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# Adam and Evie

by CHARLES L. MEE

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The cast for Adam and Evie is the most diverse cast ever seen on stage in terms of race, gender, age, ability and disability, and all other sorts of diversity.

And so Adam and Evie, watching everyone around them all evening, come to live happily ever after in this civilization of limitless global diversity—the world of romantic, personal, familial, neighborly, social, communal, global love.

And the first couple we meet,  
Adam and Evie,  
will be on stage for the entire play,  
having a few scenes themselves,  
and, when they are not having a scene themselves, watching everyone  
and everything else that happens  
to see what they can learn from it.

Adam and Evie enter from different sides.

ADAM  
Hello.

EVIE  
Hello.

ADAM  
What's your name?

EVIE

What's your name?

ADAM

My name is Adam.

EVIE

I'm Evie.

ADAM

Do you come here often?

EVIE

Oh, yes  
all the time  
and my mother doesn't even know I've left home

ADAM

well, she sees you're not there

EVIE

no, because I'm still at home in bed

ADAM

home in bed?

EVIE

because my spirit has split in two...

ADAM

so you mean, as a metaphor, your mother doesn't know you've left

EVIE

she sees me still every morning when I wake up in my bed at home

ADAM

she sees you....  
so your mother....

EVIE

you think she's crazy

ADAM

I think someone may be a little bit living in a dream

EVIE

this is how it is to love someone

ADAM

indeed

EVIE

yes

ADAM

I wonder:

would you marry me

or

would you have a coffee with me

and think of having a conversation

that would lead to marriage?

EVIE

Oh.

Oh.

Well,

a coffee with you

I would have a coffee with you.

ADAM

You are free now?

EVIE

Free now? No, well, no

right now

I am busy.

ADAM

OK then maybe later this evening?

EVIE

Well, later this evening also I am busy.

ADAM

Or late supper.

Or breakfast tomorrow

or lunch or tea in the afternoon

or a movie

or dinner the day after

Thursday for lunch

or Friday dinner

or perhaps you would go for the weekend with me

to my parents' home in Provence

or we could stop along the way

and find a little place for ourselves

to be alone.

EVIE

I don't think I can be alone.

ADAM

With me?

Or by yourself?

You don't like to be alone by yourself?

EVIE

No, I mean with you this weekend.

ADAM

Oh.

Or then just we could

have coffee over and over again

every day

until we get to know one another

and we have the passage of the seasons

in the cafe

we could celebrate our anniversary  
and then perhaps you would forget  
that you are not married to me  
and we can have a child.

EVIE

A child?

ADAM

Because  
don't you think  
after we have been together for a year  
it will be time to start to think of these things?

EVIE

We haven't been together for a day.

ADAM

You know, I have known many women.  
I mean, I don't mean to say....

EVIE

No.

ADAM

I mean just  
you know  
my mother, my grandmother  
my sisters  
and also women I have known romantically  
and then, too, friends,  
and even merely acquaintances  
but you know  
in life  
one meets many people  
and it seems to me  
we know so much of another person  
in the first few moments we meet

not from what a person says alone  
but from the way they hold their head  
how they listen  
what they do with their hand as they speak  
or when they are silent  
and years later  
when these two people break up  
they say  
I should have known from the beginning  
in truth  
I did know from the beginning  
I saw it in her, or in him  
the moment we met  
but I tried to repress the knowledge  
because it wasn't useful at the time  
because,  
for whatever reason  
I just wanted to go to bed with her as fast as I could  
or I was lonely  
and so I pretended I didn't notice  
even though I did  
exactly the person she was from the first moment  
I knew  
and so it is with you  
and I think probably it is the same for you with me  
we know one another  
right now from the first moment  
we know so much about one another in just this brief time  
and we have known many people  
and for myself  
I can tell  
you are one in a million  
and I want to marry you  
I want to marry you  
and have children with you  
and grow old together  
so I am begging you  
just have a coffee with me.

EVIE

OK.

ADAM

When will you do this?

EVIE

Right now.

ADAM

Oh.

Oh, good.

Good.

[he kisses her hand]

Good.

[Another couple enters,  
and Adam and Evie stop and turn to look at them.]

DEBARGO

Hi.

CHEN CHI

Hello.

DEBARGO

Would you like a coffee?

CHEN CHI

Thank you.

DEBARGO

What brings you here?

CHEN CHI

I'm just passing through.

DEBARGO

Well.

Isn't everyone?

CHEN CHI

Whose woods are these?

DEBARGO

I don't know.

CHEN CHI

So.

I guess you could say we're lost in the woods together.

DEBARGO

I guess you could.

CHEN CHI

I've never been lost in the woods.

DEBARGO

Neither have I.

CHEN CHI

I'm glad I'm not alone.

DEBARGO

So am I.

I like nature,

but I'm a little bit afraid of it.

CHEN CHI

Well, sure.

DEBARGO

Of the dark parts especially.

I'd like nature better if it were better lit.

I think everyone is, you know,  
basically afraid of the dark.

Even amoebas.

I mean, every life form,  
you take them out of the light  
and they begin to feel some anxiety.

I do.

CHEN CHI

I do.

DEBARGO

Light, basically, is how you orient yourself  
and a person without a sense of orientation

I mean, if you don't know where you are  
and where you're going

and about where you are on the line of the place where you are  
and the destination where you're going  
a person begins to freak out.

I think that's why

in jazz

they always play the melody at the top  
and then

once you know the tune

you think: right, let them riff

because I know where I am

and I know that, in the end,

they're going to come back to the melody

You know what I mean?

CHEN CHI

Well.

Sure.

DEBARGO

It's like  
a love story  
you can just get lost in a love story because  
we know  
whatever happens along the way  
we might get confused or we might get lost  
or it's on again off again  
and it goes down some blind alley  
but that's how real life is  
that's how it really is to be in love  
sometimes you never know  
sometimes it seems like it is just drifting  
or it becomes hopeless  
but it doesn't matter  
because in the end  
with a love story  
you know  
either they are going to get together  
or they're not.

CHEN CHI

Right.

[silence]

Do you think  
you could ever live in the woods?

DEBARGO

You mean, forever?

CHEN CHI

Well, for a long time.  
Say, like five years.

[silence]

DEBARGO

Five years.

[silence]

With you?

[silence]

CHEN CHI

Oh.

Oh.

Okay.

With me.

[silence]

DEBARGO

Yes.

[silence]

CHEN CHI

Oh.

DEBARGO

I've thought about it before  
living in the country  
because that would be beautiful  
and I've always found it frightening  
cut off from the world  
as it seems to me  
all alone  
and  
with nothing to do  
but wait to get to be eighty years old  
or ninety

and die.

You know, you might have thought you were going to be a doctor  
or go to the moon  
or just have a nice civil service job  
a career and all the ordinary stuff of life  
not throw it away on a great sort of romantic gamble  
like you think

oh

I'd like to go to the country for the weekend  
but to just fling myself out into the universe  
and drift among the stars  
and have this be my destiny  
take the gamble that this would be a meaningful life  
and one you would really like forever  
the only life you have.

I mean, not that I'm a morbid person  
but, you know, it seems to me,  
if you're out there alone  
maybe with a farm and fields and trees  
and the night sky, the stars  
you start to think pretty quickly  
how you're all alone  
and you just have your life on earth  
and then it's over  
and it hasn't been much more than a wink  
in the life of the stars  
and you haven't done anything  
that you think is worth an entire life on earth  
so I've always felt a lot safer living in the city  
where you can't see the stars at night.

CHEN CHI

Unh-hunh.

DEBARGO

There you have your friends and things to do  
you get all caught up  
and it's fun  
I'm not against having fun

what I mean is  
going to movies, having dinner, hanging out  
you can forget entirely that you're a mortal person  
it seems: this could go on forever  
until, I suppose, you meet someone, and you think:

[silence]

I could live with you forever in the woods.  
And that would be a life.

[silence.

She starts to back away from him.]

Or not, you know. Or not.

I didn't mean to come on so strong.

I just start talking, and I don't know when to stop.

CHEN CHI  
Stop.

DEBARGO  
Right.

CHEN CHI  
Good.

Maybe we could just take a walk in the woods.

DEBARGO  
Right. Good.  
Good idea.  
Let's do that.

CHEN CHI  
Like,

right after we have a cup of coffee.

DEBARGO

OK.

Good.

[They leave,  
and another couple enters.]

BOB

Do I know you?

CAROL

No.

BOB

That is to say,  
have we met before?

CAROL

Do you think we have?

BOB

You don't?

CAROL

Do you think  
we've made love in the past?

BOB

Wouldn't you remember that?

CAROL

Would I?

BOB

What would it take for you to remember?

CAROL

Something extraordinary?

BOB

Some extraordinary night of making love?

CAROL

Of falling in love?

BOB

The love of your life?

CAROL

A love you thought you would never have?

BOB

that would never be returned?

CAROL

that would never last?

BOB

Aren't you an odd sort of person?

CAROL

That's why I'm drawn to you.

BOB

I have to admit

I like a woman who has

delicate shoulders

and red hair

CAROL

and a flat nose

BOB

some people would think her plain

CAROL

or even tough looking

BOB

with her prize-fighter's nose

CAROL

and her small chest

BOB

but she's sweet, too, and shy

CAROL

and wants never to be damaged

BOB

and I would never damage her  
never raise my hand against her  
never raise my voice in speaking to her  
I would be as steadfast as she is

I would undress her with great care

CAROL

and touch her very gently

BOB

and hold her through the night

CAROL

and let her live exactly as she would like

BOB

I would let her be free

CAROL

let her choose her own way of living

BOB

and I would dote on her

CAROL

and be there for her

BOB

whenever she would turn to me

CAROL

whatever it was that she would ask

BOB

I would give to her

CAROL

and when the time came that she no longer wanted me

BOB

I would let her go lightly

CAROL

or if she wished never to leave me

BOB

I would give my life to her

[He reaches out

and takes her hand,

and they leave together.

A single guy enters.

He whistles a super loud whistle.

Waits a minute.

Whistles again.

Waits.

Whistles again.

Waits.

And now he shouts.

HE

Hello!

[Waits.]

Hello!

[Waits.]

Hello!

[Waits.

Shouts again.]

I'm here!

[Whistles]

Here I am!

[Whistles]

I'm here!

[Whistles]

[Waits.

Leaves.]

[Another couple enters.

Two guys.]

EDMUND

I think you are lying to me, Herbert.

You are always lying to me

because you wish something would be true

but it isn't.

You are a weak spineless person, Herbert,  
feckless, feeble and ineffective.

But I love you like a cicada.

HERBERT

A cicada?

EDMUND

Yes.

HERBERT

Like a grasshopper you mean?

EDMUND

Do you know what a cicada is?

HERBERT

I thought I did.

EDMUND

There was a time long ago, in prehistoric times  
when cicadas were human beings  
back before the Muses were born.  
And then when the Muses were born  
and song came into being  
some of these human creatures were so taken by the pleasure of it  
that they sang and sang and sang.  
And they forgot to eat or drink  
they just sang and sang  
and so,  
before they knew it,  
they died.

And from those human creatures a new species came into being  
the cicadas  
and they were given this special gift from the Muses:  
that from the time they are born

they need no nourishment  
they just sing continuously  
caught forever in the pleasure of the moment  
without eating or drinking  
until they die.

This is the story of love.  
If you stay there forever in that place  
you die of it.

That's why people  
can't stay in love.

But that's how I've loved you.  
And how I love you now.  
And how I always will.

[They reach out  
and hold hands,  
take a moment,  
and then leave together.

Three guys enter on their hands and knees.  
They are wearing underwear.  
And they are on leashes.  
The leashes are held by a young woman  
with a whip.

THE YOUNG WOMAN

This way!  
This way!

No.  
THIS way.

THIS way.

[she lashes them with the whip]

No no!!!  
This way.

[she lashes them with the whip]

Come on.

Here we go!

[she lashes them with the whip]

This way!

[she lashes them with the whip]

Okay.

[Two women enter.]

SUMIKO  
I'm glad to see you again.

CATHERINE  
So you say.  
And yet  
I don't know how it could be true.

SUMIKO  
How could it not be true?

CATHERINE  
Because if you were glad to see me  
you would never have left me.

SUMIKO  
Of course I would.

CATHERINE

No, because  
if you love someone  
you don't leave them.  
You hold onto them for dear life  
you hold onto them forever  
unless you are a stupid person  
which I don't think you are  
so  
what else can I think  
except you never really loved me  
I was just another one of your flings along the way  
whereas I loved you  
I knew  
if you love someone  
you don't let them go

SUMIKO

And yet you did.

CATHERINE

I never did.

SUMIKO

You said:  
if one day you are going to leave me  
then go now  
don't just keep tormenting me.

CATHERINE

And so?

SUMIKO

And so.  
It's not that I left you.

CATHERINE

Excuse me.  
I didn't leave you.

And yet, you are not with me.  
What else happened?

SUMIKO  
It turned out  
we were at different points in our lives  
we couldn't go on.

CATHERINE  
I could have gone on.

SUMIKO  
Shall we talk about something else?

CATHERINE  
I see  
in the world  
people have wars and they die  
entire countries come to an end  
Etienne has died of cancer

SUMIKO  
I didn't know.

CATHERINE  
How could you?  
And yet  
there it is.  
And one day I will die  
and so will you.  
And yet  
you could leave me.  
I don't understand.  
I will never understand  
how it is if you have only one life to live  
and you find your own true love

the person all your life you were meant to find  
and your only job then was to cherish that person  
and care for that person  
and never let go  
but it turns out  
you can still think  
for some reason  
because this or that  
you end it  
you end it forever  
you end it for the only life you will ever live on earth.  
Maybe if you would be reincarnated  
and you could come back to life again and again a dozen times  
then this would make sense  
to throw away your only chance for love in this life  
because you would have another chance in another life  
but when this is your only chance  
how can this make sense?

Do you think  
there will ever be a time  
when we could get back together?

SUMIKO  
No.

CATHERINE  
Not ever?

SUMIKO  
No.

CATHERINE  
Not ever at all  
even ever?

SUMIKO  
No.

CATHERINE

And yet  
this is so hard for me to accept.

[Sumiko stands to leave]

SUMIKO

I love you, Catherine.  
I have never loved anyone in my life as I have loved you  
and I know I never will.  
But we cannot be together.

[She leaves;  
Catherine watches her go  
and then walks determinedly after her.

A woman enters wearing a pair of red boxing gloves.  
She goes through a series of punches, dodges,  
glove hitting glove,  
ducking, and so forth

as a couple enters  
tied together with rope.  
They both have a loop of rope around their heads  
so that the rope is in their mouths,  
making it impossible to talk so we can understand them.  
Still, they are talking.

Another couple passes through  
wearing chicken suits.

Everyone stops to watch  
when a guy comes in with some wagons full of trash,  
as he parks one wagon on one side of the stage,  
the other wagon on the other side of the stage,  
a third wagon center stage,  
and he works a little bit at arranging the trash  
perfectly in the wagons.

It is installation art.

He steps back, looks at the wagons,  
and the wagons begin to speak,  
so he leaves.

The wagons speak a scene from Romeo and Juliet  
as everyone else stands and looks at the wagons  
and listens to them:

JULIET

How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?  
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,  
And the place death, considering who thou art,  
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

ROMEO

With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls;  
For stony limits cannot hold love out,  
And what love can do that dares love attempt;  
Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me.

JULIET

If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

ROMEO

Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye  
Than twenty of their swords: look thou but sweet,  
And I am proof against their enmity.

JULIET

I would not for the world they saw thee here.

ROMEO

I have night's cloak to hide me from their sight;  
And but thou love me, let them find me here:  
My life were better ended by their hate,  
Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.

JULIET

By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

ROMEO

By love, who first did prompt me to inquire;

He lent me counsel and I lent him eyes.

I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far

As that vast shore wash'd with the farthest sea,

I would adventure for such merchandise.

JULIET

Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,

Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek

For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night

Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny

What I have spoke: but farewell compliment!

Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say 'Ay,'

And I will take thy word: yet if thou swear'st,

Thou mayst prove false; at lovers' perjuries

Then say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,

If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:

Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,

I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay,

So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.

In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,

And therefore thou mayst think my 'havior light:

But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true

Than those that have more cunning to be strange.

I should have been more strange, I must confess,

But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,

My true love's passion: therefore pardon me,

And not impute this yielding to light love,

Which the dark night hath so discovered.

ROMEO

Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear

That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops—

JULIET

O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon,  
That monthly changes in her circled orb,  
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

ROMEO

What shall I swear by?

JULIET

Do not swear at all;  
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,  
Which is the god of my idolatry,  
And I'll believe thee.

ROMEO

If my heart's dear love—

JULIET

Well, do not swear: although I joy in thee,  
I have no joy of this contract to-night:  
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden;  
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be  
Ere one can say 'It lightens.' Sweet, good night!  
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,  
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.  
Good night, good night! as sweet repose and rest  
Come to thy heart as that within my breast!

ROMEO

O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

JULIET

What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?

ROMEO

The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

JULIET

I gave thee mine before thou didst request it:  
And yet I would it were to give again.

ROMEO

Wouldst thou withdraw it? for what purpose, love?

JULIET

But to be frank, and give it thee again.

And yet I wish but for the thing I have:

My bounty is as boundless as the sea,

My love as deep; the more I give to thee,

The more I have, for both are infinite.

[And now the installation art begins singing opera

A woman in a red dress

enters, dancing solo

with a floor lamp

with a lampshade made of underpants

Our couples who have been watching each other

and watching the installation art guy install his art

now join in the dancing

dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing

And Adam and Evie join the dancing.

So the singing and dancing continue  
singing and dancing  
and occasionally throwing themselves to the ground  
and occasionally throwing themselves to the ground

and a guy bends over to a woman who is on the ground  
and locks lips with her  
and “pulls her up” with his locked lips

and this happens again and again

guys picking up women  
women picking up men  
men picking up men

women picking up women

a solo guy turns front and takes a dance posture  
and flexes his bicep  
he flexes his bicep to the music  
5 guys join him in bicep flexing dance  
all in unison  
then they all do a hip thrust  
very macho  
then turns upstage and wiggle their butts  
doing the butt dance  
(not SO macho)  
they move through other male display dance moves  
finger snapping, etc

then three women step up and do the same male display moves

a woman lifts her dress up above her head  
hiding her upper body entirely  
exposing herself from the waist down  
and takes a long, slow exit

others all dance out

until only Adam and Evie are left behind.

EVIE

You know I like to cook

ADAM

Oh

EVIE

And I like to make apricot confiture

ADAM

Wow

EVIE

And I straighten up  
but not right away

and usually I live in a mess  
but then I straighten up later on  
only it's not always straightened up.

ADAM

Right.

EVIE

I do dishes, and I do laundry,  
but I'm not good at really cleaning.

ADAM

Unh-hunh.

EVIE

So that's how it is if you live with me  
that's how it will be  
that's all.  
I just wanted, if we're going to be together, you know,  
for everything to be clear.

ADAM

Right.

EVIE

So you understand about laundry and dishes  
and not straightening up  
and there are no surprises  
like you're not suddenly going to discover  
oh, she doesn't straighten up  
this will never work out  
because I can't stand a mess  
I'm sorry I wish I could

I wish I could just rise above it  
but chaos makes me crazy  
I just fall apart  
and I can't go on living with you.

ADAM  
Like that.

EVIE  
Right. That's not how it is for me.  
Because, moving in with you,  
this is a big deal for me,  
and I don't want there to be any misunderstandings  
because this is a big move for me  
and I don't think  
after I do this  
that there will be any going back  
I mean, if a year from now you were to say  
oh, you never straighten up  
I don't think I can live with that  
the point is  
I think I'd shoot you.

ADAM  
Right.

EVIE  
That's how it is for me.

ADAM  
That's it?

EVIE  
Yes.

ADAM  
That's all.

EVIE

Yes. I don't think there's anything else. I think that's everything.

ADAM

The truth is

I can do the laundry, too, and I do dishes.

EVIE

Oh.

ADAM

So, I think everything's going to be OK.

EVIE

Oh. Good. Good. That's good then.

ADAM

Right.

Plus, I cook, too.

EVIE

You cook, too.

ADAM

Right.

EVIE

Oh.

ADAM

Plus, I love you like crazy.

EVIE

Oh,

you do.

Oh, good.

Good.

That's good then.

I can accept that.

[Bonnie, Jim, and Phil  
enter together, talking.]

BONNIE

What is a man, really?

A man is a vibrator with a wallet.

A man is an unresponsive lump of flesh

obsessed with screwing,

incapable of empathy,

love,

friendship,

affection,

or tenderness—

a half-dead isolated unit that will swim a river of snot,

wade nostril-deep through a mile of vomit

if he thinks there'll be a friendly cunt waiting for him at the other end.

A man

is a creature who will fuck mud if he can.

JIM

Oh.

Oh.

And then these women wonder why

a man would prefer masturbation to marriage.

PHIL

I know some guys who like electronic masturbation.

JIM

What?

PHIL

You know, you take some electrodes

and some low-power, carefully controlled electric current,

run that through your genitals  
and you'll get some very interesting tingling and  
throbbing sensations.

JIM

And why do you want to do that  
when you can masturbate with your hand?

PHIL

You ask that because you've never done it.  
You'll get something very different with electronic stimulation.  
You get yourself a stereo audio amplifier,  
with 1 to 5 watts per channel of output power.  
A tone generator of some sort.  
An electronic music synthesizer like Casio or Yamaha.  
You don't want to use an electric guitar,  
which could put a current through your whole torso.

You set the amp control to MINIMUM.  
Set your tone source to produce a continuous tone of about 440 Hz:  
that's the "A" above "middle C" on a musical keyboard.  
Insert the small loop electrode just inside your urethra.  
SLOWLY turn up the amplifier's volume control.  
Then you can play the "A above middle C" on the left channel,  
and play the "A" an octave lower on the right channel.  
Or play "C" on one channel  
and the adjacent "C sharp" on the other channel.  
Play a steady  
tone on the left channel  
and do a downward "glissando" on the right channel.  
You know: fool around.  
It's just like any other kind of sex:  
it's not always the same.

[The three of them keep walking and leave.  
Salome enters.

She speaks directly to the audience  
as she fixes her shoes.]

SALOME

I had a friend:  
when she first met her husband  
he was preoccupied with young girls.  
All the time.  
Paul. His name was Paul.  
Looking at pictures of them.  
Looking at them on the street.  
To her it seemed strange.  
And, then, the first time she helped him get a young girl into the car  
to take her home,  
she was,  
my friend was,  
well,  
quivering,  
a knot in her stomach,  
that sick excited sensation.

After that it was easy.  
I don't mean she doesn't still get excited,  
but it was never again like the first time.  
The first time is always different, with everything.  
I mean,  
obviously.

You might say  
I'd never do such a thing  
how do you know?  
you say: because that's not the kind of person I am  
But you don't know.  
Because one day you will do something  
and then you will find out what sort of person you are.

[she smiles]

You see a woman when she is grown up

you see how she has turned out  
and you think then you could say, oh, right  
this was inevitable  
the way she grew up  
you could tell how she would turn out  
this is the person she would be  
because Freud bla bla bla  
and the social dynamics  
her background bla bla  
hindsight is so good  
all the theories of hindsight are foolproof  
but you don't know  
you never know—  
she could be a hundred people  
before she's through with her life  
that's how it is these days

As a child  
I thought about numbers a lot.  
First there was the question  
could a woman have several husbands all at the same time  
or only one after the other?  
And then, as the years went by,  
I thought about how many children a woman might have.  
And then,  
a few weeks after I lost my virginity  
I had group sex.  
There were five of us altogether,  
three boys and two girls.

[she stops and smiles—  
a bright, engaging, innocent smile]

We were finishing our lunch in a garden  
on a hill above Lyon.  
It was in June or July  
it was hot  
and somebody suggested that we take off all our clothes  
and jump into the pond.

I could hear Andre saying  
his girlfriend would be with us in just a minute  
but his voice sounded a little muffled  
because I already had my T-shirt over my head  
and then, in the end,  
no one went in the water.  
Andre fucked me first  
quite slowly and calmly  
which was his way.  
And then Ringo came and took his place on top of me.  
Ringo's body was different from Andre's  
and I liked it better.  
Ringo was taller, wiry,  
he was one of those men who can isolate  
the action of his pelvis from the rest of his body,  
so that he could thrust without smothering a woman,  
supporting his torso with his arms.

you look at history  
not to know how things are going to be  
and not for the rules of how things have to be  
but to tell you that  
the way things are is not the way they always have been  
or the only way they can be

and now  
looking back  
whatever there has been  
it's all available to us now  
to pick and choose  
have one of these and one of those  
and make a life of that

[Nora and Torvald enter.]

NORA  
Torvald, look what I got.

TORVALD

What you got?

You mean you bought all this?

NORA

You know

this is the first time we can let ourselves go a little bit,  
when we don't need to think all the time about economizing.

TORVALD

Yes, well,

still

we don't want to be spending money recklessly.

NORA

Maybe we can be just

a little bit more reckless?

You're going to have a big salary now.

TORVALD

Well, bonuses and so forth.

But not quite what we can count on just yet.

Meanwhile, thinking of the cash flow...

NORA

We can just borrow till the bonuses come along.

TORVALD

Nora!

Are we featherheads?

Suppose I borrow a thousand dollars today

and you spend it all this week

and then a piece of cornice falls from a building

and hits me on the head

NORA

No, Torvald, no,

please  
don't talk like that.

TORVALD  
Still, suppose it happened....

NORA  
Well, if that happened  
then I wouldn't care whether I owed money or not.

TORVALD  
And what about the people who had loaned the money?

NORA  
I don't think I'll bother about them.  
I don't even know them.

TORVALD  
I don't want to say:  
this is like a woman.

NORA  
Then don't.

TORVALD  
No.  
Still, you know what I think.  
No debt, no borrowing.  
There's no freedom about a life that depends on borrowing and debt.

NORA [sad, repentant]  
I'm sorry, Torvald.

TORVALD  
Oh, well, please, Nora, not so sad.  
My little skylark musn't droop her wings.  
My little squirrel musn't be disheartened.

Look.

Look what I have for you.

NORA  
Money!

TORVALD  
Yes. Of course.  
Do you think I don't know at all  
a household needs a budget.

NORA  
Oh, thank you, Torvald!  
This will keep me going for a long time.

TORVALD  
Well, yes, I hope so.

NORA  
Yes, yes, it will.  
But look,  
let me show you what I've bought.

It's a doll  
and a doll's bedstead for Emily.

TORVALD  
Ah!  
Lovely.  
Very nice.  
Thank you, Nora.  
And now, one little favor.  
You need to tell me what you would like for yourself.

NORA  
For myself? Oh, thank you, Torvald,  
but I don't want anything.

TORVALD

Well, but you must.

Tell me something you would particularly like to have.

NORA

Really, I can't think of anything—  
unless....

TORVALD

Yes?

NORA

If you really want to give me something,  
you might give me money.  
Only just as much as you can afford;  
and then one of these days I will buy something with it.

TORVALD

But, Nora.

NORA

Oh, do, Torvald, please do.  
Then I will wrap it up in beautiful gilt paper.  
And then I'll have time to think  
what I most want.

TORVALD

Alright.  
Okay.

[They leave.

A woman in a full length black evening dress comes out  
with a microphone  
and speaks to the audience.]

THE WOMAN

Act one, scene one.

Tantalus, a mortal friend of the gods,  
decides to test their omniscience.

He kills his own son, Pelops,  
chops him up and boils him,  
and plans to feed him to the gods as animal meat.

Scene two.

The gods realize the truth and are horrified;  
they put the pieces of the boy back together—  
and send Tantalus to Hades.

Scene three.

Tortured by thirst,  
Tantalus stands in water that reaches only to his chin.  
Food just out of his reach.  
Tantalized forever.

Act two, scene one.

Pelops grows up and falls in love with Hippodamia.  
But the father of Hippodamia,  
in order to test potential suitors,  
has declared that anyone who wants to marry his daughter  
must first beat him in a chariot race.

Scene two.

The crafty Pelops strikes a secret bargain  
with the father's personal charioteer:  
if the charioteer will sabotage the father's chariot,  
Pelops will let the charioteer sleep with Hippodamia on the wedding night. The charioteer  
agrees,  
Hippodamia's father is killed during the race,  
and Pelops marries Hippodamia.

Scene three.

But on the wedding night,  
Pelops changes his mind  
and refuses to give his bride to the charioteer.  
The charioteer tries to rape Hippodamia  
and so Pelops throws him off a cliff.

As he falls to his death,  
the charioteer curses Pelops  
and all his descendants—  
as though they needed another curse.

Act three, scene one.  
Pelops has two sons,  
Atreus and Thyestes,  
and, the two sons fight  
over who will inherit the throne of Mycenae.  
Atreus wins the kingdom—  
but Thyestes revenges himself by sleeping with Atreus's wife.

Scene two.  
Atreus exiles Thyestes.  
But then, under the pretense of making up,  
Atreus invites his brother Thyestes home for dinner.  
For the menu that night,  
Atreus kills the sons of Thyestes,  
cooks them,  
and serves them to their father with a robust red wine.  
After dinner, he asks Thyestes if he knows what he has eaten—  
and the servants present Thyestes  
with the heads and hands of his own sons.

[she starts to leave]

Scene three.  
Thyestes runs out of the house.  
He asks the Delphic Oracle how he can be revenged.  
The oracle tells him the only way is he must have a child  
by his own daughter Pelopia.  
That night, Thyestes sees his daughter going into a nearby stream.  
He rapes her and abandons her.

Scene four...

[she is gone]

an elderly Italian woman comes out  
singing an Italian folk song  
singing an Italian folk song

another woman in an elegant black dress  
with a blood red face  
does a wild wild dance to the folk song  
and smears red lipstick all over her face  
and then throws herself to the ground on her back over and over and over  
she becomes covered with dust  
as she kicks and writhes wildly on the ground on her back  
like a cockroach frantic on its back

and now a church choir sings Gregorian chant dirge  
as another woman in a black dress and also a black veil  
enters up center and comes all the way slowly down center  
holding a bouquet of flowers in front of her  
motionless in every way except her walking very slowly  
to lay the bouquet flowers on the ground  
her eyes are streaming tears of blood

and, finally, everyone exits,  
leaving our couple by themselves.

Our couple is dumbfounded by all they have just seen.  
Finally Evie speaks to Adam.]

EVIE

I've been thinking of us being together  
and what I thought was  
the mental picture that came to mind was  
I walked into Dean and Deluca  
and I saw that the man in front of me was sweating and  
twitching  
and just then all of the automatic doors slid shut  
and the lights started blinking.  
The man was shooting at the produce  
and screaming instructions that no one understood.  
So I started interpreting for him  
because I could tell what he must have meant.  
And everyone got down on the floor on their stomachs  
and crawled toward the corners.

They were sleeping in the stairwells and the hallways and  
on the bathroom floors.

People started to get sick.

Each night 10 or 15 of the sick old men  
were taken to the spare bedroom  
and told to lie down in a clump.

The men with machine guns said  
that they would fire one bullet per person into the clump  
and if anyone managed to live they could live.

But when they opened fire  
they just kept on shooting until everyone was hit.

You came in and led me to the bathroom.

You sat me down on the toilet and gave me 10 punchlines  
and told me to come up with the jokes that went with them.

I matched them up correctly  
and then you added in some homeopathic remedies  
where you said the herb  
and I had to say what it cured.

I ran through the back wall into the garden

where all of my friends were having a lingerie dinner party.

Everyone was dressed in long silk gowns.

The tables were covered with silk pajamas and robes sewn together.

And then it started raining  
and everyone ran around grabbing the silk and disappearing.  
So I ran for the elevator  
but when the doors closed we saw the elevator rolling away  
and we were on an Amish school bus.  
All of the kids and teachers were smiling at us and clapping.

The driver let me off at the elephant trainer's  
and he said he would take me back on his elephant.

So I climbed up on his back  
and he started walking  
and just a few steps down the road  
he turned his head around and wrapped his trunk around my waist  
and said that he had fallen in love with me  
and he wouldn't ever let go.

What do you think that means?

[silence

a guy in his underpants,  
wearing a crown of red flowers,  
enters dancing  
enters dancing  
enters dancing  
enters dancing  
enters dancing

music

he is joined by a woman in her underwear and  
she dances, too  
she dances, too

and several more men and women in their underwear  
enter dancing  
enter dancing  
enter dancing  
enter dancing  
enter dancing  
enter dancing

Our couple joins the dancing

dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing  
dancing

And, after a while, everyone is exhausted  
and sits or lies down on the ground.

Silence, and then:

HORNER

I love you, June,  
as I've never loved anyone before.  
I thought  
when I saw you on the airplane  
the way you drank your cup of tea  
I'd never seen such sweetness  
such delicacy  
and more than that  
such balance  
when the airplane hit that air pocket  
and everyone bounced around  
and the way you talked to me  
I could listen to you forever  
I could wrap myself up inside your voice  
so gentle  
and so strong, too,  
and resilience  
that's what I hear in your voice  
a sense of who you are  
and yet a respect for the person you are talking to  
the truth is:  
you are my model human being.

JUNE

And you  
now I know why I haven't been married  
because I've been looking for you  
all these years  
I knew I was right  
even though I had no idea  
I would be happy just to sit with you  
in an airplane for the rest of my life  
my shoulder pressed against yours  
and to hear you laugh  
because more than anything  
I love it when you laugh

because nothing is more important  
than the things that make a person laugh or smile  
because your sense of humor  
that's something you can't help  
you can pretend you know something about novels  
or you can pretend to be considerate  
but a sense of humor is something you can't fake  
what gets to you  
what strikes you in a certain way  
it's just spontaneously how you are  
when you're not thinking  
and I saw you  
all the way from Los Angeles to New York  
smiling and smiling  
and I knew  
I had to have you.

HORNER

Why didn't you say so?

JUNE

I'm a shy person.

Why didn't you?

HORNER

Because you said  
you were coming to New York to get married.

JUNE

Oh. Right.

HORNER

And now  
what shall we do?  
I knew a guy once who married his sister by mistake.

JUNE

You did?

HORNER

Because his sister was marrying a guy from India  
and they got married in India  
and my friend's job at the wedding  
was to carry the leis  
because in India  
the way they get married is  
they don't exchange rings  
but they put flower leis around each other's necks  
and so the time came in the ceremony  
for my friend to hand the leis to the bride and groom  
but he got confused  
and he put the lei around his sister's neck  
so  
officially  
they were married.  
So, I'm thinking,  
we could do that.

JUNE

You mean  
you could be the ring bearer  
but instead of giving the ring to the groom  
you could put it on my finger

HORNER

Right.

JUNE

And kiss me.

HORNER

Right.

[a moment's silence;

then:

he kisses her.

BEATRICE

Daily life.

Things that happen you never planned on  
when you got up in the morning.

Things you think have nothing to do with you  
and yet

that's where you are

that's where you live.

that's the water you're swimming in.

that's the woods you're wandering in.

that's the conversation you're walking through.

Sometimes in life

you look for love

but then

with everything going on

you think:

How can anyone find their way?

How do we get through our lives?

Find our way to one another?

HENRY

Right.

BEATRICE

Right.

HENRY

Find our way to one another.

BEATRICE

Right.

[He kisses her.]

EMILY

I could live with you.  
we could get a little house just on the edge of St. Remy  
with a little swimming pool  
it wouldn't have to be so big, so expensive  
because we'd have the whole town for themselves  
all the cafes  
the little streets to wander down  
the craft fair on the weekends  
with little things to buy for not much money  
and that restaurant tucked into that little street

BOB

I wouldn't mind  
going back to that café in St. Remy  
where I had lunch  
sitting outdoors  
where I first saw you.

EMILY

The one on the corner  
with the carousel across the street?

BOB

Oh, right!  
Sure!  
That one, too!  
I was thinking of the one  
a little further around the circle  
next to the store where they have postcards  
with the pictures of the lavender fields.

EMILY

Or the one right next to it  
with the canopy over the sidewalk.

BOB

Or even the one further down  
set back from the sidewalk, behind the stone wall

with the little garden.

EMILY

Or the one  
all the way back around the circle  
the one with the carousel inside.

BOB

The one with the carousel inside.  
Right.  
Sure.  
Well,  
that's my favorite.

EMILY

And then you sit there  
and see the other people passing by  
and you hear them talk  
and you think:  
they have lives, too.  
Your life is not the only life.  
There are a lot of lives.  
We could just go to all of the cafes.

BOB

In one afternoon?

EMILY

Well, in a few afternoons,  
if we just keep going around the circle.

BOB

Okay.  
I'd like that.  
That's my idea of a perfect life.

HORNER

I would say probably  
the beach  
and sitting in a café in Athens  
those would be a couple of my favorite things  
and then spending some time in an old farmhouse  
in Umbria  
overlooking the vineyards and the olive trees  
eating all our meals in the big kitchen  
where the Italians always have the big table  
and hearing the neighbors over in the next orchard  
having a shouting argument over their wine with dinner

#### MERIDEE

there are people who still want to love each other  
and be together  
and not just halfway,  
not just keeping one foot out on the river bank  
ready to say at any moment  
ok, forget it,  
I guess we grew apart  
save yourself, I'm out of here  
but they want to say  
no, I'm going all the way with you  
I'm here with you forever  
I want to make this commitment to you  
people still want to do this  
because  
no matter what we've seen in our lifetimes  
this is still a universal human desire  
the desire for love forever  
and people still want to give themselves to that  
and notice it  
and mark it with a special occasion  
so that when they die  
it doesn't seem like the most important thing in their lives  
was—what?—having their appendix out?

because everyone made such a big deal about that?  
and love IS an important thing  
it may be a necessary thing even  
for the world to go on  
and so, the wedding guests are there  
because when people make this promise to one another  
it's a happy occasion  
and the most important one  
and people like to share it.  
And leave town before the misery begins.

#### THE GROOM

Sometimes I think  
I would like to take you in my arms  
and we would lie down on the back of a chicken  
and fly up into the clouds.

#### THE BRIDE

You could do that.

#### THE GROOM

And take you to the south of France  
like they were saying  
to St. Remy  
with all the sunflowers  
and the glass of rose wine  
when we have lunch at that little restaurant  
that has a children's carousel in the main dining room  
and a toy car big enough for two kids to sit in together  
and the camping trailer  
you can sit inside and have them serve you lunch there  
but we would sit outside  
under the trellis  
so that we could see the sheep  
on the day that they have the running of the sheep  
through the town?

THE BRIDE

Yes.

THE BRIDE

Would you take me in your arms  
and lie down in that big overstuffed easy chair  
in the shape of a fat man?

THE GROOM

Well, yes!

THE BRIDE

Sometimes I feel like ten lightbulbs on the ends of the wires  
twisting out from the ceiling.

THE GROOM

The lightbulbs with wings?

THE BRIDE

Yes.

Or

I could be a bed filled with butterflies.

THE GROOM

I could be a little chair  
made of metal strips  
that make a little protective circle around a newly planted tree  
where you could sit and enjoy protecting the tree.

THE BRIDE

I could be a yellow haystack in a field for you.

EDMUND

I could be a dog,  
thirty feet tall,  
made all of flowers.

HAROLD

I could be an old wooden horse-drawn cart  
with big spoke wheels  
upended in a cobblestone street.

EDITH

I could be a boutique of antique corsets.

CATHERINE

I could be winged victory.

SUMIKO

I could be white birch tree trunks in a giant ice cube  
melting in the sun.

STEVE

Did you ever have a peacock?

EDITH

No.

STEVE

I'd like to get a peacock for you.

EDITH

I'd like that.

MUSIC

MUSIC

MUSIC

MUSIC

MUSIC

MUSIC

MUSIC

MUSIC

MUSIC

A woman in a red dress  
enters, dancing solo  
with a floor lamp  
with a lampshade made of underpants

And everyone randomly gets up  
and begins to sing and dance again—  
like the immense song and dance time they had before  
but with lots of new airs and variations

dancing  
dancing

And Adam and Evie join the dancing.

So the singing and dancing continue  
singing and dancing  
and occasionally throwing themselves to the ground  
and occasionally throwing themselves to the ground

and a guy bends over to a woman who is on the ground  
and locks lips with her  
and “pulls her up” with his locked lips

and this happens again and again

guys picking up women  
women picking up men  
men picking up men  
women picking up women

a solo guy turns front and takes a dance posture  
and flexes his bicep  
he flexes his bicep to the music  
5 guys join him in bicep flexing dance  
all in unison  
then they all do a hip thrust  
very macho  
then turns upstage and wiggle their butts  
doing the butt dance  
(not SO macho)  
they move through other male display dance moves  
finger snapping, etc

then three women step up and do the same male display moves

a woman lifts her dress up above her head  
hiding her upper body entirely  
exposing herself from the waist down  
and takes a long, slow exit

others all dance out

until only Adam and Evie are left behind.

ADAM

Did you ever have a peacock?

EVIE

No.

ADAM

I'd like to get a peacock for you.

EVIE

I'd like that.

I love you, with all my heart.

I love your hands and your kneecaps and your hair and your ears

and I love the way you are sweet when you are sweet

and the way you fuck up

because even when you fuck up

and it makes me so mad

you are actually so incompetent at it

such a wild, untargeted loser that I love you

because I think the reason you are such a loser

is that your heart is good

and so you can't hit the bullseye

when you are acting like a nasty shit

so that people don't have to take it seriously

and they can just wait till you realize

how wrong you've been

and also right

also right

because I don't think you are a pathetic loser

that people love out of pity

or because they want to be with some weak

useless guy they can manipulate

you really are a winner

because of your heart

which is always there

and when you come around

we all see it

and see you always were a good human being.

ADAM

More than anything  
I love to lie in bed with you at night  
and look at your naked back  
and stroke your back slowly  
from your neck to your coccyx  
and let my fingers fan out  
and drift over your smooth buttock  
and slip slowly down along your thigh  
to your sweet knee  
only to return again  
coming up the back of your thigh  
hesitating a moment  
to let my fingers rest in the sweet valley  
at the very top of your thigh, just below your buttock  
and so slowly up along the small of your back  
to your shoulder blade  
and then to let your hair tickle my face  
as I put my lips to your shoulder  
and kiss you and kiss you and kiss you forever  
this is what I call heaven  
and what I hope will last forever

Music.  
They leave holding hands.

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