SAMUEL FRENCH SAMPLE PERUSAL

This sample is an *excerpt* from a Samuel French title.

This sample is for perusal only and may not be used for performance purposes.

You may not download, print, or distribute this excerpt.

We highly recommend purchasing a copy of the title before considering for performance.

For more information about licensing or about purchasing a play or musical, please visit our website.

www.samuelfrench.com
www.samuelfrench.co.uk

SF PERUSALS

Samuel French Acting Edition

Fun Home

Book and Lyrics by
Lisa Kron

Music by
Jeanine Tesori

Based on the graphic novel by
Alison Bechdel

SAMUEL FRENCH

SAMUELFRENCH.COM SAMUELFRENCH.CO.UK

ISBN 978-0-573-70457-4

www.SamuelFrench.com
www.SamuelFrench.co.uk

FOR PRODUCTION ENQUIRIES

UNITED STATES AND CANADA
Info@SamuelFrench.com
1-866-598-8449

UNITED KINGDOM AND EUROPE
Plays@SamuelFrench.co.uk
020-7255-4302

Each title is subject to availability from Samuel French, depending upon country of performance. Please be aware that *FUN HOME* may not be licensed by Samuel French in your territory. Professional and amateur producers should contact the nearest Samuel French office or licensing partner to verify availability.

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

After securing performance rights to this title, please refer to your licensing agreement for important billing and credit requirements.

PLEASE NOTE:

Originally Produced on Broadway by

Fox Theatricals Barbara Whitman

Carole Shorenstein Hays

Tom Casserly Paula Marie Black Latitude Link
Terry Schnuck/Jane Lane The Forstalls

Nathan Vernon Mint Theatricals Elizabeth Armstrong
Jam Theatricals Delman Whitney

and Kristin Caskey & Mike Isaacson

The world premiere production of *FUN HOME* was produced by The Public Theater

Oskar Eustis, Artistic Director; Patrick Willingham, Executive Director

In New York City on October 22nd, 2013

***FUN HOME* was developed, in part, at the 2012 Sundance Institute Theatre Lab at White Oak and the 2012 Sundance Institute Theatre Lab at the Sundance Resort.**

FUN HOME was first produced by the Public Theater (Joseph Papp, Founder; Oskar Eustis, Artistic Director; Patrick Willingham, Executive Director) in New York City on October 22, 2013. The performance was directed by Sam Gold, with sets and costumes by David Zinn, lighting by Ben Stanton, sound by Kai Harada, wigs by Paul Huntley, projections by Jim Findlay and Jeff Sugg, choreography by Danny Mefford, music direction by Chris Fenwick, and orchestrations by John Clancy. The Production Stage Manager was Lisa Dawn Cave. The cast was as follows:

ALISON . . . . . Beth Malone
MEDIUM ALISON . . . . . .Alexandra Socha
SMALL ALISON . . . . . .Sydney Lucas
BRUCE BECHDEL . . . . . .Michael Cerveris
HELEN BECHDEL . . . . . .Judy Kuhn
CHRISTIAN BECHDEL . . . . . Griffin Birney
JOHN BECHDEL . . . . . Noah Hinsdale
ROY/MARK/PETE/BOBBY JEREMY . . . . . Joel Perez
JOAN . . . . . Roberta Colindrez

FUN HOME was subsequently produced on Broadway at the Circle in the Square Theatre (Theodore Mann, Artistic Director) on April 19, 2015. The performance was directed by Sam Gold, with sets and costumes by David Zinn, lighting by Ben Stanton, sound by Kai Harada, wigs by Paul Huntley, projections by Jim Findlay and Jeff Sugg, choreography by Danny Mefford, music direction by Chris Fenwick, and orchestrations by John Clancy. The Production Stage Manager was Lisa Dawn Cave. The cast was as follows:

ALISON . . . . . Beth Malone
MEDIUM ALISON . . . . . .Emily Skeggs
SMALL ALISON . . . . . .Sydney Lucas
BRUCE BECHDEL . . . . . .Michael Cerveris
HELEN BECHDEL . . . . . .Judy Kuhn
CHRISTIAN BECHDEL . . . . . Oscar Williams
JOHN BECHDEL . . . . . .Zell Steele Morrow
ROY/MARK/PETE/BOBBY JEREMY . . . . . Joel Perez
JOAN . . . . . Roberta Colindrez

CHARACTERS

ALISON – *43 years old, a cartoonist*
MEDIUM ALISON – *19 years old, a college freshman*
SMALL ALISON – *around 9 years old*
BRUCE BECHDEL – *Alison's father*
HELEN BECHDEL – *Alison's mother*
CHRISTIAN BECHDEL – *Alison's brother, around 10 years old*
JOHN BECHDEL – *Alison's brother, around 6 years old*
ROY – *a young man Bruce hires to do yard work*
MARK – *a high school junior*
JOAN – *a college student*
PETE – *a mourner*
BOBBY JEREMY *and* **THE SUSAN DEYS –** *imaginary television characters*

The roles of Roy, Mark, Pete, and Bobby Jeremy are performed by the same actor.
The Susan Deys are played by the actors playing Medium Alison and Joan.

SONG LIST

"It All Comes Back (Opening)"
"Welcome To Our House On Maple Avenue"
"Come To The Fun Home"
"Helen's Etude"
"Party Dress"
"Changing My Major"
"Maps"
"Raincoat of Love"
"Pony Girl"
"Ring of Keys"
"Days and Days"
"Telephone Wire"
"Edges of the World"
"Flying Away (Finale)"

FOREWORD

Alison Bechdel's graphic memoir *Fun Home* is so beautifully made and so compelling that it fools us. It feels like a traditional narrative that starts with her childhood and progresses through a linear story; but a closer reading reveals that the book is actually a recursive meditation, circling around and around the four months between when Alison came out to her parents and her father's suicide. And yet the graphic novel makes us feel like we're moving forward in time. This is largely because Alison's depictions of her childhood are so incredibly evocative. But in fact, nothing happens in Alison's childhood, dramatically speaking. Even when her father is arrested, there are no consequences; the family continues on as they were. So why are we so riveted?

It's because we know what this family does not: that they are living a lie and careening toward a tragedy they don't begin to imagine. Our source for this inside information is the narrative voice in the captions that surround every frame, which points out every instance of delusion, denial, hypocrisy, and retroactive irony. The voice is erudite, wry, and aching – the voice of a truth-seeker. It's what makes *Fun Home Fun Home.* We turned that voice into a character and made it the center of our musical. That sounds so wonderfully straightforward and definitive – but it took years to make the whole thing work. By sharing with you some of the thinking that went into our adaptation, we hope we can illuminate some possible paths to successful production.

The difference between novels and plays is stated best (as most things are) by Thornton Wilder, who said, "On the stage it is always now: the personages are standing on that razor-edge, between the past and the future… the words are rising to their lips in immediate spontaneity. A novel is what took place; we hear [the narrator's] voice recounting, recalling events that are past and over." *Fun Home,* the graphic novel, looks back; in *Fun Home,* the musical, we watch characters as they move forward in time.

Theater can't show you a person's inner life; it can only show you behavior. Activities like thinking, feeling, drawing, or remembering can only be shown on a stage if they are externalized. We did this in *Fun Home* by setting three time periods spinning forward. Adult Alison is drawing her memories of the past, and that action calls forth the other two time periods: Alison as a child and Alison as a college student. These scenes from the past flow unbidden and on their own terms, as memories do. And though this is a memory play, it's important to note that the past always understands itself to be the present. Every character in this piece is moving earnestly forward at all times into an unknown and unknowable future. This is even true for adult Alison, for whom looking back is an active journey forward.

It is very important that adult Alison not be misconstrued to be a narrator. She is not talking to the audience. She is not telling us things. She is a character, doggedly pursuing a goal. She is actively combing through her past, determined to piece together a truer version of her father's life than the one she's hung onto since he died. She is working – sketching, drafting, trying out ideas, trying out captions, rejecting them, refining them, and reshaping them as new information comes in. When she begins, this work is an intellectual and artistic quest. She tells us that she "can't abide romantic notions" of the past and is determined to "know what's true / dig deep into who and what and why and when." But the memories Alison excavates draw her, step by step, toward a chasm of long-suppressed emotion, until finally she tumbles over the edge into a fully felt reckoning with the moment of her father's death.

Alison emerges from that reckoning transformed. Led by her imperative to follow the path of truth no matter where it leads, she becomes unmoored from her intellectual safety zone and drawn into a swirling whirl of emotion. Her art requires her to pursue the deepest emotional truth, and by following that path, she is changed.

In writing this musical, we scrupulously wrung out of our scenes the elegiac tone that (so movingly) suffuses the book. It was much harder than it seems like it should be–but whenever we succeeded in situating our scenes in an unfolding present we could feel how much more powerful they became. One of our lighting-bolt moments in this regard came when we realized that we had been writing Medium Alison's coming out with an edge of dread, an overlay of anxiety. But this was because it was recast later in her mind as the catalyst for her father's suicide. But the nineteen-year-old moving forward in time had no such associations. For her, this period was a joyful opening into a wonderful new world.

But it's surprisingly difficult to keep a sense of foreboding or impending sadness from creeping into all sorts of places where it shouldn't be. It's hard to trust that this story will be sad if the characters in it don't know it's going to be sad. But you can trust us when we tell you that the more innocent your characters are of the future, the more the audience will feel the tragedy when it comes. Also, it's tempting to link the scenes in the past to each other, to imply causal connections leading to Bruce's suicide. Don't do that! Each scene from the past must be played for the stakes of that scene itself and should not foreshadow what is to come. It might feel counterintuitive not to draw a narrative arc between these scenes. But if Bruce hadn't killed himself these scenes would never have been collected together in a play. The narrative arc of this musical is located with adult Alison. It's her present-tense assembly of memories that we follow. That, along with the past's innocence of the future, is what makes this musical cohere and come alive.

– Lisa Kron, April 2015

Adult* ALISON *enters and crosses to her drawing table. Next to the table, on the floor, is a battered cardboard box. She rummages around inside of it, looking for something to draw. She finds a ring of keys. She arranges it on her table, picks up her pen, and begins to draw.

Music in.

***Enter* SMALL ALISON.**

SMALL ALISON.

Daddy, hey Daddy, come here, okay? I need you.
What are you doing? I said come here!
You need to do what I tell you to do!
Listen to me.
Daddy!
Come here, hey right here, right now, you're making me mad.
Listen to me.
Listen to me.
Listen to me.
I wanna play airplane
I wanna play airplane
I wanna play airplane
I wanna put my arms out and fly
Like the Red Baron in his Sopwith Camel! No wait–
– like Superman
up in the sky
'Til I can see all of Pennsylvania

BRUCE *enters with two battered cardboard boxes.*

BRUCE. Hey, gimme a hand.

ALISON. *(Remembering this encounter.)* Right, right, right.

SMALL ALISON. What'd'ja get, Daddy?

BRUCE. It's from Clyde Gibbon's barn. What a haul.

He said, "Take what you want," and I said, "You sure, Clyde?" He said, "It's all junk to me," so I said, "Alright, Clyde, alright." Come here. Look.

Small Alison looks on as he combs through the box.

You go to auctions, yard sales, comb the dump and crap, there's crap, there's crap, there's–

He pulls out a wrinkled clump of cloth.

Ah! What's this?

SMALL ALISON. More crap?

BRUCE. *(Rapturously inspecting the wadded fabric.)* No–

Linen
This is…linen
Gorgeous Irish linen
See how I can tell?
Right here, this floating thread, you see?
That's what makes it damask
And the weight, the weight, this drape
And the pattern, crisp and clear
See how it's made from matte and shine
It's tattered here, but all the rest–
How beautiful
How fine

Okay, okay… What else?

Crap…

Crap…

Dead mouse.

SMALL ALISON. Ooh, can I have it?

BRUCE. It's all yours.

What's this?

He pulls a grey metal coffee pot from the box.

Silver
Is this…silver?
Is this junk or silver?

With polish we can tell
I love how tarnish melts away
opening to luster
And the mark, is there a mark?
Yes, this stamp, you see right here?
That's how the craftsman leaves a sign
that he was here and made his work
so beautiful, so fine
This has traveled continents to get here
And crossed an ocean of time
And somehow landed in this box under a layer of grime
I can't abide romantic notions of some vague "long ago"
I want to know what's true,
dig deep into who
and what and why and when,
until now gives way to then

ALISON. Did you ever imagine *I'd* hang on to your stuff, Dad? Me neither. But I guess I always knew that someday I was going to draw you. In cartoons. Yes, Dad, I know you think cartoons are silly, but I draw cartoons. And I need real things to draw from because I don't trust memory.

Re: an identical metal coffee pot she's taken from her box.

But god, this thing is ghastly!
You were so ecstatic when you found it at a yard sale
No, no, wait–
In Mr. Gibbons barn
It all comes back, it all comes back, it all comes back
There's you
And there's me
But now I'm the one who's forty-three
and stuck
I can't find my way through
Just like you
Am I just like you?

ALISON. **BRUCE.**

A sign that he was here

I can't abide romantic notions of
some vague "long ago" *and made his work*

ALISON & BRUCE.

I want to know what's true, dig deep into who
and what and why and when,
until now gives way to then

All the characters who will make up this story (i.e., Alison's memories) swoop in and assemble the Bechdel house while singing various "la-la's" as Alison, Small Alison, and Bruce sing:

SMALL ALISON. **BRUCE.** **ALISON.**

Daddy, hey daddy *What is true* *What is true*
come here, okay? I *Oh–*
need you. What are you *This has*
doing? I said come here *traveled to*
I wanna play *get here*
airplane *So beautiful* *I wanna play*
I wanna play *airplane*
airplane
I wanna play
airplane *I wanna play*
airplane
Beautiful is *What is true*
what is true

Bruce lies on the ground and pushes Small Alison up into a game of airplane. Overjoyed, she laughs as she flies.

ALISON. Caption: My dad and I were exactly alike.

SMALL ALISON. I see everything!

ALISON. Caption: My dad and I were *nothing* alike.

SMALL ALISON. I'm Superman!

ALISON. My dad and I… My dad and I…

Bruce's attention shifts and he unceremoniously dumps Small Alison back down to the floor and exits.

SMALL ALISON. Daddy come back!

ALISON. Caption: Sometimes my father appeared to enjoy having children, but the real object of his affection was his house.

JOHN and CHRISTIAN are playing with blocks and trucks. HELEN is practicing piano. Bruce rushes in with big news.

BRUCE. I just got a call from Eleanor Bochner! Allegheny Historical Society! She was calling about the house tour!

HELEN. Oh, that's wonderful!

BRUCE. *(Suddenly panicked.)* She's on her way over right now. I'm not sure what to do. This place is turned upside-down… I'm not dressed…

HELEN. *(Taking the situation in hand.)* Go take a shower.

BRUCE. But–

HELEN. Take a shower, get yourself ready.

Bruce exits.

Kids? An important lady is on her way over here to see the house– Listen to me, please– This is one of those times you need to do what I say quickly and without any shenanigans.

He wants the Hepplewhite suite chairs back in the parlor
Move the GI Joe
It can't be on the floor
He wants the Dresden figurines back in the breakfront
A slinky messes up the period décor
Get the lemon Pledge and dust the–
These should face the same direction
He wants it vacuumed
The surface gleaming
He wants it closer to the door

He wants–
He wants–
He wants–

HELEN. *(cont.)*

He wants the brass candelabra set at an angle
The crayons and the glue should go back in the drawer
He wants the bust of Quixote square on the mantel
Sweep that lint away, it's what a broom is for
Gently wipe the eucalyptus
Polish up the crystal prisms
When he comes down here
He wants it ready
We've got to get it done before–

He wants–
He wants–
He wants–

BRUCE. *(Yelling from offstage.)* Where's my bronzing stick!

HELEN. It's in the–

Door slam.

ALISON.

Welcome to our house on Maple Avenue
See how we polish and we shine
We rearrange and realign
Everything is balanced and serene
Like chaos never happens if it's never seen

ALISON & HELEN.

Ev'ry need we anticipate and fill
And still–

HELEN & SMALL ALISON.

He wants the real feather duster used on the bookcase

HELEN & CHRISTIAN.

Find all the books we read and carefully restore

HELEN & JOHN.

He wants them alphabetized by classification

HELEN.

A volume out of place could start a third world war

HELEN & THE KIDS.

That's an inch out of position
Watch it, that's a first edition

HELEN.

What are we missing?
What have we left out?
When he comes down here what's in store?

HELEN & THE KIDS.

He wants–
He wants–
He wants–

Bruce re-enters in a suit and tie and inspects the now tidy house.

HELEN, CHRISTIAN, JOHN.

Welcome
to our house on
Maple Avenue

See how
we polish and we
shine

We rearrange
and realign

Every-
thing is
balanced
and serene

Like
chaos never
happens if it's
never seen

BRUCE.

Every-
thing is
balanced
and serene

Like
chaos never
happens if it's
never seen

ALISON & SMALL ALISON.

Welcome
to our house on
Maple Avenue

See how
we polish and we
shine

We rearrange
and realign

Every-
thing is
balanced
and serene

Like
chaos never
happens if it's
never seen

WHOLE FAMILY.

We're a typical family quintet

HELEN.

And yet–

Bruce regards himself in a mirror.

BRUCE.

Not too bad, if I say so myself
I might still break a heart or two

(Sudden burst of agitation:)

Sometimes the fire burns so hot
I don't know what I'll do.

(Back to the mirror.)

Not too bad, if I say so myself

BRUCE & ALISON.

Not too bad

Bruce, composed and charming, greets the [unseen] Mrs. Bochner.

FAMILY. *(perky but tense)*

Deet deet…

What is he after?
What are we doing?

Right foot is tapping
That means he's stewing

Stay very still and
maybe we'll please him

Make one wrong move
and demons will seize him

BRUCE.

Mrs. Bochner, pleasure to meet you, come on in!

(Responding to her admiring words about the house.)

Thank you. Obviously still a work in progress. Oh yes, I've done all the work myself. That's how we're able to afford the place. No, no, historic restoration is an avocation, but that's very flattering. I teach English at Beech Creek High, and the Bechdel Funeral Home, is our family business. So I'm also a funeral director.

(Re: a piece she's noticed.)

FAMILY. *(cont.)*
Try hard. What else is family for?

ALISON. *(simul. with family:)*
It all comes back…
It all comes back…

FAMILY.
He wants–
He wants–
He wants–

BRUCE. *(cont.)*
You have a keen eye! This I found yesterday at the dump. [.] Actually I believe Rococo Revival.
(Re: her request to take a picture.)
Absolutely. Would you like one with the family?
Kids! Mrs. Bochner wants to take a photo.
(Bruce and the family pose for a photo.)

ROY steps into the house. He's young, handsome, and dressed for yard work.

ROY. Anybody home?

The camera FLASHES, capturing Bruce posed with his family, and gazing at the young man.

ALISON. *(Taking in her father's gaze.)*
He wants more
Caption: My Dad and I both grew up in the same small Pennsylvania town
And he was gay.
And I was gay.
And he killed himself.
And I…became a lesbian cartoonist.

SHIFT to* MEDIUM ALISON *in her dorm room, drawing.

MEDIUM ALISON. *(Re: her drawing.)*
Not too bad, if I say so myself
This outshines the first one I drew
(Sudden burst of agitation:)
I don't know which way's up
I don't know what I'm supposed to do!

MEDIUM ALISON. *(cont.)*

(Back to her drawing.)

Not too bad
If I say so myself…

Phone rings.

MEDIUM ALISON. Hello?

BRUCE. Yes, I'd like to speak to Alison Bechdel, the college student?

MEDIUM ALISON. Hi Dad.

BRUCE. So? How's it going? How are your classes? How's your dorm? How's the food?

MEDIUM ALISON. I'm…getting used to it.

BRUCE. A little homesick?

MEDIUM ALISON. No, it's not that, it's just…stupid stuff. In Modern Classics today the professor told us that Jake's renewal in Spain in *The Sun Also Rises* is really an allusion to *Jungian rebirth.*

BRUCE. What???

MEDIUM ALISON. I almost screamed that's bullshit!

BRUCE. That's bullshit! Jake's not a *symbol,* he's Hemingway! That book is a roman-a-clef.

MEDIUM ALISON. I know! And at dining yesterday I mentioned that my family runs a funeral home and everyone dropped their forks and stared at me like I was Norman Bates.

BRUCE. Typical.

MEDIUM ALISON. I probably just need to find the right people. There must be some people here who aren't total idiots.

BRUCE. Or maybe not. One surprising thing you learn when you go away to college: people just aren't as smart as you want them to be. Trust your instincts, kid. You don't need to twist yourself in knots trying to impress people who are Not Worthy Of You. Got it?

MEDIUM ALISON. Got it. Thanks, Dad.

BRUCE. Good. Alright, I gotta get over to the Fun Home, I've got a viewing in forty-five minutes.

MEDIUM ALISON. Who died?

BRUCE. One of that big clan of Hofbruners over in Lakeview.

MEDIUM ALISON. Ah. Have fun.

BRUCE. Will do. Hey kiddo– Remember what I said, okay?

MEDIUM ALISON. I will, Dad. Thanks.

Bruce exits. Medium Alison opens her journal and writes. Alison reads over her shoulder:

ALISON. "September 15.

"Just had a good talk with Dad and I feel so much better. (Underline, underline, underline.) I'm going to spend four years reading books and drawing. And that's *fine*. I don't know where I got this insane idea I need to throw myself out into the world."

MEDIUM ALISON. It's not the "world" anyway; it's Oberlin College!

Medium Alison exits.

ALISON. Wow. I had no idea what was coming.

SHIFT to the Fun Home. Bruce enters the casket showroom with* PETE. *He sees a dust rag, a can of Pledge, and a tape recorder on top of a casket and whisks them away.

BRUCE. So sorry, the kids must have been cleaning in here. This is the one we spoke about. Cherry. Quite popular.

PETE. Alright.

BRUCE. Why don't we take these brochures into the office where you can think it over.

PETE. So you say we won't see any of the bruises? With the I.V.'s she was awful beat up by the end.

BRUCE. No, no, we remove all the signs of trauma. Don't worry, Pete. She'll look very peaceful.

PETE. Thank you. Thanks, Bruce.

BRUCE. Of course. Let's–

Indicating they should move to the office.

PETE. *(Re: the brochures.)* No, I'll, I'll take these home.

BRUCE. Sounds good. Take a look and give me a call later.

(They shake hands.)

Get some rest, Pete.

PETE. Thanks, Bruce.

Bruce sees him out, then:

BRUCE. Kids, get out of there.

(Nothing.)

Now!

Christian and Alison appear from the closed ends of a casket.

Where's John?

John appears as well.

How many times have you been told Do Not Get In the Caskets.

JOHN. We were making a commercial for//the Fun Home.

SMALL ALISON. Shhh!!

CHRISTIAN. We're sorry, Dad.

BRUCE. We've got two bodies. We've got work to do.

SMALL ALISON. My turn to do the directory! Who are they?

BRUCE. *(Handing her the directory letters.)* Muriel Swartz. Dwight Johnson.

SMALL ALISON. Wait– Benny's dad?

CHRISTIAN. Benny's in my class!

SMALL ALISON. What happened?

BRUCE. He fell off a ladder. Broke his neck. Get this cleaned up.

(To himself.)

It's going to be a long night.

John and Christian start to clean. Small Alison begins putting the names onto the directory board.

CHRISTIAN. When you break your neck is it just like *crack* you're instantly dead?

JOHN. Probably his head was hanging from his neck and then he couldn't see, and he couldn't eat or anything and then he died from not eating and running into things.

CHRISTIAN. That's not right.

SMALL ALISON. You guys, we gotta practice the commercial.

She fetches the tape recorder.

JOHN. Yeah, we messed it up before.

The kids all try to grab the tape recorder.

SMALL ALISON. Give it to me.

JOHN. I want it.

CHRISTIAN. My turn!

SMALL ALISON. *(Seeing her dad.)* Shhh!

Bruce crosses through, now wearing a gown and a surgical mask. The kids try to look innocent. He notices and shoots them a look but keeps moving through. When they're sure he's gone they return to their game.

CHRISTIAN. Should we start at the top?

SMALL ALISON. Yeah.

CHRISTIAN. Hold on, should we say Fun Home? We only call it that in the family?

JOHN. Yeah, that's right.

SMALL ALISON. It's our commercial. We can do what we want.

JOHN. That's right too.

CHRISTIAN. I guess.

SMALL ALISON. Come on!

CHRISTIAN. Okay, okay!

JOHN. *(Into a fake megaphone.)* Places everybody!

They take their places. Small Alison turns on the tape recorder.

SMALL ALISON. Fun Home commercial. Take seven million billion thousand.

JOHN.

Your uncle died
You're feeling low
You've got to bury your momma but you don't know where to go
Your papa needs his final rest
You got you got you got to give them the best
Oh–

SMALL ALISON & CHRISTIAN.

Come to the Fun Home

JOHN.

That's the Bechdel Funeral Home, baby

SMALL ALISON & CHRISTIAN.

The Bechdel Fun Home

JOHN.

Next to Baker's Department Store

THREE KIDS. in Beech Creek!

SMALL ALISON & CHRISTIAN.

The Bechdel Fun Home

JOHN.

We take dead bodies ev'ry day of the week so

THREE KIDS.

You've got no reason to roam
Use the Bechdel Funeral Home

What it is, what it is
hoo hoo hoo
What it is, what it is now baby

SMALL ALISON/CHRISTIAN. **JOHN.**

Sock it to me
Sock it to me
Sock it to me
Sock it to me
Sock it to me *Ooh–*
Sock it to me *Here come da judge*
Sock it to me, baby *Here come da judge, baby*

CHRISTIAN.

Our caskets

SMALL ALISON & JOHN.

Ooh!

CHRISTIAN.

Are satin lined

SMALL ALISON & JOHN.

Ooh!

CHRISTIAN.

And we got so many models guaranteed to blow your mind
You know our mourners–

THREE KIDS.

So satisfied

CHRISTIAN.

They like, they like, they like

THREE KIDS.

our formaldehyde!

SMALL ALISON. Yeah!

THREE KIDS.

Here at the Fun Home

CHRISTIAN.

That's the Bechdel Funeral Home, baby

THREE KIDS.

Come to the Fun Home

SMALL ALISON.

We got kleenex and your choice of psalm

THREE KIDS.

Stop by the Fun Home
Think of Bechdel when you need to embalm
You've got no reason to roam
Use the Bechdel Funeral Home
What it is, what it is
hoo hoo hoo
What it is, what it is
hoo hoo

CHRISTIAN.

Tell 'em what we got
What else have we got, Tito?
What else have we got?
What else have we got? WHAAAA!

SMALL ALISON.

Smelling salts for if you're queasy!

JOHN.

Folding chairs that open easy!

CHRISTIAN.

These are cool, you know what they are?
Flags with magnets for your car!

JOHN.

These are wire and they hold flowers!

SMALL ALISON.

Here's a sign for the names and the hours!

CHRISTIAN.

Stand right here when you sign the book!

JOHN.

This is called an aneurysm hook! En garde!

THREE KIDS.

Come to the Fun Home
Ample parking down the street
Here at the Fun Home
Body prep that can't be beat
You'll like the Fun Home
In our hearse there's a backwards seat!
That's why we made up this poem
We're the Bechdel Funeral Home

What it is, what it is
hoo hoo hoo
What it is, what it is now baby
hoo! hoo! hoo!

Big finish: they fall to the ground like corpses.

BRUCE. *(Calling from the embalming room.)* Alison.

A beat.

Alison, would you come here, please?

CHRISTIAN. *(Incredulous.)* Does he want you to go back there?

SMALL ALISON. I– I guess.

CHRISTIAN. Why?

SMALL ALISON. I don't know.

BRUCE. *(Getting cross.)* Alison!

Small Alison enters the room where Bruce is at work on a cadaver. She's never seen a dead body before.

Hand me those scissors on the tray.

She hands him the scissors, then waits for him to give her more instructions. But he just keeps working. She has no idea what she's supposed to do.

SMALL ALISON. Is that all?

BRUCE. What? Oh, yeah.

Small Alison leaves the embalming room and fetches her diary. She writes. Alison reads over her shoulder.

ALISON. "Dad showed me a dead body today."

Small Alison mulls over what to write next. Then:

"Went swimming.
Got a new Hardy Boy book.
Had egg salad for lunch."

Small Alison closes her journal and leaves.

What was that about, Dad? Why did you call me back there? Is that the way your father showed you your first dead body? Was it some Bechdel rite of passage? Or, am I reading too much into this? Maybe you just needed the scissors.

SHIFT to a door marked "GAY UNION." Medium Alison reaches for the doorknob then loses her nerve.* JOAN *breezes past her, casually giving her the lesbian nod.

JOAN. Hey.

MEDIUM ALISON. What? Oh. Hey.

JOAN. Comin' in?

MEDIUM ALISON. Uh, no. Uh, German Club?

JOAN. Oh. Over there.

MEDIUM ALISON. Thanks. Danke.

Joan exits into the Gay Union. Awash in humliation, Medium Alison fervently prays:

Please god, don't let me be a lesbian. Please don't let me be a homosexual.

(Hit by a fresh wave of humiliation.)

Oh my god, *Danke???*

SHIFT to the yard where Bruce enters with a sapling and the three kids, conscripted as free labor, trailing behind.

BRUCE. If we're careful this should bloom in a couple weeks.

(To Christian.)

Hold this.

(To John.)

Gimme that shovel.

(To Small Alison.)

Where's the peat moss?

SMALL ALISON. This bush came from someone else's yard. That's illegal.

BRUCE. No one's lived in that house for five years, nobody's going to miss it.

SMALL ALISON. Fine.

She brings him the peat moss. He pours it around the base and pats it down.

CHRISTIAN. Mom's back from play practice!

Helen enters, carrying bags from her rehearsal.

SMALL ALISON. *(Pulling a bag from Helen's arms.)* Are these your costumes?

HELEN. They are.

JOHN. I wanna see!

CHRISTIAN. Me too!

The kids pull period dresses out of the bags.

HELEN. Careful, careful!

ROY. *(Entering.)* Hey, everybody. Que pasa?

The three kids sidle up to him, shy but thrilled to see him.

SMALL ALISON. Hi Roy.

CHRISTIAN. Hey Roy, what's goin' on?

ROY. *(To John.)* Hey, you look like a guy I met the other day. Are you that same guy? I know what he looked like upside down.

He picks John up and turns him upside down as all three kids laugh and squeal with delight.

HELEN. Hello. I'm Helen Bechdel.

ROY. *(Putting John down to shake her hand.)* Ah, Mrs. Bechdel, yeah, I'm Roy– sorry, I know who you are, my aunt and uncle talk about you all the time, they see your plays, they're crazy about you. They're always saying you're so much better than Irma Hornbacher.

HELEN. *(Blushing.)* Oh. No, Irma's wonderful.

BRUCE. Come on, you're in a different class!

(To Roy.)

I've seen a lot of New York theater, even by those standards she's exceptional.

As he says this, he puts his hand on her shoulder in a gesture that only he and Helen notice is awkward.

SMALL ALISON. Our mom's in a play called Mrs. Warner and the Professor!

HELEN. *Mrs. Warren's Profession.*

SMALL ALISON. She studied in New York with Uta Hagen. Do you know who that is?

ROY. I don't even know what you just said.

BRUCE. Wanna get started?

ROY. Sure. Whatever you want. Lemme get my tools.

BRUCE. 'kay

Roy heads out to his car, with the three chattering kids clinging to him.

SMALL ALISON. Hey Roy, did you see *Herbie Rides Again*?

CHRISTIAN. Oh, yeah! It's the best movie.

JOHN. Herbie is a car!

ROY I didn't see it.

JOHN. *The Love Bug*? You didn't see *The Love Bug*?

When they're gone, Helen asks lightly:

HELEN. Who is that? Why is he here?

BRUCE. I hired him.

HELEN. To do what?

BRUCE. To help me out.

HELEN. Where is he from?

BRUCE. When we went to the lumberyard last week he was there working for Arnie. Kid has a truck, he does hauling. Arnie said he did a good job and he was looking for more work.

HELEN. Oh, so he's just hauling.

BRUCE. Hauling. Other things. I don't know.

HELEN. Oh. So… You're thinking he's going to be working here, at the house?

BRUCE. What difference does it make?

HELEN. I– I– I just–

BRUCE. Arnie recommended him, okay?

HELEN. Okay. I'm just, I'm trying to get a sense // of–

BRUCE. Chrissakes! I know him. He was my student a few years back. Okay? What, do you think I'm bringing some bum around? Is that the bug up your ass? Christ.

The chattering group returns.

JOHN. You know something else about the movie that's funny? It's that the car is called the love bug. // It's a car, but they call it a bug. Even though it's a car.

BRUCE. *(Monster-charging the kids.)* Raaahr!

The kids laugh and scream.

Okay, that's enough. Come on, Roy, let's go inside. I'll show you that wallpaper.

JOHN. Aw!

CHRISTIAN. No, come on!

SMALL ALISON. But dad!

BRUCE. Enough!

(To Roy.)

Bunch of little monsters.

Bruce and Roy leave. Helen watches them go.

CHRISTIAN. Mom, can we watch TV?

HELEN. Sure.

SHIFT to Roy and Bruce entering the library. Helen at her piano. The kids watch TV.

ALISON.

I want to know what's true,
dig deep into who
and what and why and when,
until now gives way to then…

ROY. Whoa. Nice room.

BRUCE. So this is the wallpaper. William Morris. The real deal. God, it's gorgeous.

ROY. You read all these books?

BRUCE. Working on it.

ROY. That is not something I can imagine.

BRUCE. Yes, I remember from class you're not much of a reader.

ROY. Nope. Read some good books in your class, though.

BRUCE. My job is to make it interesting.

Helen begins practicing an étude.

ALISON. *(Re: Bruce and Roy.)* It's like a 1950s lesbian pulp novel. "Their tawdry love could only flourish in the shadows."

Small Alison wanders away from the TV to talk to her mom.

SMALL ALISON. I like Roy. He's funny.

Alison's attention shifts to these two.

HELEN. Alison find something to do. I'm practicing.

SMALL ALISON. *(Peering at Helen's sheet music.)* Did Chop-In write Chop Sticks?

HELEN. It's Sho-PAHN. Alison stop bothering me.

Small Alison rejoins her brothers at the TV.

BRUCE. Sit down. Take a load off.

Alison's attention shifts back to her dad and Roy.

ROY. I've been working, I'm disgusting. Don't wanna sweat all over your nice stuff.

BRUCE. What are you talking about, it's *furniture* for chrissakes. Go ahead. Stretch out if you want.

Roy stretches out on the chaise.

ROY. This place is like a museum.

(Noticing a carafe.)

What's that stuff?

BRUCE. Sherry. Want some?

ROY. Is it good?

BRUCE. Yeah.

ROY. Okay, sure.

FINISH READING THIS SCRIPT

Visit our website to purchase the full script or to explore other titles.

www.samuelfrench.com
www.samuelfrench.co.uk

To stay up to date on all that we are doing, follow us on social media:

*Titles for licensing are subject to availability depending on your territory.

SF PERUSALS