

Acting Edition

All the Men Who've Frightened Me

by Noah Diaz

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|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

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ALL THE MEN WHO'VE FRIGHTENED ME was originally commissioned by La Jolla Playhouse (Christopher Ashley, Artistic Director; Debby Buchholz, Managing Director), in La Jolla, California. The production was directed by Kat Yen, with set design by Adam Rigg, costume design by Jennifer Brawn Gittings, lighting design by Carolina Ortiz Herrera, and dramaturgy by Madeline Charne. The stage manager was Heather M. Brose. The cast was as follows:

TY Hennessy Winkler
NORA Kineta Kunutu
DALE Dale Soules
CARRIE Keren Lugo
FIRST Leonardo Romero
SECOND Armando Riesco
THIRD John Padilla

WHO

TY – *a trans man, 30s*

NORA – *a cis woman, 30s*

DALE – *a cis woman, 60s or 70s*

CARRIE – *a cis woman, late 20s*

FIRST – *a cis man, younger*

SECOND – *a cis man, middler*

THIRD – *a cis man, older*

WHERE

A big house

FYI

Time and space are – slippery

Just go with it

The people in this world have bodies of every shape, size, color, and ability

I. I'M NOT A HOUSE

II. THE MEN ARE HERE

III. I'LL LET YOU KEEP GOING

An intermission between I and II

With thanks to Sarah Ruhl, Maddie Charne, and Kat Yen

**I.
I'M
NOT
A HOUSE**

*a big house
full of boxes
as if someone has just moved in
or just moved out
or both*

a house in transition

1.

THIRD *at the edge of the house's driveway*

THIRD. I think someone scared my mom before I was born
I think someone must've scared her again and again
and again
because I was born scared too
I got shoved into the world *covered* in her fear
The nurse wiped me clean, but
I don't think it ever left

THIRD. I think it seeped right into me and made itself at
home

THIRD. My mom tried her best after my dad left
But
bad luck, I guess
Or maybe it was her fear getting the best of her
I don't know
An entire world full of would-be fathers
but any time she tried to make it work, they all just

THIRD *shrugs*

THIRD. She once said, *Better to travel alone than to travel
with bad company*

So

There you go

THIRD. When my wife first got knocked up, I was sure of
two things

One, that baby would be beautiful

and Two, that baby would be scared

THIRD. We fought over names

Hannah

Rachel

Sarah

Jenna

Julie

Jessie

Laura

"Polly"

(an eye roll.)

But then my wife gave birth and there she was

THIRD. *Claire*

THIRD. Perfect

One syllable

Uncomplicated

It was like she got shoved into the world with her name
sewn right there on the bottom of her foot

THIRD. I held that scared, beautiful baby to my chest
and I knew it
I *fucking* knew it

THIRD. I was bad company
and I wouldn't let that baby travel with me

THIRD *shrugs*

THIRD. It is what it is

THIRD. Anyways
I'll let you keep going

THIRD. Thanks for listening

2.

the yard

TY and **NORA** peer at the house
and then suddenly

NORA's crying

*this takes as long as it takes
and then she's done*

NORA. Let's go in

TY. Okay

they don't move

NORA. Did you measure for the curtains?

TY. We can wait
There's plenty of unpacking to

NORA. Did you measure?

TY. Yeah

NORA. Then let's get them today

TY. We don't need curtains

NORA. You can't sleep
It's too bright in the bedroom
We'll get curtains

TY. I can wear an eye mask

NORA. We need picture frames
And I want a lamp

TY. A lamp?

NORA. For the living room
It's too dark

NORA. We need a lamp
It'll make the place feel
You know?
We'll feel better

TY. What else?

NORA. I want a pot

TY. A pot?

NORA. Yeah

TY. One pot?

NORA. Yeah
There's this yellow one I saw online
I think it's yellow
It's big
It can hold so much in its

and then suddenly

NORA's crying

*this takes as long as it takes
and then she's done*

TY. What else do you need?

NORA. It's *we*
We need

TY. I know
I just

NORA. *We* need a pot

TY. What else?

NORA. Light bulbs
But that's it
A doormat

TY. Okay

NORA. A shower liner
A shoe rack
But that's it
Only if they have one
I'm sure they have one

TY. We should go in

NORA. Okay

they don't move

NORA. There's an echo in the basement
We need rugs
And a lamp
I don't want to go in that house
I

TY. We'll sleep on it

NORA. On what?

TY. On things
See how you
how *we* feel

NORA. You won't be able to sleep
It's too bright
It's
I want to move

TY. We just got here

NORA. We can move again

TY. We can't keep moving

NORA. But

TY. This is our house

NORA. Your house

TY. *Our* house

NORA. You grew up here, Ty
You have history
You got a head start
It's not fair
I can't compete with that

TY. Nora

NORA.

We need a couch
Or two couches
A sectional maybe
Four throw pillows
A side table
A chandelier
This house, it's
It's too big
It can hold too much stuff in its
There's too much *space*
I can't fill all of it
How am I supposed to -?
I'll have to get so many lamps
And an ottoman
I don't want an ottoman
I want rugs
But we can do that, I guess
A few big rugs
We'll feel better

TY. We will

NORA. Yeah?

TY. Yes

NORA. Okay

Let's go to the
the place
The furniture outlet

TY. Sure

NORA. We need groceries too
Outlet, groceries, then we'll go inside

TY. Sounds like a plan

NORA. We need gas
For the truck

TY. We drive around too much

NORA. Gas, outlet, groceries, house

TY. Nora

NORA. Hm?

TY. Let's go in

NORA. Okay

they don't move

NORA. Inhospitable

TY. I know

NORA. *Inhospitable*

NORA. It

NORA. They need a better word
It hurts to say

TY. It hurts to hear

NORA. Let's go in

TY. Okay

they don't move

NORA. I don't want my body to be inhospitable

and then suddenly

NORA's crying
even harder than before

this takes as long as it takes
and then she's done

NORA. Did your mom leave us a bed?

TY. Yeah

NORA. I don't want to sleep on her mattress

TY. We'll get a new one

NORA. Let's make a list

TY. Okay

Mattress

Curtains

Picture frames

Lamp

NORA. Lotta lamps

Light bulbs

TY. A pot

NORA. One big pot

TY. Doormat

NORA. Yep

TY. Shower liner

NORA. Shoe rack

TY. But only if they have one

NORA. Couch

TY. Maybe two

NORA. Four throw pillows

TY. Why four?

NORA. Two for you
Two for me

TY. (*A sad smile.*) I don't need two pillows

NORA. Just in case
Side table
Chandelier
Baby
A baby
I want a baby

TY. Honey

NORA. I do
I want one
I know what he said back there
I heard him
I understood
but I'd be a good mother
I would be so good
And it's not fair
It isn't

NORA. I said that to him, when you left the room
Why did you leave the room?
I said, *It's not fair*
I'd be such a good mother
And he said, *Your body thinks differently*
Just like that
He
I don't get that
How can my body think differently?
I am my body
and I want one
So I don't know why he said that, Ty
I think a baby would fill this house
We'd save so much money on furniture
Just some rugs and pillows
Six pillows
Two for you
Two for me
Two for her
Him
Her
Them
Her
It
Two pillows for it
That's all we'd need
We'd roll around on our rugs
on our pillows
We'd just roll around together, the three of us, and that
would be
(*a deep breath.*)
So
we just need to figure out how to do this
We need a plan
We're good at this
We just need to know what to do next and we can do it

NORA. Let's make a list

We adopt

We get a surrogate

We steal one from the park

We

TY. I'll do it

NORA. Do what?

TY. (*Simply.*) I'll carry the baby

3.

the living room

some new furniture

some old furniture

TY and DALE *unpack the last of the boxes*

DALE. She's liking it?

TY. I think so, yeah

DALE. Think?

TY. Well, she's still settling in

DALE. Uh huh

TY. She's still figuring out how to make this place feel like hers

DALE. It is hers

TY. You know what I mean

DALE. Not really, no

TY. She's just figuring the place out
The rooms or whatever
I don't know

DALE. She take her shits here, or she dig a hole out back and squat?

TY. What?

DALE. I think this place would feel like hers if she just sat down and took a big

TY. Mom, stop!
C'mon!

DALE. Well, I don't like it when she says stuff like that
What settling does she have to do?

DALE. It's a house

Move in

Unpack

There you go

TY. It's not always that simple

DALE. Of course it is!

When I moved outta here, you know what I did?

Packed what I wanted, left some things for you two,
sold the rest

TY. I just don't think it's

DALE. And when I moved into the new place, you know
what I did?

First thing

DALE.

Took a shit

Exactly

TY.

Took a shit

Fabulous

DALE. I'm just saying

I didn't need to *settle* into anything

I walked in and I existed

and in that moment I just happened to be existing in
a new house

You know what I mean?

She might do with a little less settling and a little more
existing

TY. She just wants to feel at home here, that's all

DALE. You're here

You're her home

TY. I'm not a house

DALE. Yeah, but you should be enough

TY. What's that supposed to -?

DALE. No, nothing

I just meant that she should be happy wherever she
lives as long as you're with her

TY. Who said she was unhappy?

DALE. She's sad

TY. What?

No, she isn't

DALE. You can't tell?

TY. My wife isn't sad

DALE. Okay

TY. She isn't

DALE. I said okay, Ty

DALE. That a new lamp?

TY. Yeah

DALE. Hm

TY. What?

DALE. Nothing

DALE. It's just

TY. *What*, Mom?

DALE. You got a lot of new lamps

TY. We've got a lot of square footage

DALE. What's wrong with the lamps I left you?

TY. We wanted our own lamps

DALE. We?

TY. Yes

We

DALE. Uh huh

TY. The closing papers didn't say we were contractually obligated to keep your lamps

DALE. No, but

TY. Do you regret moving out?

Is that what this is?

Because

DALE. I wanted you to have it!

This is your home, Ty

It's your turn to

TY. Right

It's *my* turn

You don't live here anymore

DALE. I'm perfectly aware

TY. I'm sorry if it's hard for you, leaving this place behind, but

DALE *takes a breath as if to interrupt*

TY. But you did

And you left it to us

You shouldn't have done that if you weren't ready to leave
or if you were going to have a problem with what we
did here

DALE. She's changing it

TY. It's a lamp

DALE. It's not just a lamp!

It's new furniture

It's new paint

It's

I let you move in here because

TY. Let?

DALE. Yes, *let*

I let you move in here because I thought you wanted
our house

Your house

The one you grew up in

Not the uh

the

milk stuff

Bones!

Not the fucking bones of it

This house is more than its bones, Ty

You could've moved into any other boring-ass house if
you just wanted its bones

TY. I love this house

DALE. Why doesn't she?

TY. Mom

DALE. What?

TY. I will always want you to feel welcome here because
this was your house for a very long time

But if you don't lay off my wife, I can't have you over
here anymore

Okay?

DALE. Yeah

Fine

DALE. Just

Please don't forget that this is your house too

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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