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SF PERUSALS

Samuel French Acting Edition

Back Back Back

by Itamar Moses

SAMUEL FRENCH

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BACK BACK BACK premiered at The Old Globe, San Diego on September 19, 2008; Louis G. Spisto, Executive Director, Jerry Patch, Co-Artistic Director, Darko Tresnjak, Co-Artistic Director.

DIRECTOR: Davis McCallum
SCENIC DESIGN: Lee Savage
COSTUME DESIGN: Christal Weatherly
LIGHTING DESIGN: Russell Champa
SOUND DESIGN: Paul Peterson
STAGE MANAGER: Tracy Skoczelas

CAST:

KENT . . . . . Brendan Griffin
RAUL . . . . . Joaquin Perez-Campbell
ADAM . . . . . Nick Mills

BACK BACK BACK opened at Manhattan Theatre Club in New York City on October 30, 2008; Lynne Meadow, Artistic Director, Barry Grove, Executive Producer.

DIRECTOR: Daniel Aukin
SCENIC AND COSTUME DESIGN: David Zinn
LIGHTING DESIGN: David Weiner
SOUND DESIGN: Daniel Baker, Ryan Rumery
PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER: Kasey Ostopchuck
STAGE MANAGER: Kyle R. Gates

CAST:

KENT . . . . . Jeremy Davidson
RAUL . . . . . James Martinez
ADAM . . . . . Michael Mosley

CHARACTERS

KENT
RAUL
ADAM

A NOTE ABOUT SCENE HEADINGS: The momentum of the play depends partly on the audience being made aware, at the top of each scene, how far we've moved in both time and space since the previous scene. What this means is somehow using the headings that appear in the text for each of the nine scenes as an explicit part of the transitions between them. The best way to do this, probably, is to use some type of scoreboard on which the headings can appear, and then remain visible, such that they gradually line up like the recorded outcomes of each of the nine innings of a game. But, short of that, some way of conveying up front, at minimum, both what month and year we're in, and our location geographically, as a sort of button on each transition, is desirable.

A NOTE ABOUT NUDITY: It is not necessary for the actor playing Raul to be completely naked at any point during scenes 3 or 4. Nudity is, of course, an option, but would be, at that moment, needlessly distracting, in the opinion of the author.

1.
August 1984
Southern California

(A press room in the Olympic Village. **KENT** *is talking to the press. Perhaps he is seated at a table at a microphone. He is wearing a Team USA baseball uniform.)*

KENT. Well, geez. Um, honestly? We're not even thinking about that, we're not even paying attention to that. We're not here to talk about the past, the politics of it, or the behind the scenes drama, or the negative, we're just here to play our game. Because, first of all, it's just an honor and a privilege even just to be here, to be playing with this great bunch of guys, in a situation that really is an honor, against all these other countries, who are just being great to us, um, I mean, they're our guests, but you know what I mean, everybody's getting along just great, and we're glad to be playing well, which, I mean, nobody's exactly surprised, this is our sport, and our home turf, so I guess that we, you know, did come in with some expectations that we would do well, but everybody, Thrill, and Larkin, and everyone, we're obviously pretty pumped, pretty psyched, that we were able to meet those, you know, expectations, and we're pretty psyched, pretty pumped, to be out of the elimination rounds, and into the semis where it counts, though, then again, it is, you know, we are still a demonstration sport, sure, or, what do they call it, like, an exhibition, or whatever, as opposed to like a full-on medal event, which, okay, they've got guys getting medals for how far they can throw a log, but baseball is somehow this big issue for some reason? I don't get it. *(beat)* Oh, but, I don't know, as to a boycott, or whatever, like I said, to be

honest, nobody's giving it all that much thought. Definitely not here on the baseball club. That's not even cluttering up our minds, we're just gonna keep doing what we've been doing, keep being positive, and try to win this thing. And, uh, not get a medal for it. *(beat)* It's South Korea in the semis, right? We're gonna kick their ass.

2.
October 1988
Southern California

(A weight room. **RAUL** *is lying on the bench press. He is wearing the workout clothes of a major league baseball team. He sits up. Looks at his watch. Lies back down. Moments pass.* **ADAM** *enters, wearing the uniform of the same team.)*

ADAM. Hey.

RAUL. The fuck took you so long? *(He sits up. Sees who it is.)* Oh. Hey, Adam.

ADAM. Sorry, I, uh… Just. I thought there'd be…

(A moment. **ADAM** *turns to go.)*

RAUL. Hey, hey, no, it's no problem. I just… What's up, rook?

ADAM. Nothing.

RAUL. *(sudden enthusiasm)* Hey! Back to back to back, baby! Wooooo!

ADAM. Oh, hey, no –

RAUL. Oh yeah! Back to back to back, baby! Wooooo!

ADAM. They haven't even announced it yet. We don't even know.

RAUL. Yeah, no, you're right, you're right. *(beat)*

ADAM. So –

RAUL. Back to back to back, baby! Wooooo!

ADAM. Stop it, Raul. Seriously.

RAUL. What's the *matter* with you, *Adam.*

ADAM. Nothing! Just. I was actually looking for a place to be alone. Get my head clear for the game.

RAUL. And you came to the weight room?

ADAM. Most of the guys on the team don't lift.

RAUL. That is true.

ADAM. Yeah.

RAUL. Their loss.

ADAM. I guess. *(pause)* But so. I just, uh… That's all.

RAUL. Okay.

(Pause. **ADAM** *doesn't go anywhere.)*

RAUL. Is there something I can do for you?

ADAM. Uh. No. No, no, no.

RAUL. Okay.

ADAM. Just. I don't feel great.

RAUL. Oh.

ADAM. I mean, it's nerves, it's just nerves, but I do feel kinda antsy. Anxious. But I'm fine. *(pause)* It's nerves. I feel a little nervous. And I'm like sweating a lot. And I'm having a hard time keeping my hands still. But I'm cool. *(pause)* And I feel maybe like I'm gonna pass out, or throw up, or first one and then the other, but like I don't know in what order. And I don't want Tony to see me like this because then he'll completely lose faith in me as a player.

RAUL. Um. Okay.

ADAM. Yeah. So.

RAUL. You had a great year. You'll be fine.

ADAM. Well, yeah, no, I know. I know. *(pause)* I didn't feel this way during the year, though, is the thing.

RAUL. Well we've got a big game tonight.

ADAM. I know.

RAUL. Game One. And we're in their house. And they've got their ace on the hill. And we've gotta set the tone for the whole series, rook. Tonight.

ADAM. I know. I think that's probably what it is, too.

RAUL. No what I mean is you should get your head straight because we need you.

ADAM. Oh. *(beat)* I mean, yeah. I know.

RAUL. Because a big part of this game? Is *mental.* You know?

ADAM. I know that, Raul.

RAUL. I mean you gotta be *in* it. Up *here.*

ADAM. I know what you mean, Raul.

RAUL. Yeah but so my point is, sure, you had a great season, but also you need to deliver when it counts. In the post-season. Which is now. So –

ADAM. Have *you* ever been in the post-season – ?

RAUL. *(overlapping)* Let me answer your question with a question. Am I shaking and sweating and about to hurl like some kind of an amateur pussy? The answer to that question? Is no. I am calm. Fired up even. How did I do in the A.L.C.S., Adam? I kicked ass. And I cannot wait to step into the box against this guy tonight, this, uh… What's his name?

ADAM. Hershiser.

RAUL. *(with faux innocence)* Right, but, uh. What Hershiser?

ADAM. *(oblivious to the set-up)* Orel.

RAUL. Heh heh. I know.

ADAM. What? Oh.

RAUL. *(overlapping)* Who names their kid "Orel"? I mean…! That's just cruel! "Orel."

ADAM. How would you feel if someone made fun of your name, Raul?

RAUL. I would tell them it's the Spanish variant of the Old Norse Raoulfi meaning Counsel of the Wolf. *(beat)* As I was saying, I am not afraid of, uh, of Orel… Heh. Heh. Sorry. It's just –

ADAM. Please continue.

RAUL. Oh! Hey. That reminds me. And you'll like this. *This* you'll like. After the game? There's this *ridiculous* girl I want you to meet. *Ridiculous.* She's friends with this other chick I'm kind of involved with, or who I get, like, reinvolved with again whenever we come down to L.A.? And, actually, I was *kind of* involved with both of them? But not really the second one. But I *can* tell you? That she really likes baseball players. Like. She really *really* likes them. Like. Really a *lot.*

ADAM. *(beat)* That's fantastic, Raul. Thanks.

RAUL. The fuck is wrong with you?

ADAM. Just…! *(beat)* Nothing. Nothing. That will really be great after the game.

RAUL. Yeah. You're right. It will.

ADAM. I…! *(beat)* Maybe I should just tell Tony. See if he wants to sit me down.

RAUL. What?

ADAM. If, since, because I don't want to, like, hurt the team!

RAUL. Yeah but that would be pretty humiliating for you to have to sit one out in a clutch situation. It would be hard to come back from that.

ADAM. Well you know what? You, like, *riding* me about it? And, like, offering me your leftover *tail*? Isn't helping.

RAUL. Oh! Oh. You, uh… You want my help?

ADAM. I, uh…! Why do you think I'm *talking* to you?

RAUL. If you wanted help why didn't you say so, Adam?

ADAM. I'm a professional athlete. It can be hard for us to just ask.

RAUL. Well you're in luck. Because I can help you. I mean. I can help you help yourself. In a big way. If, uh. If you're really sure that you want my help.

ADAM. Uhh… *(beat)* Is there something in particular you're trying to say? Because if there is then I'm not getting it.

RAUL. *(pause)* Come here. Spot me for a minute.

*(***ADAM** *goes over to the bench press.)*

ADAM. It's weird that you and Kent get away with this.

RAUL. Um. With what?

ADAM. Working out with weights.

RAUL. Oh.

ADAM. With lifting. Tony doesn't like it.

RAUL. That's true. He doesn't.

ADAM. He says it's bad for you.

RAUL. That's right. He does.

ADAM. But you guys just go ahead and do it anyway.

RAUL. Sure. I mean, he can make his demands, and yell, but the fuck is Tony gonna do really? We're his stars. Without us he doesn't –

*(***KENT** *enters, also wearing the team workout clothes.)*

KENT. Sorry. Media. *(beat)* Oh. Adam. Hey.

ADAM. Hey, Kent.

*(***ADAM** *moves away from the bench press, clearing space for* **KENT** *to take up the spotting position.* **RAUL** *points among the three of them.)*

RAUL. Hey! Back to back to back, baby! Wooooo!

KENT. Oh did they announce?

ADAM. No. No. They haven't even *voted*. Not until the season is over.

KENT. Right. That's what I thought.

RAUL. Well, yeah, but come on, Kent, I mean, you sort of get a general sense before that, right? I mean, my year, I pretty much knew a month before. And, last year, same for you, right?

KENT. I guess. People are always kind of informally polling each other or whatever so there can be a vague idea of what's going to go down pretty far in advance sometimes, which, um, what is so funny, Raul?

(Because **RAUL** *has been chuckling.)*

RAUL. Heh. "Polling each other."

KENT. Yeah that's great.

ADAM. Well, whatever, now I'm probably not even gonna get it now and I'll feel extra stupid because you got me all pumped up and then it didn't happen.

RAUL. See? This is what I'm talking about! This mentality you've got going mentally up there is just totally fucking with you!

KENT. Hey, lay off! Rook's trying to get focused.

RAUL. Rook is ready to pass out and vomit.

KENT. What?

RAUL. Tell him.

ADAM. Thanks, Raul, that's awesome.

KENT. You okay?

ADAM. Yeah, I'm fine, I'm fine, it's just nerves, I'm just a little nervous.

RAUL. And?

ADAM. And…! Like sweaty and shaky and nauseous. And light-headed

KENT. Wow. Maybe you should, uh, maybe you should tell Tony, have him sit you down, if –

RAUL. Great. That's great advice.

KENT. What? I'm just saying if the team –

RAUL. He has an opportunity to play on the big stage and he's spooked and you're instantly telling him to sit it out? Why don't you try for like a half a second to help him get it together?

KENT *(to* **ADAM***)* Um. Okay. Have you tried taking some deep breaths?

RAUL. Deep breaths? That's your advice?

KENT. What.

RAUL. *I* offered to get him laid.

ADAM. Jesus. You guys? I'm *fine.*

KENT. Okay, but, seriously. Just, like, try to slow down your heart rate and get calm and slow your pulse and just take deep even breaths. Okay?

ADAM. Okay.

KENT. *(to* **RAUL***)* You ready to lift?

RAUL. Aw, already, really? Yeah that'd be nice.

KENT. Like I said. Press wanted quotes.

(During the following, **KENT** *spots* **RAUL** *for a set.* **ADAM** *attempts to take deep breaths off to one side.)*

RAUL. *(lifting)* I hate talking to those guys. It's a total mind-fuck. It's like they already know what they want to say about everything, and then they just take whatever you say and make it, like, fit into what they were going to say already.

KENT. Don't talk while you're lifting.

RAUL. *(lifting)* Oh because you're the expert on conditioning now?

KENT. No, just –

RAUL. *(lifting)* Because in fact, *Kent*, if I am lifting at a level that is comfortable for me I should be able to talk comfortably while I lift.

*(***RAUL** *is finished with his set. He sits up. He stares at* **KENT.** *A beat.)*

KENT. You're right.

RAUL. I know I am.

KENT. Well you are.

RAUL. Good. I know.

*(***KENT** *and* **RAUL** *switch places.* **KENT** *does a set.* **RAUL** *spots him. Meanwhile:)*

RAUL. In fact, this debate about conditioning is not unrelated to what I was talking to you about just a moment ago, Adam.

ADAM. What? What.

RAUL. About how to help you help yourself in a way other than telling you to breath or to somehow magically slow down your own pulse.

ADAM. Oh.

RAUL. Because you know what the secret to conditioning is? Or, what the thing is that gets in people's way the most when they work out?

KENT. *(lifting)* Hey –

RAUL. *(to* **KENT***)* Don't talk, Kent. *(to* **ADAM***)* Do you know?

ADAM. No.

RAUL. People think it's how much weight you can lift, or how many reps you can do, or something like that, but it's not, that's not what it is.

ADAM. It's not.

RAUL. No.

*(***KENT** *has finished his set. He sits up.)*

KENT. Raul –

RAUL. Just a second, Kent. The biggest thing that gets in your way? Is recovery time. By which I mean the *time* that it takes you to *recover.*

KENT. He knows what recovery time means.

RAUL. *(to* **ADAM***)* Is this helping?

ADAM. Yes.

RAUL. Actual information that's not some zen bullshit is helpful?

ADAM. Yeah.

RAUL *(to* **KENT***)* So shut up, Kent.

KENT. *(gesturing)* Yeah, but, just, come on, could we –

*(***KENT** *and* **RAUL** *switch places. During which:)*

RAUL. Like if you maybe do a set for a particular muscle group and you have to rest a while before you do the next set? That's way more limiting than amount or reps or anything.

KENT. Are you gonna go or what?

RAUL. In a second. *(to* **ADAM***)* Or if you do a whole routine for a whole bunch of muscle groups and have to wait a day, two days, before you do that routine again. But if your recovery time was lower, then instead of rotating through, you know, chest, legs, back, arms, whatever, and you could just go arms, arms, arms…! And that's the biggest obstacle. Which is something that not a lot of people know.

ADAM. *(He feels unwell.)* Ohhh.

RAUL. And the best thing you could do is find a way to eliminate that problem.

ADAM. Oh, god, I don't feel good.

RAUL. And it turns out? That there is one.

ADAM. What is wrong with me?

RAUL. Hey. Do what you gotta do. The bathroom's right back there.

ADAM. No, I'm fine. I'm fine. *(pause)* Yeah. I think I'm fine. What were you saying? *(pause)* I'm fine. Go on.

RAUL. You sure?

ADAM. Yeah, just…

RAUL. I was saying –

ADAM. Oh fuck. Oh god.

*(***ADAM** *runs off.)*

RAUL. *(calling off, after him)* You do what you gotta do!

*(***KENT** *is staring at* **RAUL**. **RAUL** *is oblivious. A moment.)*

RAUL. So it's, uh, is it my turn to – ?

KENT. The hell are you doing.

RAUL. What.

KENT. "The best thing you could do is find a way to eliminate that problem?"

RAUL. Oh, come on, relax, okay?

KENT. I'm totally relaxed. I just think that you should leave him alone. *(beat)*

RAUL. What?

KENT. You heard what I said.

RAUL. Okay. I see. And…is that an order?

KENT. What? No.

RAUL. Oh, see, because, here I was thinking that you were sitting over there just fucking *telling* me what I could and couldn't do –

KENT. Hey, come on –

RAUL. But now I see that I was wrong. Which is good. That's good. Because I'd hate to think that just because you're everybody's can't-do-shit-wrong fucking golden boy over there, Tony in your fucking pocket, that that somehow means you can tell me what to do. I would hate to think *that.*

KENT. You don't have to be a dick about it.

RAUL. *You* don't have to be a fucking dick about it.

KENT. It's just, I think, getting him caught up in it. Might be a little misguided.

RAUL. What does that mean?

KENT. What. *(beat)* What "misguided"?

RAUL. Yeah.

KENT. It…! There's risks, there's some risks, and I don't think you should bring him into it. I don't think you should do that to him.

RAUL. I'm not going to do anything *to* him. Kent. He asked me for help. And I'm going to make clear to him some options he may not have thought about.

KENT. Well you have a way of talking about options that makes a guy feel like if he doesn't take those options then that means that he's stupid.

RAUL. I think that anyone who doesn't take *this* option *is* stupid.

KENT. Um. Exactly.

RAUL. *(mock concern)* Whoa. Uh-oh. Hey now. Did I make *you* feel stupid?

KENT. What? Fuck you. No. *You* did not make *me* feel stupid.

RAUL. Oh! Now. What is *that* supposed to mean?

KENT. Nothing. Just. I think you should leave him alone.

RAUL. Huh.

KENT. That's all.

RAUL. Mm. *(beat)* See, it's funny, because when I did the same thing for you, I didn't exactly hear you complain or even really have any doubts.

KENT. Okay, well, first of all, I don't do it like you do it.

RAUL. Uh. *What?*

KENT. Just, I'm just saying, I just do my thing, that I do, but I don't do your whole like big regimen, or routine, or whatever, the way *you* do it.

RAUL. Oh, so there's, like, *levels* of it now, that are okay, or not okay – ?

KENT. But, whatever, apart from that, it makes *sense* for me.

RAUL. It does.

KENT. Yeah.

RAUL. But it doesn't for him.

KENT. No.

RAUL. No?

KENT. No it does not make sense for him.

RAUL. Because you're the expert now.

KENT. No, I just –

RAUL. One year, one year and you're the expert, who should do it, who shouldn't, dispensing it from your locker, with your little lab coat on, hey, everybody come see Doctor K, he knows what amounts are okay and not okay, he knows what makes *sense.*

KENT. *(overlapping, on "dispensing")* No. No. No. Would you…! I'm just saying I don't think that it's necessarily for everybody! And you're a leader and you're a star and he's gonna listen to you!

RAUL. Well he should listen to me because I'm the one that knows what I'm talking about because I've thought about it and figured it out for years, since I was in the minors, and I'm not some guy who just got into it like a half a second ago who's acting now like he invented it!

KENT. I'm not. I'm just…saying.

RAUL. Yeah. I heard you.

KENT. Okay. That's all. *(beat)* So, go, come on, it's –

RAUL. And what the fuck does that mean it's not for everybody?

KENT. Uh. I just think that it's not.

RAUL. Why not.

KENT. I think it's pretty obvious.

RAUL. Pretend I'm a fucking moron.

KENT. Uh. Because, sure, the extra power is great, and it's not a problem if you play a position where it's okay to have that bulk, but…

RAUL. But?

KENT. Adam's not camped out in deep right.

RAUL. I know that. He plays third base.

KENT. He… What? No he doesn't.

RAUL. Or, I mean –

KENT. Tony moved him.

RAUL. When?

KENT. Like six months ago!

RAUL. You know, it's hard to see who's where from back there, I –

KENT. He's playing second! He's right in front to you!

RAUL. Okay. So?

KENT. So he needs to be fast.

RAUL. Uh-huh.

KENT. And he needs to get the ball off quick. To me.

RAUL. Right.

KENT. And he hits for average. Not for power.

RAUL. Okay.

KENT. So…

RAUL. So. Sounds like you just listed a bunch of reasons why he *should* do it.

KENT. Raul –

RAUL. No, I mean, you're talking about he needs to be fast, um, you know what helps people be fast? Strong leg muscles.

KENT. Yeah but –

RAUL. You know what helps people throw hard? Strong arms.

KENT. Okay but –

RAUL. And you're talking about he hits for average not for power and that just makes me think, like, okay, but what if he could do both?

KENT. I mean he needs to be nimble.

RAUL. See now you're just making words *up*.

KENT. He needs to stretch and bend and throw across his body to make plays! He's a fucking defensive player!

RAUL. *(overlapping)* No, I see.

KENT. *(overlapping)* And he doesn't have the frame in any case and you know it! You'll ruin his joints! You'll end his career!

RAUL. No, I get it, I see. Cause that would really fuck you up, huh? Cause you, you don't have to play defense, not really, just put your foot on the bag, stick out your arm, and hope that Adam, or Lance, or Terry, or whoever hits the bullseye, and that's good enough, and you're still a potential M.V.P. because you can park one every now and then. But –

KENT. Are *you* talking to *me* about defense? You can *barely* play right field, Raul.

RAUL. That's not –

KENT. Somebody goes the opposite way, you can feel the fans hoping you don't lose it in the sun or give up running before the warning track!

RAUL. That's not the point.

KENT. And don't talk to me about playing first base until you've tried to backhand a short hop from third coming in six feet up the foul line.

RAUL. That's not. My point. Kent.

KENT. What's your point.

RAUL. Cause, sure, you can hurt yourself if you do it *wrong*. But if you do it right? Why *not* him? How about a defensive dynamo who's also a slugger? Explosive from a standstill because his calves and thighs are huge. Tossing bullets from wherever the fuck he plays because his arms are jacked. And meanwhile he's hitting balls out, hitting for extra bases, average through the roof because he's getting walked because he's so fucking dangerous in the box, and then whenever he gets on he's a threat to steal, and everybody's just *quaking* at this guy. Why don't you want that for him? "Hey, Adam, sit down for the good of the team!" So concerned. *Fuck* you. That kid scares the *hell* out of you. And you're just worried that if *I* take him on? Suddenly *that's* what everybody's looking for. And that. Was my fucking. Point.

(There is a silence. **RAUL** *stands. And begins to walk off.)*

KENT. Where are you going?

RAUL. I'm going to get our pre-game vitamins.

KENT. Oh.

RAUL. Unless. Hm. Do you not want those now?

KENT. No. I mean yes. I do.

RAUL. So I can go get them?

KENT. Yes. But –

RAUL. What.

KENT. I mean, does it ever…?

RAUL. *What.*

KENT. *Bother* you?

RAUL. What? Why.

KENT. I don't know! Um. Ethically?

RAUL. *(beat)* What does that mean.

KENT. *Um.* That it's not exactly. I don't know. Fair? That it's. Kind of…

RAUL. What? That it's "kind of" what?

KENT. You know.

RAUL. No, I don't know, Kent, why don't you *tell* me.

KENT. I mean. Isn't it?

RAUL. Well let me answer your question with a question. Does it bother you that you're taller than most guys, so your reach is farther, and your stride is longer?

KENT. No.

RAUL. Does it bother you that you were born in a town that had some money so it had great baseball facilities?

KENT. No.

RAUL. Do you know where *I* was born?

KENT. I mean, not, no, not exactly –

RAUL. Because the way I see it? This is only way to *make* it fair. They are watching us *all the time,* guy. Is he hot? Is he slumping? We gonna hold onto him or cut him loose? For a few healthy years, Kent. And there's two ways it can go. Don't pan out and get traded like a chump? Or blow up like a superstar, go free agent and get paid.

This is not a team sport. Not anymore. You want to play with a handicap? You be my guest. But not me.

KENT. That's a great attitude, Raul.

RAUL. I know. I know it is.

KENT. This is not a team sport? Are you *nuts*? Who *cares* about putting up huge numbers if you're on a losing club, Raul? But also? You jackass? Free agency has some problems. Because the owners are colluding. "What does that mean?" It means they all get together and agree not to sign any free agents and nobody gets paid, so I don't care if you *are* a superstar, Raul, because, the fact is you need the union. Which is full of guys who may or may not share your personal views on what's fair. So also? Don't call them our "pre-game vitamins." I know in your mind that counts as being subtle? But it's not subtle. It's fucking stupid. And anybody who heard you would know exactly what you were talking about. And who *knows* what happens then. *(beat)* And I am *not* scared of that fucking *kid*.

(pause)

RAUL. Kent?

KENT. Yeah.

RAUL. I know you're smarter than I am. I know that. Don't think I don't. But I also think? That you're a little bit of a coward. And a little bit of a snake. And so you can say whatever the fuck you want about me. You go ahead and you say it. But I am not either of those things.

*(***RAUL** *exits. Silence.* **KENT** *is alone. He fumes for a moment. Then he does a violent set on the bench press. During this,* **ADAM** *enters. He watches for a while.* **KENT** *finishes.)*

ADAM. Should you really do that without anybody spotting you?

KENT. Oh. Hey. Feeling better?

ADAM. Yeah, that just… What the fuck is wrong with me?

KENT. Hey. Same thing used to happen to me.

ADAM. When you came up?

KENT. Oh, well, no, I mean, not really since like, uh, high school, but –

ADAM. Well it doesn't happen to me.

KENT. You're a rookie. And this is Game One of the World Series. It's okay.

ADAM. No. I mean. It's not the game.

KENT. It's okay if it's the game, Adam.

ADAM. It's not the game. It's a girl.

KENT. *(beat)* What?

ADAM. It's, uh… You know what? Never mind.

KENT. *(Smiling.)* You're upset about a girl?

ADAM. Oh, okay, haha, fine, yes, it's hilarious –

KENT. No – !

ADAM. See? This is exactly the kind of bullshit I figured I'd get from Raul, so I didn't say anything, but I thought that maybe with you, but no, here it is anyway, so that's just –

KENT. *(overlapping)* No. No, no. Just. Hey! Just. That's really sweet.

ADAM. Oh yeah? It doesn't *feel* too sweet.

KENT. This is that girl you've been seeing?

ADAM. Yeah.

KENT. What happened, man?

ADAM. I don't…! Nothing. Just. She broke up with me.

KENT. Just now?

ADAM. Yeah. Like. Right after we closed out the A.L.C.S.

KENT. Man.

ADAM. Like. Right before I play in the World Series.

KENT. Yeah, no, it's not very considerate.

ADAM. And I don't know. Just. I felt…safe? Because like. Why would she break up with a guy who's about to play in the World Series? Like. Isn't it actually really cool to be dating a guy who's doing that? So like. You know. It wasn't really a moment at which I was feeling like that

could even happen. And then. It did. And now I'm in really bad shape, like, I always, with this stuff, I go to this place where I'm, like, I'm all up in my head, like, if I try to go out with somebody else, instead I'm just thinking about what she would think about what I'm doing, or I wonder what *she's* doing, which is *worse*, so I'm in this cloud of, like, memories, or all like anxious about if I'm gonna hear about her, or run into her, and this is, yeah, you're right, a really really inconvenient time for that, so, fuck, I'm sorry, this is lame and irrelevant, and I am such a loser, I apologize –

KENT. *(overlapping)* No, hey, no no, not at all. I'm, hey, I'm glad you feel like you can talk to me about this stuff.

ADAM. I…! *(beat)* Really? *(beat)* But I mean what do *you* know? You've been with the same girl since college. You're married. You've got a kid.

KENT. That's true.

ADAM. Yeah. *(beat)* No, I mean, come on, tell me, what do you *know*? You've been with same girl since college, you're married, you've –

KENT. Oh! Oh, oh.

ADAM. Yeah.

KENT. Oh, uh. Huh. Well, okay, first of all, forget the athlete thing. Forget it. Because why would you want to be with someone where that was the most important thing to them? Because with anybody worthwhile? I don't get the impression that the things we think are important to them are the same things they think are important. And second of all…? *(beat)* No, that's it. That's all I got.

ADAM. Well, thanks, even just… Because I couldn't… I mean *you* know Raul.

KENT. Yes I do.

ADAM. On top of which? On top of his own way of dealing with people? It's like the guy's invincible with this stuff, he feels nothing, no matter what any girl ever does, he just bounces back, like, instantly, and then there's two more in line, for which he's always game.

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