

AGAIN AND AGAIN

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CHARACTERS

MAN 70. Old soul.

YOUNG MAN 19. Young soul.

YOUNG WOMAN 18. Old soul.

SETTING

The edge of an abandoned quarry. Summer. Just before midnight.

(Night. Moonlight. Crickets. A large rock on a scrubby clearing of land high above an abandoned quarry. A MAN is sitting on the rock, looking out over it. Unnoticed by him, a YOUNG MAN enters from one side, carrying a bundle. He watches MAN silently.)

YOUNG MAN

'Sup.

(No reaction. YOUNG MAN walks over to him.)

YOUNG MAN

'SUP?

MAN

(turns) What?

YOUNG MAN

Didn't mean to— Didn't expect to find anyone up here. You okay?

(MAN shrugs, nods.)

YOUNG MAN

(wary) Homeless?

MAN

'Course not!

YOUNG MAN

So what, you just... chillin' out by the quarry?

MAN

Oh, I used to court up here.

YOUNG MAN

No way.

MAN

When's she coming?

YOUNG MAN

Who?

MAN

Your girl.

YOUNG MAN

What makes you think... (beat) Midnight.

MAN

(checks watch) Good, you're right on time.

YOUNG MAN

Well yeah, I gotta... (indicates bundle)

MAN

Well please, set up. If she comes I'll keep her entertained. (beat; laughs) Just joshing you! I'll be off in a minute, just give me a second, my legs.

YOUNG MAN

Sure, take your time...

MAN

Please... (gestures for him to set his things up)

(YOUNG MAN checks watch, then rather self-consciously undoes his bundle—a blanket, a book, a bottle of Jagermeister—lays the blanket on the ground and sets up.)

YOUNG MAN

How'd you know I was meeting her?

MAN

Oh, boys been meeting girls here since the night they abandoned this place.

YOUNG MAN

Wasn't that, like, 1880?

MAN

Something like that.

YOUNG MAN

Hope I ain't putting you out. I mean, any other night... You know how it is though, right?

MAN

Certainly. So, you wooing this lady or is she your... *inamorata*?

YOUNG MAN
My what?

MAN
Girlfriend.

YOUNG MAN
Uhhh, well...

MAN
You're right, it's none of my business...

YOUNG MAN
No, it's okay. (chuckle, sighs) It's complicated, we been kinda... estranged. You know?
Estranged?

MAN
(nods) I do. But you're reconciling?

YOUNG MAN
Cross your fingers.

MAN
How long since you've seen her?

YOUNG MAN
God, forever.

MAN
Sure you'll still recognize her?

YOUNG MAN
Oh, I'd recognize her with my eyes shut.

MAN
Yeah? You've memorized her body?

YOUNG MAN
(stops setting up) 'Scuse me?

MAN
Your hands remember her shape?

YOUNG MAN

(perturbed) I dunno... How your legs doin'?

MAN

Girl I courted here? We entered this contest once at the shore. They blindfolded me and I had to pick her out just by touch, out of twenty contestants.

YOUNG MAN

No pressure, right?

MAN

Found her in (snaps fingers) five seconds flat.

YOUNG MAN

No way...

MAN

Five foot nine. Modeled for art classes.

YOUNG MAN

Well, mine's a dancer.

MAN

What, like on a pole? Or artistic?

YOUNG MAN

Jesus, man. Ballet.

MAN

Well. Congratulations.

(MAN puts his hand out, YOUNG MAN shakes it. They chuckle.)

YOUNG MAN

(sits on blanket) Five seconds, huh?

(MAN snaps his fingers. They chuckle more.)

MAN

She pretty?

YOUNG MAN
Oh god, she's a *Betty*...

MAN
Her name's Betty?

YOUNG MAN
No, *she's* a Betty. A hot... a pretty girl.

MAN
What *is* her name?

YOUNG MAN
Why?

MAN
Why not, is it magic? Something happen if you say it?

YOUNG MAN
No, just... you don't know her. If I tell you you'll... know her more.

MAN
What're you afraid of? I'll try to whisk her away for myself?

(They laugh.)

YOUNG MAN
Mae.

MAN
Mae?

YOUNG MAN
M A E, yeah.

MAN
(imitates Mae West) "Come up and see me sometime." Never mind. And she doesn't mind meeting so late?

YOUNG MAN
Dude, it was her idea! (pulls out a letter, reads) "Meet me at our special place, midnight of the fifth."

MAN

I'm just thinking of her safety.

YOUNG MAN

(laughs, then) She can handle herself.

MAN

(nods) Mmm. (picks up bottle) Jagermeister. Classy.

YOUNG MAN

Her favorite.

MAN

Aren't you supposed to keep this chilled?

YOUNG MAN

Are you?

MAN

(reading label) Says here.

YOUNG MAN

We always drank it straight off the shelf. We'd buy from this guy who never carded? Then go to the movies and split it.

MAN

That was your courtship?

YOUNG MAN

Well, people don't really "court" anymore, ya know? You just kinda... you know.

(MAN nods.)

YOUNG MAN

(looks at blanket) First time we... were together? Was on this. Figured it'd bring back some memories. Good ones, I mean. (holds up a corner, points to a tear) See this? She tore this with her teeth when I... (stops himself)

MAN

Well. (picks up book) "Haiku."

YOUNG MAN

Little poems.

MAN
I know. I lived in Japan.

YOUNG MAN
No way! Say something.

MAN
Nihongo ga wakari masen.

YOUNG MAN
What's that mean?

MAN
"I don't understand Japanese."

(They laugh. MAN hands the book back.)

YOUNG MAN
She'd dig that. (leafs through book) Yeah, we'd come here on Sundays, write haikus to each other. (bravado) She goes for that. Poets. *I'm* a poet. (MAN gives him a look.) Seriously, I'm, like, a published poet.

MAN
Anything I'd've read?

YOUNG MAN
Doubt it. You read *Black Ink*? Underground journal. (MAN shakes head.) Been in that a few times.

MAN
Well, it all sounds very romantic between you.

YOUNG MAN
God, it was.

MAN
So how'd you get estranged? If you don't mind.

**To read the rest of this play, please contact me at:
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