYLE. No it's. Beautiful.

LEILA. Really?

KYLE. Really. I'm impressed.

LEILA. It's new.

(beat)

In my building.

When it was snowing out of nowhere here last month.

All these seagulls fly past my windows.

Fucking weird, right?

Right in the snow.

The way they moved, right up to the windows, glide their bodies right by, then raise up, that's grace I thought.

I'd like to move like that.

Some people make mistakes but can move through them, let them go and they don't hurt.

They don't cry in hallways and look like shit.

They sit in corners and keep it all inside.

But I can't.

I have this wish, the way I want things to be.

And when I see it, in my head, it's good, it's good but how can I make that...

I dream about it.

Being that.

I wake up.

It's a feeling.

Alive like...

Like there are all these possibilities.

But I wake up.

I lose it.

KYLE. I had a...

My friend she...

I came out here for her funeral.

A car accident.

I loved her.

I loved her very much.

She asked me if I had the strength to change, to be with her.

But back then I didn't. I left.

When I was with her I was so much, thought I could be so much.

LEILA. I'm sorry.

KYLE. It's okay.

(silence)

LEILA. It's so quiet now.

People must be leaving, getting coats.

Joan.

KYLE. Joan.

(beat)

LEILA. At the end of my lunch hour I ran around to pick up stuff for the party.

I stared at everything, the decorations, the pile of cakes.

Staring at frosting and everything in me felt gone.

Greg and I – this guy at work - for months now- it's been...something.

I thought it was.

That it had possibilities.

I picked out a white cake.

Red icing.

Bought the candles.

Go back.

Open the door.

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