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

Lucky Me

Robert Caisley

A Samuel French Acting Edition

SAMUEL FRENCH
FOUNDED 1830

SAMUELFRENCH.COM
SAMUELFRENCH-LONDON.CO.UK

Copyright © 2015 by Robert Caisley
All Rights Reserved
Cover design by Leigh Bradford

LUCKY ME 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 978-0-573-70427-7

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 *LUCKY ME* 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 *LUCKY ME* 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 Robert A. Freedman Dramatic Agency, Inc., 1501 Broadway, Suite 2310, New York, NY 10036

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.

LUCKY ME was first produced in a Rolling World Premiere, as part of the National New Play Network's Continued Life Program at the following theatres:

LUCKY ME opened on July 31, 2014 at New Jersey Repertory Company (Gabor Barabas, Executive Producer; SuzAnne Barabas, Artistic Director) in Long Branch, New Jersey. The director was SuzAnne Barabas; the set design and properties were by Jessica Parks; the costume design was by Patricia E. Doherty; the lighting design was by Jill Nagle; the sound design was by Merek Royce Press; the technical director was Michael "Rusty" Carroll; the production stage manager was Jennifer Tardibuono. The cast was as follows:

SARA FINE. . . . . Wendy Peace
TOM . . . . . Michael Irvin Pollard
LEO . . . . . Dan Grimaldi
YURI . . . . . Mark Light-Orr

LUCKY ME opened on October 24, 2014 at Curious Theatre (Chip Walton, Producing Artistic Director) in Denver, Colorado. The director was Chip Walton; the set design was by Markas Henry; the costume design was by Kevin Brainerd; the lighting design was by Jacob Welch; the sound design was by Brian Freeland; with properties by Kristin Hamer; the technical director was Mark Wethington; the production stage manager was Rachel Ducat. The cast was as follows:

SARA FINE. . . . . Dee Covington
TOM . . . . . Erik Sandvold
LEO . . . . . Randy Moore
YURI . . . . . Kurt Brighton

LUCKY ME opened on January 30, 2015 at Riverside Theatre (Jody Hovland, Artistic Director; Jennifer Holan, Executive Director) in Iowa City, Iowa. The director was Jody Hovland; the scenic design and properties were by Shelly A. Ford; the costume design was by Osean Perez; the lighting design and sound design were by Drew Bielinski; the technical director was Violet Virnig; the production stage manager was Rachel Potthoff. The cast was as follows:

SARA FINE. . . . . Jennifer Fawcett
TOM . . . . . Patrick DuLaney
LEO . . . . . Ron Clark
YURI . . . . . Tim Budd

LUCKY ME opened on April 10, 2015 at Oregon Contemporary Theatre (Craig Willis, Producing Artistic Director) in Eugene, Oregon. The director was Patrick Torelle; the set design was by Jeffrey Cook; the costume design was by Erin Schindler; the lighting design was by Amanda Baca; the sound design was by Gabe Carlin; with special effects by Amy Dunn, and properties by Andrew Frederick; the production stage manager was Bryanna Rainwater. The cast was as follows:

SARA FINE. . . . . Kelly Quinnett
TOM . . . . . Eric Hadley
LEO . . . . . Joe Cronin
YURI . . . . . Tony Stirpe

CHARACTERS

SARA FINE – in her 40s

TOM – her neighbor, around the same age; he works for the TSA

LEO – Sara's elderly father; he is blind

YURI – the landlord, whatever age works; he is Ukrainian

SETTING

Denver, Colorado.

Sara's second-floor, two bedroom apartment.

TIME

Between New Year's Eve and July 4th of the same year.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The playwright wishes to thank the following individuals and organizations for their assistance and generous support during the writing and development of this play: SuzAnne and Gabor Barabas, Jere Hodgin, Greg Johnson and the Missoula Writers Colony, Nan Barnett and the National New Play Network. With very special thanks to the Idaho Commission on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

The script contains some "special effects" which overall contribute to the great fun, but also the great challenge of producing this play. I have seen these technical issues solved in a variety of ways, but I have found that the very simplest solutions have proved to be the most effective, both visually and cost-wise. Some of the effects are rudimentary, while others a little more elaborate, but it is the combined effect of all this "weirdness" – as it's described in the play – that lends LUCKY ME its whimsical appeal as a very different kind of comedy. None of the effects are beyond the capabilities of any theatre, regardless of size or budget. I do, however, encourage directors and producers to begin thinking about these technical challenges as early in the process as possible, and think of them almost like another character in the play. I offer some thoughts on production at the end of the script.

This play is dedicated to Jean Bruce Scott.

ACT ONE

One

(It is 2:30 in the morning on New Year's Day. The stage is dark and empty. From the hallway outside, we hear muffled voices, someone coming noisily up the stairs.)

SARA. *(off)* This is me.

TOM. *(off)* Where's the switch?

SARA. *(off)* The light's burnt out.

TOM. *(off)* Where's the key?

SARA. *(off)* My back pocket, can you grab it?

TOM. *(off)* Sure, hold on.

(A jingle of keys. The door swings open.)

There we go. Mission accomplished.

(In the low light now streaming in we can barely make out **TOM***, helping a woman on crutches, her foot in an orthopedic boot, into the apartment. This is* **SARA FINE**. *She wears a coat over pajamas.* **TOM** *is dressed for arctic weather.)*

SARA. I really gotta pee!

TOM. Let me get the lights.

SARA. Don't go anywhere.

TOM. You need any help?

SARA. Peeing?

TOM. With your foot.

SARA. I don't use my feet to pee.

TOM. No, I just meant…

SARA. Kidding. Make yourself at home.

*(***SARA** *hobbles off in the direction of the bathroom.* **TOM** *looks around the dark apartment. He hits the nearest light switch. Nothing happens.)*

TOM. Hey.

You got a bulb out.

*(***TOM** *goes to another light switch. Nada.)*

You got two bulbs out.

SARA. *(off)* Thanks.

TOM. Plus the one on the staircase…which is a major safety issue.

(He tries one more switch.)

I think maybe the power's out.

All the snow and ice? Maybe took out a power line.

SARA. *(off)* Yeah, no.

TOM. Or you've blown a fuse. Where's the fuse box?

SARA. *(off)* No, I just have a problem with bulbs.

They burn out.

TOM. You should try those new kind, you know, the curly things? Incandescent deals?

SARA. *(off)* Fluorescent.

TOM. Huh?

SARA. *(off)* You said incandescent. You meant fluorescent.

TOM. Yeah, the curly things. They last forever.

SARA. *(off)* No, they burn out too.

TOM. You got any candles?

Maybe a flashlight?

I got flashlights up the wazoo but God knows which box I packed 'em in.

(beat)

SARA. *(off)* Did you just say "up the wazoo?"

TOM. Yeah.

SARA. *(off)* Okay.

(beat)

I got bulbs.

I keep extras.

TOM. Good for you.

Emergency preparedness.

You never know, right?

(a beat)

Where am I lookin?

SARA. *(off)* In the kitchen. The cupboard. With the calendar.

*(***TOM** *notices her calendar: it has cats on it.)*

TOM. Cute calendar. Do you have a cat?

SARA. *(off)* Sometimes.

*(***TOM** *looks in her direction.)*

(He opens the cupboard.)

(It contains nothing but light bulbs.)

TOM. Wow! That's a lot of bright ideas! Does this happen a lot?

SARA. *(off)* Huh?

TOM. The bulb thing?

SARA. *(off)* Yeah, I told you I gotta problem with bulbs.

*(***TOM** *relocates a chair to help him replace one of the burnt out bulbs; he starts taking it out of its package.)*

TOM. *(like it's an interesting story, except it's not)* Maybe I'm exaggerating to make a point, but seriously. I think I've changed like ten light bulbs my whole life. I don't think I'm making that up. It's so rare, it's such a surprise when one burns out, I'm like…*that's weird.*

SARA. *(off)* You're lucky.

Mine don't last that long.

(We hear a toilet flushing.)

TOM. How long do yours last?

*(***TOM** *screws in the first bulb and the light pops on just as* **SARA** *comes back in, minus the coat.)*

SARA. I spent forty-seven hundred bucks on bulbs last year.

*(***TOM** *stares at her. Did he hear her right?)*

You want something to drink?

*(***TOM** *nods, 'Yes,' removes his parka and continues to replace the other two burnt out bulbs in the living room.)*

TOM. There's gotta be some kind of electrical surge. You should probably have the landlord check it out.

SARA. He checked it out last week.

TOM. And?

SARA. He slipped on the ice; he's in a neck brace, so… I didn't want to bug him. Orange juice okay?

(He gives her a 'thumbs up.')

Actually, do you mind getting it yourself? I really need to sit down.

(She hobbles to the couch and collapses onto it with a sigh of relief.)

TOM. *(Heading for kitchen area)* I'd take a look myself, but I'm not really one of those D.I.Y. guys, you know?

SARA. You look really self-sufficient.

TOM. Yeah, no. Shoveling snow and changing bulbs is about the extent of my home improvement skills. It's funny: I asked you where your fuse box was.

SARA. Why's that funny?

TOM. Because I'm not entirely sure what you do with a fuse box once you find it.

SARA. *(Duh!)* Check the breaker?

TOM. See: all these technical terms.

*(***TOM** *grabs the O.J. from the fridge.)*

Fridge light's out.

SARA. Drawer to the right.

(He finds and holds up a small bulb for her to see, right above his head.)

TOM. Bing! Get it?

SARA. Uhuh.

(We get the feeling she's heard this a million times before. **TOM** *replaces the fridge bulb.)*

TOM. Hey, sorry about the thing. Earlier. In the hallway. On the stairs?

SARA. What thing?

TOM. When I grabbed your key?

SARA. Oh.

TOM. From your back pocket?
And I kinda – ?

SARA. Groped me?

TOM. Yeah.
I normally don't do that.

SARA. That's good.

TOM. I mean: I normally don't get that close to people.

SARA. Okay.

TOM. On a regular basis, I'm sayin'.
Where I…you know, because of…
Proximity an' all, I…accidentally –

SARA. Grope them?

TOM. Right.

SARA. I thought you worked at the airport.

TOM. I do work at the airport.

SARA. For TSA.

TOM. Yeah.

SARA. I would think accidentally groping people was a –

TOM. 'Occupational hazard?'

SARA. I was gonna say 'resume builder.'

TOM. Yeah, well, I was referring to…non work-related groping. So…sorry.

SARA. It's the least I could do. I didn't get a chance to thank you at the hospital.

TOM. Forget it.

SARA. No, really. Who wants to spend New Year's Eve in the emergency room – ?

TOM. Hey, free coffee.

SARA. – With a total stranger?

TOM. It was a nice distraction from all those boxes I gotta unpack.

SARA. You don't like hospitals do you? You seemed real agitated.

TOM. *(He looks agitated, then…)* – And what was I doing interrogating the doctor with all those lame questions?

SARA. Right?

TOM. – Like I had *any* clue what he was saying? I'm just a weirdo tonight.

(He hands her a glass of O.J.)

O.J. for the little lady. *(catches himself)* See, that's not a cool joke.

SARA. Well, thanks, weirdo. For coming to my rescue. And welcome to the neighborhood, I guess.

TOM. Cheers!

*(***TOM** *clinks glasses with* **SARA** *and* **SARA***'s shatters, spilling juice all over her. She doesn't react at all.)*

Oh, shit, I'm sorry!

(Horrified, **TOM** *runs to the kitchen and grabs a roll of paper towels.)*

SARA. It happens all the time, don't worry about it.

(He laughs.)

What's funny?

TOM. "It happens all the time."

SARA. Yeah?

TOM. It happens all the time?
Your glasses shatter all the time?

SARA. I don't usually use *these* except for company, which I rarely have. I got plastic for everyday use. You weren't to know.

(He stares at her. He goes back to the kitchen, pours her some more juice in a plastic cup and grabs a wet cloth.)

TOM. Sorry about the couch.

SARA. That's what the plastic's for.

(And it's now, that **TOM** *realizes all the furniture in the apartment is covered in plastic.)*

Hey: was I a bitch? I was bitchy, wasn't I? At the hospital. You can tell me.

TOM. *(diplomatically)* You were in pain.

SARA. So that's a 'yes.'

TOM. *(re: her foot)* How's it feeling by the way? Now the drugs kicked in.

SARA. My armpits hurt.
The foot's fine, actually, the pits are kinda raw.

TOM. You got a sweat sock?

SARA. *(dubious)* Why…?

TOM. *(pointing off)* You mind?

SARA. It's a mess back there. Go like that:

(She makes a gesture like she's wearing blinders. **TOM** *follows suit and walks off toward the bedrooms.)*

TOM. *(off)* Hey, I like that thing above your bed. What is it?

SARA. You're not supposed to be looking. *(Duh!)* It's called a photo?

TOM. *(off)* Awesome. Is that you as a kid?

SARA. Uhuh.

TOM. *(off)* With your dad?

SARA. Uhuh.

TOM. *(off)* Is he still with us?

SARA. Last time I checked.

TOM. *(off)* You got another bulb out in the hallway, F.Y.I. *And* the guest room.

SARA. That's dad's room.

What are you doing anyway?

(He returns with two rolled-up athletic socks, which he unfurls.)

TOM. Little padding's all you need.

*(***TOM** *wraps the socks around the head of each of her crutches as the following dialogue continues.)*

SARA. Thought you weren't much of a handy-man?

TOM. Live and learn. I broke the same little bone two summers ago.

SARA. Get outta here.

TOM. Same exact spot.

I guess we're twinsies.

(He hands her the crutches. She tries it.)

SARA. *(re: the crutch)* Oh, that's so much better.

So what *you* do to get your very own "Dancer's Fracture"?

TOM. Well:

…I wasn't up on any roof, I can tell ya that.

(She just stares at him.)

Cleaning the gutters?

In your bathrobe?

In an ice storm?

On New Year's Eve…?

(beat)

What were you doing up there – ?

SARA. – I should probably let you get back to your unpacking.

TOM. *(an attempt at humor)* You can tell me. I can take it.

(She looks at him. Should she tell him?)

SARA. There's a leak. That's been driving me crazy. Seriously. Whenever it rains: drip, drip, drip. Like the Chinese water torture. *And* it's going right into my fish

tank, *and* it's screwing up the ph or whatever *and* it's probably gonna kill my fish, so…

*(***TOM** *drifts over to the fish tank. He looks at the fish. He looks up at the ceiling.)*

TOM. Why don't you move the fish tank?

SARA. I have.

(And it's now that **TOM** *realizes there are leaks in several spots from the ceiling, and several buckets throughout the living room to catch the drips.)*

TOM. Wow!

(assessing it like a pro) I guess what you got here…is a bit of a leaky roof.

(Beat. He checks out the fish.)

What're your fish called?

SARA. Fish.

(He looks at her.)

TOM. Both of 'em?

SARA. I try not to get attached.

(beat)

Hey, so: what's your excuse?

(She points at her injured foot.)

Twinsies?

TOM. Oh. Right. I was, in fact, dancing.

SARA. Dancing?

TOM. In fact, I was.

SARA. You got a Dancer's Fracture from *actual* dancing?

TOM. I have some moves, yeah.

SARA. What kind of dancing?

TOM. Salsa.

SARA. Get outta here!

TOM. I will not.

SARA. You were Salsa dancing –

TOM. With my ex.

SARA. – and you made one of your moves –

TOM. One of my *signature* moves.

SARA. – and *actually* sustained a fracture of the fifth metatarsal.

TOM. Yeah, but I told people I was mountain biking.

SARA. Okay.

TOM. And went off a cliff. 'Cause it sounds…

SARA. Got it.

TOM. Much more… *grrrrr*

(He makes a weird hand gesture like he's gunning downhill on a mountain bike.)

SARA. Right.

TOM. …much less… *(another gesture; a flourish) Olé*, y'know?

*(***SARA** *nods.)*

(pause)

SARA. Why'd you tell me?

TOM. Huh?

SARA. About the dancing? The signature move? If it's so…embarrassing? Why'd you come clean?

TOM. Yeah, I dunno.

(He thinks about it: he still doesn't know.)

Now I'm naked before you. I guess.

(They stare at each other awkwardly.)

(pause)

You live with your dad?

SARA. He lives with me.

TOM. Awesome.

*(***SARA***'s not sure about that.)*

I'd love to meet him.

SARA. Why?

TOM. When he's home next?

SARA. He never goes anywhere.

He's back there right now.

*(***TOM** *looks down the hallway.)*

TOM. In the dark?

SARA. You don't wanna meet him…why'd you want to meet him?

TOM. Err… you know.

(He doesn't know.)

Just being neighborly.

SARA. Dad doesn't really *do* neighbors.

TOM. How come?

*(***LEO FINE***,* **SARA***'s elderly father appears from the hallway. He's dressed smartly in a suit. He's carrying a briefcase like he's on his way out the door to go to work. He is blind. [Does he have a cane? If he does, he only uses it occasionally, having a pretty good sense of the layout of the place. Regardless, it's essential that we understand right away he's blind.])*

LEO. Who the hell are you?

*(***TOM** *startles.)*

TOM. Jesus!!! I didn't see you back there.

LEO. I didn't see you either.

SARA. Hi dad.

TOM. I'm sorry.

LEO. Are you sellin' something?

SARA. This is Tom.

LEO. What's he sellin'?

SARA. This is Leo.

TOM. Hi, no. No, I'm –

SARA. He's a friend of mine.

LEO. I don't know about that.

SARA. We just met, actually.

TOM. She fell off the roof.

LEO. Who did?

TOM. Your daughter?

LEO. Which one?

SARA. You only have one, Dad.

LEO. That sounds about right.

SARA. Sara.

LEO. Sara was on the roof?

SARA. I broke a bone in my foot. Tom helped me.

LEO. You're a doctor?

TOM. I'm in security.

LEO. What's a security guard doing giving out medical advice?

TOM. No, *Homeland* Security.

SARA. No, Dad, he found me.

LEO. Huh?

TOM. After she fell.

SARA. I fell off the roof and Tom found me.
He just moved in across the street.

LEO. *My* street?

SARA. It's not your street Dad.

LEO. We'll see about that.

TOM. Yeah, I'm err, right over… well, actually… you can see it from here.

(He moves toward the window, pointing.)

The white building? With the little…err…

(He realizes his mistake; stands dumbly at the window. Beat.)

LEO. You fell off the roof?

SARA. Yeah.

LEO. That was pretty stupid.
And you broke your ankle?

SARA. Just one little bone.

LEO. And you work security?

TOM. At the airport.

LEO. You're one of them creeps likes to feel everybody up.

TOM. Apparently.

LEO. Why aren't you at the airport?

TOM. Haven't started yet. Just transferred in.

LEO. From where?

TOM. Juneau.

LEO. They got an airport there?

TOM. A little one, yeah.

LEO. Why'd you come here?

TOM. They got a bigger one.

LEO. *(to* **SARA***)* Does that sound safe to you?
Is this guy even qualified?

SARA. Daddy!

LEO. What kinda threat-level they got up in Juneau?
Do terrorists even go that far north?

TOM. Yes, sir, I think so, sir.

LEO. Why? Is it for the fishing?

TOM. Well, no there's the, uh, whaddayacallem…strategic oil reserves.

LEO. Oil?

TOM. Uhuh.

LEO. In Alaska.

TOM. We got oil up the wazoo.

*(***SARA** *laughs.)*

LEO. What do they want *my* oil for? They got their own, don't they?

TOM. Sir?

LEO. The terrorists? Don't they have enough of their own?

TOM. I don't know, I guess.

LEO. Well, do they or don't they?

TOM. That's not exactly my area of expertise.

LEO. You're the first line of defense, aren't ya?
Shouldn't it be? Shouldn't these larger philosophical questions *be* your "area of expertise?"

TOM. I'm just a screener. I screen luggage. I screen passengers.

LEO. You *grope* passengers.

TOM. No, I –

LEO. You deprive them of moisturizer.

SARA. Okay, Dad.

LEO. What exactly are you looking for?

TOM. Err…

LEO. The tell-tale signs? Do you *know* the tell-tale signs? D'you receive *any* special training before they sent you down here to my airport?

SARA. It's not your airport, Daddy.

LEO. Because if you didn't, that's the last time I fly out of that death trap.

SARA. *(sotto voce to* **TOM***)* He hasn't been on a plane in twenty years.

(Pause. **LEO** *is not satisfied with any of this guy's answers.)*

LEO. What were you doin' on my roof, anyway?

SARA. It's my roof, Dad.

LEO. What were you doin' on her roof?

TOM. I wasn't on the roof.

SARA. He was a bystander.

LEO. That's what they all say!

TOM. Sara was on the roof, sir.

LEO. *(to* **SARA***, shaking his head disapprovingly)* Boy! Where'd you land this time?

TOM. She um – it's funny – she's lucky the hedge broke her fall, or it'd be more than her fifth metatarsal busted.

LEO. Meta-what?

TOM. It's the little bone between…

This time???

You said, where'd you land *this* time?

(to **SARA***)* You've fallen off the roof before?

SARA. *(oddly, in her own defense)* Well, not this roof.

TOM. You've fallen off *a* roof before?

LEO. Oh, she's always falling off roofs.

SARA. Okay, dad.

LEO. She falls off all kinds of things.

SARA. Let's get you to bed.

LEO. I just woke up.

SARA. It's almost three a.m.

LEO. That doesn't sound right. Is she lying to me?

TOM. No, sir, it'll be daylight soon.

LEO. What do I care?

TOM. Be careful, it's dark back there.

LEO. Okay, funny man!

TOM. No, I was just –

LEO. *(suddenly irate)* Mind your own damn business! This is America: a man can be in the dark if he wants!

TOM. *(an appeal to* **SARA***)* I could replace the bulbs if you want.

LEO. What's the point? They'll just burn right out. They don't make 'em like they used to. In my day? Boy, they used to really know how to make a light bulb. What do they expect: outsourcing all those American jobs to twelve year olds in Mumbai. What does a twelve-year-old know about light bulbs?

TOM. I was telling Sara that I think you've maybe got some kind of electrical problem.

LEO. Are you an electrician now, or somethin'?

TOM. No, I –

*(***SARA** *is struggling to corral her father, but it's tricky with crutches.)*

SARA. Come on, dad.

LEO. I gotta get to the office.

SARA. The office is closed, Dad.

LEO. There's people out there who need protection!

SARA. You can take care of it in the morning, Dad.

LEO. *(agitated)* Don't let me forget!

SARA. I won't.

LEO. All it takes is a moment's inattention!

*(***SARA** *is ushering* **LEO** *out.)*

TOM. It was nice to meet you, sir.

LEO. *(to* **SARA***)* I wish he'd stop with the "sir" business.

SARA. Let's hit the hay.

LEO. Did I miss the fireworks?

I missed the fireworks again, goddamn it!
(to **SARA***)* D'you watch 'em with that TSA fella?

SARA. He took me to the hospital.

LEO. What kind of a date is that?

TOM. It wasn't a date. It was an emergency.

LEO. That's what they all say.

TOM. Good night, Leo.

LEO. *(to* **SARA***)* Who is he again?

SARA. Thanks again, Tom.

TOM. I'll see myself out.

*(***SARA** *and* **LEO** *start to exit.)*

Sara? Happy New Year.

*(***SARA** *smiles, then heads off. We hear music: "Auld Lang Syne.")*

(Before leaving, **TOM** *takes a light bulb from the cupboard, opens the front door and sets his sights on the hallway light fixture. He looks briefly back inside then shuts the door behind him.)*

(As he does, one of the new bulbs that **TOM** *replaced earlier flickers and goes out.)*

Two

(A couple weeks later. **LEO** *is in the kitchen area fixing himself a sandwich. His briefcase is on the counter. Once again, he is dressed smartly in suit and tie.* **SARA** *is at the fish tank with a little net. She's scooping a dead fish out of the tank and into a little container.* **LEO** *grabs a bottle of mustard from the refrigerator and holds it up.)*

LEO. Is this the kind I like?

SARA. Uhuh.

LEO. We're gettin' low.

SARA. I'll get more.

LEO. Bread, too.

SARA. Okay.

LEO. It's suspiciously stiff.

SARA. Okay, dad.

LEO. You want one?

SARA. I'm not hungry.

LEO. You should eat.
You know what they say? "Feed a cold"…something else a fever.

SARA. Oh, is that what they say?

LEO. Last time I checked.

*(***LEO** *makes a big deal of squeezing the remaining mustard noisily from the bottle.)*

SARA. "Starve."

LEO. Huh?

SARA. "Starve a fever."

LEO. Well, there you go. You got a fever?

SARA. No.

LEO. Then what further evidence do you need? I'll make you a little sandwich. With the crusts cut off. The way you like it.

SARA. I like crusts.

LEO. That musta been your sister.

*(***SARA** *sighs.)*

SARA. I don't have a cold, dad. Or a fever. Or a sister.

I broke a little bone in my foot. We've been over this. I don't think eating or not eating's gonna make a difference.

LEO. You broke your foot?

SARA. We've been over –

LEO. *(impressed with himself)* The 5th meta-tarsal!

(They're both a little impressed.)

SARA. You remembered.

LEO. Of course I remembered. *(taps his forehead)* My brain's a steel trap. *(He sits to eat his sandwich.)* Your mother would tell me, all week long, whatever she needed at the store. Monday through Friday, she'd blurt out item after item, and I'd say, "Sure, Gracie," and she'd say, "Leo, write it down," and I'd say, "Gracie, don't you worry about it, it's all up here." *(He taps his steel trap.)* And sure enough: Saturday morning I'd go to the store, I'd go to *five different* stores, and *bango!* Instant recall. I never once forgot a single item, a single necessity that woman wanted, all the years of our marriage.

(He takes a bite of his sandwich.)

SARA. Estelle, dad.

Gracie was your sister.

(He stops chewing, considering the implications of this.)

LEO. The point still stands.

(He chews a few more chews.)

This cheese is questionable.

How old is this cheese?

SARA. I got it last week.

LEO. No, there's something iffy about this cheese.

It's pungent.

SARA. Cheese is supposed to be pungent.

LEO. Not this kind.
This is good old-fashioned American cheese.
It's supposed to have a decided *lack* of pungency.

SARA. Fine, I'll get more.

LEO. This is makin' my eyes water.

SARA. Then don't eat it, I'll get more.

*(***LEO** *chews his sandwich, looking over in his daughter's direction.)*

LEO. Do you know when, exactly?

SARA. I'm a little busy right now.

(pause)

LEO. You hear about it all the time.
Food-borne illnesses.
People lose their lives.
Many people.
Many innocent people.
Many innocent *elderly* people.

SARA. Jesus, Dad, you're not gonna die from eating some week-old funky cheese. I'll get some when I get some. I'm not exactly *functional* right now. So make a list.

LEO. I don't need a list.

(He taps his steel trap.)

SARA. Make one anyway. For us mortals!

LEO. I'll type one up at the office.
After I finish this questionable cheese sandwich.

SARA. Look, if you don't want it, toss it out.

LEO. Are you nuts? Who knows when you'll be fit enough to replenish the stores. We better conserve.

SARA. Fine.

D'you take your pills?

LEO. Already took 'em.

*(***SARA** *is doubtful.)*

SARA. Two in the morning, two at night.

(This is a thing they do.)

LEO. Two in the morning, two at night.

*(***SARA** *continues work on the fish tank.* **LEO** *pulls out a Ziploc bag and packs up the rest of his sandwich. He puts it in his briefcase and starts to put on his overcoat. He hears the sloshing of tank water.)*

LEO. What are you up to, anyhow?

SARA. The fish died again.

LEO. We had fish?

I thought we had a cat.

SARA. Me too.

LEO. *(somewhat philosophically)* I like the idea of having fish.

Sounds calming.

Did you ever just sit and watch 'em swimming around?

Little weightless colorful things?

SARA. I did.

LEO. That sounds nice.

What happened? The cat get 'em?

SARA. That was last time.

LEO. That's right. This time?

SARA. The water got contaminated.

LEO. We should look into that.

The water supply is critical. Read your history books.

(She nods.)

What happened to the cat?

SARA. You got me.

LEO. Did he leave a note or anything?

*(***SARA** *smiles.)*

Was it that ugly fat thing would sit on my lap, make my legs go numb?

SARA. He got hit by a car. Don't you remember?

LEO. One summer.

SARA. Last summer.

LEO. That dippy teenager.

SARA. He was sweet.

LEO. He was dippy. If I recall.

SARA. He didn't have to knock on every door. I thought that was really sweet. You were mean to him.

LEO. I was trying to instill a sense of personal responsibility.

SARA. You flushed his car keys down the toilet.

LEO. I can't be expected to be courteous to every Tom, Dick and Harry that knocks at my door.

SARA. Well, it's not your door.

LEO. It used to be my door.

SARA. It was never your door.

LEO. *(suddenly irate)* Listen, young lady –

SARA. Okay, dad –

LEO. – I used to have a door that looked very much like that door! I used to have *lots* of doors. You understand? There was a time –

SARA. I'm sorry, dad.

LEO. There was a time…

SARA. I said I'm sorry.

(pause)

LEO. Well, I can't stand around blathering with you. I gotta meeting downtown.

(He heads for the door but stops short, listening to the sound of the water sloshing in the tank.)

What's the death toll this time?

SARA. Two.

LEO. *(He suddenly remembers.)* Last time was six. Quite a massacre. If I recall.

You only had two?

SARA. These guys were expensive.

(A beat. **LEO** *removes his overcoat.)*

LEO. You know, maybe I won't go to the office today. Maybe I'll stay home, play hooky with my little girl.

SARA. That'd be nice.

LEO. Don't tell your mother.

(He shuffles over to **SARA** *with his briefcase.)*

Should we say something?

SARA. Okay.

LEO. A few words. To commemorate their life.

SARA. That'd be nice.

(They stand together by the empty tank.)

LEO. Dear Heavenly Father:

(He clears his throat.)

(He shifts uneasily on his feet.)

(He clears his throat again.)

SARA. Dad…?

LEO. *(suddenly overcome with emotion)* You know, I don't think I can.

SARA. It's okay.

LEO. I'm sorry, honey. Maybe I could…

(He points off down the hallway.)

SARA. That's fine, dad, go ahead.

LEO. I'll call you.

*(***LEO** *shuffles out of the room.* **SARA** *watches him exit. She struggles over to the couch with one crutch and collapses with relief. And just as she gets settled…)*

(There is a very soft knock at the door. **SARA** *freezes, unaccustomed to people knocking on her door.)*

SARA. Yeah…?

TOM. *(off)* Sara?

SARA. Yes?

TOM. *(off)* It's Tom?

SARA. Yeah?

TOM. *(off)* From across the street?

SARA. Yeah?

TOM. *(off)* You okay?

SARA. Yeah.

TOM. *(off)* Can I come in?

SARA. Yeah.

(The door slowly opens. **TOM** *enters. He is dressed in his TSA uniform. He's got a fast food bag in one hand, and a pair of saucepans in the other. He looks at the bulb just outside the door that's burnt out again.)*

TOM. I thought I fixed that.

Hi.

I was at work.

SARA. Okay.

TOM. I just got off.

SARA. Okay.

TOM. *(re: the saucepans)* I found these in the bushes. Out front. Are they yours?

*(***SARA** *shakes her head, "No.")*

You want 'em?

*(***SARA** *nods, "Yes."* **TOM** *puts them in the kitchen. He stands, looking at her for a moment.)*

I was five hours into my shift, when this little kid with one of those monkey backpacks goes ape shit 'cause her mom put monkey in the metal detector. And that's when it hit me: how's Sara gonna manage? On crutches? Cooking, or…cleaning, or…whatever?

SARA. You just thought of this?

TOM. Uhuh.

SARA. Two weeks later?

TOM. I thought of it the same day, but…it took me a while to…

(He makes an odd gesture with his hands which apparently explains whatever he was trying to explain.)

…you know?

*(***SARA** *nods vaguely. Beat.)*

Hope you're not vegetarian.

(He holds up the bag of food he brought.)

(The phone rings. **SARA** *struggles to answer it.)*

(Johnny-on-the-spot) Relax, I'll get it.

SARA. No, no, it's my –

TOM. *(into phone)* Hello? This is Tom. Who's this?

(Maybe we can hear **LEO** *through the phone: he doesn't sound pleased.)*

(covering the mouthpiece) I think it's your dad

(He hands it over. During **SARA'***s call,* **TOM** *takes note of the dead fish.)*

SARA. *(into phone)* Hi, dad.

Tom?

From the hospital?

No, from the airport.

No… Tom!

Just checking up on us.

(She looks over at **TOM***, then covers the mouthpiece and mutters something incomprehensible.)*

(to **TOM***: lying)* He says, 'Hi.'

*(***TOM** *gives a 'thumbs up.')*

(into the phone) Yeah, go ahead. I'm ready.

(She listens to her father speak.)

(She listens some more; she is moved; she nods, smiles.)

Thanks, daddy. That was nice. Yeah. I think they will. No, you go ahead, I'll be okay.

(She hangs up.)

TOM. Everything okay?

Does he need a ride home or something? I got the truck in front.

SARA. No. He's home.

*(***TOM** *looks down the hallway; he looks back at* **SARA**, *confused.)*

He calls me.

Sometimes.

If he has something to say…and he can't quite…you know.

Say it.

*(***TOM** *nods. He holds up the bag of fast food in acknowledgement, as the lights snap to black.)*

Three

(A few days later. **LEO** *is sitting on the couch with a small typing table before him, on which stands a manual typewriter. He is slowly and meticulously typing something out.* **TOM** *is standing in the doorway, not entirely certain if he should come inside. We sense he's been standing there for a whole. He is holding a plastic bag with a goldfish swimming in it. Mid-story:)*

TOM. There was this other guy, right? With his wife. And two kids. And they're about to go through the check point. This was late 2001/2002, so we're still on heightened alert, you know, the *nation*. And we got this K9 unit assigned to us, this pair of beagles specially trained to sniff out a whole range of crap you shouldn't be taking on board a plane: everything from C4 to drugs to…well, contraband, right? And, well: the mom goes through with the little boy, and the dad goes through with the little girl. And the beagles go ballistic. Somethin's triggered their…their whatchamacallit… and all hell breaks loose. TSA uniforms are everywhere, six and seven deep, and the airport police respond, guns drawn. Passengers are freaking out. And these kids, these two kids? *(suppressing his own laughter)* Their backpacks are *stuffed* with pounds and pounds of jerky. Beef jerky, turkey jerky, salmon. They'd been to visit grandma and grandpa, and grandpa had just got himself a dehydrator and fancied himself a jerky connoisseur…

*(***TOM** *smiles, nods.)*

So: that was funny.

(Silence. **LEO** *keeps typing.)*

And then this other time? I'm "wanding" this older lady and her crotch starts beeping –

LEO. I'm not listening to a word you're saying, you know that, right?

TOM. Is Sara home?

LEO. What's your name again? Brad?

TOM. Tom.

LEO. TSA Tom.

TOM. Yeah, is she home?

LEO. She's probably on the roof.

*(***TOM** *looks skyward.)*

TOM. Why would she do that again?

LEO. Women are complicated.
How old are you, Tom?

TOM. 42.

LEO. And you haven't learned that yet?

TOM. How would she even get up there?

LEO. Wouldn't *you* like to know?

TOM. I mean with her *foot* and everything?

LEO. Life is full of mysteries, Brad.

TOM. Tom.

LEO. I once saw a man with two broken legs carry his fallen comrade across a battlefield.

TOM. Wow! I didn't know you were in the service.

LEO. *(Isn't it obvious?)* I saw it in a movie!
I haven't always been blind, you know.
This is a *recent* development.

TOM. Really?

LEO. You callin' me a liar?

TOM. No, I…
How'd you lose it? Your eyesight.

LEO. The usual way.

*(***TOM** *doesn't get it.)*

I just woke up one morning…

TOM. *(OMG)* And it was *gone*?

LEO. No, I woke up one morning, as usual, and went to the office, as usual, came home, as usual, and this went

on for several years, and then I went in for a regular checkup with the eye doctor, as usual, and he said, "Leo, I've got some good news and some bad news. The bad news is you'll lose sight in both your eyes within six months. And you'll never get it back." And, boy, was he right. Six months, to the day. Boom! Lights out!

(beat)

TOM. What was the good news?

LEO. I didn't have to renew my prescription.

*(***TOM** *nods, slowly.)*

TOM. Maybe I should come back later. You look kinda busy.

LEO. I *am* kinda busy.

*(***LEO** *lazily punches two or three typewriter keys.)*

TOM. What are you doing, exactly? If you don't mind me asking?

LEO. Are *you* blind? I'm typing.

What are *you* doing?

I mean that's the more interesting question, don't you think?

Brad?

TOM. Tom.

LEO. What exactly are *you* doing?

TOM. I, I brought Sara something.

And I wanted to drop it off.

It's just a little…

LEO. What?

TOM. A gift.

LEO. A gift?

TOM. Uhuh.

LEO. You bought her a gift?

TOM. Kind of.

LEO. You kind of bought my daughter a gift?

TOM. Is that okay?

LEO. What kind of gift you bring her?

TOM. A fish.

LEO. Why the hell d'you bring her a fish?

TOM. Well, I thought, you know: in light of recent tragic events.

LEO. Are you nuts? She's *allergic*!

How long you been married to her?

TOM. What? I'm not –

LEO. You can't remember these critical details?

TOM. I'm not married to Sara.

*(***LEO** *stops typing.)*

I'm just a friend. A neighbor.

I've known her for like three weeks. Don't you remember? I…

And this isn't a fish for eating.

LEO. Then what the hell good is it?

TOM. It's a replacement fish.

LEO. *Replacement* fish?

TOM. To replace the fish she lost.

LEO. She lost her fish again, huh?

She's careless that way. Always has been.

TOM. No, no, they died. The tank water –?

LEO. She's always losing things.

She lost a husband the same way.

*(***TOM** *just stares at* **LEO***, surprised.)*

LEO. *(grabbing his wallet)* How much do I owe you?

TOM. No, Leo, I just dropped by to…

I was done with my shift so…

I thought I could run to the store for you guys. You know?

Get some necessities.

LEO. What kind of necessities?

TOM. I dunno, milk.

Bread.

Toilet paper.

LEO. You've known my daughter a couple weeks and already you're contemplating her bathroom habits?

TOM. Wasn't exactly *contemplating*.

LEO. Well, what *were* you doing?

TOM. …

Sara said she was gonna leave me a list.

LEO. *(He laughs.)* Have you seen her handwriting?

TOM. No.

LEO. Everything she writes looks like a doctor's prescription. Like a right-handed chimp writing left-handed…if the left hand had been crushed in a vise. *(beat)* That's why I gotta type it all up.

TOM. Leo…

LEO. What is it with the modern world? Zero regard for penmanship. It's a crime what they're *not* teaching in school these days.

TOM. *(news to him)* Sara's in school?

LEO. What time is it?

TOM. Eleven o'clock?

LEO. She better be. I used to play hooky when I was her age. It's a terrible habit.

TOM. *(confused)* Who are we talking about?

LEO. You tell me. You're the one who called this meeting.

TOM. I'm talking about Sara.

You said she was on the roof.

LEO. Don't quote me!

(He tears the sheet of paper from the typewriter and hands it to **TOM**. **TOM** *reads it.)*

TOM. What's this?

LEO. Sara's shopping list.

Read it back to me.

TOM. There's nothing on it.

LEO. So the first thing we need is ribbon.

(beat)

Say, you know what else we need?

You know what we're *desperately* low on right at this instant?

TOM. Light bulbs?

LEO. Don't be an idiot!

Mustard! The kind with the seeds!

We never run out of light bulbs.

TOM. I was making a joke.

LEO. Leave that to the professionals.

And get some bread while you're at it. Russian rye.

My wife always lets the bread get stale.

That's a firing offense as far as I'm concerned.

*(***TOM** *sets his goldfish down and heads to the kitchen area to look for a writing implement.)*

TOM. I should write this down.

LEO. Real men don't need lists!

TOM. *You* wrote it down.

LEO. No I didn't.

TOM. Sara's list?

LEO. What about it?

TOM. You typed it up.

LEO. You got any proof?

TOM. *(looking at blank paper)* You said…

LEO. Don't quote me!

I don't need lists!

(tapping his forehead) It's all right here.

Real men keep it all right *here*.

Can't you remember a few simple items?

Typewriter ribbon. Russian rye. Mustard. The stuff you put in coffee.

TOM. Creamer?

LEO. Jesus Christ! Real men don't use creamer!!!

TOM. Okay.

LEO. I thought you claimed to be from Alaska?

TOM. I am from Alaska.

LEO. Is that why they asked you to leave?
I'm not talking about *creamer*, pal, I'm talkin' about the other thing…

TOM. Sugar.

LEO. You wanna get punched in the mouth?

TOM. What? No!

LEO. Then quit tryin' to annoy me.

TOM. *(trying to control his growing frustration)* I'm sorry, Leo! I just don't know what else goes in coffee besides cream and sugar.

*(***SARA** *suddenly appears from the hallway. She's no longer relying on the crutches, but she's still wearing the orthopedic boot.)*

SARA. Cookies. He's talking about those little cookies you can dunk.

LEO. *(elementary)* Thank you!!!

SARA. The wafery kind. They're his favorite.

TOM. Your dad said you weren't home.

SARA. I'm home.

TOM. Your dad said you were on the roof.

LEO. I said don't quote me.
Don't *ever* quote me!

TOM. I'm totally confused.

LEO. They have pills for that.

SARA. Why are you here?

LEO. He wants to run errands…*apparently.*

TOM. You were gonna make a list?

SARA. Yeah, my foot was killing me so I took one of my pills and *wham. (Meaning: "Knocked me right out.")*

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