

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

The Hatmaker's Wife

Lauren Yee

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION

**SAMUEL
FRENCH**
FOUNDED 1830

SAMUELFRENCH.COM
SAMUELFRENCH-LONDON.CO.UK

Copyright © 2014 by Lauren Yee
All Rights Reserved

THE HATMAKER'S WIFE is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, the British Commonwealth, including Canada, and all other countries of the Copyright Union. All rights, including professional and amateur stage productions, recitation, lecturing, public reading, motion picture, radio broadcasting, television and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved.

ISBN 978-0-573-70284-6

www.SamuelFrench.com

www.SamuelFrench-London.co.uk

FOR PRODUCTION ENQUIRIES

UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Info@SamuelFrench.com

1-866-598-8449

UNITED KINGDOM AND EUROPE

Plays@SamuelFrench-London.co.uk

020-7255-4302

Each title is subject to availability from Samuel French, depending upon country of performance. Please be aware that *THE HATMAKER'S WIFE* 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.

CAUTION: Professional and amateur producers are hereby warned that *THE HATMAKER'S WIFE* is subject to a licensing fee. Publication of this play(s) does not imply availability for performance. Both amateurs and professionals considering a production are strongly advised to apply to Samuel French before starting rehearsals, advertising, or booking a theatre. A licensing fee must be paid whether the title(s) is presented for charity or gain and whether or not admission is charged. Professional/Stock licensing fees are quoted upon application to Samuel French.

No one shall make any changes in this title(s) for the purpose of production. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means, now known or yet to be invented, including mechanical, electronic, photocopying, recording, videotaping, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher. No one shall upload this title(s), or part of this title(s), to any social media websites.

For all enquiries regarding motion picture, television, and other media rights, please contact Samuel French.

MUSIC USE NOTE

Licensees are solely responsible for obtaining formal written permission from copyright owners to use copyrighted music in the performance of this play and are strongly cautioned to do so. If no such permission is obtained by the licensee, then the licensee must use only original music that the licensee owns and controls. Licensees are solely responsible and liable for all music clearances and shall indemnify the copyright owners of the play(s) and their licensing agent, Samuel French, against any costs, expenses, losses and liabilities arising from the use of music by licensees. Please contact the appropriate music licensing authority in your territory for the rights to any incidental music.

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

If you have obtained performance rights to this title, please refer to your licensing agreement for important billing and credit requirements.

THE HATMAKER’S WIFE, under its current title, received its Off-Broadway premiere produced by The Playwrights Realm (Katherine Kovner, Artistic Director; Renee Blinkwolt, Producing Director) on August 27, 2013. The performance was directed by Rachel Chavkin, with sets by Carolyn Mraz, costumes by Michael Krass, lights by Amith Chandrashaker, sound design and composition by Ryan Rumery, props by Andrew Diaz, and dramaturgy by Alex Barron. The production stage manager was Lori Amondson, and the company manager was Evan O’Brien. The cast was as follows:

HETCHMAN	David Margulies
HETCHMAN’S WIFE	Marcia Jean Kurtz
MECKEL	Peter Friedman
VOICE	Stephanie Wright Thompson
GABE/GOLEM	Frank Harts
WALL	Megan Byrne

A MAN, HIS WIFE, AND HIS HAT, under its original title, was presented at the University of California San Diego’s Baldwin New Play Festival in La Jolla, California (Naomi Iizuka, Head of Playwriting) on April 13, 2011 at the Forum Theatre. It was directed by Joshua Kahan Brody, with costumes by Elisa Benzoni, lighting by Sherrice Kelly, set and projections by Kathryn Lieber, original music and sound by Nicholas Drashner, and dramaturgy by Gabriel Greene. The production stage manager was Laura Zingle. The cast was as follows:

HETCHMAN Daniel Rubiano
HETCHMAN’S WIFE Natalie Birriel
MECKEL Matthew MacNelly
VOICE..... Megan Robinson
GABE Mark Christine
GOLEM Kyle Sorensen
WALL..... Claire Kaplan

A MAN, HIS WIFE, AND HIS HAT received its world premiere at AlterTheater. The production opened on November 12, 2011 in San Rafael, California, directed by Robin Stanton. Costumes by Jan Koprowski, lighting by Selina G Young, sound and projections by Norm Kern, original music by Daniel Savio, and dramaturgy by Nakissa Etemad and Elizabeth Williamson. The production stage manager was Mina Sohaa Smith. The cast was as follows:

HETCHMAN Jeff Garrett
HETCHMAN’S WIFE Patricia Silver
MECKEL Ed Holmes
VOICE Jeanette Harrison
GABE Hugo Carbajal
GOLEM Jon Deline
WALL.....Nakissa Etemad

A MAN, HIS WIFE, AND HIS HAT was commissioned by AlterTheater, with support from Theatre Bay Area’s New Works Fund, and was developed with the support of PlayPenn, Paul Meshejian, Artistic Director.

Special thanks to the El Gouna Writers Residency, Naomi Iizuka, Adele Edling Shank, Allan Havis, Antje Oegel, and the University of California San Diego.

CHARACTERS

HETCHMAN – Our hero. Hetchman the hatmaker. He wears a hat. Curmudgeonly.

HETCHMAN'S WIFE – Wife of Hetchman. Nondescript. Does she have a name? Who knows.

MECKEL – Hetchman's neighbor and only friend. Meckel is cheerful, popular, and kind. He is the opposite of Hetchman. He also wears a hat.

VOICE – A young woman.

GABE – Voice's boyfriend. Easygoing in a way Voice has never been.

WALL – A wall, probably female, that speaks with a quasi-Eastern European accent. The wall is realized in the play as an unseen voiceover. The actor playing the wall does not appear onstage. The wall's voice should emanate from a specific place (as opposed to a 'voice of god from above').

GOLEM – A golem, à la the Jewish golem of Prague. Only makes sounds but does intuit what is going on. Eats a lot. Made of mud and crap. Has a male presence. Can be doubled with **GABE**.

Note: **HETCHMAN**, his **WIFE**, and **MECKEL**, despite being "old," are not necessarily old old. They are old in the way your math teacher could be fifty or ninety. Ageless. They also all speak with quasi-Eastern European accents.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

Hatmusic is very important in this world. "What is hatmusic?" you ask. For you, I explain. When you are happy and you are wearing the right hat, you hear hatmusic. Hatmusic is indescribable and unique to each person, but think the clarinet section of Klezmer music.

For Goong Goong and Paw Paw

Prologue

(Living room)

(Lights up on a living room. In the center of the room is an old, musty easy chair, on top of old, musty carpet, from a color palette popular a long time ago.)

*(Then **HETCHMAN** on stage in his own light. He holds a hat out in front of him. A well-balanced man's hat. It is perfect.)*

(The hat has its own light. He puts it on. Together, they play the most beautiful music: hatmusic.)

*(Another light up on **HETCHMAN'S WIFE**. She looks at **HETCHMAN**, she looks at the hat.)*

(The hatmusic turns sour, tinny, grinds to a halt.)

Scene

(Living room)

(In the darkness, the sound of someone opening the front door, with some difficulty. The lights click on. We are in the same living room. VOICE stands in the middle of the room with a large moving box labeled "pillows." She stares at the space, then she hears a human noise coming from behind the front door.)

VOICE. Oh! Gabe.

(VOICE goes to open the door. GABE struggles with a much heavier moving box, labeled "books.")

Sorry!

(GABE drops the box, exhausted.)

GABE. It's cool. You were carrying all those – *(reads side of VOICE's box)* pillows.

VOICE. I like packing by category.

GABE. Yeah, but box of pillows. *(re: his box)* Ton of bricks.

VOICE. *(shrugs)* I enjoy my books.

GABE. Well, thank god this is the last one.

VOICE. That's it?!

GABE. You want more?

VOICE. I didn't get a video.

GABE. Of what?

VOICE. Of us moving.

GABE. Why do we need a video?

VOICE. Do it again. Come through the door.

(VOICE takes out her camera.)

GABE. Can I do it without the box?

VOICE. No.

GABE. I'm not getting the box.

VOICE. It's not going to look authentic without the box.

GABE. Yeah, 'cause it ISN'T. The moment has passed.

VOICE. It's important!

GABE. We're moving in together, not signing a peace treaty.
There doesn't need be a historic record.

VOICE. It's kind of historic, right? I want to remember that
this actually happened.

GABE. Then let me do it of you.

VOICE. Noooo.

(GABE sits down in the easy chair, closes his eyes.)

GABE. Fine. I'll do it in a minute.

VOICE. In a minute you'll be asleep. *(beat)* You're not
asleep, are you?

GABE. No. Just listening.

(VOICE joins him on the chair.)

VOICE. To what?

GABE. The sound of space. Land.

VOICE. We're renting.

GABE. Still: LAND.

VOICE. Suburbia.

GABE. Fresh air! It's exactly what you need. What we need.

VOICE. I never thought I'd live so far away from people.

GABE. We're twenty minutes from the city.

VOICE. Growing up, I was like, "As soon as you are out of
range of people, you will be taken and no one will ever
notice."

GABE. Presumably, Dave and Ruth might've said something.

VOICE. I figured they'd be happy to move on to their next
adoptee. To someone better, blonder –

GABE. And less anxious?

VOICE. Or at least less prone to kidnappers.

(VOICE *half-gets up.*)

You locked the door, right?

GABE. Yes. Now sit down.

(VOICE *relents, sits down. They relax.*)

You'll feel better once we get stuff of our own. (*re: easy chair*) And we can get rid of this crap.

VOICE. You don't like it?

GABE. Do you?

VOICE. It goes with the living room.

GABE. Yeah, our hideous new living room.

VOICE. You said you liked it.

GABE. I said it is exactly what it should be: a shitty first house. (*beat*) Our shitty first house.

VOICE. Well, I like it. It called to me.

GABE. "It called to you?"

VOICE. Hasn't that ever happened to you?

GABE. No?

VOICE. You see a place and it just says –

(*Behind them, a voice from nowhere –*)

WALL. HELLO

VOICE. Exactly!

GABE. What?

VOICE. What you said.

GABE. I didn't say anything.

VOICE. Well, I just saw it and I knew. (*beat*) We should keep the chair. Just in case the old tenants come back for it.

GABE. Chair like this? If they left it, they're not coming back for it.

(*Someone's phone rings. VOICE finds GABE's pocket, checks his phone.*)

Who is it?

VOICE. Your mom.

GABE. Oh. Weird.

(GABE answers.)

Hey.

Okay.

Yeah, put her on.

Yeah, I'm listening.

...

(excited) Wait, WHAT?!

VOICE. What? What?!

GABE. No, yeah! Congratulations!

Marriage. Big stuff.

VOICE. Big stuff who? Big stuff who?

GABE. (to VOICE) It's Jenny.

VOICE. Jenny?

GABE. So how'd he propose?

VOICE. And Steve Scumbag? I thought they broke up.

(GABE waves VOICE away from the phone.)

GABE. (to phone) Yeah, uh huh –

(GABE gestures: "five minutes!" as he exits to the bedroom.)

VOICE. Okay.

I've got stuff to do, too, you know!

Work.

Awesome work.

Yep.

Yes, I do.

Busy as well.

Talking to myself.

(VOICE rolls over, digs into her purse, and pulls out a bound stack of pages. She pulls out a pen, starts editing a safety manual.)

“To reduce the risk of fire, electrical shock, or – ”
(corrects) “INJURY when using YOUR dishwasher,
 follow basic precautions including the followING – ”

(Her pen runs out of ink. She looks around for a new pen. Behind her, a white piece of paper drops down from the WALL. VOICE notices something falling to the ground. She picks it up, looks at it. Weird. Where did this come from? Maybe it's one of her papers.)

“Hetchman sat alone in easy chair.”

(A strange noise from somewhere in the house.)

Gabe?

(VOICE continues editing.)

(corrects) “Hetchman sat alone in HIS easy chair.”

(HETCHMAN appears in the living room easy chair. He wears a hat we saw earlier. This startles VOICE for a moment but she continues to read.)

“Wearing A hat. A well-balanced man’S hat. IT was perfect.”

(This is obviously not a safety manual. Nevertheless, VOICE continues.)

(Focus shifts to HETCHMAN’s world: HETCHMAN watches TV in the easy chair. His chair. Everything HETCHMAN needs is precisely within arm’s reach. Anything not in arm’s reach can be gotten with the assistance of a trash picker-upper.)

(HETCHMAN wears the same clothes every day. Or perhaps variations of the same outfit. And most importantly, he always wears the same hat.)

(We watch HETCHMAN watch the TV. He laughs at the TV, eats another peanut.)

“Next day-”

(HETCHMAN in the same position. He has a terrible itch in his crotch/thigh region. He considers reaching into his pants to scratch himself. Can anyone see from the window? More importantly, does it matter? He digs into his pants, scratches the itch. Ahh.)

"Next day – "

(HETCHMAN in the same position. He hocks the phlegm in his throat, spits into a tissue. He ineffectually tosses the tissue towards a nearby trashcan. He considers retrieving the tissue, but does not.)

"Next day – "

(HETCHMAN in the same position. Something is not quite right. He reaches up to his head, feels around. He does not feel a hat. Where is his hat?!)

HETCHMAN. Ey. Ey, wife!

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. *(offstage)* What!

HETCHMAN. I said, ey, wife!

(HETCHMAN'S WIFE enters with the laundry.)

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. I said, what?

HETCHMAN. You see my hat?

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. What hat?

HETCHMAN. My hat, I always wear.

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. That old hat? No, I don't see it lately.

HETCHMAN. Watchu mean you don't see it lately? I wear it every day.

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. You think I look at you every day or something?

HETCHMAN. Watchu be looking at instead, uh?

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. Maybe you get up, you do a little housework, and maybe THEN you find hat.

HETCHMAN. Is good thinking!

You start first, okay? Okay.

VOICE. "Next day – "

HETCHMAN. You think maybe you wash it?

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. Wash what?

HETCHMAN. My hat.

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. Why I wash a hat for, uh?

VOICE. "Next day – "

HETCHMAN. You look in bedroom?

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. There is no hat in bedroom!

HETCHMAN. You look then?

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. If there is hat in bedroom, I will see it,
okay?

HETCHMAN. Okay.

You should look, though. I am thinking maybe it is in
there.

VOICE. "Next day – "

HETCHMAN. You see it now?

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. No.

VOICE. "Next day – "

HETCHMAN. How 'bout now?

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. No!

VOICE. "Next day – "

HETCHMAN. You see it now, right?

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. Hetchman: I don't see it today. I don't
see it yesterday. I am thinking MAYBE: you lose hat.

HETCHMAN. How I lose hat?

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. Maybe hat it walk away.

HETCHMAN. But hat does not have legs.

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. You want to find hat?

You look for hat. Yourself.

(HETCHMAN'S WIFE *exits.*)

VOICE. "More and more, thoughts of the hat consumed
Hetchman.

He changed the channel"

HETCHMAN. – to hat-related program.

VOICE. "He watched a scary movie"

HETCHMAN. – and reach to hat for comfort.

VOICE. "He ate from his canister of nuts"

HETCHMAN. – which feature hat-wearing peanut. Maybe is behind TV?

(Without getting up, HETCHMAN strains to look under the TV.)

VOICE. "But it was not behind the TV, nor was it in any of the handful of places Hetchman searched. The hat being just the first of two possessions that would go missing in the days that followed."

(HETCHMAN'S WIFE enters in her coat.)

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. The Mendelssohns are outside, I think they leave without us.

HETCHMAN. Eh, I don't like the fucking Mendelssohns. I see the Mendelssohns and I want to vomit all over. Why we eat with people like that, uh?

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. You seen this one before.

HETCHMAN. No.

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. "Life After People?" Is rerun!

HETCHMAN. Is ten-part series!

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. Is so boring, I don't know how you watch.

HETCHMAN. Is good show!

Is what world will be like after people they are all dead.

Is fun time!

(HETCHMAN'S WIFE hears a noise. She looks up.)

VOICE. "And then all at once, she heard it, low and mournful."

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. You hear that?

HETCHMAN. What?

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. That sound. That, *rumble*.

HETCHMAN. Is fart?

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. Is not fart.

HETCHMAN. Is probably just TV program, is all.

(HETCHMAN'S WIFE *exits, listening.*)

VOICE. "Hetchman failed to notice his wife's apprehension, so consumed he was by his beloved TV program. The more he watched, the more he fantasized about a world empty of people. He imagined his neighbors –"

HETCHMAN. Dead.

VOICE. "His podiatrist –"

HETCHMAN. Dead.

VOICE. "Even the weeds in his lawn, the feral cats his wife chased off from time to time –"

HETCHMAN. Dead dead dead dead dead.

VOICE. "The once great and powerful hatmaker happily mused on the eventual fate of the hatless masses."

(HETCHMAN *chuckles to himself, contented.*)

VOICE. "It would be hours before Hetchman finally looked up and realized –"

HETCHMAN. She is gone?

(*Without leaving his chair, HETCHMAN leans back to see if she's in the bedroom. No. He leans further to see if she's in the bathroom. He almost falls over. He catches himself, exhales. Too much exertion.*)

HETCHMAN. (*dismissive*) Eh, she is not gone.

VOICE. "Tomorrow, he thought. Tomorrow, he would look and tomorrow, he would find."

(HETCHMAN *watches the TV, falls asleep.* VOICE *reaches the end of the page.* HETCHMAN *disappears from view.* GABE *enters.*)

GABE. Well, mark your calendar! Memorial Day weekend, coming to a non-denominational chapel-slash-golf resort near you.

VOICE. When did they get back together?

GABE. Couple months ago.

VOICE. But he's Steve Scumbag.

GABE. Well, he's her Steve Scumbag now. Which reminds me, we should probably stop saying that since I kept slipping on the phone just now.

VOICE. What made her change her mind?

GABE. Who knows. *(beat)* According to her, the moment she first knew she loved him, she was recovering from the mono that he gave her. My sister's not big on picking the right time and place for things.

VOICE. Love and disease know no boundaries!

GABE. What about you? What was your moment?

VOICE. Why does there need to be a moment?

GABE. I had a moment.

VOICE. When?

GABE. Our last night in Costa Rica and you lost your shoe and we had to walk all the way back.

VOICE. That was a misfortune, not a moment.

GABE. I felt this little ping in my breast pocket. I thought someone had sent me a text, but it was actually just my heart thinking about you.

VOICE. Wow.

GABE. True.

VOICE. And to think, for me, it was that your douchebag quotient was so much lower compared to everyone else's.

GABE. You mean compared to your previous consecutive boyfriends?

VOICE. You and Jose overlapped by like, the tiniest bit.

GABE. Two weeks.

VOICE. I don't like being single, so what?

GABE. You're like a machine.

(GABE kisses her, starts to exit.)

VOICE. Where're you going?

GABE. Sleep?

VOICE. This early?

GABE. My first period class starts at seven-fifteen. This is not early.

VOICE. What about the video?

GABE. First thing tomorrow, I promise. The boxes'll be there when we wake up.

(GABE starts to go off towards the bedroom.)

VOICE. Don't leave me.

GABE. Sorry, but daybreak waits for no man!

(GABE knocks against the WALL for emphasis. In response, the WALL makes a strange noise. Ow. Only VOICE hears this.)

VOICE. What was that?

GABE. What?

VOICE. You didn't hear it?

GABE. *(hushed)* Oh wait, actually, I think I did.

VOICE. Really?

GABE. Yeah. That is the sound of your brain ticking. That is the reason you can never fall asleep.

VOICE. That's not true. I sleep.

GABE. Then you get up, do laps around the living room, make yourself a bowl of oatmeal, and go BACK to sleep at four in the morning. I'm surprised your roommates never said anything.

VOICE. How do you know that? You don't know that.

(GABE makes a little "BOOM! Revelation!" noise/gesture.)

GABE. That's why this'll be good. *(beat)* See? I know you. You don't think I know you, but I do. I see everything.

VOICE. Not everything.

GABE. I'm a motherfucking knowledge ninja.

(GABE ninjas out of the room. VOICE considers taking the WALL papers with her, but under GABE's gaze, she does not. She instead looks around the room one last time and turns off the lights. She follows GABE into the bedroom.)

Scene

(Next morning)

(VOICE gets ready to take a video, sets up the living room just so. The WALL sends down a paper. VOICE sees a flash of white as it falls to the ground. She looks for it.)

(As she searches, getting closer, the WALL says, not too loudly –)

WALL. UH HUH

UH HUH

(VOICE finds the paper.)

BINGO

(VOICE definitely hears this. But where is it coming from?)

VOICE. Hello...?

WALL. HELLO

(Okay, that came from the WALL. VOICE approaches the WALL.)

YOU HEAR ME?

VOICE. *(small)* Yes?

WALL. I HEAR YOU

(VOICE drops her camera.)

VOICE. Omigod! Gabe. GABE!

WALL. WAIT!

(GABE enters in work clothes. Probably a shirt and tie.)

GABE. What?! What?!

VOICE. The wall.

GABE. What about the wall?

VOICE. Listen.

(GABE puts an ear to the WALL.)

GABE. Okay.

WALL. HEY THERE, HOT STUFF

VOICE. There!

GABE. What?

VOICE. You didn't hear that?

(GABE listens harder.)

GABE. You mean the radiator?

VOICE. No.

(GABE peeks out the window.)

GABE. Could be the neighbors.

VOICE. It's not the neighbors.

GABE. My parents used to have cats underneath their porch. They sound just like babies.

VOICE. It wasn't a cat.

GABE. Then what was it?

VOICE. I...don't actually know.

GABE. So are we doing this?

VOICE. Huh?

GABE. The video? I got my good tie on for this, you know.
(waits) Or we can just not, I guess.

(VOICE doesn't move, still staring at the WALL.)

GABE. You okay?

VOICE. Yeah. I'm fine. I think I'll just skip work today.

GABE. You feeling sick?

VOICE. No. I just feel like taking a break, is all.

GABE. Little Miss Perfect, taking a break! That's new.

VOICE. New home, new priorities.

GABE. Well! I gotta go. Some of the kids are coming in early to set up their presentations. Call me if you need anything.

VOICE. Okay.

GABE. See you.

(GABE kisses VOICE, exits. Beat.)

VOICE. What is this?

WALL. EH?

VOICE. What are you?

WALL. ME?

I AM WALL. I AM WALL OF TRUTH
WHICH MAKE ME
SO AWESOME SO AWESOME SO AWESOME
(YAY)

VOICE. Oh boy.

WALL. MAYBE YOU WONDER

WHAT IS WALL?
WHY IS WALL HERE?
IS WALL A HE?
MAYBE IS WOMAN
WHO KNOWS!
WALL KNOW
BECAUSE WALL KNOW ALL

VOICE. Okay then why doesn't he hear you?

WALL. YOU MEAN HOT STUFF?

VOICE. Yes.

WALL. IF YOU HEAR WALL, YOU MUST BE SPECIAL
TYPE PERSON

IS NOT EVERY DAY SOMEONE THEY HEAR WALL.

VOICE. I am a copy editor. Of safety manuals.

I am about as unspecial as they come.

So what're you doing in my living room?

WALL. WALL IS EVERYWHERE

YOU ARE IN BED?

YOU ARE ON TOILET?

I SEE ALL

(I CLOSE MY EYES IF YOU ARE ON TOILET,
THOUGH)

(I AM RESPECTFUL WALL)

I AM MOST IMPORTANT CHARACTER IN STORY

VOICE. Wait, "story?"

WALL. YES: STORY.

VOICE. What story are you referring to?

(The WALL sends down a paper.)

VOICE. This is your story? The hat guy?

WALL. FOR SURE

VOICE. Just one more page, okay?

WALL. OKAY!

(VOICE begins to read the paper. HETCHMAN appears again in his chair. VOICE picks up the paper.)

VOICE. "Hetchman's thoughts remained so muddled by the disappearance of his hat, that even when his best friend and next door neighbor Meckel entered, Hetchman could only hear – "

(MECKEL enters in a perfectly MECKEL-like hat.)

MECKEL. Hat hat hat? Hat hat hat. Hatman. Hatman.

HETCHMAN. Uh?

(MECKEL nudges HETCHMAN.)

MECKEL. Hetchman. Hetchman.

HETCHMAN. Oh. Ey, Meckel.

(MECKEL looks at HETCHMAN. Something is different.)

MECKEL. You get haircut?

HETCHMAN. No.

MECKEL. You get sunburn?

HETCHMAN. No.

MECKEL. You sure? 'Cause there is something different about you –

HETCHMAN. My hat!

MECKEL. Oh yeah.

HETCHMAN. Is gone!

MECKEL. Is gone?!

HETCHMAN. Is poofed!

MECKEL. Is poofed?!

HETCHMAN. My hat, is – is –

(HETCHMAN *hyperventilates*. MECKEL *grabs*
HETCHMAN.)

MECKEL. Ey, Hetchman. Hetchman – !

Is okay, okay?

(HETCHMAN *breathes*.)

HETCHMAN. Okay.

MECKEL. Is probably just below chair.

HETCHMAN. Is below chair?

MECKEL. Or somewhere. Is probably just –

(MECKEL *stifles a laugh*.)

HETCHMAN. What.

MECKEL. Is nothing, is just – you sure look strange without
hat. I never notice, your head, how it is –

(MECKEL *makes a noise that suggests how weird*
HETCHMAN's head is without his hat.)

MECKEL. Anyway. You ask your wife? Where is she?

HETCHMAN. Who?

MECKEL. Wife.

HETCHMAN. MY wife?

MECKEL. Yeah.

(*As if realizing it for the first time...*)

HETCHMAN. Oh, I don't know.

MECKEL. She is gone, too?

HETCHMAN. Eh, she is probably doing shitwork, or being
chased by small dog.

(MECKEL *looks around, peeks into the bedroom*.)

MECKEL. Her purse, it is gone.

HETCHMAN. Oh yeah?

MECKEL. So she is missing, too.

HETCHMAN. Okay.

MECKEL. And you sit here, all alone, no one to love you?

HETCHMAN. I watch TV program, is okay.

MECKEL. Next time, you call my house, I come over right away.

HETCHMAN. Eh.

(MECKEL adjusts his hat, stretches.)

MECKEL. Okay. I love you.

HETCHMAN. What.

MECKEL. You come into my arms, I love you a little.

HETCHMAN. I do not need loving!

MECKEL. You are looking a little floaty. Is okay, I do it real fast, is like two seconds.

(MECKEL forces himself on HETCHMAN. Mmm, hug.)

HETCHMAN. Enough! Enough! Meckel! Getgetget!

(MECKEL gently releases HETCHMAN.)

MECKEL. Ohhhhh.

See? You look so much better.

Okay: now I help you find wife.

HETCHMAN. I am not looking for wife.

I am looking for hat.

MECKEL. Okay, but –

Hat and wife, they disappear same time?

HETCHMAN. Yeah?

MECKEL. Then maybe you find wife: you find hat.

(MECKEL lets this sink in. HETCHMAN is suddenly more attentive in his own lazy way.)

HETCHMAN. Ohh.

MECKEL. Maybe wife leave because you and wife, you fight?

HETCHMAN. We do not fight.

MECKEL. No?

HETCHMAN. How can we fight? We don't even talk!

MECKEL. Or maybe she say something important before she go?

HETCHMAN. Hat?

MECKEL. Wife.

HETCHMAN. Oh. No.

MECKEL. Maybe she say something like – ?

(HETCHMAN'S WIFE *appears.*)

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. I wash dishes

I want hat

I go to store

I want hat

I make the mandelbread

I want hat

I want hat

HETCHMAN. She want cat...?

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. I want *hat!*

(HETCHMAN'S WIFE *disappears.*)

HETCHMAN. Or maybe she get lost in field, I don't know!

MECKEL. You know what you do?

You call her name.

HETCHMAN. What?

MECKEL. Then she will have to come back.

With hat!

HETCHMAN. Oh yeah. Is good thinking, Meckel!

MECKEL. Okay?

HETCHMAN. Okay!

MECKEL. You know her name, right?

HETCHMAN. Is my wife!

MECKEL. Okay: and go!

(*waits*) You start any time now.

HETCHMAN. Or Meckel, maybe you say it for me.

You have loud voice, everyone they will hear.

MECKEL. You don't know her name?

HETCHMAN. I know her name!

MECKEL. Okay. Then you just say, "Ey!... Name!" Okay?

HETCHMAN. Okay. Ey – !

(HETCHMAN opens his mouth. He waits for her name to come to him. Wait a minute, what is her name?)

HETCHMAN. ... [mumbles name].

MECKEL. You don't know her name?

HETCHMAN. Has been long time since I call to her.

And you don't know either!

MECKEL. Is not my wife!

HETCHMAN. So?

MECKEL. Maybe wall know.

HETCHMAN. *(aside)* Eh! Don't ask wall. Wall is big stupid.

MECKEL. Ey, wall! Whatsherface, you know her name?

WALL. NOT A CLUE

SORRY, MECKEL.

MECKEL. Is okay!

HETCHMAN. See? Big stupid!

MECKEL. Or maybe, you write her letter.

HETCHMAN. Uh?

MECKEL. Maybe you woo her with a "I love you" letter.

HETCHMAN. But we are not the "I love you" type.

We are more of the "I guess I am married to you so oh well" type.

MECKEL. Write letter: and mail will find her.

HETCHMAN. Yeah, maybe I write letter –

(HETCHMAN starts watching TV.)

HETCHMAN. – right after TV program it end.

MECKEL. Hetchman, c'mon, you need to –

(MECKEL is also dazzled by the TV. They temporarily abandon their search.)

Scene

(The train)

VOICE. “And as Hetchman and Meckel were temporarily dazzled by the TV, Hetchman’s Wife found herself – for the first time in her life – alone, awake, and on the train.”

(HETCHMAN’S WIFE sits next to the hat on the train. This is HETCHMAN’s hat. She tries to look out the window, but can’t concentrate.)

(HETCHMAN’S WIFE picks up the hat, places it on her head. She waits. Nothing. She tosses the hat aside.)

HETCHMAN’S WIFE. I used to hate you.

I used to dream about the day he would lose you

On sailboat

In blizzard.

And I would be such a good wife.

But every day he come home, he come home with you.

How you feel now, now he is not here to protect you,
uh?

(HETCHMAN’S WIFE pokes the hat.)

HETCHMAN’S WIFE. Is lucky I need you.

Otherwise, hat you would not be so safe.

Whatchu think of that, uh?

Uh?

You have nothing to say?

(The hat says nothing.)

Scene

(Living room)

(VOICE continues reading as GABE enters with takeout.)

GABE. Hey.

VOICE. Hey.

(GABE takes in the mess of papers around VOICE.)

GABE. Am I interrupting?

VOICE. No.

GABE. What happened to your break?

VOICE. They said it was urgent.

GABE. You work on safety manuals. When is it ever urgent?

VOICE. I promised I'd look at it.

GABE. I thought we did this so you could get away from it all.

VOICE. We did this 'cause my roommate got married and my lease was up.

GABE. Technically, yes. But getting away from the work should be a side perk.

VOICE. I can get away from work. I can get away whenever I want.

GABE. So that...?

VOICE. ...is work that I can do later.

(GABE looks at VOICE's papers. She puts them down.)

VOICE. That I will do later.

GABE. Good. 'Cause I got Indian. Your favorite.

VOICE. Aw, thanks.

GABE. Also: next Friday, we're getting dinner. The whole family. For Jenny and Steve.

VOICE. Okay.

GABE. As in you're invited.

VOICE. Me?

GABE. Family, that's you basically.

VOICE. I don't know. You guys like to do your thing together.

GABE. You mean eat?

VOICE. You know what I mean.

GABE. And Steve Scumbag's still working for that publishing house.

VOICE. So?

GABE. You want to do what he does. So ask him. Perfect opportunity.

VOICE. Yeah, but I have no experience in that.

GABE. That's kind of the point.

VOICE. But to get where he's at, I'd have to do another seven years of intern entry-level crap that I don't think I'm prepared for. And I'm six months away from a promotion. Once I get that, it'll be so much better.

GABE. Or you can just quit.

(VOICE accidentally knocks into something. It's HETCHMAN's peanut canister. She shrugs, opens it, eats the remaining peanuts inside.)

VOICE. Quitting is not part of the plan.

GABE. Not everything has to be a plan. And I think you'd be fantastic at whatever it is you want to do.

VOICE. I'll come to dinner. And I'll sit next to him.

GABE. Good. *(re: peanuts)* Now stop that. We're eating.

(GABE opens up the takeout, VOICE joins him. She looks back at her pages longingly. She almost reaches out to them, before GABE catches her.)

Scene

(Living room)

(VOICE finishes the remnants of the takeout. She looks around for GABE.)

VOICE. Is he asleep?

WALL. COAST IT IS CLEAR

(VOICE picks up a page.)

VOICE. Finally.

WALL. YOU DON'T WANT HIM, WALL CAN TAKE HIM

VOICE. Really? 'Cause I'd love to see you try.

WALL. EY

WALL CAN MAKE THINGS HAPPEN

YOU WILL SEE

VOICE. Ha. "And back at home, Hetchman wrote a letter – "

WALL. TO HIS MISSING LOVE

(HETCHMAN still in his chair. He now has a firefighter hat on his head. The living room is just a bit messier and smellier, just as he is just a bit messier and smellier than last time.)

HETCHMAN. Who you talking to, wall?

WALL. NO ONE

NO ONE YOU KNOW

YET

HETCHMAN. Oh okay.

(HETCHMAN takes out a pen and paper from his pocket. He writes.)

HETCHMAN. Dear...hat.

If you are reading this, ey, you can read!

Awesome job, hat.

Is very cool thing you know how to read.

Also, kudos to mail service for finding you even when
I cannot.

Tax dollars at work: totally cool!

How are you, hat?

Are you happy?

Are you lost?

Have you grown legs which you use to run away from
me?

I wish you had a name, hat

So I could call to you

And you would have to come back to me

Which would be totally easier.

But you are hat, and so you do not

Which is big bummer.

I miss you.

Your Hetchman.

(Then as a post-script –)

HETCHMAN. And if you see wife, you tell her floor it is full
of the dust bunny, so maybe when she come back, she
clean it?

*(HETCHMAN finishes his letter. He holds the letter up in
the air, waits, looks around.)*

HETCHMAN. Ey, wife!

WALL. SHE IS NOT HERE

HETCHMAN. Oh right. Thanks, wall.

WALL. NO PROBLEMO

HETCHMAN. Maybe you mail letter for me?

WALL. I AM WALL.

HETCHMAN. Oh. Right. Okay, I get mailman do it later.

*(HETCHMAN puts the letter away. He reaches into his
peanut canister. It's empty.)*

(HETCHMAN sees a new canister of peanuts in arm's reach. He uses his trash picker-upper to retrieve it. He stretches. As soon as he picks it up, it falls out of the picker-upper, rolls away from him. No!)

(HETCHMAN considers getting up, but doesn't. He turns back to the items around his chair, searches for something, anything to munch on. He finds a bag of cheetos. He doesn't like cheetos, but hey, peanuts would require getting up. So he eats the cheetos, first grudgingly and then more normally.)

HETCHMAN. Is Elna?

Is Hortza?

Is Wife?

(Nothing. HETCHMAN gives up, sighs.)

VOICE. “ – but try as he might, Hetchman simply could not recall the name of the seemingly nameless woman who had spent the past sixty years cooking, cleaning, and loving him to the ground.”

Scene

(Living room)

(VOICE puts down her piece of paper.)

VOICE. I don't get it.

WALL. EH?

VOICE. "Loving him to the ground?"

WALL. OH

WELL

FOR YOU, I EXPLAIN

(Lights up on MECKEL, who explains.)

MECKEL. Okay, so:

"Love keep you grounded."

Is true!

(Lights up on an example: a baby in a pink blanket, maybe attached to a bunch of balloons. MECKEL holds the baby from floating away.)

MECKEL. From the moment you are born, baby, she need love.

Otherwise, she float off into the sky like balloon.

(MECKEL lets go of the baby, it begins to float up.)

MECKEL. I love you!

(The baby sinks down for a moment, then rises back up.)

MECKEL. I love you!

(Baby sinks, then rises.)

MECKEL. I...*don't* love you!

(Baby continues to rise, but MECKEL holds it down.)

MECKEL. And then she become loveless lonesome her whole life.

Is big bummer!

But baby is small and easy to love, so she usually stay on ground.

The longer you live, the more love you need.

The more love you have, the longer you live.

WALL. IS WHY MECKEL WILL LIVE FOREVER

(MECKEL *blushes.*)

MECKEL. Oh well –

WALL. IS TRUE

MECKEL. Is mostly true.

Because even though my wife, she is long dead from seagull attack, I am having plenty of small ones to love me, so is okay.

WALL. EVERYONE'S FAVORITE GRANDPA MECKEL.

EVERYONE'S BEST HELPER MECKEL.

EVERYONE'S SECRET SMOOCHER MECKEL.

(*Awkward pause. MECKEL tries to ignore this last statement.*)

MECKEL. Is why parents they nag, "You find girlfriend yet?"

'Cause if you are late bloomer, they have to love you extra long time, which is huge pain in the ass to do.

Is also why parents they are eager for the grandchildren.

Is like, "I am feeling a little floaty today, you have baby yet?"

"I don't stay here so long you don't have small one soon!"

(MECKEL *puts a clothespin on his nose.*)

And is why I go hug increasingly stinky pal Hetchman.

Because I am and have always been loyal friend, cool protector Meckel.

Because once you become floaty, this feeling you will never lose.

And forever after –

MECKEL/VOICE. “ – wherever you are, whoever you’re with,
something will always be not quite right.”

(MECKEL disappears. VOICE folds up the paper.)

WALL. EH?

VOICE. What.

WALL. THAT FEELING, YOU KNOW IT?

VOICE. Sure, sometimes.

WALL. EVEN WITH HOT STUFF?

VOICE. With anyone, I guess. I’m just not the kind of
person who gets all emotional about things. That’s all.

(VOICE clears her throat. New topic.)

VOICE. Next page?

(The WALL sends down another paper.)

VOICE. Thank you.

WALL. UH HUH

VOICE. “At the hatmaker’s shop – ”

WALL. IN WHICH WALL PLAY HATMAKER FOR
DRAMATIC EFFECT

(The wall clears its throat.)

Scene

(The hatmaker's shop)

(HETCHMAN'S WIFE *stands nervously at the hatmaker's counter in a shop three towns over. The wall perhaps wears a moustache and hat for disguise.)*

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. They tell me you make hat.

WALL. YOU WANT HAT?

(HETCHMAN'S WIFE *produces HETCHMAN's hat.)*

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. I want this hat.

You make copy for me?

(The HATMAKER examines the hat.)

WALL. SO WHAT?

YOU THINK YOU HAVE HAT

YOU WILL HEAR THE HATMUSIC?

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. Is just hat, is all – !

WALL. IS NO HATMUSIC FOR THE WOMAN
IS JUST NOT POSSIBLE

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. But they tell me you are second-best
hatmaker around.

So surely you make it for me, uh?

WALL. AND HETCHMAN, HE CANNOT MAKE HAT FOR
YOU?

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. Hetchman he does not believe in hat
for me.

I want hat

And Hetchman he say –

(Flashback to HETCHMAN in his chair, eating peanuts.)

HETCHMAN. No good!

So silly!

Hat?! For lady?!

(**HETCHMAN** nearly dies of laughing, chokes on a peanut.)

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. So all this time, I never have hat.

Is like everything else I have wanted.

I want flower

And Hetchman he say –

(**HETCHMAN** eats a fruit cup.)

HETCHMAN. Flower?!

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. You buy flower for Autzel the shoemaker's wife.

HETCHMAN. Autzel's wife, she die of unfortunate foot fungus!

I have to buy flower for fucking dead woman, is rule!

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. I want passion

And Hetchman he say –

HETCHMAN. Why I need to show you passion, uh?

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. Meckel feels passion for Doshka.

HETCHMAN. Doshka is slightly stupid dead woman!

Passion for dead woman is like passion for trashcan, is easy!

Here. I give you rest of fruit cocktail.

(**HETCHMAN** offers a spoonful of fruit, gestures for an "aaah" from his **WIFE**.)

HETCHMAN. Is good as passion. Is passionfruit!

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. I want baby

And Hetchman he say –

(We wait for **HETCHMAN** to speak. He doesn't hear her. Or maybe he does and just ignores her?)

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. And Hetchman he say nothing.

(**HETCHMAN** disappears out of the scene.)

HETCHMAN'S WIFE. So I don't ask Hetchman anymore.

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.