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SF PERUSALS

*Samuel French Acting Edition*

# Mirror, Mirror

*by* Sarah Treem

SAMUEL FRENCH

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***MIRROR MIRROR*** was first produced at the Yale School of Drama on November 11, 2005. The performance was directed by Nick Avila, with sets by Sara Clement, costumes by Mike Floyd, lighting by Bryan Keller, and sound by Sharath Patel, with dramaturgy by Rachel Rusch. The production stage manager was Adam Ganderson. The cast was as follows:

**GRETCHEN** . . . . . Corena Chase
**HOYT** . . . . . Richard Gallagher
**ROY/ROSE** . . . . . Blake Hackler
**LAUREL** . . . . . Bridget Jones
**COSTEN** . . . . . Jacob Knoll
**BADGER** . . . . . Allen Read
**LIBBY** . . . . . Alexis McGuinness
**HONEY** . . . . . Lauren Worsham
**DONNIE** . . . . . Alexander Rubin
**RONNIE** . . . . . Paul Spera

## CHARACTERS

**GRETCHEN BLACK –** 17, Most popular girl in school.

**BADGER BIERS –** 17, Gretchen's boyfriend. Most popular boy in school. Captain of the football team.

**COSTEN LYONS –** 18, Badger's best friend. Richest boy in school.

**LIBBY SUNDAY –** 17, Gretchen's new best friend. Hoyt's ex-girlfriend. Valedictorian. On scholarship.

**HOYT MONROE –** 18, Tortured teenage artist. Libby's ex-boyfriend.

**LAUREL BUCHANAN –** 16, Hoyt's best friend. President of the drama club. Costen's second cousin.

**HONEY –** 15, Stage manager in the drama club. Nerd.

**DONNIE –** 17, Actor in the drama club. Ronnie's best friend.

**RONNIE –** 17 Actor in the drama club. Donnie's best friend.

**ROSE WHITE –** 16, New girl. This is a boy's part.

## SETTING

A private high school in the South. A gym. An auditorium. A bathroom. Boo-yeah.

## TIME

Fall. Present day.

*(**AT RISE:** An empty space. Cloudy. Liminal. The space before a story starts.)*

*(A boy,* **ROY**, *17, walks into the space. He's wearing a backpack and a baseball cap. He snaps his fingers.)*

*(A mirror descends in front of him. Large and institutional.)*

*(***ROY** *looks at the audience. Smiles. He takes a make-up case out of his backpack and a long white dress the color of moonlight.)*

**ROY.** Mirrors are strange things. Sometimes they seem to have minds of their own. Especially when you're young. And you don't know what you're looking for.

I was young once upon a time. In a land not so far away.

*(***ROY** *takes off his shirt.)*

Every autumn, as the summer sun finally relinquished her gentle throne to cold crown of winter, there was a tremendous celebration.

*(He takes off his shoes.)*

A ritual as old as the ancient land itself.

*(***ROY** *takes off his pants.)*

A great ball.

*(***ROY** *puts on the dress.)*

Princes and Princesses came from all over to attend.

*(***ROY** *puts on a pair of heels.)*

The air tasted like honeysuckle and peach.

*(***ROY** *puts on a wig of long black hair.)*

The earth itself trembled to be tread upon.

*(***ROY** *opens his make-up case and applies very red lipstick.)*

**ROY.** *(cont.)* And they called it…Homecoming.

*(He looks at himself in the mirror. He is stunning. He smiles.)*

It's a long story.

*(***ROY** *snaps his fingers again. Down comes a door and toilet stalls. He's now inside a girls' high school bathroom.)*

*(A knock at the door.)*

One second.

*(The door swings open.* **GRETCHEN***, 17, enters. She's all dressed up for the dance.)*

**GRETCHEN.** Libby? Oh, I'm sorry. I was looking for my friend.

**ROY.** I was just leaving.

*(***ROY** *packs his clothes and make-up back into his backpack.)*

**GRETCHEN.** I don't know you, do I?

**ROY.** I don't think so. I'm new.

**GRETCHEN.** What's your name?

**ROY.** Rose White. What's yours?

**GRETCHEN.** Gretchen Black.

*(***ROY***, who will henceforth be known as* **ROSE***, holds out her hand to shake.* **GRETCHEN** *just stares at her.)*

**GRETCHEN.** I just had my nails done.

*(A beat. Then* **ROSE** *smiles brightly.)*

**ROSE.** They look sharp.

*(***ROSE** *exits.)*

*(***GRETCHEN** *looks down, and takes a deep breath.)*

**GRETCHEN.** Mirror Mirror on the wall, who's the fairest of them all?

*(***GRETCHEN** *looks up suddenly. She gasps. Turns around. There's nobody there. She turns back to the mirror.)*

**GRETCHEN.** Don't you pull that shit with me. I will break you.

When I was a child I had a beautiful mirror. Gilded and very old. It was my great grandmother's mirror. Brought over from Vienna on a first class steamer. The mirror hung in the grand hallway. I cleaned it incessantly. Every time I passed it. The mirror loved me for that. And always made sure I looked beautiful in return. We were best friends. Until one day…

The mirror showed me something just *wicked*. Something that never should have been. I told my father, who banished the evildoer from the land.

But the poor mirror never recovered. It was traumatized. It stopped working properly. It reflected back all the wrong faces. It was a very sick mirror. It started infecting other mirrors. Soon the town was plagued with demented mirrors. The townspeople became afraid to use the bathrooms. I knew I had to do something. What do you supposed I did? I broke the mirror. Smashed it in, late one night, with the heel of my shoe. Then I picked up the shattered pieces of glass and sewed them into my skin. And from that day forth, I've carried them with me wherever I go. And everyone everywhere always asks me about my skin. They want to know what makes it shimmer so.

*(***GRETCHEN** *looks down at her feet. She smirks at the mirror.)*

*(a threat)* What do you think of my shoes? Are the heels too high?

*(***GRETCHEN** *lights a cigarette. Takes a long drag. She raises her arm. She looks down.)*

Mirror, mirror on the wall. Who's the fairest of them all?

*(***GRETCHEN** *puts the cigarette out in her armpit. Then she whips her head up and looks at herself. She smiles. It is a much more innocent smile.)*

**GRETCHEN.** *(cont.)* Why yes Badger, of course I'll marry you.

*(Lights fade on* **GRETCHEN** *in the girls' bathroom, as they rise, across the stage, on the boys' bathroom.* **BADGER**, *17, looking princely in his dark suit, stands before the mirror with his eyes closed.)*

**BADGER.** Gretchen, will you marry me?

*(***BADGER** *opens his eyes. He recoils at the reflection in the mirror. He closes his eyes.)*

*(in a panic)* It's the right thing to do. The *honorable* thing to do. Your father could marry us himself. My mother, if she's well enough to leave the hospital, could sit in the first row of the parish. My God, that would make my Mama proud to be at the front of the church. She thinks Jesus doesn't see so well, on account of his bleedin' eyes. I try to tell her, Mama, that's ridiculous, that isn't the real Jesus hanging up there, it's a statue. But she still thinks the reason she ain't gotten better is because Jesus don't know she's sick, 'cause he can only see the top of her head.

*(Pause.* **BADGER** *opens his eyes cautiously and looks at his reflection. He breathes a sigh of relief.)*

Good. Say it just like that. And if you don't get this done tonight, you'll be whooping your own ass tomorrow morning faster then you can say –

**VOICE.** Roy Black?

*(***BADGER** *whips around.)*

**BADGER.** Who's there?

*(The sound of a toilet flushing.* **HOYT**, *18, exits from one of the stalls. He's dressed in jeans, a t-shirt and a tie.)*

**HOYT.** Hello Badger Biers.

**BADGER.** Hoyt, man, what the fuck?

**HOYT.** That was quite a speech. So tonight's the night you're going to propose to Gretchen.

**BADGER.** *(as if it's obvious)* It's Homecoming, asswipe.

**HOYT.** I just thought – with what happened at Prom last spring, you might want to keep a low profile from now on at school dances.

**BADGER.** What do you know?

**HOYT.** He was my best friend. I cannot believe you are going to marry his sister.

**BADGER.** Do you have a date to this thing? Or do you spend all your Saturday nights in the boys' locker room?

**HOYT.** Laurel Buchanan.

**BADGER.** No shit? She's kinda hot.

**HOYT.** You think so?

**BADGER.** I did. Until I found out she's dating a loser like you.

**HOYT.** She's not. We're just here as friends. Laurel only dates Ph.D. candidates.

*(Beat. The boys look at each other in the mirror.)*

**BADGER.** I'm sorry man, I didn't mean – you just freaked me out, coming out of the stall like that.

**HOYT.** Don't do it, man. Don't propose to her. He's coming back. I know he is.

*(***BADGER** *punches the wall next to* **HOYT***'s head. Hard.)*

**BADGER.** You know *nothing* about me. Do you hear me? NOTHING. And if I ever catch you eavesdropping on a conversation that I am having with myself or anybody else again I will make sure you cannot leave this bathroom without a catheter.

**HOYT.** Ooh, I'm scared.

*(***BADGER** *hits the wall, lightly this time, and exits.)*

*(***HOYT** *looks down. He's peed himself.)*

**HOYT.** Fuck.

*(Lights down.)*

*(Lights up, at the HOMECOMING DANCE in the gym.* **LIBBY** *and* **COSTEN** *are dancing. They are both dressed in southern, high school, formal wear.)*

**COSTEN.** You look hot, Libby.

**LIBBY.** Thanks.

*(beat)*

**COSTEN.** Do you think I look hot?

**LIBBY.** What? Oh yeah. Definitely. Really hot.

**COSTEN.** When someone gives you a compliment, it's nice to pay them one in return.

**LIBBY.** You're right.

**COSTEN.** That's called courtesy.

**LIBBY.** You're right. I'm sorry.

**COSTEN.** My mother always says the way you tell a person with heritage from a person without, is courtesy. A person with heritage is always courteous. Patient. They know how to wait. They hold doors for women. They sip their cocktails. Because they know, when the sun goes down at the end of that day, they will still be on top. They will still have their heritage, no matter if they've moved forward that day or backwards or nowhere at all. Whereas, someone without heritage has to keep moving forward or they will die. Like sharks.

*(***COSTEN** *smiles at* **LIBBY**. *Then he opens his mouth and bites down violently. Like a shark.* **LIBBY** *has no idea what to say.)*

When you get scared your posture improves.

*(***COSTEN** *slides his hand down the back of* **LIBBY***'s dress.)*

**LIBBY.** Stop it!

**COSTEN.** You know you like it. I really, really want to have sex with you tonight. It's always been a sort of fantasy of mine to do it on the football field. What do you say?

**LIBBY.** Does heritage screw on a football field?

**COSTEN.** Why don't you let me worry about my heritage and you worry about your virginity? You haven't had any boyfriends or anything before me, right?

**LIBBY.** I had one.

**COSTEN.** You did? Does he go to this school?

**LIBBY.** Yes. Hoyt. Hoyt Monroe?

**COSTEN.** I don't know him.

**LIBBY.** Of course you do. He's in our class. You've known him since kindergarten.

**COSTEN.** Really? I must have chosen to forget him. Is he ugly or something?

**LIBBY.** How do you choose to forget somebody?

**COSTEN.** It's easy if you want to. You just have to condition yourself. For example, every time that person pops into your head, think of maggots. You'll stop thinking about them all together in no time. Your brain won't let you. It really works – I've done it before. Remember Gretchen's faggoty little brother? I don't. I mean, I remember she had one, but I can't remember one thing about him. Whenever I try to…maggots. *(***COSTEN** *shudders.)* So this other guy, this…

**LIBBY.** Hoyt.

**COSTEN.** Did you fuck him?

*(pause)*

**LIBBY.** Fuck him? No.

**COSTEN.** Good for you. I knew you were a good girl. I love good girls. I'll bet you're wearing white panties, aren't you? Don't answer that. I want it to be a surprise. So where do you want to go to church tomorrow?

**LIBBY.** Church?

**COSTEN.** I like to end nights like this at church. It's soothing. It makes you feel clean again. When Gretchen and I used to date we would always haul our asses out of bed and get to her father's early sermon on Sunday morning, no matter how late we'd been up fucking. It was very spiritual.

**LIBBY.** Gretchen's dad preaches at the Southern Methodist church on Briar Hill, right? My mother loves that church.

**COSTEN.** Yeah, it's beautiful inside. The richest parish in Durham County.

**LIBBY.** She wants me to be married there.

**COSTEN.** Whoa, hold up. I'm talking about Sunday morning service, not walking you down the aisle. Besides, I think we should go to your church.

**LIBBY.** Why?

**COSTEN.** I just think it would be a little awkward, me showing up with my new girlfriend to Gretchen's father's sermon.

**LIBBY.** I'm your girlfriend?

**COSTEN.** Listen sweetheart, whatever gets you through the night.

*(***LIBBY** *stops dancing.)*

**COSTEN.** I was kidding.

**LIBBY.** I have to go to the bathroom.

**COSTEN.** That was a joke.

**LIBBY.** It wasn't funny.

**COSTEN.** Libby, if you want to be popular – if you want to be my girlfriend, – you're going to have to lighten up. I've been asking myself why a girl as pretty and nice and smart as you has been a loser all these years? Now I get it. You can't take a joke. Hey, come on. It's Homecoming and you're so beautiful, I feel woozy. Come on.

*(***COSTEN** *holds out his arms. They resume dancing.)*

**LIBBY.** We don't go to church. My mother used to, before she met my father. She used to go to your church actually. But my Dad wouldn't go with her and after he died, she never went back.

**COSTEN.** That wasn't very Christian of him.

**LIBBY.** He was Jewish.

*(***COSTEN** *and* **LIBBY** *stop dancing again.)*

**COSTEN.** You're serious?

**LIBBY.** Yes. Still want to fuck?

**COSTEN.** More than ever.

*(He kisses her. She winces. They continue dancing. He starts massaging her scalp as if he's checking for lice.)*

**COSTEN.** Oh Libby. Libby Sunday. My Jewish princess.

**LIBBY.** Costen, what are you doing?

**COSTEN.** You have a very smooth head, Libby.

*(***BADGER** *enters, rubbing his fist.)*

**BADGER.** Where's Gretchen?

**COSTEN.** I think she went to the bathroom.

**LIBBY.** By herself? She's in there by herself? What is she, crazy? We're not supposed to do that anymore. *(beat)* I'll be right back.

**COSTEN.** Don't be long, sweetheart.

*(***LIBBY** *exits towards the bathroom.)*

I fucked her in the limo ride over.

**BADGER.** Really?

**COSTEN.** Almost.

*(***ROSE** *crosses behind* **COSTEN** *in her moonlight dress. She waves at* **BADGER** *and disappears into the shadows.* **BADGER** *is mesmerized.)*

**BADGER.** I'm gonna go for a walk.

**COSTEN.** I'm going to stay here and look hot.

*(***BADGER** *exits. Lights down on the GYM.)*

*(Lights rise in the BATHROOM where* **GRETCHEN** *is still in front of the mirror, as we've left her. )*

*(***LIBBY** *enters.)*

**LIBBY.** Gretchen! There you are. What's that smell?

**GRETCHEN.** What are you wearing?

**LIBBY.** Your mom gave it to my mom.

**GRETCHEN.** My mother gave you my dress?

**LIBBY.** She said you'd never wear it again.

**GRETCHEN.** Well look at me – I gave you my guy, I gave you my dress – we really are new best friends, aren't we?

**LIBBY.** I'd like us to be Gretchen.

**GRETCHEN.** Why?

**LIBBY.** I think you're…really nice.

*(Beat.* **GRETCHEN** *stares at* **LIBBY**.*)*

**GRETCHEN.** So, it seems to me, you and Costen are as cozy as a pig in mud. I did you quite the favor, making that match.

**LIBBY.** He tried to rape me in the limo ride over.

**GRETCHEN.** What did you say?

**LIBBY.** Rape me. Costen tried to rape me.

**GRETCHEN.** What do you mean?

**LIBBY.** I mean, he pulled up my dress –

**GRETCHEN.** That's my dress.

**LIBBY.** Sorry *your* dress – and pulled down his fly and tried to climb on top of me.

**GRETCHEN.** Did you fuck him?

**LIBBY.** No, of course not.

**GRETCHEN.** He stopped?

**LIBBY.** I screamed.

**GRETCHEN.** And he stopped?

**LIBBY.** Yes.

**GRETCHEN.** Doesn't sound like he was trying to rape you then.

**LIBBY.** He had his dick out.

**GRETCHEN.** You shouldn't toss that word around so carelessly, Libby. That word can destroy a young person's life.

**LIBBY.** So can being raped.

**GRETCHEN.** *(considers that)* No, not in the same way. Bodies heal. Babies can be aborted. But reputations? That shit never goes away. Your children's children pay for that. (*beat)* So did you get a look?

**LIBBY.** At what?

**GRETCHEN.** His dick.

**LIBBY.** Sort of.

**GRETCHEN.** Isn't it beautiful?

**LIBBY.** I've seen better.

**GRETCHEN.** Oh please.

**LIBBY.** I have.

**GRETCHEN.** You. Libby Sunday. Libby Sunday has seen more than one dick.

**LIBBY.** I did exist before we became best friends, Gretchen.

**GRETCHEN.** No, you didn't. *(beat)* Look, don't worry. Costen can't get it up after more than five drinks.

**LIBBY.** He's not drinking tonight. He wants to be sober to accept the Homecoming crown. When he gets drunk, his eyes cross and his father will tar and feather him if he's looking out all cross-eyed from the picture in tomorrow's paper.

**GRETCHEN.** Badger is going to be Homecoming king.

**LIBBY.** Costen doesn't think so.

**GRETCHEN.** Badger is the captain of the football team. The captain of the football team is always the Homecoming king. It's tradition.

**LIBBY.** Costen doesn't think Badger is an appropriate role model.

*(Beat.* **GRETCHEN** *stares at* **LIBBY** *until icicles form on her lashes.)*

**LIBBY.** I'm sorry, I –

**GRETCHEN.** When Costen's the king, I assume you'll be his queen?

**LIBBY.** *(with a sigh)* Like you said – it's tradition.

**GRETCHEN.** It's also traditional for the king and queen of the Homecoming dance to get married.

**LIBBY.** Very funny.

**GRETCHEN.** I'm not kidding, darling. That's the way it's been every year since Reconstruction. As Homecoming King and Queen it's your responsibility to set a proper Christian example for the other young folks. You get engaged at Homecoming and you're married at Prom. Everyone who's ever been to Prom knows that. Oh, but that's right, you weren't popular last year, so you weren't there.

**LIBBY.** Can I tell you the truth? I don't even want to be Homecoming Queen.

**GRETCHEN.** No!

**LIBBY.** It's true. I'm happy just to be here. With all of you. I don't need a crown. You should have it.

**GRETCHEN.** Why Libby – that is very generous of you.

**LIBBY.** I'll go talk to Costen.

**GRETCHEN.** Would you? Gee, that'd be swell. I'm so glad we're friends. Can I have my dress back first?

**LIBBY.** This dress?

**GRETCHEN.** I love that dress. I will wear it again. And even if I don't. I want it back.

**LIBBY.** You want it back now?

**GRETCHEN.** Right now. You should tell your mother it's rude to accept hand-outs.

**LIBBY.** But Gretch, I don't have anything else to wear.

**GRETCHEN.** Did you really think you could waltz into the ball with my ex-boyfriend in my old dress and claim my crown? Take it off. Or I'll take it off for you.

*(Shaking,* **LIBBY** *unzips her dress and steps out of it. She hands it to* **GRETCHEN**.*)*

**LIBBY.** I said I'd talk to Costen for you.

*(***GRETCHEN** *sets the dress on fire.)*

**GRETCHEN.** He wouldn't have listened to you, Libby. He doesn't care what you want. But it's going to be difficult for him to accept Homecoming King when his date is trapped in the bathroom in her training bra and a diaper that says Saturday.

*(***GRETCHEN** *hands the burning dress to* **LIBBY** *who puts it out in the sink.)*

**LIBBY.** It's not a diaper. It's Hanes Her Way Days of the Week underwear.

**GRETCHEN.** Grow up. Wear a thong.

*(***GRETCHEN** *exits.)*

*(***LIBBY** *glances at the mirror in fear, then covers her eyes. She huddles on the floor, next to the door, her knees to her chest.)*

*(A knock on the door.)*

**LAUREL'S VOICE.** Is anyone in there?

**LIBBY.** Laurel?

**LAUREL.** Who wants to know?

*(***LAUREL** *enters, wearing a beautiful Asian kimono. She's not Asian, just alternative.)*

*(She takes in* **LIBBY** *on the floor.)*

**LAUREL.** What's the matter? Your dress make you look too fat?

**LIBBY.** It was Gretchen Black's. She took it back and set it on fire.

*(***LAUREL** *smiles.)*

**LAUREL.** You could cover yourself with my coat.

**LIBBY.** I could?

*(***LAUREL** *takes off her coat and hands it to* **LIBBY**.*)*

**LAUREL.** Would you mind? I can see all your ribs and I'm afraid it's going to kill my buzz.

*(***LAUREL** *takes out a little bag filled with weed and rolling papers. She sits down on the bench behind* **LIBBY** *and starts to roll a joint.* **LIBBY** *gingerly stands up and wraps the coat around herself. She takes a deep breath and makes herself look into the mirror. She breathes a sigh of relief.* **LAUREL** *notices.)*

It doesn't happen when there's more than one person in the room.

*(***LIBBY** *smiles into the MIRROR and nods.)*

**LIBBY.** *(to the MIRROR)* Who are you here with?

**LAUREL.** Are you talking to me or yourself?

*(***LIBBY** *turns away from the MIRROR.)*

**LIBBY.** You, of course. Sorry, I just – I haven't seen myself in a while. How are you?

**LAUREL.** Oh, because, for a moment, I thought maybe the latest "cool kid" thing to do is to talk to all those people who aren't cool, through mirrors. That way, you can pretend like they're your imaginary friends, that you don't actually have to acknowledge in the hallways or hang out with after school, like real people, because they are only figments of your imagination that you can conjure up at whim, through bathroom mirrors, when you're lonely and when you know you're alone.

**LIBBY.** Laurel – come on.

**LAUREL.** To hell in your handbasket? No thank you. I may not be in Homecoming court this year, but at least I don't have to blow Costen Lyons at the end of the night.

**LIBBY.** He tried to…coerce me into having sex with him in the limo ride over.

**LAUREL.** Of course he did. You're on a date with Costen fucking Lyons. What did you expect?

**LIBBY.** I thought it might be fun. *(beat)* Are you having fun?

**LAUREL.** Right now? At Homecoming? Are you kidding? I can't have fun at Homecoming, I would implode. It's the culmination of high school, which itself is the culmination of everything that's ever been wrong with the world since the triumph of Christianity. I am having a delightfully miserable time, of course. It's like being trapped in the middle of a never-ending Philip Larkin poem.

**LIBBY.** Who?

**LAUREL.** He's a poet. I'll lend you his stuff as soon as you finally return that copy of *Where the Sidewalk Ends* you

borrowed in second grade. Take your time though. It's a big book.

*(***LAUREL** *takes a drag.)*

**LIBBY.** Remember last year's Homecoming, when we broke into the Black family stables and rode the horses over Briar Hill down to the lake?

**LAUREL.** I remember Hoyt kept screaming that he couldn't feel his balls.

**LIBBY.** Remember the lake? With the millions of moons floating on the water?

**LAUREL.** It was pretty beautiful.

**LIBBY.** It was magic. Roy was magic.

**LAUREL.** Oh please. He was clever.

**LIBBY.** Clever people can't break apart the moon.

**LAUREL.** They can if they hang mirrors from the trees. Do you mean to tell me you never figured that out? I cannot believe you are going to be valedictorian. You are the thickest person I know. How can you possibly get straight As?

**LIBBY.** I'm detail-oriented. *(casually)* How's Hoyt?

*(***LAUREL** *takes another drag.)*

**LAUREL.** What are you doing?

**LIBBY.** What? We're just catching up.

**LAUREL.** We're not friends.

**LIBBY.** We've been friends since nursery school!

**LAUREL.** You jumped ship. The moment Roy disappeared.

**LIBBY.** I needed some space. You and Hoyt were walking around like the sun had gone out. You made me feel like a horrible person if I cracked a smile.

**LAUREL.** You are a horrible person.

**LIBBY.** I had to grieve in my own way –

**LAUREL.** By giving Costen head?

**LIBBY.** Just because I didn't think we would reach him through a séance –

**LAUREL.** It worked for James Merrill. He's another poet –

**LIBBY.** I KNEW THAT.

**LAUREL.** No you didn't. Look, as much fun as I've had reminiscing with you, I have so much more misery to disseminate tonight, before my work here is through. So, if you'll excuse me…

**LIBBY.** Have you heard from Roy?

**LAUREL.** Not since the fruitcake he sent over the holidays.

**LIBBY.** If there's anything I can do –

**LAUREL.** Oh Jesus Libby, shut the fuck up.

*(***LAUREL** *takes a drag.)*

**LIBBY.** Can I have a hit?

**LAUREL.** No.

**LIBBY.** Why not?

**LAUREL.** Because WE'RE NOT FRIENDS.

**LIBBY.** Fine. Can you at least tell Hoyt I said hi?

**LAUREL.** I can do that. Easily. He's my date.

*(beat)*

**LIBBY.** What?

**LAUREL.** Hoyt. I came with Hoyt. He's my date.

**LIBBY.** Oh. That's funny because Hoyt used to say he would only go to the Homecoming dance if they would be holding public executions there.

**LAUREL.** I know. He took some convincing. I told him it was either this or the Debutante, but he had to come with me to one of them. He chose this.

**LIBBY.** You're gonna deb?

**LAUREL.** Yes, my grandmother sits on the state board, she would disown me if I didn't do it, I need her money for college, resistance is futile, its only one night. Don't look at me like that. What?

**LIBBY.** That's great.

**LAUREL.** Yeah, it will be awesome. We can get together beforehand and paint each other's nails and tie each other's twats shut so people think we're virgins.

**LIBBY.** I wasn't invited.

**LAUREL.** You're lucky.

**LIBBY.** It must be fun to be here with Hoyt.

**LAUREL.** It would be. If he wasn't spending the whole time staring at you.

*(***LAUREL** *takes one last drag of her joint, then extinguishes and puts it back in her pocketbook. She starts to exit. She turns back.)*

**LAUREL.** Stay here. I'll find you a dress.

*(***LAUREL** *leaves the BATHROOM.* **LIBBY** *stares in the mirror.)*

**LIBBY.** Mirror, mirror on the wall. Who's the fairest of them all?

*(The MIRROR shows* **LIBBY** *a reflection that upsets her. She gasps. She turns on her heels and goes into one of the bathroom stalls. The sound of gagging, vomiting and then a toilet being flushed.* **LIBBY** *reemerges, pale and shaking.)*

Mirror, mirror on the wall. Who's the fairest of them all?

*(The MIRROR shows* **LIBBY** *another reflection. She smiles, weakly.)*

**LIBBY.** *(cont.) (whispering)* Thank you.

*(Lights down in the BATHROOM.)*

*(Lights up in the AUDITORIUM.* **HOYT** *is sitting on the stage in his tee-shirt, the tie, and his boxers. He is studying his non-alcoholic punch.* **LAUREL** *enters.)*

**LAUREL.** Hoyt, what are you doing in the auditorium?

**HOYT.** Squandering my youth.

**LAUREL.** Is that going to take all night?

**HOYT.** It's going to take much longer. In the meantime, there must be some way to speed up the fermentation process in this grape juice. Want to go break into the chemistry lab and see what we can accomplish?

**LAUREL.** What happened to your pants?

**HOYT.** They got wet. I took them off.

**LAUREL.** Well put them back on and let's go dance.

*(***HOYT** *gives her an "are you crazy" look?)*

**LAUREL.** You have to dance with me at some point tonight.

**HOYT.** I said I'd come. I never said I'd dance.

**LAUREL.** The gym is packed. Nobody will even notice us.

**HOYT.** Hey, remember Homecoming night last year?

*(beat)*

**LAUREL.** *(lying)* Not really.

**HOYT.** How could you forget? Roy and I hung those mirrors in the trees over Moonlight Lake until the water was bobbing with moons. That was the first night Libby gave me a – that was the best night of my life. *(beat)* Though this is a close second.

**LAUREL.** I remember you were terribly concerned about the state of your balls on that horse.

**HOYT.** *(smiling at the memory)* Was I? Yeah, well it turns out they were fine. *(beat)* I cannot *believe* she came with Costen Lyons.

**LAUREL.** I have a joint in my purse. Want to go hotbox in the car?

**HOYT.** No thanks. I don't want to do anything that could null this perfectly exquisite pain. *(***HOYT** *takes a deep breath.)* Now this is living!

**LAUREL.** She's a moron.

**HOYT.** I know.

**LAUREL.** And two-faced.

**HOYT.** That's true.

**LAUREL.** And a shameless social-climber.

**HOYT.** Utterly remorseless.

**LAUREL.** So why –

**HOYT.** *(in agony)* I don't know! Okay? I have no fucking idea.

**LAUREL.** Hoyt, how often do you think about sex?

**HOYT.** Ceaselessly.

**LAUREL.** Me too. I don't know how to stop. Every moment in the day that does not require a hundred and ten percent of my mental capacity – which at this school happens just about never – every other moment there is some part of my brain thinking about sex. Nothing dirty. Not like a porno. Just images. Not even images, but flashes of –

**HOYT.** Feeling. I know what you mean.

**LAUREL.** I had this revelation recently. At swim team practice, actually. Watching him cut the water. That this is why Greeks thought young men were beautiful. Because they have bodies like water flowing. Their muscles fit together, work together, follow each other like waves. And I thought, Oh Sophocles. I get you man. I really get you.

**HOYT.** Watching who cut the water?

**LAUREL.** Nobody.

**HOYT.** No wonder you always swim in the guys' lane. I thought you wanted to challenge yourself.

**LAUREL.** Fuck off, I said.

**HOYT.** Who is it? Come on, you have to tell me.

**LAUREL.** It's you Hoyt.

**HOYT.** Very funny. Tell me who it really is. Maybe I can help. Badger Biers thinks you're really hot. But I told him you only date Ph.D. candidates.

*(A beat.* **LAUREL** *stares at* **HOYT**.*)*

**LAUREL.** Thanks for that.

**HOYT.** Does it ever strike you as a bad joke? Life?

**LAUREL.** I'm not sure we're qualified to judge whether or not this is all suppose to be ironic yet. We're only seventeen.

**HOYT.** I'm eighteen.

**LAUREL.** Oh, well, in that case, how does it look from there?

**HOYT.** Bleak. What's the point? We all hate each other. We derive pleasure from hurting each other. Who greenlighted this project? Who woke up and said "Mankind, now that's a good idea." I'd just like to know.

**LAUREL.** Come on, let's go ask pot. Pot will know.

*(***LAUREL** *and* **HOYT** *start to exit the AUDITORIUM.* **LAUREL** *stops short.)*

I had a reason for coming here. What was it? Oh, that's right. The costume closet.

**HOYT.** You need a costume?

**LAUREL.** I need a dress.

**HOYT.** I like the one you have on.

**LAUREL.** You do? Really?

**HOYT.** Yeah. For a culturally appropriated sartorial statement, it's not as offensive as it could be.

**LAUREL.** Thank you, Hoyt. That was practically a compliment. But it's not for me. It's for your ex-girlfriend. She's naked in the women's bathroom and she's freezing.

**HOYT.** Why?

**LAUREL.** Probably because she's anorexic.

**HOYT.** I meant, why is she naked?

**LAUREL.** I don't know, Hoyt. Why is she valedictorian? Why did she dump you for Costen Lyons? Why doesn't she eat? I'll be honest with you – I don't get her. But I promised I'd bring her something to wear. I'll be right back.

*(***LAUREL** *exits into the costume closet.)*

*(Behind* **HOYT**, **ROSE** *opens the door to the auditorium and peeks in.)*

**HOYT.** I wish Roy were here. He'd know how to ferment the grape juice.

*(***ROSE** *jumps a little and quickly exits.)*

*(***LAUREL** *reemerges with a Cinderella dress.)*

**LAUREL.** Recognize this?

**HOYT.** It's the Cinderella costume.

**LAUREL.** You think Libby could pull it off?

**HOYT.** I'm the wrong person to ask. Libby could pull a diaper off as far as I'm concerned.

**LAUREL.** You know what your problem is, Hoyt? You're just like all the rest of them. You're a sheep in wolf's clothing. I am the only truly, authentically cool person I know. I am so alone.

**HOYT.** Why don't you write a poem about it?

*(***LAUREL** *stares at* **HOYT***, furious. Then she turns on her heels and then starts to exit.)*

**HOYT.** Laurel, wait!

**LAUREL.** What?

**HOYT.** Can I give bring Libby the dress?

**LAUREL.** No!

*(At the door,* **LAUREL** *bumps right into* **BADGER BIERS***.)*

**BADGER.** Hey. Did y'all see a girl come through here in a dress the color of moonlight?

*(***LAUREL** *and* **HOYT** *look at each other, amazed.)*

**LAUREL.** Ah, no. Sorry.

**BADGER.** Damn. I could have sworn she came this way. What is this place anyway?

**LAUREL.** The auditorium.

**BADGER.** Oh *this* is the auditorium. This is where you all do those…those…

**HOYT.** Plays?

**BADGER.** Right. Right. Sort of creepy in here, isn't it?

**LAUREL.** I was just heading back to the gym. Care to walk me?

**BADGER.** My pleasure.

*(***BADGER** *offers* **LAUREL** *his arm.)*

**BADGER.** So you didn't see no new girl?

**LAUREL.** 'Fraid not, honeychild.

*(As* **BADGER** *and* **LAUREL** *exit,* **LAUREL** *raises her free hand to flip* **HOYT** *off.)*

*(***HOYT** *sighs, takes out a book and lies down on stage. Lights down in the auditorium.)*

*(Lights up on the HOMECOMING dance.* **BADGER** *and* **LAUREL** *enter.* **GRETCHEN** *is waiting in the middle of the floor. She waves.* **BADGER** *goes to* **GRETCHEN**. **LAUREL** *continues towards the bathroom.)*

**BADGER.** There you are.

**GRETCHEN.** Where've you been?

**BADGER.** Me? You're the one who's been in the bathroom all night.

**GRETCHEN.** I had to check my face…this is a big night for us, Badger.

*(***BADGER** *looks around the room.)*

**GRETCHEN.** Who are you looking for?

**BADGER.** What? Nobody. No one. Why?

**GRETCHEN.** Are you going to dance with me?

*(***BADGER** *takes* **GRETCHEN** *in his arms. He smiles at her. They begin dancing.)*

**BADGER.** Of course, I don't know what I was – this is great. Isn't this great? This is so great. We're at Homecoming.

**GRETCHEN.** Ow! Watch it, these are open-toed shoes.

**BADGER.** You look so great. Your skin feels so great. Your hair smells so –

*(***BADGER** *smells* **GRETCHEN***'s hair.)*

*(coldly)* Have you been smoking?

**GRETCHEN.** No! You know I don't smoke, baby.

**BADGER.** Your hair smells like smoke.

**GRETCHEN.** That's because girls like the one you came in with are puffing away in the bathroom.

**BADGER.** Who, Laurel?

**GRETCHEN.** Is that her name?

**BADGER.** She's in Cotillion Class with us.

**GRETCHEN.** Is she? I never noticed.

**BADGER.** She's one of Costen's second cousins. Her family basically founded this county. And she doesn't smoke cigarettes. Though she has experimented with marijuana.

**GRETCHEN.** How do you know that?

**BADGER.** I talk to her when we're partnered in Cotillion.

**GRETCHEN.** You never talk to me in Cotillion.

**BADGER.** You make me nervous.

**GRETCHEN.** I make you nervous? You're the one who can't dance.

*(beat)*

**BADGER.** Cigarettes killed my mother.

**GRETCHEN.** They haven't killed her yet, baby. I thought she looked so sweet in that African headdress thing she had on when she took our picture. I'd've never known she had cancer, if I didn't know already. I'd've thought she was an African princess.

**BADGER.** Africans are black.

**GRETCHEN.** Not their princesses.

**BADGER.** Their princesses too. Everyone is black.

**GRETCHEN.** Then how do they tell the princesses apart from the regular folk?

**BADGER.** They recognize them.

**GRETCHEN.** You sure they aren't white people who just look dark because of all the sun they get?

*(***BADGER** *stops dancing.)*

Oh Badger, I'm kidding. Give me a little credit. I'm not a total moron. I was just trying to say something nice about your mother.

**BADGER.** Don't bother. She's dying. She looks like shit.

**GRETCHEN.** That's not true.

**BADGER.** YES IT IS.

*(***GRETCHEN** *and* **BADGER** *stop dancing.)*

**GRETCHEN.** Baby? Don't get upset. It's okay –

**BADGER.** Have they announced the king and queen?

**GRETCHEN.** Not yet.

**BADGER.** When is that going to happen?

**GRETCHEN.** Soon.

**BADGER.** Do we have to stay until that happens?

**GRETCHEN.** Considering it's going to be us, I think we should stay, don't you?

**BADGER.** Why don't we just get it over with now?

**GRETCHEN.** Get what over with?

*(***BADGER** *takes* **GRETCHEN***'s hand and drops down to one knee.)*

**BADGER.** Gretchen Black, will you –

*(Behind* **GRETCHEN***,* **ROSE** *appears. She waves at* **BADGER** *and exits out the gym door.)*

– Will you give me a second?

*(***BADGER** *exits after* **ROSE** *just as* **COSTEN** *enters.)*

**COSTEN.** Gretchen, where's my date?

**GRETCHEN.** How the hell should I know?

**COSTEN.** Because she got all freaked out when you went to the bathroom by yourself and she went to find you. Apparently, she's one of those "really nice people." And now you're here and she's nowhere to be seen. So what did you do to her?

**GRETCHEN.** Nothing. I never saw her.

**COSTEN.** People don't just vanish.

*(***GRETCHEN** *looks off to where* **BADGER** *exited.)*

**GRETCHEN.** Around here they do.

*(***COSTEN** *follows* **GRETCHEN***'s gaze.)*

**COSTEN.** I think you ought to let him go, Gretch. After what happened at Prom last year, this can't be easy for him.

**GRETCHEN.** *(slowly)* I have no idea what you're talking about, I'm sure.

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