Acting Edition

Seared

by Theresa Rebeck

This sample is an excerpt of a Concord Theatricals title.

Samples of Concord Theatricals titles are for perusal and cannot be used for performance or downloaded, printed, and distributed in any way.

This sample may not reflect the version of the play currently in print.

SAMUEL FRENCH

Copyright © 2024 by Theresa Rebeck
All Rights Reserved

SEARED is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, the British Commonwealth, including Canada, and all member countries of the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, the Universal Copyright Convention, and/or the World Trade Organization conforming to the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. All rights, including professional and amateur stage productions, recitation, lecturing, public reading, motion picture, radio broadcasting, television, online/digital production, and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved.

ISBN 978-0-573-71135-0

www.concordtheatricals.com
www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

FOR PRODUCTION INQUIRIES

United States and Canada
info@concordtheatricals.com
1-866-979-0447

United Kingdom and Europe
licensing@concordtheatricals.co.uk
020-7054-7298

Each title is subject to availability from Concord Theatricals Corp., depending upon country of performance. Please be aware that *SEARED* may not be licensed by Concord Theatricals Corp. in your territory. Professional and amateur producers should contact the nearest Concord Theatricals Corp. office or licensing partner to verify availability.

CAUTION: Professional and amateur producers are hereby warned that *SEARED* is subject to a licensing fee. The purchase, renting, lending or use of this book does not constitute a license to perform this title(s), which license must be obtained from Concord Theatricals Corp. prior to any performance. Performance of this title(s) without a license is a violation of federal law and may subject the producer and/or presenter of such performances to civil penalties. Both amateurs and professionals considering a production are strongly advised to apply to the appropriate agent 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 Concord Theatricals Corp.

This work is published by Samuel French, an imprint of Concord Theatricals Corp.

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, scanned, uploaded, or transmitted in any form, by any means, now known or yet to be invented, including mechanical, electronic, digital, photocopying, recording, videotaping, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher. No one shall share this title(s), or any part of this title(s), through any social media or file hosting websites.

For all inquiries regarding motion picture, television, online/digital and other media rights, please contact Concord Theatricals Corp.

MUSIC AND THIRD-PARTY MATERIALS USE NOTE

Licensees are solely responsible for obtaining formal written permission from copyright owners to use copyrighted music and/or other copyrighted third-party materials (e.g. artworks, logos) 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 and materials that the licensee owns and controls. Licensees are solely responsible and liable for clearances of all third-party copyrighted materials, including without limitation music, and shall indemnify the copyright owners of the play(s) and their licensing agent, Concord Theatricals Corp., against any costs, expenses, losses and liabilities arising from the use of such copyrighted third-party materials by licensees. For music, 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.

SEARED was first produced by the Williamstown Theater Festival on July 25, 2018, in Williamstown, Massachusetts. The production was directed by Moritz von Stuelpnagel, with set design by Tim Mackabee, costume design by Tilly Grimes, lighting design by David Weiner, and sound design by Palmer Heferan. The cast was as follows:

HARRY.....Hoon Lee
RODNEY..... W. Tré Davis
MIKE.....Michael Esper
EMILY.....Krysta Rodriguez

SEARED had its Off Broadway debut at the The Robert W. Wilson MCC Theater Space/Susan and Ronald Frankel Theater in New York City on October 28, 2019. The production was directed by Moritz von Stuelpnagel, with set design by Tim Mackabee, costume design by Tilly Grimes, lighting design by David Weiner, and sound design by Palmer Heferan. The Production Stage Manager was Rachel Gross.The cast was as follows:

HARRY.....Raul Esparza
RODNEY..... W. Tré Davis
MIKE.....David Mason
EMILY.....Krysta Rodriguez

CHARACTERS

HARRY – Forty-five. Any ethnicity. Harry is obstreperous, demanding, kind, self-destructive, passionate and brilliant. A difficult but worthy genius.

RODNEY – Twenty-one. Black. Rodney is a kid of the neighborhood, smart, loyal, Harry's acolyte. He has a deep and honest love for his mentor.

MIKE – Mid-40s. It is important that Mike and Harry are the same age as they came up through the ranks of the restaurant industry as peers. Any ethnicity. Mike is devoted to Harry and his exacting standards and bends over backwards to help Harry achieve his vision, but he is a realist.

EMILY – Twenty-seven. Any ethnicity. Emily is charming, sexual, and extremely and unapologetically capable. She knows how to operate.

SETTING

The small, slightly run-down kitchen of a restaurant that will either slide into oblivion or leap ahead into success. When the story begins, there are many eccentricities in the way the place is held together.

TIME

The recent past, or the present.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

There is a lot of overlap, which only gets more pronounced as the stakes get crazier. Where the overlap begins in a line is indicated with a forward slash (/). In all other places feel free to let it rip, of course keeping in mind the information the audience needs to hear.

Some of the cooking must happen onstage, but not all of it necessarily has to.

ACT ONE

Scene One

(The sound of oil sizzling, the smell of garlic. As the lights come up we see:)

*(***HARRY***, forty-five, a big guy in every way. He wears a white chef's apron, and red bandana tied on his head.)*

(He dominates a clean but cluttered kitchen. Large six-burner stove, pots, drawers, a large refrigerator.)

HARRY. *(To himself.)* Fennel where's the fennel?

*(***RODNEY** *enters. He is twenty-one, African American, skinny, good natured, on the move. Well dressed in a sort of way. He sticks a meal order next to the two already in place at* **HARRY***'s eye level.)*

Where's the fennel?

RODNEY. I don't know.

*(***RODNEY** *leaves. While* **HARRY** *keeps an eye on the frying garlic, he grabs a plate of portobello mushrooms and slices them efficiently. Drops butter into another pan, takes a piece of white fish off a platter and*

dredges it in flour. Chops asparagus, looks for fennel among the vegetables piled on the counter.)

*(***MIKE** *enters.)*

HARRY. You know where the fennel is?

MIKE. You put it back in the crisper.

HARRY. Why would I do that?

MIKE. I don't know Harry you just do it I need the balsamic?

HARRY. It's where it always is. What's this?

*(***HARRY** *is reading a ticket.* **RODNEY** *reenters, goes for the chilled salad plates.* **HARRY** *holds the slip up and* **RODNEY** *barely pauses to read it.)*

RODNEY. Scallops, that's scallops.

HARRY. We don't have scallops tonight. Snapper.

(He flips it, reaches for the pasta cooker, shakes it, and pulls finished pasta out of the water, plates it.)

RODNEY. You know when we'll have 'em next?

HARRY. I'll keep an eye out for 'em, they didn't look so good this morning. Tell 'em the snapper or the lamb, the pasta's good too.

RODNEY. What's in the pasta?

HARRY. Sage and fennel, ricotta cheese, pancetta, grilled onions.

RODNEY. What's it called?

HARRY. Pasta.

RODNEY. I think she might be a vegetarian.

HARRY. She wanted scallops!

RODNEY. Yeah, she said they were really good.

HARRY. Tell her everything's good.

RODNEY. *(Sad.)* She was pretty excited about those scallops.

(But **RODNEY** *heads back out, passing* **MIKE**, *who is on his way back in with another ticket.)*

MIKE. There's a big spender at the four top in the window. TWO bottles of the Masi Amarone, wants me to open it up and let it breathe while they start with Prosecco.

HARRY. That's not a big spender, that's just a drunk showing off for a new girlfriend.

*(***HARRY** *finishes the plated snapper and then the pasta. He hands them both to* **MIKE**.*)*

MIKE. They've got a table full of appetizers, gnocchi, prosciutto, bruschetta –

*(***HARRY** *studies the ticket.)*

HARRY. Yeah okay.

(He reaches up, tosses sliced homemade bread into a toaster on top of the oven. **MIKE** *finishes the garnish on the pasta and wipes the edge of the plated snapper. He tastes it.)*

MIKE. Wow, what is that?

HARRY. Cinnamon.

MIKE. No, not that.

HARRY. I put a little ancho chili in it.

MIKE. Ancho chili.

*(***MIKE** *heads out as* **RODNEY** *heads back in.)*

RODNEY. She wants the scallops.

HARRY. We don't have scallops.

*(**HARRY** is collecting fresh gnocchi from a nearby bowl, ready to toss it into the pasta cooker.)*

RODNEY. She's really sad.

HARRY. She hasn't eaten anything yet, she's probably just hungry.

RODNEY. I have to offer her something else, she doesn't want anything that's on the menu.

HARRY. Then she should go to another restaurant.

RODNEY. I'm not telling her to go to another restaurant. That's rude. I mean, that's rude. She comes here all the time. She loves it here. You don't want her to go to another restaurant.

*(**MIKE** comes back in.)*

HARRY. I don't know what to say. I don't have any scallops.

RODNEY. Come on, Harry, you're making my job harder. Everyone wants scallops so the first thing I have to do is disappoint them and tell them I don't have any scallops.

MIKE. I'll run across the street to the Key Food.

HARRY. No no no

MIKE. I've told you a million times no one cares if the scallops are fresh.

HARRY. Are you kidding?

MIKE. They can't tell the difference; they don't care.

HARRY. Cold disgusting mealy

MIKE. They don't.

HARRY. Watery frozen

MIKE. Stop it you know how to cook a scallop and I can get them fresh at the meat counter those guys at the Key Food

HARRY. The Key Food

MIKE. Those are professional guys and their fish department

HARRY. I'm not having this discussion

MIKE. All the scallops are flash frozen on the boat.

HARRY. I'm not cooking a frozen scallop!

(He finishes plating his appetizers.)

MIKE. Rodney, take my four top in the window.

HARRY. He's got his own tables.

MIKE. And now he's got mine too. Because I'm going to the fucking Key Food and I'm buying some fucking scallops.

*(***MIKE** *heads for the back door.)*

HARRY. I won't cook them.

MIKE. We have a regular customer

HARRY. Offer her the pork belly sliders, I have one order left from last night.

RODNEY. She doesn't want pork belly, she wants scallops.

HARRY. Then sell it.

*(***RODNEY** *goes back out as* **HARRY** *goes to the refrigerator and finds the last order of pork bellies. He doesn't look at* **MIKE**. *He continues to cook.* **MIKE** *hangs in the doorway.* **RODNEY** *returns.)*

RODNEY. She's fine with the pork bellies.

HARRY. I know she's fine with the pork bellies. And she hasn't even tasted them yet.

(He tosses them into a skillet on the stovetop. Starts chopping vegetables. **RODNEY** *looks back and forth between* **MIKE** *and* **HARRY**.*)*

RODNEY. You still want me to take your four top in the window?

(A moment of silence. Neither man answers. **RODNEY** *just takes the appetizers and goes back out to the floor.)*

*(***HARRY** *continues to cook.* **MIKE** *looks out into the alleyway.)*

MIKE. You can't say you're not going to serve the scallops. People come here, okay I told you this morning this was going to happen when *New York Magazine* came out with that little blurb about your scallops. We were written up in *New York Magazine* for the fucking scallops. You can't just choose not to serve the scallops.

*(***HARRY** *just keeps cooking.)*

We're not a big enough establishment to be *(Pronounced "eye-diosyncratic.")* idiosyncratic.

HARRY. *(Pronouncing it correctly.)* Idiosyncratic.

MIKE. You know what I'm saying.

HARRY. Don't you fucking call me idiosyncratic.

MIKE. Oh my god that is the nice word when you're in a mood like this.

HARRY. I'm not in a mood; I'm in the middle of a dinner rush.

MIKE. It's too small a restaurant to have a dinner rush.

HARRY. We got sixteen setups and people lining up on the sidewalk.

MIKE. That's my point. People are lining up for the scallops.

HARRY. They are lining up for the food.

MIKE. When the food critics at *New York Magazine* / call our ginger lemongrass scallops exquisite

HARRY. When those fucking food critics – "our"? Did you just call them "our" scallops?

MIKE. Harry, don't. We're in the middle of a dinner rush.

HARRY. I thought we were "too small" for a dinner rush.

MIKE. That's not what I

HARRY. You just said it, not thirty seconds ago. I said we were in the middle of a dinner rush, I got work to do here.

(And he is, **HARRY** *continues to cook and plate as he argues.)*

MIKE. We are both back here and the kid too, trying to make this work

*(***RODNEY** *comes in, a little panicked.)*

RODNEY. Two more snappers, they want to split the gnocchi.

HARRY. No takers on the lamb? I hate Park Slope. Aside from the vegetarians who love pork belly, all the meat eaters have just laid down and died. People are carnivores, we're carnivores, we eat each other alive for sport. Have they not noticed this? Fucking scallops.

RODNEY. They wanted the scallops, seriously six people have been asking about the scallops.

(There is a pause at this.)

MIKE. I'm going to go get them.

HARRY. Do not go get them. I'm warning you. Do not go get them.

(Blackout.)

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

Please visit our website to buy the full script, apply for a license to perform this show (if it's available), or to explore hundreds of similar titles.

www.concordtheatricals.com

www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

To be the first to know about new books, licensing releases, and anything theater-related, follow us on our social media channels.

@ConcordShows and **@ConcordUKShows** on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

concord
theatricals