

MISSED

by Chris Van Strander

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CHARACTERS

VICTORIA	A tabloid journalist, 20's
VOICEMAIL VOICE	A computerized voiceover
MOM'S VOICE	A soccer mom, mid-30's to mid-40's, voiceover
MAN'S VOICE	Totally nice and normal, 20's, voiceover

SETTING

Anytown, USA.

VICTORIA's hotel room.

VICTORIA, bottle of bourbon to help her get through this, a rocks glass, plenty of ice, and a cell phone which she listens to via Bluetooth or similar headset.

She makes and drinks drinks. Throughout.

VOICEMAIL VOICE

New message: today, 1:28 PM.

MOM'S VOICE

(erupts in something between a cry and a cheer) (to someone in background, overjoyed relief) It's letting it's letting me! *(into phone)* Daisy?! Oh god! I've been calling so much your voicemail musta filled, it wouldn't let me leave any more, just kept saying it's full! *(beat; starting to cry)* But it's not now, so you... you're checking messages, you're okay. Where are you?! Call us!, please!, let us know you're all right! Come home sweetie!, come home we wanna hug you! *(hangs up)*

VICTORIA deletes.

VOICEMAIL VOICE

Message deleted. New message: yesterday, 7:07 PM.

MOM'S VOICE

(trying to be strong) I don't know if you're getting these, but Daisy?, if you're listening? Everyone's looking for you. All of us, your friends... We won't stop 'til we find you. I... *(beat; hangs up)*

VICTORIA deletes.

VOICEMAIL VOICE

Message deleted. New message: yesterday, 8:58 AM.

MOM'S VOICE

(sobbing) Where are you? *(hangs up)*

VICTORIA deletes.

VOICEMAIL VOICE

Message deleted. New message: Saturday, 10:17 PM.

MOM'S VOICE

(sober concern) Hi hon it's Mom. I hope you're checking messages. It's after 10. Did I forget you had plans? Could you give a call back quick?, lemme know you're okay? I thought maybe you got hung up at Java, but they said you left like 1, 1:30. Couldja gimme a call? Okay. I love you. Bye. *(hangs up)*

Another cell phone—VICTORIA's work phone—rings. She grabs it, listens in her opposite ear.

VICTORIA

Metro, Victoria. ...Hey boss man, number's this? ...*(laugh)* Her husband know? ...*(laugh)* ...Where'm I? Nowhere, family's in seclusion. ...*Niente*: she doesn't Tweet, her Facebook's watching paint peel. *(reads from her reporter's notebook)* "Favorite color: cream. Favorite flavor: vanilla." ...No boyfriend—bookish. ...I am aware, Ed. I'll have something. ...Lay it on me. ...You're *kidding!* What, someone spotted? ...How then? ...*(beat)* Say again? ...Uh. Oh god. Ed, are you sitting? ...Close enough. *(beat)* It's not her. Deleting. ...'Cause I do. ...'Cause it's me. ...Ed— ...Soon's I figured out her pass— ...'Cause I had to make room, case new ones came. ...Who's interfering with the course of anything?! Her cell's right on her wall! ...*(glances at bottle)* A tad but that had nothing to— ...Ed, it was full, her box. Cops had access they'da pulled it. They probably can't figure out her password either. You're fifteen!, many couldja have? Wouldn't it be just "pony" or—? ...3-2-4-7-9. Spells her name. You know, D's on the 3, A's on the 2. ...Nothing, her mom. ...Look we are so not anyone's concern. I called from mine anyway, work phone's— ...We're really gonna have this—? Christmas?, your office?, "Siddown, Vicki, there's concern your approach isn't quite" *WHAT?* "enough for the *Metro*"? So look, *colleague*, you encourage folks to lift up rocks, don't scream when they start tracking mud. ...No!, good to know! Postmortems?: Peachy keen! Voicemail?: *Verboten!* ...*(meek)* Sorry. ...Dunno. ...Okay. ...All, yes, all. ...'Course I'll hold.

VICTORIA's on hold. *Beat.* VICTORIA deletes.

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

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