

SAMUEL FRENCH SAMPLE PERUSAL

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Informed Consent

Deborah Zoe Laufer

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION

**SAMUEL
FRENCH**
FOUNDED 1830

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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

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INFORMED CONSENT was first produced in New York by Primary Stages (Casey Childs, Founder and Executive Producer; Andrew Leynse, Artistic Director; Elliot Fox, Managing Director) and Ensemble Studio Theatre (William Carden, Artistic Director; Paul Slee, Executive Director) at The Duke on 42nd Street on August 4, 2015. The performance was directed by Liesl Tommy, with sets by Wilson Chin, costumes by Jacob A. Climer, lights by Matthew Richards, sound and original music by Broken Chord, projections by Jeanette OI-Suk Yew, and props by Christine Goldman. The Production Stage Manager was Robbie Kyle Peters. The cast was as follows:

- ONE.** Tina Benko
- TWO** Jesse J. Perez
- THREE.** Delanna Studi
- FOUR** Pun Bandhu
- FIVE** Myra Lucretia Taylor

INFORMED CONSENT received its world premiere on March 18, 2014 in a co-production between Geva Theatre Center in Rochester, New York (Mark Cuddy, Artistic Director; Tom Parrish, Executive Director) and the Cleveland Playhouse in Cleveland, Ohio (Laura Kepley, Artistic Director; Kevin Moore, Managing Director), in association with Ensemble Studio Theatre/Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Science and Technology Project. The performance was directed by Sean Daniels, with sets by Michael Raiford, costumes by Amanda Doherty, lights by Brian Lilienthal, sound by Matthew Callahan, and dramaturgy by Jenn Werner. The Production Stage Manager was Frank Cavallo and the Assistant Stage Managers were Jenny Daniels and Jenn Lyons. The Production Assistant was Stephie Kesselring. The cast was as follows:

- ONE.** Jessica Wortham
- TWO** Fajer Al-Kaisi
- THREE.** Larissa FastHorse
- FOUR** Gilbert Cruz
- FIVE** Tina Fabrique

INFORMED CONSENT was developed with the support of PlayPenn, Paul Meshejian, Artistic Director

CHARACTERS

ONE:

JILLIAN – Genetic anthropologist. The smartest person in the room.
Desperate to make the most of the time she has left to save her
daughter. Full of life and hunger.

TWO:

GRAHAM – Jillian's husband, children's book author. Loving and
patient. A romantic. An optimist.

THREE:

NATALIE – Jillian and Graham's four-year-old daughter
ARELLA – Spokesperson for the tribe, in her 30s.

FOUR:

KEN – A social anthropologist, in his 70s.

LAWYER

LITTLE GIRL AT THE BOOK NOOK

JOAN – A Preschool Mom

FIVE:

DEAN HAGAN,

JILLIAN'S MOTHER

SHEILA – A Preschool Mom

SETTING

Present Day.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

When there is a slash in the middle of a line / the next actor begins to speak.

There could be projections on a screen. There don't have to be.

Characters could shift with a single piece of costume. Or actors can simply morph. It should all be as fluid as possible.

The chants and rituals during the blood collection should be designed by the creative team for each production. It should be clean and simple. It must be original because performing the actual Native chant on stage is not respectful.

CASTING NOTE

The cast should be as racially diverse as possible. All best efforts should be made to cast an Indigenous actress in the role of Arella. If that is unfeasible, the role must be cast with an actress of color. If there are questions please contact Samuel French to discuss.

SPECIAL THANKS

I'm so grateful to so many people and organizations who helped me develop this piece. I can only name a fraction of them, or there wouldn't be room for the play. Ensemble Studio Theatre and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Primary Stages, Geva Theatre Center, Cleveland Playhouse, PlayPenn, The Eugene O'Neill Baltic Playwrights Conference, Billy Carden, Andrew Leynse, Michelle Bossy, Lindsay Firman, Graeme Gillis, Tessa LaNeve, Derek Zasky, Jenni Werner, Amy Cordileone, Liesl Tommy, Kyle Brown, Sean Daniels, my brilliant writers' groups, and, most of all, David, Alex and Charlie.

For Dr. Ben Stanger

*(JILLIAN is composing a letter to her daughter,
NATALIE. It is difficult to find the words.)*

JILLIAN. Dear Natalie. Once upon a time...

*(She pauses. The cast, as her pulse, as her DNA, as
her story, whispers behind her.)*

TWO. TA

FOUR. GC

FIVE. CG

THREE. AT

FIVE. GC

*(And on and on, repeated in this order, at a
whisper.)*

JILLIAN. ...there was a mother. Who had a monster sleeping
inside her.

*(The cast stops the genome. This is not right at
all.)*

FIVE. No, no, no.

JILLIAN. Ugh. That's awful.

FOUR. Yeah.

TWO. It's just not *you*. That's not how you tell it.

JILLIAN. OK.

TWO. It's more how I would tell it, actually.

FIVE. Try again.

JILLIAN. OK.

(breath)

Once upon a time

*(The pulse, once again, beneath her words at a
whisper:)*

TWO. TA

FOUR. GC

FIVE. CG

THREE. AT

FIVE. GC

JILLIAN. ...there was a little girl, whose mother loved her
so much...

TWO. Good.

JILLIAN. ...that she would do anything to save her.

THREE. No matter who got hurt.

TWO. Hey.

FOUR. Come on.

FIVE. That's definitely not how she'd tell it.

THREE. That's how I'd tell it.

FIVE. I know. But tonight...

THREE. Yeah?

FIVE. Tonight might be the last time she can tell it.

(beat)

Go back.

TWO. Start with the couple.

THREE. Start with the tribe.

FOUR. Start with the university.

FIVE. Start with the scientist.

ALL. Once upon a time...

FIVE. (*helping her*) Once upon a time at a large university in
Arizona, there was a scientist.

JILLIAN. (*immediately needing control of the story*) Well, a
genetic anthropologist. Actually.

FIVE. Fine. A genetic anthropolo/gist.

JILLIAN. Who was the smartest person in the room.

FIVE. (*sardonically amused*) OK.

TWO. She had a husband

THREE. And a daughter

FOUR. And a pendant

FIVE. Her mother died much too young.

JILLIAN. She was afraid of horses. Seriously.

FOUR. This genetic anthropologist loved to say...

JILLIAN. We're family!

THREE. She looo/oved...

FOUR. She loved to say that.

FIVE. She made a *lot* of speeches.

JILLIAN. We're all cousins! It's genetic. It's a *fact*!

THREE. She believed in *facts*.

JILLIAN. Now that we can trace our genome, we're finally able to read the greatest story every told – the history of our species, written in our cells. And what is it telling us? That we're all cousins! There is a single mutation in the genes of every one of us that we can trace back to one woman in Africa, only a hundred fifty thousand years ago.

We call her

ALL. Mitochondrial Eve.

JILLIAN. She was our great great /great great great...

THREE. And on and on and on...

JILLIAN. ...great great grandmother. Yours and mine.

Everyone in this room, everyone on this planet – we all share that one single mutation. From that one woman. In Africa. So...

ALL. We're all cousins!

JILLIAN. And...

We're all Africans!

(beat)

FIVE. We're all Africans.

JILLIAN. All humans are 99.9 percent the same genetically. One base pair out of three thousand between you and the guy next to you. We have so much more in common than we have differences. Really.

THREE. Really.

JILLIAN. We're so alike.

TWO. So alike.

JILLIAN. Only .1 percent different.

FIVE. So alike.

JILLIAN. Is that difference race? Is that .1 percent?

FIVE. skin color

JILLIAN. and

THREE. shape of eyes

JILLIAN. and

TWO. hair texture

JILLIAN. whatever you think of as “race”?

(All the actors make “ ” fingers.)

FOUR. Nope.

JILLIAN. No! Race isn’t biological. There are no genes that indicate race.

FIVE. She loved to say...

JILLIAN. “Race” *(All the actors make “ ” fingers.)* is a fiction. It’s a myth.

All of the things we see as “race” *(All actors “ ”.)* are about migratory patterns!

THREE. Migratory patterns?

JILLIAN. About where our tribes went when they migrated from Africa.

Then, what is that thing, that .1 percent that makes you different from anyone else. That makes you...you?

FOUR. That makes you...

JILLIAN. Such a tiny difference.

TWO. You.

JILLIAN. But that tiny difference...

FOUR. That makes /you...

FIVE. Makes /you...

THREE. Makes you...

TWO. You.

JILLIAN. Makes all the difference.

THREE. She had a clicker, and she wasn’t afraid to use it.

(She clicks her clicker and TWO makes the noise.)

TWO. Click.

(A genome sequence appears on the screen.)

JILLIAN. This is me.

TWO. A

FIVE. T

FOUR. C

THREE. G

(While JILLIAN speaks, the other actors softly read the sequence.)

TWO. TA

FOUR. GC

FIVE. CG

THREE. AT

FIVE. GC

(And on and on, repeated in this order, at a whisper.)

JILLIAN. That's my story, my genome.

It's also the echo of everyone who's come before me – written in my DNA – three billion bases all made up of adenine, thymine, cytosine and guanine. Or just ATCG among friends.

(The cast stops.)

And this... *(She clicks.)*

TWO. Click.

JILLIAN. is my mother.

(Another genetic sequence comes up – the cast reads it, a whisper.)

TWO. TA

FOUR. GC

FIVE. CG

THREE. AT

FIVE. GC

JILLIAN. This...

(JILLIAN shows her necklace. Maybe it also appears on the screen.)

JILLIAN. This was her pendant that she always wore. That I always wear now. When she gave it to me, she thought I was her sister, Jenny. Her hands shook so much she couldn't unfasten the clasp.

FIVE. *(as JILLIAN'S MOTHER, struggling with the clasp)* You should have this, Jenny.

JILLIAN. I'm Jillian, Mama.

FIVE. This should go to you.

JILLIAN. She was only thirty-four years old.

FOUR. Thirty-four years old.

JILLIAN. As I am, today. And I was only seven.

Later, I found one dark strand of hair caught in that clasp. Which I saved.

TWO. She saves everything.

JILLIAN. On that strand of hair was one tiny root particle. And with that tiny bit of root, over twenty years later, I traced my mother's genome. Unlocked her mysteries. Finally got to know her.

ALL. TA GC CG AT GC

JILLIAN. Stop. There. There it is. There's the glitch. And here it is in my genome.

TWO. Click

ALL. TA GC CG AT GC

JILLIAN. Same glitch. Mutation in the amyloid precursor protein. Chromosome 21. Right there. Familial. Inherited. Early onset. Alzheimer's.

(Beat. Light shift.)

TWO. Once upon a time, at the floor of the Grand Canyon, there was a tribe of Native

ARELLA. Native.

TWO. Americans.

ARELLA. Americans. That's your word. Not ours.

FIVE. There was a tribe who lived at the floor of the Grand Canyon.

ARELLA. We sprang forth from the Grand Canyon.

FIVE. And, in that same large university in the state of Arizona there was a social anthropologist...

(FOUR hurriedly steps forward, claiming the role.)

...in his seventies.

FOUR. In his *seventies*?

(He adjusts his posture to reflect his age.)

FIVE. He called the genetic anthropologist into his office.

(A slide of KEN's office, appears on one side of the screen. His genome is on the other side.)

FOUR. *(becoming KEN)* I called Doctor Elliott into my office. Hard-working, passionate young woman, if a little...

THREE. Fanatical?

KEN. Overzealous. She reminds me of my daughter at that age. When my contact from the Public Health School moved to Singapore, I immediately thought of Dr. Elliott as a replacement. Seemed like the perfect opportunity for a young person with fire in her belly, you know?

(to JILLIAN, delighted to talk about his favorite subject)

The beauty of the place, Jillian.

JILLIAN. *(overwhelmed, thrilled)* Oh my God.

KEN. And the people.

JILLIAN. Ken!

KEN. They're a remarkable people.

(JILLIAN impulsively hugs him in her excitement. He's unprepared for this, but pleased.)

JILLIAN. Thank you!! Thank you so much! I'm so thrilled you came to me!

JILLIAN. *(to the audience)* I don't even have tenure yet, and he's handing over this massive opportunity?! I hope he realizes that diabetes isn't my field of study.

KEN. I realize that diabetes isn't your field of study. You're working on...

JILLIAN. Right. Gene flow based on migratory patterns.

KEN. Ah! All these new fields!

JILLIAN. Some day I'd actually like to be focusing on Alzheimers full-time, but, you know, at this stage, every opportunity is wonderful.

KEN. Well, like I always tell my daughter – you just keep putting one foot in front of the other, slow and sure, and there's no limit to how far you can go.

JILLIAN. Until you reach the ocean!

(He looks at her blankly.)

I won't let you down, Ken. You'll see.

KEN. *(his book)* I want you to have this.

JILLIAN. Oh. Thanks!

KEN. *(to the audience)* I gave her my book. Inscribed, of course.

(to JILLIAN)

As you can see, I've inscribed it.

JILLIAN. Wow! Thank you!

KEN. This will give you a sense of the history of the tribe, their form of self-government, their creation story.

ARELLA. We sprang forth from the Grand /Canyon.

JILLIAN. That's great, thanks! So... I guess we should make an amendment to the IRB?

(to the audience)

Institutional Review Board

(to KEN)

To reflect the change in personnel?

ARELLA. We were the first people on Earth. My people.

KEN. Of course it charts their relationship with and therefore distrust of the white man.

JILLIAN. Of course.

KEN. (*reading from the back flap of his book*) We raped them of their land, their way of life.

JILLIAN. It's awful, Ken. I can't wait to read it.

KEN. Good!

JILLIAN. I was looking at the work that the NIH did with the Pima – there are some striking similarities. The tribe's degree of isolation, their rate of diabetes. Boy, if we find the same candidate gene –

KEN. Yes?

JILLIAN. We could really help them, you know? Get them the right treatment. Fast.

KEN. You're already on the case!

JILLIAN. I'm on it!

So, when could I get a team down to start collecting samples? How would I get them down there?

KEN. You've never been?

JILLIAN. No.

(*We see images of the Grand Canyon on the screen.*)

KEN. You live on the lip of the Grand Canyon, one of the great natural wonders of the world, and you've never / gone?

JILLIAN. I've been meaning to, but you know...life...

KEN. You've got to lift your eyes up from that microscope, young lady!

JILLIAN. You're so right! I will!

KEN. Good. So, there are three ways to get down there. You can climb down by foot, which is around an eight-mile hike.

JILLIAN. Wow.

KEN. Just magnificent. You can ride in by horseback.

JILLIAN. Hmmm...

KEN. Or there are regular helicopter runs.

JILLIAN. OK! Helicopter is sounding awesome.

(to the audience)

I had this incident when I was a kid – horseback riding. We were in this indoor rink, and it was /winter and icy...

(FIVE coughs.)

FIVE. Not really relevant...

KEN. There are regular helicopter runs bringing down supplies...

JILLIAN. If I can get all the paperwork done – consent forms, can we get down there next week?

(pulling out her iPhone)

I have Wednesday afternoons open. So...do you know when the next helicopter run is? Do they have a regular /schedule or...

KEN. Whoa. This is going to take some time, Jillian. We need to handle this very delicately.

JILLIAN. OK...

KEN. They've never allowed blood to be taken for any kind of research.

ARELLA. Our blood is sacred.

JILLIAN. Maybe if I could go down there, talk to them...

KEN. Jillian, I've spent forty years with this tribe. They're my family.

JILLIAN. *(to the audience)* Well, we're all family, really.

KEN. Their creation story tells of how they sprang forth from the Grand Canyon. They're its guardians. They don't easily let white people into their community.

JILLIAN. *(to the audience)* There's no such thing as "white" people, really. *(The whole cast does " ".)*

ARELLA. When I was little, before I'd met Ken, I'd hear about, "the white man did this and the white man did that." I thought there was one white man and he did all these terrible things. Like, if they had just locked up that awful white man everything would have been great.

KEN. I earned their trust. A sacred trust.

JILLIAN. And they came to you for help. Which is fantastic.
That they could turn to you.

KEN. I lived there in the canyon for over a year in the 60s.

(to the audience)

Back then I was just beginning my field work. I'd recently graduated – no wife, no family, and I was heading west on /my way to...

FIVE. Again, this is really not your story.

KEN. So far nine people have consented to giving samples.

JILLIAN. *(to the audience)* Nine participants? And he calls it a *study*?

KEN. There are only six hundred seventy tribe members left.

JILLIAN. *(to the audience)* Well, he's a social anthropologist
That's just barely science, really.

KEN. This will take patience, Jillian. For most of the tribe the thought of giving their blood is...unthinkable. It could take up to a year or two for you to gain their trust, help them /warm to the idea.

JILLIAN. A year or two???

FIVE. *(becoming JILLIAN'S MOTHER)*

(struggling to unhook her pendant)

You should have this, Jenny.

JILLIAN. I'm Jillian, Mama. Not Jenny. Aunt Jenny died.

JILLIAN'S MOTHER. This should belong to you, Jenny.
I can't... Ahh...it's stuck! I can't...

(She backs away.)

JILLIAN. Ken! They don't have a year or two. I mean, it's an epidemic – almost fifty percent of the population. Let me get down there. I'll bring some literature... /the success with the Pimas...

KEN. English is not their first language.

ARELLA. We're the only remaining tribe in the country
whose tribal language is our first language.

JILLIAN. I'll bring a translator.

KEN. Arella Namida is working on convincing the tribal council. I've known her since she was a little girl. She's becoming a real force there.

JILLIAN. Could I just meet with her then? Arella...

KEN. I taught her how to drive.

ARELLA. There are no cars in my village. He insisted I come to the plateau. That I learn to drive.

KEN. She's like a daughter to me.

JILLIAN. Wow. /That's...

ARELLA. Only five tribe members have ever graduated from college. He insisted I go.

KEN. Like my own daughter.

JILLIAN. She sounds remarkable. How would I contact her? Arella...

KEN. She'll convince them. I feel almost certain.

(Beat, as JILLIAN works to control her hunger.)

JILLIAN. OK. In the meantime, I'll get those documents to the IRB – stress the /urgency that we begin...

KEN. You know Dr. Elliott, this is strictly a diabetes study.

JILLIAN. *(to the audience)* I don't think he said that.

KEN. I did. I remember...

JILLIAN. Not "strictly" *(The cast does " ".)*

KEN. Fine. You know Dr. Elliott, this is a diabetes study.

JILLIAN. Yes. I'm so glad you came to me Ken. No one here has worked more with human subjects. Oh – should we also put together a nutritional program? Who is that nutritionist...she was working in Carl's lab.

KEN. Yeah...

JILLIAN. Do we have funding for that? What do they eat down there?

KEN. Their diet is not what it was. You'll see in the book /how they...

JILLIAN. Right. Good.

KEN. Hunter-gatherers. Farmers.

ARELLA. There was a time my sister could climb the whole canyon to the rim in three hours. /Now...

KEN. Now, few of the tribe can climb any more.

JILLIAN. Right.

KEN. Health, weight, /amputations.

ARELLA. Amputations.

JILLIAN. I'll put a good team together. You can count on it.

(light shift)

(To the audience:)

Stay healthy, cousins. Stay healthy for the next twenty years. Don't get hit by a bus, resist french fries, wear a seat belt – you might live to see...*two hundred.*

And, if research continues at the incredible rate it's going, it's possible... (I really shouldn't even say this. Cone of silence, OK?) it's possible that our children's children will attain...immortality.

I know, it sounds crazy! Believe me, I know! But genomic progress is sprinting forward at super exponential speeds. It's breathtaking. The first genome sequencing in 2003 cost about three billion dollars. In a few years, you'll carry around a card with your entire sequence on it for a thousand bucks.

FIVE. *(becoming DEAN HAGAN)* The Dean of the large university in Arizona was a little uncomfortable with these assertions.

(to JILLIAN)

I'm not really comfortable with the assertions you've been making publically. You said we're about to become immortal?

JILLIAN. Oh. No. Hah! Well, I said that our rate of progress is exponential and that, you know, that there's really no knowing what might be possible. In the future.

DEAN HAGAN. Let's just stick to science, Dr. Elliott, and let the English department imagine the unimaginable.

JILLIAN. Okey dokey.

(to the audience)

Our Dean – a visionary.

Where was I?

(She can't remember. It's a bit unnerving. Pause.)

THREE. *(trying to help her, a whisper)* Exponential growth...

(This doesn't help. Pause. The cast looks to each other, worried.)

FOUR. Stay healthy cousins...

(JILLIAN is still lost.)

TWO. God of Cancer.

JILLIAN. Oh. Right! Thanks. OK. OK, so, the way we treat disease today – it's still the Dark Ages. We throw chemicals at a problem and pray that the God of Cancer will make it go away. Seriously – we're basically poisoning people to see if we can kill off the disease before we kill off the person.

But once we can read your genome, we're going to be able to find out exactly what's malfunctioning in *your* body. And the pharmacist will whip up a drug specifically for you. We could end disease. We could re-grow aging cell tissue. It's all within our grasp.

This is why it's so important that we all take part. That we all give our blood. I mean, my genome is up on the internet for anyone to look at. Because really, it's *our* DNA. *Our* history. *Our* stories.

We're all in this together, cousins. To save us all. The human family.

(light shift)

TWO. *(becoming GRAHAM)*

(He is telling the story to NATALIE, his daughter.)

Once upon a time a man and a woman fell in love. The man was the color of the earth's deep clay, and the

woman had skin like soft ripe peaches. And they came together with so much love, sooo much love, that...

THREE. (as **NATALIE**) They had a little girl!

GRAHAM. They had a little girl. And that little girl was the smartest, funniest, kindest...

NATALIE. Best singing!

GRAHAM. best singing, most generous little girl who ever lived. She was also beautiful, which isn't as important as those other things, but may as well be mentioned.

(light shift)

FOUR. The genetic anthropologist told her /husband

FIVE. And told him and told him and /told him

FOUR. about the restricted gene pool.

(GRAHAM is searching through stacks of paper, a bit frantically, for NATALIE's poster. He has been at it for a while and is retracing. JILLIAN is following him around, out of her head excited.)

JILLIAN. A restricted gene pool like this – it's a gold mine!

GRAHAM. Yeah?

God, where could I have put it??

JILLIAN. Looking at that DNA unpolluted – it makes what's there so /much clearer.

THREE. Unpolluted?

GRAHAM. Unpolluted... That /sounds...

JILLIAN. No no no, it's like, you're scanning the night sky, looking for a specific star?

GRAHAM. Uh, huh.

JILLIAN. If there's light pollution, like in a city, it's much harder to find it.

GRAHAM. K.

JILLIAN. Clearing away all the other light makes your star shine brighter. That's what their blood is – it's clear of all the other distractions.

GRAHAM. Aww. Who says you're not a poet, babe.

(He comes over and kisses her, and then goes back to his hunt. She is now exhilarated!)

JILLIAN. This is pretty much the oldest blood on the continent!

THREE. We were the first people.

GRAHAM. You're sure you haven't seen Natalie's picture?

THREE. Our blood is sacred.

JILLIAN. This is how it happens hon – huge breakthroughs in science – when large related families like this allow research. That's how we identified the gene for Huntingtons.

GRAHAM. Yeah?

JILLIAN. This group of families in Venezuela gave their blood. The Mormons In Salt Lake City gave us the key to colon cancer.

GRAHAM. Huh.

JILLIAN. And this tribe is much more isolated. So – who knows what we'll discover here. This could majorly impact genomic research. And we could save the tribe from extinction. Which is where they're headed. Fast.

GRAHAM. Amazing.

(his search)

How is this possible? I left it right here.

JILLIAN. Oh my God. Maybe I could get a *Cell* article, Graham.

GRAHAM. Hmm.

JILLIAN. Maybe even *Nature*. And if that happens... Oh my God.

GRAHAM. What?

JILLIAN. I could finally get funding for my own lab. Focus on Alzheimer's full time.

GRAHAM. Whoa...

JILLIAN. With all my focus, and the right funding, – which an article in *Nature* would generate – oh my God. I could cure it.

GRAHAM. Whoa... Honey. Slow down. You just went from doing this study on...

THREE & FOUR. Diabetes

GRAHAM. On diabetes, to getting your own lab, to curing Alzheimers... It's kind of...a big leap, right? I mean...

JILLIAN. You only get one opportunity like this in a lifetime, hon – it could change my whole career. My whole life. Change Natalie's life.

(emotional)

I'm going to save her, Graham. I am.

GRAHAM. *(a little worried that she's spiraled out of control)* OK, hon.

JILLIAN. *(back to her impassioned planning)* I'll need to test for a lot of things – schizophrenia, alcoholism, I'll take handprints.

GRAHAM. Handprints?

JILLIAN. That's how we find patterns for inbreeding.

THREE & FOUR. Inbreeding?

FOUR. This is strictly a diabetes study.

JILLIAN & FIVE. You didn't say "strictly"

GRAHAM. Where is that drawing?!

JILLIAN. You checked her room?

GRAHAM. It's not there.

JILLIAN. Huh.

GRAHAM. I left it right here. Last night.

JILLIAN. Weird.

(beat)

Did I tell you, they have the third highest rate of Type 2 diabetes *in the world*?

GRAHAM. Maybe you should sound less gleeful about it.

JILLIAN. Graham, I could really help them.

GRAHAM. Honey. Are you sure you haven't seen it?

JILLIAN. What does it look like?

GRAHAM. *(a little incredulous)* Her poster. Of us. The one she's been working on all week.

JILLIAN. I don't think so.

GRAHAM. Shit. She's going to fail preschool and it's all my fault. Could you have moved it? Or thrown it out?

JILLIAN. Me? Throw something /out?

FIVE. *(to the audience)* She saves everything.

GRAHAM. Could you see if it's in with your papers?

JILLIAN. Why would it be in with /my papers?

GRAHAM. Because it's not anywhere else?! Help me out here!

JILLIAN. OK! OK!

(She looks through her briefcase and finds it.)

Oh my God.

GRAHAM. Jillian! Jesus! I've been looking for an hour!

JILLIAN. Look at this.

GRAHAM. What?

(JILLIAN turns the painting around. We see it on the screen. It shows a four-year-old's drawing of her family – the daddy and girl are brown, holding hands. The mommy is white, and off by herself.)

JILLIAN. This is how she sees us.

GRAHAM. I know – I'm *significantly* smaller than you.

JILLIAN. Graham. I'm...separate.

GRAHAM. Just a bit.

JILLIAN. You're both brown and holding hands, and I'm white. And separate. She thinks I'm different. A different...race.

GRAHAM. She doesn't know about race hon. She just draws what she sees. I was here with her while she was coloring it, and you /were at work.

JILLIAN. It looks like... "One of these things is not like the other." Like I got sorted out.

GRAHAM. No.

JILLIAN. I'm away too much. I work too much.

GRAHAM. She's just going through a Daddy's girl phase.

Every little girl goes through that.

JILLIAN. I didn't.

GRAHAM. *(giving her a hug)* Well, you're a freak.

FIVE. Wait. Back it up a little. Give us some context.

JILLIAN. *(to the audience)* I didn't think we should have a child. I told him that first day, the day we met.

FOUR. Do the meeting. In the bookstore. I love that part.

(THREE steps forward to grab a prop.)

Nah, that's OK. I'll be the little girl.

THREE. *(laughs)* Sounds good.

GRAHAM. She was standing at the back of Book Nook. I was giving a reading of my book "Lily the Lemming" to the kids. Now, the book is hilarious. It's about this lemming who decides she's not going to follow the pack /and the rest of the lemmings...

FIVE. *(coughs)* Anyway...

GRAHAM. Anyway, you're just going to have to trust me – it's killer funny. I mean, all the kids are cracking up and she's just standing there in the back, watching. It was a little creepy really.

JILLIAN. I laughed.

GRAHAM. No.

JILLIAN. I did! I remember. I thought /it was funny...

GRAHAM. OK, hon.

JILLIAN. *(to the audience)* What made me stop to listen?
I don't know. Between us – I'd just gone in to use the bathroom.

(FOUR, now a little girl with a cold, hands

GRAHAM a book to sign.)

FOUR. Emiwy.

GRAHAM. Very nice to meet you, Emily.

(He signs the book.)

FOUR. *(She sneezes on and then gives him a picture she's drawn.)*

I drew this. Wiwy.

GRAHAM. Wow! You drew Lily!

JILLIAN. He knew – what to say to them.

GRAHAM. It's amazing. Is this for me?

(She nods.)

Thank you so much! I'll hang it on my fridge!

(FOUR moves away and JILLIAN approaches.)

JILLIAN. *(her version of flirting)* That was pretty good. I mean, your story. For fiction. I usually hate fiction.

GRAHAM. Who says it's fiction?

JILLIAN. Hah!

GRAHAM. So...you're...here by yourself?

JILLIAN. Me? Yeah.

GRAHAM. At a children's book reading?

JILLIAN. Oh. Right. Yeah.

GRAHAM. You don't have kids?

JILLIAN. No. No. I don't. I won't...have kids.

GRAHAM. OK...

JILLIAN. Ever.

GRAHAM. OK...

FOUR. Later, at her apartment...

(JILLIAN and GRAHAM are making out.)

JILLIAN. *(disentangling)* I need to tell you something.

GRAHAM. I need to tell *you* something.

JILLIAN. What?

GRAHAM. You're adorable.

(He tries to resume kissing her.)

JILLIAN. No, but really. This is serious.

GRAHAM. You are *seriously* adorable.

JILLIAN. Graham.

GRAHAM. Jillian.

JILLIAN. I have to tell you this. It's important.

GRAHAM. You're a dude, aren't you.

JILLIAN. No.

GRAHAM. Excellent!

(tries to kiss her again)

JILLIAN. Graham. You should know this if we're gonna move forward.

GRAHAM. It can't wait for the second date?

JILLIAN. You may not want a second date.

GRAHAM. But I've already cleared my calendar.

JILLIAN. There's a fifty percent chance I'll get early-onset Alzheimers.

GRAHAM. *(laughing)* OK...

JILLIAN. *(to the audience)* This was before you could get your genome traced. Before I found out that there's one hundred percent chance.

FIVE. *Nearly* /one hundred percent.

JILLIAN. One hundred percent.

GRAHAM. Wow. Well. That's not what I was expecting.

(beat)

No, seriously? I mean, you seem fine to me.

JILLIAN. My mom died of it at thirty-six. So...

GRAHAM. Oh, shit. I'm sorry.

JILLIAN. So the thing is...marrying me might mean you would have to /take care of me

GRAHAM. Whoa – *marrying* you!?

JILLIAN. for the next maybe thirty or forty years. And, I might not even know who you are.

GRAHAM. Jill, you barely know who I am now.

JILLIAN. And we couldn't have children. Our offspring would have a twenty-five percent chance of getting the disease.

GRAHAM. This is...totally...the weirdest first date ever.
Do you ever get a second date?

JILLIAN. Not often.

(beat)

GRAHAM. OK. So good. So I know. You want to catch a movie tomorrow night?

JILLIAN. I have a lab meeting tomorrow night.

GRAHAM. *(to the audience)* I had never met anyone like her. Anyone. She says whatever's on her mind. Here are the facts, sir. No filter. Right up front. I love that... /She's...

JILLIAN. But I'm free Friday.

GRAHAM. Friday it is.

(He goes back to kiss her. She turns to the audience.)

JILLIAN. What if we had met just a few years later when we learned the true percentages?

FOUR. One hundred percent

FIVE. Nearly...

JILLIAN. Would he have been as sure then?

GRAHAM. Yes! Life is short. There are no guarantees for any of us. I want to be with you.

FOUR. Nearly one hundred percent chance she'll get the disease.

JILLIAN. He's the optimist.

GRAHAM. I love you Jillian.

JILLIAN. The romantic.

I'm not genetically programmed for optimism and romance.

GRAHAM. I love you. I want to marry you.

JILLIAN. So, we were married!

GRAHAM. I want a baby.

JILLIAN. No.

GRAHAM. I want to have your baby.

JILLIAN. No! No, no, no. No!

Again, this was before *I* could be tested, or have *her* tested in-utero. So much has changed in four years. Life is so much more complicated now. Or so much simpler.

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