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Funny Little Thing

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Funny Little Thing

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Characters:

Iris: Female. Young Adult. Southern.

Sam: Male. Adult.

Heather: Female. Adult.

Jessica: Female. Adult.

Justine: Female. Adult. Ditzzy.

Megan: Female. Adult.

Polly: Female. Adult. Cranky.

Margaret: Female. Adult.

Priest: Female. Adult. A lot like Man.

Man: Female. Adult. A lot like Priest.

Paula: Female. Older. A bit ridiculous.

Wilmer: Male. Older. A bit less ridiculous.

*Jessica, Justine, Megan, Polly, Margaret, Man, and Priest are all played by the same actress.

[Wilmer and Paula rock together in two rocking chairs center stage.]

We met in the winter of '60.

Wilmer

'59.

Paula

'60, I was working at the mill.

Wilmer

Yes. dear, you're right. It was '60.

Paula

Right and I was working a the mill.

Wilmer

I was not.

Paula

No you weren't.

Wilmer

No sir.

Paula

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And then we bought the Cafe. Wilmer

Sure did. Paula

And here we are all these years later. Wilmer

50 years later. It's like nothing has changed. Paula

But, I don't work at the mill anymore, Wilmer

No dear, you don't. Paula

Oh well. Wilmer

[A bell dings, Paula stands.]

Pie's ready. [Waddles offstage] Paula

[Blackout]

[Sam sits alone at a table in a diner. He's a bit frazzled. Heather is his waitress, she stands with an apron and a small pad of paper she writes on.]

How can I help you? Heather

I'm on a blind date. Sam

Uh . . . Coffee? Heather

Yeah. Sam

Right up—[Sam stops her] Heather

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Wait—I don't like coffee.	Sam
Tea?	Heather
I don't know what to do.	Sam
Well, first you'll have to decide on a beverage.	Heather
What?	Sam
Something to drink?	Heather
Oh, I shouldn't have done this.	Sam
You certainly aren't very good at it.	Heather
No, not this, I mean, this, a blind date.	Sam
Oh.	Heather
I don't want to do this.	Sam
Then don't.	Heather
I have to.	Sam
Why?	Heather
Mother's making me.	Sam

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Your mother is making you date? Heather

Yes. Sam

A girl. Heather

Apparently. What if she isn't even a girl? Sam

Then I suppose she wouldn't be a she. Heather

Good point. Sam

Your mother wants you to date? Heather

Yes. Sam

But you don't want to? Heather

Not in the slightest. Sam

Then why are you? Heather

Midlife crisis. Sam

You're mother? Heather

No, me! Sam

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Let me get you something. Heather

I'll say something stupid. Sam

Drink? Tea? Heather

Oh I am! I'm going to say something stupid. Sam

I find that hard to believe. Heather

No, I will, I'll say something offensive, then I'll try and fix it and be more offensive, or I just won't know what to say—Or she'll be some horrific monster, or really old, or really young for that matter, this just wasn't a very good— Sam

Relax. You'll be fine. Just order something to calm you down. Heather

OK, Tea Sam

What kind? Heather

Hot. Sam

I think we have that. Heather

[Heather exits]

Sam

My mother is setting me up. She watches one show on the correlation between middle-aged criminals and being single, and now she's setting me up on a blind date to keep me from robbing the local bank. Hello I'm Samuel, Sam really, some people call me Samuel though, my parents named me Sam, some people call me Samuel anyway, not that you're "some" people, obviously you're one kind of collective person, thing out there. Anyway, she says it's time. And now, all these years later, filled with masochistic maternal torment, she's setting me up. Damnable mothers and their incessant trouble. Oh well. It's only once. Just one date. Just one girl. Just one horrifying evening (considerable pause, he sighs) I hope it goes well. [Beat] I don't know what I'm going to do.

[Heather returns]

Heather

Here you are sir.

Sam

Blind dates never go well. You talk about your children, if you don't have children then it's your cats, you don't have cats it's your music collection, and when you only have tons of old 8-tracks and Beta Max tapes, you know it's going to be a long evening. She's meeting me here—Jessica something—it'll honestly never work. I knew a "Jessica something" when I was a kid. She used to step on me. It's an omen. A *bad* omen.

Heather

I believe you are over-thinking this.

Sam

Anyway, I figure we'll never have to get past drinks, It'll never work. The fates are all against us, the fates of Jessica something, her light-up tennis shoes. Dear God my mother is setting me up! I don't know what I'm going to do.

Heather

Calm down, you won't say anything stupid, you won't say anything offensive, and if worse comes to worse don't talk—just nod and laugh, you'll be fine.

Sam

Thanks, that's actually very reassuring—[looks at her nametag]—Heather.

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Heather

That's quite alright . . .

Sam

(He goes on about his name like he did before.) . *Heather walks out on him while he's talking.* [Jessica enters]

Jessica

Sam Aldridge I presume?

Sam

Jessica?

Jessica

[Shakes his hand] Yeah, Jessica Adolph.

[Heather enters with a coffee pot. She stops to listen.]

Sam

[Not letting go of her hand, the shake dissolves into an awkward handholding] Oh like Hitler! [Pause] Not that you're Hitler. [Pause] You're Jessica Hitler—Adolph. [Pause] Shit. [Heather Exits.]

[Blackout]

[Wilmer and Paula sit in their rocking chairs]

Wilmer

Sometimes we rock outside.

Paula

But also sometimes we rock inside.

Wilmer

Then there are the times we don't rock at all.

Paula

Yes sir. Then we're just sitting.

Wilmer

Sometimes we sit inside.

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Paula
We also sit outside.

Wilmer
That's vey true.

Paula
I've also been known to stand.

Wilmer
She stands well.

Paula
Very well, if I say so myself. He's better at rocking though.

Wilmer
I do have practice.

Paula
Always been that way he has. A hard rocker.

[In the diner Heather stands next to Sam's booth.]

Heather
Didn't work out with Hitler?

Sam
(Grimace)

Heather
I though she was pretty.

Sam
Unfortunately she wasn't the problem.

Sam
My "mother" still thinks I'm "sad." and pathetic.

Heather
So?

Sam
I am sad. I am pathetic (she puts the tea on the table)

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Heather

Oh.

Sam

I have another date on the way. What should I say?

Heather

It depends on what she says.

Sam

What if she's ugly?

What if she has a mole on her nose

What if she has a hairy lip

What if she has a big zit on her cheek

What if she has a snaggle tooth (what's that?)

What if she's cross eyed?

What if she has a hairy mole on her face?

Heather

Well, then, you probably shouldn't tell her.

Sam

Well now you've jinxed me.

Heather

You'll be fine.

Sam

So what do I say?

Heather

I'd start with hello.

Sam

Then?

Heather

Trust yourself. You're a nice guy. Just put all your focus on her.

SAM

You're good at talking.

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Heather

I'm practiced. And if worse comes to worse I'll come over and help you—

Sam

It's too late I'm jinxed anyway, here she comes.

[Megan enters she goes to Sam. Sam is uncomfortable.]

Megan

Hi, Sam?

Sam

Hello.

Megan

I'm Megan.

Sam

That's good. That's nice, that's nice, good.

Megan

Sorry if I'm a bit awkward, I'm still not quite used to all this.

Sam

Right. Shall we sit.

Megan

This place is quaint.

Sam

Yes.

Megan

I like the décor.

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Sam
Yes.

Megan
Do you come here a lot?

Sam
Mhm.

Megan
[Sighs] Good—that's good.

Sam
Good, Sure. We should probably order [signals Heather who's near-by]

Megan
Hi I'd like a—

Sam
What is that,
What
It's a zit

You're ugly. [Beat] Shit!
What if she has a mole on her nose
What is she has a hairy lip
What she has a big zit on her cheek
What is she has a snaggle tooth (what's that?)

Heather
Will that be all?

Sam
Shit
[Blackout]

Wilmer

[Doing a crossword in a newspaper] What's an eleven letter word for euphoric?

Paula

[Holding a channel changer and clicking it at the audience. Flipping through channels on her invisible television.] Seamstress.

Wilmer

[Counting on his fingers] Exhilarated. [He writes]

Paula

What happened to all the good television?

Wilmer

What's a five letter word for candid?

Paula

Gooseberry.

Wilmer

Ah. Frank. [He writes]

Paula

Where do I find the Price is Right?

Wilmer

What's a seven letter word for plethora?

Paula

Bing Crosby.

Wilmer

Surplus. [He writes.]

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Paula

Oh dang it. [Clicks once hard and puts down remote.]

Wilmer

Rotate? [She hands him the remote and he hands her the crossword. He flips through channels.]

Paula

Nine letter word for harm?

Wilmer

Detriment.

Paula

[Thinks] Brouhaha. [Writes]

[Pause while the two rock]

[Sam stands center stage, he holds a phone to his ear, there are appropriate pauses.]

Sam

Mom...I called her ugly. I called her *ugly*. Knock Knock. [beat] Me. [beat] Me, I've come to call you ugly because I lack all social etiquette and have been jinxed by numerous bad omens. Never again. I'll never do it ever again. Sorry Mother, no more dates for me. I'm dangerous. It's clear to me now, I'm meant to end up sad and alone. It's the fates, the fates of Jessica something, Hitler, that girl I called ugly, and tea. No, never again. Never again. (beat) Ok . . . Wednesday at 6:00pm. I'll be there. Yes mother.

[It's the Diner set-up. Heather stands next to Sam's booth. Chekhov's *The Seagull* sits on the table.]

Heather

Hello again.

Sam

Hi Heather.

Heather

What are you reading?

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Sam
No, I don't read.

Heather
Then what's that?

Sam
Oh that? It appears to be a book.

Heather
Why do you have it?

Sam
Well, I pretend to read.

Heather
(looks)

Sam
Makes me look more desirable.

Heather
I see, and what do you pretend to read?

Sam
Chekhov.

Heather
Good choice.

Sam
I wouldn't know really.

Heather
It's alright Chekhov's not really—oh your date's here.

[Sam turns to look and quickly picks up the book upside down, he pretends to read,
Justine enters]

Justine
Samuel?

Sam

Oh hi! [He sets the book down] It's Sam actually.

Justine

Oh my, I knew I'd say something silly like that. I'm so sorry. I'm no good at this sort of thing.

Sam

It's alright.

Justine

I'm Justine.

Sam

I know.

Justine

Silly me, of course you do, there I go again.

Sam

No, don't worry about it.

Justine

Menu? [Heather quickly hands one to her. Justine takes it without looking at her.] Oh good. Waitress? I'd like an iced tea with a slice of lime, preferably raspberry—tea that is, not the lime. [Laughs to herself]

Heather

And for you?

Sam

The usual is fine. Thanks Heather.

[Heather exits]

Justine

Heather? You're awfully friendly.

Sam

I come here often.

Justine

I can see that.

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Sam
So...do you like Beta Max tapes?

Justine
What?

Sam
Never mind. Uhm—

Justine
Beat, Do you have children?

Sam
What?

Justine
I just love children.

Sam
Really? That's wonderful.

Justine
I wouldn't want my own though. Nine months of only God knows what and at the end of it you have—

Sam
(Laughs awkwardly) Yeah, me neither.

Justine
I like flora though.

Sam
You mean plants?

Justine
Oh course. [Laughs] You're funny.

Sam
So I'm told. (Short awkward silence.) So, Justine, what do you do?

Justine
Well, lot's of things I like to knit, singing, I like auctions—

Sam
No, I mean, where do you work?

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Justine

What?

Sam

Like are you in advertising, are you a policeman, a waitress?

[Heather enters with drinks]

Justine

Oh, [laughs] me a waitress, you silly goose, no nothing like that. [Heather exits.] I'm a financial planner Lincoln Federal.

Sam

Oh. That's great.

Justine

Perhaps I should be in serving though, honestly, how long does it take to get drinks? (As heather puts drinks on the table and hears it all.)

Sam

Thanks Heather.

Heather

It's no problem—[Accidently knocks Justine's drink into her lap as she hands Sam his drink.] I'm so sorry, let me get that for—

Justine

It's fine. Look just—it's fine.

Heather

No I really should--

Justine

It's fine!

Heather

Uh...alright. [Exits]

Sam

I'm so sorry about this, here...[tries to help her]

Justine

No, no, no, don't be sorry, it certainly wasn't your fault. [Pause as she scrubs viciously at her stain] Shoot, I'd better get this off and to the dry cleaners, it'll never stand a chance if I don't right away. But here's my number. [Writes on a napkin] And I'm really sorry our date didn't go accordingly, I'd love to see you again.

Sam

Sure.

Justine

Great. I'll see you soon Samuel. [Kisses his cheeks] Toodle-loo. [Does a little finger wave then hobbles offstage in an odd manner due to the nature of her clothing.]

Heather

[Enters] I'm so sorry Sam, I really didn't mean to ruin your date like that I just—

Sam

It's fine. I didn't like her much anyway.

Heather

Really?

Sam

Yeah, you saved me some time.

Heather

Okay. I'm still sorry.

Sam

It's alright.

Heather

[Begins cleaning up the mess.] She was awfully pretty.

Sam

Was she? [Sam also begins to clean]

Heather

[Nods] And she was awfully nice.

Sam

I must have missed that as well.

Heather

You must have.

Sam

Maybe it was the fact that she was a dead-boring drip.

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Did you just say drip?
Heather

Maybe.
Sam

How is living in the 50s by the way?
Heather

Pretty good. I haven't poured tea on anyone recently.
Sam

It was raspberry thank you very much. With lime. The tea that is—not the raspberry.
[Imitates laugh] Sam stares. Half ass Chuckle. Not Funny? [Seriously continues cleaning up, they clean for a period]
Heather

[Sam sighs]

What?
Heather

What?
Sam

You just sighed.
Heather

I did?
Sam

You did.
Heather

Alright, I sighed.
Sam

Well, I know.
Heather

So what?
Sam

So you sighed! That's bad.
Heather

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It is? Sam

Yes! Heather

Oh, I'm sorry. Sam

No, I don't mean it's bad for me. It means it's bad for you Heather

Bad? Sam

Of course! Heather

Wow, all this for excessive exhalation? Sam

Look, just explain the sigh. Heather

I don't know what to tell you, I sighed. Sam

Well you have to give me something better than that. Heather

I don't even remember the context. Sam

Alright. Never mind. Heather

[She continues cleaning, there's a pause, he sighs again, they both realize it]

Aha! You did it again! Heather

Did not. Sam

Did too. What is it? What's wrong? Heather

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Nothing! . . . Sam

Well what do you want me to say? Sam

Tell me what's wrong with you! Heather

Really, what's wrong with me? Sam

Yes! What is wrong with you? Heather

Sam
Okay. I'm pathetic! I'm thirty-four years old, I've lived completely alone for the past decade. I've half a Masters and no friends. I'm a business analyst for God's sake! How *boring*, no wonder I'm where I am! I'm tired of it, that's what's wrong. That's the sigh. Christ—I don't even really read Nabokov!

Heather
Chekhov.

Sam
Yeah, that too. See! Just look at me!

Heather
What are you tired of?

Sam
What?

Heather
You said you were tired of 'it,' what's 'it?'

Sam
This date thing.

Heather
Well it's over now. And I think you can thank me for that.

Sam
No! I mean, well yes, I'm glad that's finished, but no, really the whole—date—thing.

Heather

So then stop.

Sam

I can't stop.

Heather

Just tell your mother one clicked. That you're finished and well on your way to a happy marriage.

Sam

I wasn't thinking about her.

Heather

No?

Sam

No. She's onto antique shows now. She doesn't care anymore. I had to prompt her to set that last...date...up for me.

Heather

You *wanted* another date? [He nods] Really?

Sam

I know! I'm pathetic, friendless, and lonely. (*Big sigh*)

Heather

[Quietly] I'm your friend.

Sam

What?

Heather

You said you didn't have any friends. I—I mean, I'm willing to consider you a friend.

Sam

What do you mean?

Heather

I know I'm just your waitress, but I figure I'm a good one at least.

Heather

And frankly you don't read Chekhov because he's boring.

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Sam

I'm boring.

Heather

Sam, I would have kicked you out already if you were boring. You'll find someone Sam. You're too hard on yourself. You're smart, you're funny, and you're not a convict...you're a catch! [He coughs uncomfortably] Well you are!

Sam

I'm uncomfortable now. I think it was better when we were cleaning.

Heather

[She knocks over his glass onto the floor] Better?

Sam

That was entirely unnecessary.

Heather

Here. (throws rag to him).

[They both fall back to the floor and start cleaning.]

Sam

I'm not sure why I'm helping you this time. This was in no way my fault.

Heather

You said it was better.

Sam

I also told ice tea woman I'd go on another date with her.

Heather

Yeah, that was unwise.

Sam

What can I say. I'm lonely.

Heather

Who isn't sometimes?

Sam

It's a miserable world.

Heather

You know, I honestly don't think that's true. I think there are people out there who are genuinely happy.

Sam

I respectfully disagree.

Heather

Fine, but you'll never be one of them until you accept it.

Sam

Why, are you one?

Heather

Of course not.

Sam

No?

Heather

No. I'm thirty and my closest confidant is my five-year-old cat.

Sam

You don't have friends either?

Heather

Please, I'm not *you*. I have friends. They just don't live here.

Sam

So where are they?

Heather

My hometown, I lived in the suburbs. Moved here about a year ago. (At some point she goes to kitchen and brings back chips, or something to eat.)

Sam

Why?

Heather

Thought there were more opportunities.

Sam

Chuckles

Heather

I found this place, and now I guess my closest friends are the old folks that own it—it hasn't been all bad.

Sam

Fair enough.

[They clean in silence]

Sam

So, do you have a boyfriend?

Heather

No.

Sam

Girlfriend?

Heather

No.

Sam

Then we're both . . .

Heather

I have a cat.

Sam

right.

Heather

I *was* with someone for a while. Didn't work out, ended a while ago.

Sam

Sorry.

Heather

No need. I'm good where I am.

Sam

Well, I better get home to my desolate apartment.

[He begins to exit]

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Heather
Goodnight Sam.

Sam
Night Heather.

[He exits, she watches him leave]

Sam
Should I turn off the lights?

Heather
I got it.

Sam
See you tomorrow?

Heather
I'll be here.

Sam
Bye.

Heather
Bye.

[He really exits. She waits, sighs, picks up the glasses and rags, disposes of them, gets to the edge of the stage and mimes shutting off the lights, they blackout save for a spot hits her, she addresses the audience]

Heather
My mom didn't talk about love. Never. It was all Marlboro and Baretta growing up. Love was forbidden. She'd scoff at the very notion and take a puff of her cigarette. But that made me want to know more, a scoff means something's important, that you're just getting to the good part, then again, a puff means there's also a bad part. Nevertheless, I would sit in my room with the contraband, little picture books with images of beautiful girls, I'd read them, every one about princesses and girls who became princesses, and even then I knew that wasn't really it. Don't get me wrong, I'm sure there's been a princess or two who might agree with the stories' homogenous royal ladies that filled my childhood, but I didn't want that. I didn't want the flawless prince galloping into my room on a steed, nor did I want Baretta. I just wanted someone. Someone that could tell me what love was. Someone who laughed at my jokes and made me laugh. Someone who when I got really old and a bit batty would hold my hand and make sure I never knew I was old and batty. Because they'd love me, and I'd love them. Had there been that storybook when I was seven, I'd have left home right then. I'd have searched the schoolyards day and night for the boy who looked most like he needed me. I think that

was mom's problem. She didn't need anyone. She had Marlboro and Baretta. She didn't want to talk about love because she didn't get it. No one ever told her. And she didn't care. [Pause] I'd sure like to know.

[Wilmer stands with an unfinished knitted cap on his head, Paula sits, she knits the excessively long cap on Wilmer's head, it hasn't been finished, but she continues to knit tirelessly none the less.]

Wilmer

Dear, what are you doing?

Paula

Knitting.

Wilmer

Oh. Knitting. [Beat] Why are you knitting?

Paula

The cold is a blowing in.

Wilmer

Hm, it is a bit chilly, isn't it? [Beat] Well, I do already have a hat. Should I go—

Paula

It's all right dear, I'm almost finished.

Wilmer

I see. Well---good. Good.

Paula

Would you like some mittens?

Wilmer

I don't think so.

Paula

It would only take a second to make dear.

Wilmer

Uh...

Paula

Sure you do. Don't want you catching death--it's going around you know.

[Blackout]

[It's the Diner set up. Sam sits with Polly at his table.]

I don't like men. Polly

Oh. Sam

I hate men. Polly

I see. Sam

[Scoffs] You sound just like the rest of them. Polly

I do? Sam

Same, same, same. [Awkward pause] My husband left me. Polly

I'm sorry to hear that. Sam

For my mother. Polly

Oh. Sam

Slut. Polly

Do you want to order, because you know, I'm not actually all that hungry and— Sam

Do you want to hurt me? Polly

Not especially. Sam

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Liar. Polly

So what do you do? Sam

What are you insinuating? Polly

No! I just mean, you know, where do you work? Sam

I teach preschool. Polly

Really? Sam

Why would I lie about that? Polly

No—I didn't mean it like— Sam

Stop talking...Waitress! Another iced tea. Polly

Here—I'll go get it for you. [Hurriedly exits] Sam

[Soon after a man and a woman enter arm and arm.]

[Greeting them] Thomas. [Pause] Mother. Polly

[The couple exits.]

[Blackout]

[Wilmer sits in his chair, he is covered from head to toe in knitted things. Yarn has piled up around him, Paula knits feverishly to finish her creation. Upon doing so, she stands up proudly.]

Paula
There we go! Nice and toasty.

Wilmer
[Snores]

[Music – Couple crosses down the steps]

Paula
Wilmer?

Wilmer
Paula?

Paula
I have a question to ask you.

Wilmer
Alright.

Paula
[Makes a funny face] Would you still love me if I looked like this?

Wilmer
Yes.

Paula
[Alters her voice] What if my voice sounded like this?

Wilmer
I imagine I would.

Paula
[Sits up rigidly] And if my hands didn't swing when I walked? [Long pause] Wouldn't you? Wilmer?

Wilmer
Look, dearest, every day of my life, from the very moment I was born, I knew I loved you.

Paula
Did you?

Wilmer
Well of course not, we didn't meet until I was at least twenty.

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Oh, that's right. Paula

I love you anyway. Wilmer

[Melancholy] That's nice— Paula

Even if your arms don't swing. Wilmer

[Considerably happier] Oh—I wasn't worried. Paula

I didn't think you would be. Wilmer

[Blackout]

[Sam Enters after Heather]

Hey, Heather going into work. Reed

Who is it today? Kate? Sara? Ingrid? Heather

WanderingLady360. Sam

Pretty. Heather

I found her online. Sam

I gather, how is she? Heather

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Seems great actually—we share a lot of interests: newspaper comics, taffy, quilting—

Heather

You quilt?

Sam

No, but I enjoy quilts.

Heather

Oh. Well, is she—you know—good looking?

Sam

I don't know. She's athletic, 5'6", and an Independent.

Heather

No pictures?

Sam

None.

Heather

How will you know who she is?

[He points to the flower]

Heather

Clever, I figured it was just a fashion statement. [*Xs into café.*]

[*Margaret stops and stares at Sam, he does the same, there is an awkward pause*]

Sam

Margaret?

Margaret

Hi.

Sam

You're—

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WanderingLady360. And you're— Margaret

ManWithAPlan12. Sam

Well this is a...coincidence. Margaret

Yeah. Sam

Maybe I should go. Margaret

Don't! Sam

No? Margaret

No. Stay, for just a drink maybe. Sam

Okay. Just for a drink. [Margaret sits] Margaret

So—You know each other? Heather

Oh, sorry Heather. This is—Margaret Brown. Sam

Hello. Oh! Ha, I almost forgot. Would you like a drink? Or anything? Heather

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Can I have— Margaret

Coffee, two sugars, no cream. Sam

[Heather looks to Margaret to confirm]

That's right. Margaret

And Sam you'll have— Heather

The same. Sam

Coffee? *Then they sit.* Heather

Yeah. Thanks. Sam

[Pause] Uh. Right up. [Heather exits] Heather

So...How are you? Sam

I'm fine. What about you? Margaret

Fine. Sam

Margaret
How are you folks (Beat), your dad?

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Sam
He's good, good. He's getting around.

Margret
You're mother? (the both laugh)

Margret
Yea, um . . .well . . .

Sam
How's your sister, Susie?

Margret
She Good, you missed the pinkest wedding ever.

Sam
Oh, yea, that's right. Damb I forgot

Margaret
We missed you, it was nice.

Margaret
So, you haven't met anyone yet I see.

Sam
And you didn't stay with Arthur.

Margaret
I said I was sorry Sam.

Sam
I know. It's fine.

Margaret
So this place is nice.

01/18/10

Sam

Yeah. What have you been up to?

Margaret

Not too much. Joined some dating websites.

Sam

Never know what weirdoes you'll find on those!

Margaret

Heh, yeah.

[Heather enters]

Heather

Here are your drinks. Will that be all?

Sam

Yes.

Margaret

Yeah, thanks.

[Heather exits]

Margaret

Sam. Are you okay?

Sam

Of course I'm okay, why wouldn't I be okay?

Margaret

You know what I mean...

Sam

It was two years ago.

01/18/10

Just checking. Margaret

What else? Did you ever get that promotion? Sam

Yeah. Margaret

Finally right? Sam

Right. And you're... Margaret

Same old, same old. Sam

Right. Margaret

[There's a pause]

I'm sorry Sam, this is—I should go. Margaret

You don't have to go. Sam

Yeah, I do. Margaret

I'm not mad. Sam

Yeah, you are. And if you aren't then you should be. Margaret

01/18/10

Sam
I'm really not—[Sam stands and grabs her arm]

Margaret
That's always been your problem, you never let yourself admit it. I need to go now.
[Margaret turns but then remembers something] Here are a few dollars for the coffee, and
a tip for the girl.

Sam
Heather.

Margaret
She's cute. [Beat] Bye Sam.

Sam
Bye.

[Margaret exits, Heather enters]

Heather
Who was that?

Sam
Ex-girlfriend.

Heather
Oh.

Sam
Ex-fiancée really.

Heather
Seemed like you like her.

Sam
I did.

Heather
Why did it end?

Sam
She cheated on me.

Funny Little Thing

01/18/10

I'm sorry Sam. Heather

Water under the bridge. Sam

Would some cake help? Heather

Yes. Sam

I'll get us some. Heather

[She exits, Sam sits alone. He is quietly distressed. Heather returns with a slice of cake and two forks]

I hope you don't mind, I only brought the one plate. Fewer dishes to clean. Heather

That's fine. Thanks. Sam

Sure. Heather

[They begin eating the cake]

She seemed nice. Heather

Yeah. She is. Sam

Except... Heather

For the cheating thing, yeah. Sam

01/18/10

I didn't realize you were ever engaged. Heather

Not a lot of opportunities to bring it up. Sam

I'm sorry. Heather

No, it's fine. It was a long time ago. Sam

Still hard though. Heather

Yeah. Sam

I was close to marrying once too. Heather

Oh yeah? Sam

Oh yeah. I dated this guy, Michael, I've probably mentioned him, for—near twelve years. Heather

Wow. Sam

Yup. Heather

I guess it didn't end well. Sam

Heather

I guess it didn't. Well, not that badly. We're alright. Just—we were both *so* unhappy. You know it's not going to end well if you start going out with him because he has a Camero. So she likes the camero

Sam

I think that's fair.

Heather

It was all wrong, but at a certain point you just fall into the rhythm, you don't think about it until you're screaming at each other about why the Christmas lights are still up and whose fault it is.

Sam

You lived together?

Heather

Oh yeah. Right after high school.

Sam

You went to college together then?

Heather

No, no, no, I didn't go to college. Nobody expected me to, least of all myself. So I just—didn't. I regret it now of course. Michael went though. Full scholarship for football. But dropped out himself, second year was too much. He started a granite business.

Sam

I see.

Heather

Yeah. That's the way it goes though. We broke up and I moved here. Oh God, nine months, has it really only been nine months, almost a year. . .

Sam

Life just doesn't work out right, does it?

Heather

Just because it hasn't doesn't mean it won't you know.

Sam

I guess. Sometimes I think I should have stayed with her anyway. (some people miserable line here perhaps.

Heather

Margaret?

Sam

Yeah.

Heather

Even though==

Sam

Yeah. I really loved her. It destroyed me when she—but at least I had her. You know? I had something. Isn't something better than nothing?

Heather

I suppose it depends on what that something is.

Sam

I guess. But God, I'm so tired of this.

Heather

I could get us pie instead.

Sam

You know what I mean. I'm tired of forcing myself on these dates. I'm so tired of it! It's never the same but always horrible.

Heather

There's always the cafe here for you.

Sam

Yeah, but I can't keep coming back, can I? I don't have the paycheck to pay for hundreds of futile blind dates.

Heather

Right.

Sam

I don't mean it like that. I just—I want to give up but I don't want to at the same time. I just want—*someone*. You know?

Heather

I know.

Sam

You always do. You are really amazing, thanks Heather. For all of this, here [He pays her for the coffees and cake] for the food, I better go.

Heather

Okay. Bye Sam.

Sam

See you soon?

Heather

[Beat] I'll be here.

[He smiles at her and exits. She sits for a while thinking. She sighs, stands and walks to the light switch then turns to the audience.]

Heather

Don't judge me. All I want is to be happy. And I thought I was. But—well, I thought I was. I guess I thought he was too. And he can be. [She drops the forks from the plate] Shoot! [Sighs and picks them up] I don't know. [She looks around the room] Goodnight (not goodnight, but good bye. Sam. [She turns off the lights])

[Blackout] Music transition right into old people scene and set up.

Wilmer
Kids are mixed up now-a-days. I'm not surprised though, with all these gadgets, and drugs, and—

Paula
Interwebs.

Wilmer
It's amazing they get anything done.

Paula
Downright amazing.

Wilmer
We didn't have anything like that back in the day.

Paula
No sir.

Wilmer
No computers or microwaves or peer pressure.

Paula
Didn't have any peer pressure back then, hadn't been invented.

But there *was* plenty of competition

Wilmer
And now. They're practically swimming in it.

Beat

Paula
You remember the boxcar?

Wilmer
Sure do.

Paula
Ain't enough boxcars now-a-days.

01/18/10

Wilmer

Very true.

Paula

Maybe it wouldn't be so bad if they just had boxcars.

Wilmer

I like your thinking.

Paula

I like you.

[It's the Diner set up. Sam is alone at his booth. Paula stands next to him with an ordering pad.]

Sam

Hi. You're not Heather.

Paula

I don't think so.

Sam

Where is she?

Paula

Where's who?

Sam

Heather.

Paula

Who's Heather?

Sam

Uh...Your—

Paula

Oh! The waitress girl.

Sam

Exactly.

01/18/10

Paula
Nope, she's not here.

Sam
Where is she then?

Paula
Somewhere else, I'd imagine.

Sam
--Okay. Maybe she's sick.

Paula
She was here yesterday, she looked fine. Well not *fine* she's a bit thin and her—

[Wilmer enters]

Wilmer
[Walking toward Paula] Casserole's ready!

Paula
Ooh! [Exits, passes off his order pad and writing utensil to Wilmer as they switch positions. Wilmer is wearing mittens and an excessively long hat that's prone to getting in the way, he fumbles with the pad due to his hand situation.]

Sam
Do you know where Heather is?

Wilmer
Who's Heather?

Sam
Never mind.

Wilmer
Oh! The waitress girl!

Sam
Right.

Wilmer
She's sick. Called in this morning.

Sam
Oh. Did she say with what?

01/18/10

Oh yes. Wilmer

[Beat] With what? Sam

With sick. Wilmer

Alright. Thanks. Sam

Order? Wilmer

Yeah—just in a second, I’m waiting for someone. Sam

[Wilmer exits he trips all over himself. Iris enters.]

Hello there, Sam? Iris

That’s me. Sam

Hi Sam, I’m Iris. Iris

Nice to meet you Iris. [Gestures to chair across from him.] Seat? Sam

I think I just might, thanks...[Pause] Iris

You look familiar. Sam

Do I? That’s awfully strange, so do you. [Beat] Iris

Sorry, I’m not really that good at all this. SAM

Iris

01/18/10

Neither am I. It seems I've been on hundreds of these things and you just never get used to it.

Sam

I feel the same way.

Iris

I mean, you could be an axe-murder and how would I know? [Awkward pause] I know you're not an axe-murderer though. No, I don't know it, how could I know that? I ain't never seen an axe-murderer but you don't look like any that—

Sam

[Laughs] It's fine. I understand.

Iris

You're not are you? (Beat) hits him in the arm. I'm like a squawking bird in the coop!

Sam

No, it's really fine.

Iris

Oh lord, no it's—

Sam

It really is—Listen on my first blind date I called a woman Hitler.

Iris

Oh. That's bad.

Sam

Yeah. Well. You see if you're a—

[Wilmer enters.]

Wilmer

Ready?

Sam

Yeah, I'll just have my usual.

Wilmer

Do we have a usual?

01/18/10

Sam
Heather Would know.

Wilmer
She's Sick

SAM
Oh sorry. Uh, tea, is all.

Wilmer
What kind?

Sam
Hot.

Wilmer
I think we have that, What'd you like?

Iris
Hot tea sounds nice.

Wilmer
Kind?

Iris
Whatever you end up bringing him.

Wilmer
Very good. [Exits]

Iris
Who's Heather?

Sam
She's usually my waitress here.

Iris
Oh, you come here often?

Sam

Yeah. It's pretty good. Finding Heather's been lucky though. She's gotten me through all of them, all the awful dates. You know, she always makes it better.

Iris

Sounds nice.

Sam

Yeah, she is.

Iris

Does she have a brother. (Beat) How many dates have you had here?

Sam

Too many to count.

Iris

oh, heavens.

Sam

How many have you been on?

Iris

More than I want to remember.

Iris

We're two misfits Sam. Two misfits in the land of tea.

[Wilmer enters with two mugs.

Wilmer

Here you are. (brings coffee)

Sam

So, Do you like kids?

Iris

Sure do.

Sam

That's good.

Iris

I like chickens. Horses too. Lots of things I suppose.

[Sam drinks a bit as does Iris.]

Iris
This is coffee.

Sam
Yeah.

Iris
That's peculiar.

Sam
Yeah.

Iris
Is coffee tea?

Sam
No.

Iris
He's just crazy then?

Sam
Yes.

Iris
That's a shame. I miss Heather.

Sam
You have no idea.

Iris
So what's so amazing about her? What makes her so special?

Sam
Well she's never brought me coffee.

Iris
So that's it.

Sam
And she's funny. And nice. And she always knows how to fix a problem.

Iris

That's one hell of a waitress.

Sam

She's great. I didn't think I'd miss her. Then again I always expected her to be here.

Iris

I see. You know . . . My mama once said to me, when you find the perfect bird, she said, when it is so beautiful and just right—you got to catch it and don't ever let go—it'll be hard and long-fought, but just don't let go, 'cause if you do you won't ever forgive yourself and you'll always be wishing you didn't waste your luck. I wish I had a waitress.

Sam

I guess that's it.

Sam

[Pause as they sit.]

Sam

I'm sorry but I don't really know what I'm doing here. Oh not because of you—It was very nice to meet you Iris, I just have to go. [Does he know where he's going. If he is going to look for Heather might be interesting.

Iris

I understand. She must because of how he talked about Heather.

[Sam leaves some money on the table and exits]

Wilmer

Where'd the other one go?

Iris

Somewhere else, I'd imagine. [Pause] So I saw your help wanted sign [Beat] I'm helpful.

Wilmer

You're wanted. [He hands her the pad and pen, then exits] We have a replacement.

Paula

Welcome dear, Kitchens in Back.

[Blackout]

[Wilmer and Paula rock together in two rocking chairs center stage.]

Wilmer

We got married in the spring of '60.

Paula

'57, no dear, you're right. It was '60.

Wilmer

We married in the spring of '60. I bought her ring at Tiffany's.

Paula

I did not.

Wilmer

No you didn't.

Paula

No sir, found his in the Cracker Jack's box.

Wilmer

And here we are all these years later.

Paula

It's like nothing has changed. I still wear the ring.

Wilmer

So do I.

[A bell noise is heard around the theater, Paula stands.]

Paula

Strudel's ready. [Waddles offstage]

[Blackout]

[It's the Diner set-up. Sam sits alone at a booth. Heather enters.]
what brings them together. Some place else outside the café.

Sam

Where have you been?

Heather

I was sick.

Sam
So I've gathered.
Heather
Didn't meet any fantastic women while I was gone?

Sam
There were some good ones.

Heather
And?

Sam
And I'm still a misfit in the land of tea.

Heather?
What?

Sam
Sorry. There was no tea actually.

Heather
What are you talking about?

Sam
I don't really know what happened.—Something certainly did. Then they brought me coffee.

Heather
You don't like coffee. You like tea.

Sam
Well I know that.

Heather
Why did you ask them to fix it?

Sam
It was all too confusing. Also I don't know what kind you bring.

Heather
Earl Grey.

Sam
Don't get sick again.

Funny Little Thing

George Ye 1/17/10 12:28 PM

Comment: Need to clean up transition for this dialogue. Also in this scene I think there should be a quicker, shaper more direct event. PERHAPS they meet in a park outside of the café? Did he call her and get her number. CAN this scene happen somewhere else.

I'll try not to.

Heather

Sam

[Concurrently] Uh, Heather I have something I wanted to ask you.

Heather

[Concurrently] Look I'll tell you something if you promise not to tell anyone.

Sam

What?

Heather

You first.

Sam

No, no, you go.

Heather

Alright—I'm going back home!

Sam

What?

Heather

I'm going to move in with Michael.

Sam

Wait what?

Heather

I'm going back!

Sam

Why?

Heather

Well, you pointed something out for me. I'm alone here. And not just *here* I mean—in general. In life. What am I doing? Maybe I wasn't the happiest with him before but, isn't better than nothing?

Sam

It's not nothing.

Heather
What?

Sam
You have the diner.

Heather
But who can keep coming back right?

Sam
I—
Someone once tole me that if you find a bird you have to hang on to or it'll fly away and then what do you have. . . She say's WHAT?

Heather
Look, I'm sorry I didn't tell you before. It was kind of a—revelation, I guess.

Sam
What will you do?

Heather
Well, I'll go back to school. There's a good Community College. Maybe get that degree I never thought I would. Then hey, who knows? We could move back here.

Sam
You and Michael?

Heather
If he'll take me.

Sam
But...

Heather
I wasn't happy. I know I wasn't. But maybe if I just try harder—I don't want to be alone either Sam. And here—it's all work. I love this place. But I don't have time to *meet* someone let alone Prince Charming. And you know, Michael may not be Prince Charming but he's still got the Camero.

Sam
Yes.

Heather
I just don't want to go around telling anyone yet, don't want the owners to worry or anything until everything is finalized. So mum's the word.

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Sam

Mum.

Heather

Thanks. I went up to see Michael yesterday, he seems okay with the idea. We'll have a trial period I guess. Then you don't need to question if he takes you back in. Check line a few beats back.

Sam

Right. [Sighs]

Heather

So what'd you want to tell me?

Sam

oh—nothing. Bird story. . . HERE. Someone once told me. .

Heather

Your date's Late, you know, that's a bad sign.

Sam

No one's coming.

Heather

What?

Sam

Nobody's coming to meet me here.

Heather

You're alone?

Sam

[Gesture]

Heather

Hang on. [Exits quickly. Sam sits with his head in his hands. She enters again.] Here you are sir.

Sam

Thanks.

Why are you leaving?

01/18/10

	Heather
I told you.	
	[He is silent]
	Heather
See?	
	Sam
But...[
	Heather
What's wrong?	
	Sam
I just—I don't even like tea that much.	
	Heather
What?	
	Sam
I think...[He trails off]	
	Heather
You think?	
	Sam
Don't move in with Michael.	
	Heather
Why not?	
	Sam
Because.	
	Heather
Thanks Sam, but I don't think—	
	[He kisses her, Heather is stunned]
	Heather
Why—?	
	Sam
Because.	

Funny Little Thing

01/18/10

Heather

Oh.

Sam

Would you like to go on a—date sometime?

Heather

With you?

Sam

Yes.

Heather

Yes.

Sam

I know this great little café. I'll make a reservation.

Heather

That sounds wonderful, Sam. (they both sip tea together).

[Blackout]

[Sam stands center stage]

Sam

It's funny how life works sometimes. You can be all up in arms about something, you can spend your whole life with your arms up in fact, and as soon as you just stop, you realize you get fewer looks with your arms down. [Beat] That didn't come out right. You know what I mean. I mean, well, it's tough to explain. But. Hell, I guess what I'm trying to say is that you were right mom. You were right. Of course. [Beat] Love is just that I guess, just one of those funny little things in life. Does it have to be to mom?

All are setting up the stage for the wedding as he give the mono. Someone hands him a jacket, and flower, and he Heather is wearing a white dress of sorts, she steps down to him and take his hand, they all split and make way for Wilmer and Paula.

[Blackout]

[The stage is set for a wedding procession, There's a groom and bride up front, in chairs facing them are many dummies with the wigs of the various blind dates on, all the other actors sit watching in the audience save for the Priest, who wears a fake mustache, who marries them.]

Priest

Do you Wilmer Diner take thee Paula Diner as your lawfully wedded wife from this day forward, to have and to hold, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do you depart?

Wilmer

[Turns, revealing himself] I do. Again.

Priest

And do you Paula Diner take thee Wilmer Diner to be your lawfully wedded husband from this day forward, to have and to hold, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do you depart?

Paula

Of course I do. Again.

Priest

Then by the power veste—

[A bell sound is heard]

Paula

Hold that thought. [Beat] Cake's ready! [Exits while everyone watches her]