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SF PERUSALS

Fish Eye

Lucas Kavner

A Samuel French Acting Edition

SAMUEL FRENCH
FOUNDED 1830

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FISH EYE was first produced by Colt Coeur at HERE Arts Center in New York City on June 2, 2011. The performance was directed by Adrienne Campbell-Holt, with sets by John McDermott, costumes by Jessica Pabst, lighting by Grant Yeager, and sound by Daniel Kluger. The Production Stage Manager was Trisha Henson. The cast was as follows:

MAX . . . . . Joe Tippett
ANNA . . . . . Betty Gilpin
AVERY . . . . . Katya Campbell
JAY . . . . . Ato Essandoh

CHARACTERS

MAX – mid to late 20s

ANNA – mid to late 20s

AVERY – mid to late 20s

JAY – late 20s

SETTING

The majority of the stage is Max and Anna's studio apartment in Brooklyn, which can be open to interpretation, design-wise, but must have two entrances/exits, and one front door that can be isolated by light.

Anna's moving boxes could be part of the set; items are packed and unpacked throughout the show.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

A slash (/) indicates that the next character's dialogue should begin.

** indicates a pause, or a shift in tone of some kind.

As the play unfolds, characters can be places you wouldn't expect them to be onstage.

ONE

*(***MAX** *and* **ANNA** *sit, off left, holding beers.)*

(They are isolated by light.)

(A moment as they take each other in for the first time in a while.)

(Then **ANNA** *looks out at something.)*

ANNA. How long has that been there?

MAX. Oh, like a month.

ANNA. It used to be a karate place, right? Like karate classes or jujitsu –

MAX. It was empty for a while.

ANNA. Is the food good?

MAX. It's falafels, you know.
Just, like, Middle Eastern –

ANNA. Mmm.

MAX. Kebobs.

ANNA. Cool.

MAX. Hummus plates.
Pita.

(They look at each other, sort of laugh.)

Fuck, it's…

ANNA. I know, I just want to, like…

MAX. What?

ANNA. Like…

(She makes a gripping gesture.)

MAX. Murder?

ANNA. No, it's just *very*…
Everything comes back like:

(She chops the air.)

MAX. Chops.

ANNA. Yeah.

MAX. I almost sent you an email the other night. Drunk. I never sent it to you. I didn't think it was appropriate and I didn't – I dunno, it didn't –

ANNA. What did it say?

MAX. You know, like, "Go fuck yourself."

ANNA. Oh.

MAX. I'm glad I saved that in drafts. I save a lot of things in drafts.

(They lock eyes again.)

Scooter.

ANNA. *(makes a sound)*

MAX. Sorry.

ANNA. Yeah, don't…

MAX. Sorry.

ANNA. It's OK.

MAX. So.

How many guys are you sleeping with?

ANNA. Max.

MAX. But you're definitely sleeping with someone –

ANNA. Max.

MAX. What?

ANNA. I said I didn't / want to…

MAX. I know, I know.

ANNA. You agreed.

MAX. I know, but seeing you is…

ANNA. I just wanted to see you're OK. And you are.

MAX. I am. I'm great.

ANNA. So am I.

MAX. Really?

ANNA. Yeah, things are good, you know? Things are…

MAX. You look the same.

ANNA. Do I?

MAX. Uh huh.

ANNA. You don't.

MAX. I'm fatter.

ANNA. Yes, that's what I was gonna say.

(They stare at each other.)

MAX. So… I have something.

ANNA. What?

MAX. For you. I have something for you.

ANNA. Uh oh.

MAX. No, it's – this is good. You'll…

*(***MAX** *pulls out a folded-up piece of paper from his pocket and hands it to her.)*

*(***ANNA** *unfolds it and looks at it.)*

ANNA. Oh.
Wow.

(beat)

MAX. You remember?

(beat)

That's still how I see you.

(A long moment as **ANNA** *takes it in.)*

(Then **MAX** *stands and the lights shift, revealing the apartment.)*

TWO

*(***AVERY** *enters the space.)*

(She grabs a drink from the kitchen.)

AVERY. I can't believe I've reached the point where I'm coming to a game night at your apartment by my*self* and I'm actually OK with it.

MAX. You love us.

AVERY. It's important for you to get out of the house once in a while, see the outside world –

ANNA. It's *cold* out there.

AVERY. Oh Jesus, is that where we're at now?

MAX.
It's very cold.

AVERY.
Oh my God.

AVERY. You don't leave the house because it's *cold*?

MAX. I've always tried to stay with the heat.

AVERY. That's a good motto.

MAX. That's the way I've been my whole life, Avery, I'm extremely practical / to a fault.

AVERY. Oh yeah, you've always struck me as *practical*.

MAX. I *feel* practical.

ANNA. I was outside all day on a shoot, it was freezing.

MAX. I was indoors sitting at a computer and crying.

ANNA. You weren't *crying*, / come on –

AVERY. Maxie, how's your job? You, like, never talk about it –

MAX. It sucks dick.

AVERY.
Oh, neat.

ANNA.
That's what he always says.

AVERY. Maybe that should indicate something to you, Maxie-pad.

MAX. About what?

AVERY. The fact that you hate your job.

ANNA. He doesn't *hate* his job, he only *says* – Max, tell her that thing about what your boss said last week. About the presentation.

MAX. My boss said I made a very good presentation.

AVERY. Nice.

ANNA. No, come on, that's not all she said, / she said you –

MAX. *(deliberately loud)* My boss said I made a really good presentation and if I kept at it I might become president of the United States.

**

ANNA. *(to* **AVERY***)* How are the little rich kids?

AVERY. Oh, the – no, I haven't been doing the nannying for a while.

MAX. She's been catering.

AVERY. What? Dude, I'm not *catering,* I'm working at La Sala.

MAX. La Sala?

ANNA. That fancy restaurant? / Isn't that on –

AVERY. Yeah, it's good, I like it –

ANNA. I walked by there last week when we were shooting up by –

MAX. Where's that, like South Brooklyn?

AVERY. Uh, the Upper West Side?
Very close, though.
You could come and visit, that's something friends do.

*(***ANNA** *opens up the game, starts arranging it.)*

MAX. You're always doing a million things, I can never keep track.

AVERY. What's hard to keep track? I quit my nanny job and now I'm waiting tables at La Sala.

MAX. Do you get discounts?

ANNA.
Crap, we don't have a timer.

AVERY.
I get ten percent off, I think

MAX. That's low.

ANNA. Guys, We don't have a timer.

AVERY. Do you have an hourglass thing from another game?

ANNA. Oooh, I don't know, I can look.

MAX. Just use your phone.

AVERY. How long does it go for, though? / Like how much –

ANNA. I swear I have an hourglass thing somewhere.

MAX. Just use your phone.

ANNA.
Calm *down*, I will, but –

AVERY.
What games have hourglasses?

MAX. Ann just use your phone it has a stopwatch thing.

ANNA. How long does it go for, though??

MAX.
Like two minutes?

AVERY.
Thirty seconds.

MAX. Thirty *seconds*? What the hell kind of Boggle are you playing?

AVERY. Normal Boggle.

MAX. Crazy Boggle.

ANNA. I know we have an hourglass.

MAX. It's not really important, we can just wing it.

ANNA. It *is* important, if we're gonna play we might as well do it right.

*(***MAX** *takes out his phone, looks up the Boggle rules.)*

(And now **ANNA** *is not there [even though she's still there physically, it's one of those things.])*

THREE

*(**AVERY** rests her head on **MAX**'s shoulder.)*

(Another time, two years earlier.)

AVERY. She's probably just busy.

MAX. She's not busy, she's ignoring me –

AVERY. Well then what can you possibly do about it on your phone?

MAX. She just became friends with this one guy and I just want to look to see if the, uh, *(distracted)* …thing…

AVERY. Oh I'm sorry, you trailed off.

MAX. I just want to see if this is the guy Adam said he saw her with, this guy from one of her P.A. jobs or –

AVERY. Her what jobs?

MAX. P.A. jobs, she works on movies.

AVERY. Wow, man, you're having people check *up* on her now? They're like your personal investigators?

MAX. No, not at all, that's –

No, Adam just saw her out with some friends at a bar and he called and told me about it…

(He finds the guy on his phone.)

Paul Abrams.

Fuck Paul Abrams.

*(**AVERY** takes the phone from **MAX**.)*

AVERY. Who is this girl? I've never seen you like this with anyone. Even in college with Erin you didn't get like this.

MAX. That's because I didn't like Erin very much.

AVERY. You guys went out for a year.

MAX. I know and did we ever like each other?

*(**AVERY** thinks about this. **MAX** grabs the phone back.)*

MAX. She should block her photos, it's really weird that I can look at all her photos when I'm not even friends with her.

AVERY. It's weird for her or it's weird for you?

FOUR

(Lights.)

(Now we're back to Boggle.)

*(***MAX** *looks up from his phone.)*

MAX. OK, it's three minutes.

AVERY. Oh good! So you weren't right, either, that's a total relief for me.

ANNA. Should I just start it?

AVERY. We have to shake the box first.

MAX. Anna already shook it.

AVERY. Yeah but then we sat around and thought about how long the timer goes for so we all saw the letters.

MAX. That's just – ridiculous, / that's a ridiculous thing to say.

ANNA. I want to shake it again! I love shaking it.

MAX. Why don't we all just shake it together as a family?

ANNA. Oh, hush –

MAX. That way everyone gets a turn.

*(***ANNA** *shakes the Boggle cube. She has trouble getting the letters lined up.)*

OK, are we ready now? I'm gonna start it.

AVERY. You can't look at the cubes.

MAX. I'm not looking at the cubes, / I'm looking at the timer.

AVERY. You *are* looking at the cubes, I'm watching you look at the cubes.

ANNA. This has gone on long enough, OK, just press it.

AVERY. No! Wait…

I have to pee.

MAX. Are you serious?

AVERY. Yeah, I'm sorry, I have to pee. Just cover the cubes.

MAX. This is bullshit, you can't just get up and walk out!

AVERY. You didn't even care about the game five seconds ago!

And you two aren't allowed to fall asleep or be watching "West Wing" when I get back.

ANNA. No / promises.

MAX. No promises.

*(***AVERY** *walks off to the bathroom.)*

*(***ANNA** *packs the Boggle back up and puts it in the box.)*

*(***ANNA** *puts a phone to her ear, stands.)*

FIVE

*(***JAY** *appears off left with a backpack.)*

(His energy and enthusiasm are infectious.)

JAY. Annabelle! Oh man, I'm so sorry I took like eight weeks to get back to you, I was completely… I was in Budapest for this conference and we ended up staying an extra two weeks to try and nail down this Eastern-Hungarian government guy who's trying to get all their buses to run on bio-fuel, but we got all these pat downs from these tiny Magyar men with long beards and it was just a total shit show, I ended up getting my arm caught in a…

(He stops and looks suddenly to one side.)

Whoa, holy shit! That guy almost – oh fuck that guy almost got hit by a car on his…

Jesus. No, he's good, he's – Jesus.

*(***ANNA** *puts on a big, blue winter jacket.)*

(She sits with **MAX** *on the couch, as* **MAX** *starts fiddling with his guitar.)*

Uh, sorry, so, yeah yeah yeah. Video stuff.

I totally want to try and get you something on the next trip, OK? I think it's somewhere…

I don't know, I'll have to ask the planning guy, I just go where they tell me. I'm not sure what our budget is, but you know I love your movies and I only know how to do those star wipe fade things, I'm terrible at that editing stuff, so it'd be great if we could get you onboard, and uh…what am I saying? *(laughs)* I don't know!

But I'll be in New York in two weeks and I'd love to see you! See you and your boy –

Max – see your place, if that's cool.

Miss you, Annabunga!

SIX

(The apartment.)

*(***MAX** *finishes playing a song on guitar.)*

ANNA. That's so pretty.

MAX. Yeah, it's not really supposed to be *pretty*, I guess, but yeah that's the kind of stuff I play.

ANNA. I don't know what I was expecting when you said you were going to play me a *song* –

MAX. Something douchey.

ANNA. Yeah.

MAX. You thought I'd just take a shit on the guitar strings.

ANNA. Yes, I thought you would put the guitar on the floor and take a big long shit on it.

*(***MAX** *looks hard at* **ANNA**.*)*

MAX. I used to do that.

ANNA. Oh yeah?

MAX. Yeah, it was part of my dark period. The Brown Period. I can burn you a copy if you want. It was a series of political movements, a dense concept album.

ANNA. You should play a show, have you ever thought about that?

MAX. I don't think I'm a per*former* or anything –

ANNA. Why not?

MAX. Plus I'd need to, like, send some demos out or something – is that how you do it?

ANNA. Yeah, you put your stuff out there.

MAX. I just like messing around.

ANNA. But you're good, you should be sharing your work with people.

MAX. Mmmm…

*(***MAX** *tinkers a bit more.)*

ANNA. I'm also really good at guitar.

MAX. Oh yeah?

*(***ANNA** *grabs the guitar from* **MAX**.*)*

(She sits next to him and tries to play at least one chord.)

(She can't quite find it.)

*(***MAX** *is enthralled.)*

MAX. That's the best song I've ever heard.

(They slowly lean into each other and kiss.)

(The guitar is still in the way.)

MAX. I'm gonna put the guitar down now.

ANNA. Have you ever lived with roommates? I can't imagine not –

*(***MAX** *leans in again.)*

Hey, I'm trying to ask you questions about things.

MAX. No, yeah, I know, they're really great.

(more kissing)

*(***MAX** *starts to take off her jacket.)*

ANNA. No, wait wait wait, I'm leaving this on.

MAX. You're leaving your jacket on.

ANNA. I'm not ready to have sex.

MAX. That's fine, that's totally –

ANNA. I just have to…leave my jacket on.

MAX. That's very weird.

ANNA. It's not weird!

MAX. It's fine that you don't want to have sex, but you're wearing a giant winter jacket.

ANNA. If I take off the jacket I'll have sex with you.

MAX. You will?

*(***ANNA** *nods.)*

Just like that?

(She nods again.)

So you take off this jacket and that's it. You're fucked.

ANNA. Yeah.

Literally.

MAX. It's your magical abstinence jacket.

ANNA. No, it's just big and bulky and heavy and reminds me that I'm leaving right *now.*

(She stands and moves to the door.)

(She stares at the door.)

(Then she moves back to the couch and sits again.)

MAX. You're back.

(She nods.)

*(***MAX** *buries himself in her jacket.)*

ANNA. What are you doing?

MAX. Burrowing.

ANNA. I don't want you in here.

MAX. *(in a weird Dracula voice)* Let me in!

ANNA. Who's that supposed to be?

MAX. I'm like that vampire movie. If you let me in then I'm in here forever –

ANNA. I have to button your head inside.

MAX. Fine, button me, I like it in here.

(A moment with him in her jacket.)

ANNA. OK, I have to gooooo nowwww, / Max.

MAX. You can't.

ANNA. I can.

MAX. Noooooooo.

(She pulls him out. He continues to hold onto her arm.)

ANNA. Call me soon, OK?

MAX. How soon? When? How soon, Anna?! When?!

ANNA. I don't know just call me soon.

MAX. In five minutes.

ANNA. I'll be on the subway.

MAX. Not if you stay here in this house.

ANNA. I just said I'm leaving.

MAX. I know, but what if you *don't*, howsabout that? Howsabouts if you stay.

Stay.

Stay.

Stay.

Stay.

Howabout if you stay.

*(***ANNA** *exits through the kitchen.)*

Stay.

Stay.

Stay.

(She grabs a box of her stuff and re-emerges through the front door.)

(She begins to move in to **MAX***'s apartment.)*

*(***MAX** *helps her as…)*

SEVEN

*(***AVERY** *appears off right.)*

(She's on the subway, above ground, on the phone.)

AVERY. What? Holy shit, you've only known her like three months!

Well, still, you know, it hasn't been that long, she must really…

Is your stupid apartment big enough? We could barely fit that couch in there when you moved in.

(in **MAX** *voice)* "PUSH THE STUPID THING FORWARD, AVE."

Yeah, that's you. That's my impression of you.

Well, congrats, Maxiepad. I will gladly warm your house. Again.

Yeah, who are Anna's friends, even? I don't think I've ever…

Oh, OK, sure, I'll just bring some girls for her to *know* in the city. That's usually how it works, friendship.

K, should I be playing, like, the voice of reason here?

Because, because sometimes you do things on principle –

Um, howbout everything you've ever *done*; your job, your *wrestling* in college, working at Applebee's our senior year –

Yeah, that's exactly the same thing! We'd all be going out and you'd be like, "No, I have to work," and we'd be all, "Why is Max working at Applebee's?"

I know, I can barely keep a fish alive, let alone a…

But no, OK, listen, Max, you said all this stuff about Erin don't forget, OK, you do things because you feel like you *have* to, you get obsessed with an *idea* of –

(The lights go darker, she's heading underground.)

Shit, every time I'm on the F, I always –

OK, can we finish this later, though? I think it's… Oh, shit. Yeah, I'm in the tunnel.

Shit.

EIGHT

(Music.)

*(***MAX** *sleeps.)*

*(***ANNA***, restless, grabs an old camera from the shelf.)*

(She hasn't used this thing in ages.)

(She goes to **MAX** *and records him as he sleeps.)*

(She gets too close and accidentally stirs him.)

(He wakes up.)

(She keeps the camera trained on him.)

(He does something with his hands.)

*(***ANNA** *puts the camera down.)*

(Then she opens the front door…)

NINE

*(***JAY** *enters the apartment.)*

JAY. I kept getting rerouted everywhere, and then they said there's a sick passenger in another car –

ANNA. They always say that when anything goes wrong on the train, it's really bad karma.

JAY. I didn't know whether to take the Two-Three or what –

ANNA. Oh sorry, I should've told you to take the Q.

*(***MAX** *moves to the kitchen and starts making snack trays.)*

(Cheese, crackers, and the like.)

(He also grabs a few beers.)

JAY. It's cool, I kind of miss the subway, like, the smell of the underground or whatever –

ANNA. Yeah, whenever I leave New York I always miss the *smell* of the *subway.*

JAY. I don't know, I guess I just like the *idea* of it. Plus I hate driving.

ANNA. Because you're terrible at it.

JAY. I am. I really suck at driving.

ANNA. Skidding around the mountains in your Dodge *Saturn.*

JAY. Dodge *Stratus* –

ANNA. What? I though it was a Saturn –

JAY. Uh, the 'Stratusphere?'

ANNA. Oh, right right, right – 'Stratusphere.'

JAY. The Stratusphere saw us through two life-threatening blizzards.

ANNA. And that horribly botched attempt to see aurora whatever-its-called –

JAY. Aurora / Borealis.

ANNA. *Borealis*, yes, which apparently only lasts four minutes.

JAY. We just didn't get high enough over the hill.

MAX. *(to himself)* The northern lights.

ANNA. Hey, when did you shave your beard?

JAY. Oh, yeah,

(He touches his face.)

I don't remember, maybe like –

ANNA. All your pictures make you look like a scraggly disaster, I figured you'd still be all *Into The Wild*-ish –

JAY. I had to be in this video promo thing for Climate Core and they made me shave.

ANNA. Bastards.

JAY. *(in Ian McKellen-Gandolf voice)* We must look our best if we are to take on the world –

ANNA. *(same voice)* Ambitions, they are truly an external aim –

MAX. Who is that?

JAY. *(the voice)* Begin your transcendence by first understanding your appearance.

ANNA. *(laughing, to* **MAX***)* Oh God, this very – this guy looked like Ian McKellen's scarier uncle, or something, he came and spoke to our class for this career workshop senior year about, like, "coming to terms with your physical self."

JAY. It was called, "Understanding Your Physical Presence."

ANNA. *(to* **JAY***)* I think Monica boned that guy when she was working at CSO.

You met Monica, didn't you? At the thing?

*(***MAX** *shakes his head.)*

JAY. Monica: who is having a *real baby* in four months –

ANNA. Two babies! Adam told me she's having *twins*.

JAY. What? Oh no, no, / no –

ANNA. She can't even make *eggs* by herself, remember Montreal, she didn't even know whether you butter the pan –

JAY. Those babies will…die. They're going to die.

*(**ANNA** laughs. **JAY** holds up his beer in a toast.)*

JAY. Adulthood.

ANNA. Aaaaaaaaaah.

MAX. We are adults.

(They cheers.)

JAY. Hey, so you and Max – you guys just moved in here, right?

ANNA. Like four months ago?

MAX. A couple months ago, yeah –

ANNA. This is Max's place from before, I really like it.

JAY. Yeah, it's nice.

(beat)

ANNA. So where you off to next, Captain America, weren't you just in Denmark or something?

JAY. Yeah, I was, uh – Copenhagen for the Climate Core Gas conference thing.

ANNA. *(finds this hilarious)* Gas conference!

JAY. Yup –

ANNA. A bunch of farty environmental activists sitting around…farting.

JAY. That's good, Ann.

MAX. Fart conference.

(short beat)

JAY. Oh, hey, I have key chains for you guys!

(He pulls out two key chains from his bag.)

(Hefty steel Earth balls with gas fumes coming out.)

ANNA. Oooooh.

JAY. These are very high-end, sterling silver. Or plastic. I'm not sure.

ANNA. I used to collect these.

JAY. Really?

MAX. *(reading from the keychain)* "If you can't stand the heat…"

JAY. Yeah, this whole conference… I can't even…

It was such an amazing, life-changing experience. There are just so many people involved in this movement now, working their asses off, so to be able to get them together in one *place* actually talking and *moti*vating each other and working, and I got to meet Greg Neeling who's basically like the Dutch version of me, the guy does so much work for Climate Core worldwide and to actually sit down with him and talk in *person*, was amazing, since we're always talking on Skype, most of the climate movement is done over *Skype*, you know? / so to be able to –

MAX. *(a little song under his breath)* Goat cheese, goat cheese, gotta have goat cheese.

(the shortest beat)

JAY. What's that?

MAX. Oh, nothing, sorry.

ANNA. No, what'd you say, babe?

MAX. It was really nothing, honestly –

ANNA. *(quieter)* Come on, don't do that, I hate it when / you do that.

MAX. Seriously, it was nothing.

ANNA. Just – what'd you say?

MAX. You're gonna be really embarrassed you made a big deal about this / when I tell you –

ANNA. You're making a bigger deal about it by being weird about telling us –

MAX. OK, I sang, "Goat cheese, goat cheese, gotta have goat cheese."

**

JAY. Nice.

MAX. Yeah, something on the plate had goat cheese in it so I just…

ANNA. OK.

*(**JAY** laughs, trying to lighten the mood.)*

JAY. Hey, I'm with you, man.

*(**ANNA** mouths something to **MAX**, privately.)*

*(**MAX** shakes his head at her.)*

Hey, Max, do you do social media stuff?

MAX. Huh?

JAY. We have a stipend for social networking stuff at Climate Core and Anna said you did some of that at your day job –

MAX. Mmm, sort of, not really social networking –

JAY. You still in that same office?

MAX. Still in the office, yeah. It's not really a "day job," it's pretty much my *job* job, 'cause it's my only source of income.

JAY. What is it you do there, again, isn't it a – ?

MAX. It's an executive search firm, so I mostly – you know, do office stuff. I print and copy shit, I make spreadsheets –

ANNA. No, you're also in charge of –

He's also in charge of all their advertising.

MAX. I'm in charge of their print advertising. Once in a while they post a really, like, shitty ad in a newspaper for their services.

JAY. Well, we always need that kind of help at Climate Core, so I'd be happy to bring you on –

ANNA. That'd be great.

MAX. Yeah, I mean – I can barely stand that stuff at the office, so not sure how much help I'd be.

(He plays with his silverware, or something else slightly distracting.)

But uh… I'd definitely be willing to…give it a look.

ANNA. Max is playing slide guitar for this band now.

MAX. I'm not playing "slide guitar" it's – I'm just playing some guitar for them while their other guy – it's just like backup.

JAY. Oh, that's awesome! I didn't know you played music.

ANNA. Max is an incredible guitar player, like kind of country stuff, like Neil Young-ish kind of –

MAX. We're just – you know, we're just fucking around right now –

ANNA. Don't sell it short, babe, they're super serious about it, they even made a little logo for the band, it's this like / wedge of –

MAX. *(just to* **ANNA***)* We didn't make a *logo*, I just drew a stupid thing on Photoshop.

JAY. *(nicely)* Well, you just have to be det*erm*ined, man. Like you *should* be making a logo – you should be doing the kinds of things you want to do and make them your focus, right? Like I remember when I started Climate Core and it was like every single piece of advice I got was about how difficult it was going to be to actually get anything *done* –

MAX. No I mean, yeah, I'm gonna keep at it. I have every intention of keeping at it.

JAY. Good, good, cause things are so hard right now, man. In every field.

Everyone's struggling.

Even after we got our initial funding and then the grant from the Clinton Initiative it was like, "What's next?" What can I actually accomplish with this money, you know, how do / we best serve –

MAX. Yeah and then before you know it you're just sucking his cock.

(short beat)

JAY. Whose cock?

MAX. Bill Clinton's cock.

*(***JAY** *nods.)*

*(***ANNA** *looks at* **MAX** *hard.)*

TEN

*(**AVERY** appears off left, she stumbles across the stage on her phone.)*

*(Bar music plays as **JAY** exits the apartment.)*

AVERY. *(loud, drunk)* Because it's my birthday, you shit!

You still have a few hours, you have to come.

Because I put it on the day, because Thursday's the new Friday, your job should know that and understand that –

Max. It's my fuckin' birthday. Are you really gonna –

Come on.

Well, what are you doing?

No, no, what are you doing right *now*?

God, I'm gonna hold this against you so hard.

I'm putting five pins in my Max voodoo doll, I'm stabbing you in the face with a pin when I get home, seriously, I'm stabbing you in the eye.

So, you know, if your eye hurts, that's from me. Stabbing it.

(Music from the bar drowns her out and bleeds into.)

ELEVEN

*(**MAX** reads the paper.)*

*(**ANNA** grabs a dreamcatcher from one of the boxes.)*

(She moves to a wall and hammers a nail into it.)

*(**MAX** looks up from his reading.)*

MAX. Hm.

ANNA. What.

MAX. What are you, / uh…

ANNA. I'm just hanging something.

MAX. I know, what is it?

ANNA. It's just a thing.

MAX. What is it, though?

*(**ANNA** holds up the dreamcatcher.)*

Oh, cool.

(beat)

Is that, like, an important thing for you?

ANNA. Is it what?

MAX. No, just – does this have, like, sig*nifi*cance to you?

ANNA. I've had it since I was little, yeah, my mom gave it to me 'cause I had all these nightmares.

MAX. OK.

ANNA. I found it when I was home last week.

*(**MAX** nods, returns to his paper.)*

(But he can't stop staring at the Dreamcatcher.)

Max.

MAX. Yeah?

ANNA. Do you want me to take it down?

MAX. No.

ANNA. I can move it if you want, it's kind of center stage / right here.

MAX. Yeah, I guess – I dunno, maybe you can put it in the kitchen or something?

ANNA. OK.

MAX. Or the bathroom? Don't people usually put Dreamcatchers in the bathroom?

ANNA. I'll put it wherever you want, just tell me where you want me to put it.

MAX. I'm saying I don't care where you put it.

ANNA. Great, then I'm just going to leave it here.

MAX. *(not cool)* Cool, cool.

**

ANNA. OK, you're being extremely… *Max-ish* about this. / Clearly it bothers you.

MAX. Max-ish! That's – no, it doesn't bother me.

ANNA. It does bother you, you did that "Cool, cool" thing that you do that I hate –

MAX. You hate when I say 'cool?'

ANNA. I hate when you say 'cool, cool,' the way you do. You're telling me you don't have anything on any of your walls that means something to you even though it's lame?

MAX. Probably, I don't know.

ANNA. Nothing from your childhood you keep around –

MAX. Um, I still have my camp counselor t-shirt in my closet from when I was a…camp counselor? I don't know, that's / kind of important.

ANNA. I'm asking – no, I'm asking about walls, stuff on dis*play*, you don't keep things that are important?

MAX. I know what you're asking about and I guess I just don't keep stuff. I keep things in my head boxes, you know, I remember things –

ANNA. Your *head* boxes?

MAX. Yeah, I'm not a hoarder, I don't tend to –

ANNA. It doesn't mean you're a *hoarder.*

MAX. I just feel like I'm being reprimanded for just having a decorative opinion –

ANNA. You're not being *reprimanded* I'm just asking you a simple question about the things you choose to keep throughout your life.

MAX. No, you're right, I should definitely keep more stuff, so next time I go home I'll find something stupid in the attic and bring it back here and put it on the wall.

ANNA. That's not what –

It's about caring for things and holding on to them throughout your life.

MAX. How did this become a thing about me?

ANNA. It didn't.

MAX. I just don't want you to put up the Native American bead art in the middle of the room, OK, I didn't ask to be analyzed about the things I hang on to from my fucking *childhood*.

*(***ANNA** *takes the Dreamcatcher down and hurls it at* **MAX**.*)*

*(***MAX** *acknowledges it for a second. Then goes back to reading.)*

TWELVE

*(***JAY** *enters.)*

(He sits on the couch.)

*(***MAX** *remains on the bed.)*

JAY. I never thought in a million years you would meet a guy at a party.

ANNA. Why not?
I'm a hip, fun girl of the city.

JAY. Ohhhh, OK.

ANNA. Where do *you* think I should meet people?

JAY. I don't know, like, an artist's retreat.

ANNA. *An artist's retreat!*

JAY. Yeah, I don't know, I thought you'd go elope with some famous artist man.

ANNA. *(laughs)* Jesus –

JAY. Someone who *whisks* you away with the power of his art.

ANNA. Max whisked me away.

JAY. Cool, that's…

(short beat)

ANNA. What about *you*, Jayface? I bet you meet lots of climate…hoes. Sexy climate hoes –

JAY. Oh yeah, climate hoes never stop…flowin'.

ANNA. "Tell me more, Mr. Barrett, about how *warm* my globe is."

JAY. Mmhm.

ANNA. "I wanna melt your polar ice caps…with my thighs."

JAY. Too easy.

ANNA. "Find me the nearest…snow tiger…and bring him…"
I lost it.

JAY. I'll put it this way: it's a lot of hotel rooms.
A lot of weird cities and aggressive…activists.

ANNA. Yeah. You love it.

JAY. I do. It's nice feeling good at the end of my days.

ANNA. You're doing amazing stuff.

JAY. But…it's lonely as hell, too, you know?
Just a lot of: "Hey, I love what you're doing here, Let me tell you about this similar thing that *I'm* doing in the world, I will lay out these points for you, and did I mention we need funding? Here's why you should give me money, thank you very much for your time, here's my card, have a good one – "

ANNA. But you're so good at that.

JAY. I know, but it gets…

ANNA. You miss having a weird film girl around to talk about weird film stuff.

JAY. Yes! Of course I do. I loved that.

ANNA. I don't even know if I can, like…
I haven't made anything in ages.

JAY. Yeah, what's up with that?

ANNA. I've been working, I'm – you know, I'm climbing the *lad*der.

JAY. Alright, but you also need to be making your own stuff, that's the whole point of the work –

ANNA. You only knew me when I made weird shit back in college –

JAY. Yeah, Fucking A, it was weird, it was amazing!
That movie you made for your video art class? With the carrots and celery, that stop motion animation thing with the, like, all the different food fighting each other –

ANNA. Oh, shoot me in my face –

JAY. When the celery commits suicide by drowning himself in the cream cheese?

ANNA. That video was so stupid, Jay, that was like the dumbest thing I've ever done / in my life –

JAY. It *wasn't*, Ann.

Do we need to have a "what color is your parachute" conversation here?

That thing came from the depths of your brilliant brain, and it made people feel something really good and that's important.

ANNA. It wasn't *important*, Jesus, come on –

JAY. It *was*, though.

Why do you say that?

You know it was.

(**ANNA** *shakes her head and makes a sound, like "Can we stop this conversation?")*

**

JAY. You should start thinking about grad school.

ANNA. Grad school.

JAY. For film. Or video. Something visual. Have you thought about it?

ANNA. Yeah, sure, I've *thought* about it. I've also thought about finding a job I *like* and / working at it –

JAY. OK, I just – I think you should really think about that. Because right now it seems like you might be selling yourself short.

*(***ANNA** *shoots him a look.)*

I'm just saying –

ANNA. OK, listen, Doctor Future, I'm not selling myself *short*, I'm working on sets, I'm learning all the stuff first hand, and I want to be in the city.

JAY. *("whatever")* OK.

ANNA. What?

(beat)

JAY. When you look at yourself and where you want to be in five years, do you see yourself doing something creative?

ANNA. Yeah, of course I do. Of course I want to be making things. / That's why I'm –

JAY. And does Max inspire you to want to do that? Does he make you feel something –

ANNA. Definitely, yeah, you know *love* is very…

JAY. Does he make you feel something *real*?

ANNA. Ugh, for fuck's sake, yes, it's super major real.

JAY. No, I just mean does he –

ANNA. I love Max, OK, this isn't about him. And how are you ever able to define why you're with somebody? You're not. There are qualities in him that I love, just as there were qualities in you that I loved, that I still love.

**

Max makes me laugh. All the time. You never made me laugh.

JAY. What? Yes, I did!

ANNA. We laugh now at things, but back then – we were very serious together, you and me. A very *serious* couple.

JAY. We were driven. That's not a bad thing.

ANNA. Max is driven.

JAY. Awesome, that's –

ANNA. And we love each other.

JAY. Good, that's…yeah, that's what counts.

ANNA. Yeah.

(They drink wine.)

*(***JAY** *checks his watch.)*

JAY. OK. I'm gonna go crash with Adam, I think.

ANNA. OK.

JAY. Unless it's cool if I stay on the couch?

*(***ANNA** *makes a sound)*

*(***JAY** *nods.)*

ANNA. Max is – you know…

JAY. Where is he again?

ANNA. He's home in Ohio, his dad's kinda sick.

JAY. Oh, that sucks.

ANNA. I care about what you *think*, Jay.

*(***MAX** *goes and grabs his guitar. Then he sits back down on the bed.)*

JAY. Yeah, I just want you to…

ANNA. I know, it's hard, though. 'Cause now I'm…

(She gestures to the apartment, to her life.)

JAY. Just watch *Carrots and Celery*, that'll refresh you.

ANNA. I don't even have a copy of that stupid thing.

JAY. That's a tragedy.

*(***ANNA** *smiles. Fidgets.)*

OK, well…

(They stand.)

(Maybe some awkward handshake or something.)

(Then they hug for a long moment.)

ANNA. *(like an old New York Jew)* Gawd, you're so tall.

*(***MAX** *starts fiddling with his guitar on the bed.)*

*(***ANNA** *stays holding* **JAY**.*)*

(They stay like that for a bit, in some sort of weird holding pattern.)

(Finally, **ANNA** *breaks off and* **JAY** *exits.)*

THIRTEEN

A Montage

*(***MAX** *gets out of bed.)*

(He's excited.)

(He goes to the stereo and turns on a song.)

(Something a bit overwhelming and mildly ironic, in the style of "The Final Countdown.")*

(He waits for **ANNA***, who emerges from the bathroom in very little clothing.)*

*(***MAX** *is enthralled, and embarrassed.* **ANNA** *listens to the song a moment.)*

ANNA. Are you serious?

MAX. I don't… God, I'm such an asshole.

ANNA. Yeah, I…

MAX. You look…

ANNA. I think we were on two different pages –

MAX. No, you…

*(***MAX** *moves to her and kisses her.)*

*(***ANNA** *and* **MAX** *stumble towards the bed.)*

ANNA. Oh, Jesus, I really like you touching that part of my back.

MAX. Which?

ANNA. Just remember where you're touching right now.

MAX. OK, I mean, I / can't –

ANNA. Just remember it, it was nice.

MAX. OK, but I'm not sure I can / get it exactly –

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