

THE DAY BEFORE
YESTERDAY
(Or, LOVE IN A TIME OF TERROR.)
A play by Israel Horovitz.

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Represented by Marie-Cécile Renauld, MCR-Agence Littéraire, Paris.
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May 2019.

THE PEOPLE OF THE PLAY

MISSY 28, African-American, dark-skinned, tall, beautiful.
PETER 29, American, Jewish, short, quick-witted, handsome.

MARIE-LAURE 28, American, white, small, blonde, beautiful.
PIERRE-EDOUARD (a/k/a PETEY).. 28, French, white, tall, athletic, handsome.

MIRANDA 28, American, unusually tall, white, athletic, beautiful.
ALI (a/k/a AL) 28, American-Palestinian, tall, brown-skinned, handsome.

THE PLACE OF THE PLAY

Variously, loft-apartments in Brooklyn (Cobble Hill); Miami (Wynwood); and Paris (11th Arrondissement).

THE TIME OF THE PLAY

During 72 hours, from Thursday, November 12, 2015, through Saturday, November 14, 2015.

AUTHOR’S NOTE:

Prior to each scene, we will see a projection of signage -- NYC subway or Miami Metrorail or Paris Métro -- to indicate the location of the scene that follows. Projections can also be images of the particular city-scape.

It is possible to use only one apartment-setting, but, obviously, change its occupants as well as lighting. For example, the NYC apartment can be dim and gray, with advertising projected on the wall outside the window ... and the Paris attic-loft can be much brighter and yellowish.

During transitions between scenes, actors exiting will carry off prominent props from their scene, and actors entering will carry on prominent props for the new scene.

Local street-sounds will aid clarity of location as well as music introducing each scene. Music should be character-appropriate and energetic: NYC rap for NYC, Cuban salsa for Miami, French rap for Paris.

In the play’s final scene, all music should be songs by Eagles of Death Metal. Actual newsreel is heard from TV.

Monologue that begins Scene One should be in extremely tight spotlight. It is only necessary to see speaker’s face. Lighting should be similarly tight on speakers’ faces during the six monologues in Scene Eight.

“I wonder what became of me.”

Song lyric by Harold Arlen.

SCENE ONE.

OPEN IN TIGHT SPOTLIGHT on
PIERRE-EDOUARD's face. HE
speaks directly to audience.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

(Simply, without strong emotion.)

I knew this emergency staircase, and I led everybody down it and out this backstage door. We had to crawl over dead people, over people wounded, bleeding and moaning. You could hear this crazy mixture of screams and gunshots and hundreds of cell-phones ringing, because it must have already been on TV and families knew. These insanely upbeat ring-tones were mixing in... When we ran past the band's dressing room, there were a whole bunch of kids hiding inside. Two of the terrorists were in there with them, shooting them in cold blood. They were kicking wounded kids on the floor to see if the kids were still alive. If they were, they shot the kids again. Somehow, I got everybody out on to Passage Saint-Pierre Amelot and up into my apartment... After the attacks at Charlie Hebdo, and at the *Hypercacher supermarché*, Porte de Vincennes, we all knew something else would be coming from *Daesh* ... ISIS. We all knew ... but, we were the fortunate few. We are, for the moment, still alive.

SPOTLIGHT fades out. PIERRE-EDOUARD exits.

LIGHTS WIDEN TO main room of Peter's loft-apartment in Cobble Hill, Brooklyn. A window overlooks brick wall (the back wall of a neighboring building).

LIGHTS UP on MISSY and PETER, mid-conversation.

MISSY's coat is on. SHE is holding a laundry bag.

PETER hangs his jacket on a hook on the wall. Another laundry bag is in evidence below his jacket.

MISSY
(Talks to his back.)
Your name is Peter?

PETER
It is.

MISSY
My name's Missy. I'm Missy.

PETER
(Turns to HER.)
I knew that.

MISSY
I just wanted to be sure...
(PETER stares blankly at MISSY.)
...that you knew my name.

PETER
You told me in the laundramat.

MISSY
Yuh, but I didn't know for sure.

PETER
Your name?

MISSY
... That you were listening.
(Laughs. Adds ironically...)
Yuh, right, you got it ... I forgot my own name.

PETER
You had a bad experience with somebody forgetting your name?

MISSY
Yuh, well ... I did. I spent a weekend with this French guy ... when I was in grad school...
(Stops herself. And then...)
I shouldn't be telling you this.

PETER
He forgot your name?

MISSY
Something like that.
(And then...)
I'd just met him.
(Beat.)
I said "Missy" and he thought I'd said "Messy".

PETER
He called you "Messy"?

MISSY
Something like that.

PETER
That's kind of funny.
(And then...)
We all did shit in college we'd like to forget.

MISSY
I was in grad school.

PETER
Grad school.
(And then...)
Yuh well, we're a bunch older now.

MISSY
It was kind of recent.

PETER
Ah.

MISSY
This past summer.

(There is a small pause. And then...)

PETER
Ah.

(Beat.)
Will you be seeing him while you're in Paris? ...
(Adds explanation.)
The French guy from the offending weekend.

MISSY
Definitely not on my radar.
(And then...)
You guys have the same name.

PETER
Oh, yuh?

MISSY
Similar. He's "Petey".

PETER
My parents called me Petey when I was little.

MISSY

So, how come you're going to Paris tomorrow? Work? Vacation?

PETER

Little of both. You?

MISSY

Same. Mostly research for my dissertation. Still gathering string.

PETER

PhD?

MISSY

Well, yuh. I did an MA at Columbia a couple of years back... Journalism School ... and I got offered a free ride to go for a doctorate in International Affairs, which is ironically how I hooked up with the aforementioned French Petey. Anyway ... yuh.

PETER

I went to film school at Columbia.

MISSY

Really? You make movies?

PETER

I'd rather not talk about it.

MISSY

Ah. That's cool.

PETER

I'm being ridiculous. I edit E!-TV promos for the Kardashians.

MISSY

(Less impressed.)

Ah.

PETER

Let's just say it's not the life I started out to have. Although the Paris perk's not so bad. I'm assisting an MTV guy who's moonlighting with a French cable channel ... shooting a concert video. He's a close pal. Basically, I'm just along for the ride.

(And then...)

You wanna' drink something?

MISSY

Oh. I don't ever drink in the daytime...

(Adds.)

...anymore.

(And then...)
I should go. I shouldn't have...
(And then...)
I don't do this.

PETER

Anymore.

MISSY

(Smiles.)
Exactly. I have a history of going with the flow ...
seeing where serendipity takes me ... which doesn't
always turn out to be a great place.

PETER

I meant tea or coffee ... or bubbly water.

MISSY

Oh.

PETER

Maybe I didn't.

MISSY

I didn't think you, like, lured me up here to ... you
know ... pull a Bill Cosby.

PETER

Listen ... seriously ... This is making both of us
nervous. Should I leave?

MISSY

Uhhh ... This is your apartment. You live here.

PETER

But I go out from time to time.

MISSY

(Smiles.)

This is true.

PETER

I was out when I met you. I could go back out. I could
go back to the laundramat. You have any whites that
need bleaching?

MISSY laughs. And then SHE takes a
long, thoughtful pause before speaking.

MISSY

You're nice. I'm glad I came up here.

PETER

Yuh, me too. I'm glad you came up here.

MISSY
Do you have any tea?

PETER
Sure. Regular or herbal?

MISSY
Herbal. Anything but Kava.

PETER
I only have Kava.

(Beat. And then...)
I just said that. I have a bunch of Yogi teas. How's licorice?

MISSY
Love licorice!

PETER
Me too.

Goes to stove, lights fire under kettle. Calls out to MISSY.

PETER
Wanna meet up in Paris? Maybe go to the concert with me?

MISSY
Sure!

PETER
Great!

(And then...)
How old are you?

MISSY
28. How old are you?

PETER
29. When's your birthday?

MISSY
September 11th. I know.

PETER
Mine's November 22nd. The day Kennedy was shot.

MISSY
Disaster babies.

PETER
Disaster babies. Excellent. May I use that?

MISSY

Be my guest.

PETER

My cousin Benjy was a freshman at Stuy when the Twin Towers came down. He saw people jumping out of windows, all of it.

MISSY

Life-defining.

PETER

Seriously life-defining. Benjy's got some heavy-duty nervous ticks and a major-league case of Islamophobia.

(Small beat.)

I'm not so far behind him. I've got a huge problem with Arabs.

MISSY

You should work on that.

PETER

Yuh.

MISSY

No, seriously.

PETER

Oh, I know. Trust me.

Tea kettle whistle whistles. PETER returns to stove, pours water into mug.

PETER

Where were you born?

MISSY

Harlem. Our apartment was up past City College, but I was actually born in the Village ... at Saint Vincent's ... before it was luxury condos. My mother cleaned houses in the Village and I either came way early or she just got the date wrong.

PETER

Were you born, like, undersized?

MISSY

Unlikely. I weighed nine pounds. Unless I was meant to weigh ten pounds.

PETER brings mug of tea to MISSY.

MISSY

Thanks. Were you born here?

PETER

Boston. My father taught full-time at B.U. for twenty years. I lived in Brookline till I was ten, then here.

MISSY

Brookline to Brooklyn.

PETER

Brookline to Brooklyn.

(And then...)

My dad teaches at N.Y.U., now, but just part-time. Mostly, he's writing ... like me.

MISSY

You're writing?

PETER

I try. Two pages a day. That's my mantra.

(Closes his eyes, spreads his arms,
whispers...)

"Two pages a day ... Two pages a day ... Two pages a day."

MISSY

What are you writing?

PETER

Unwanted screenplays.

(Beat. Checks to see if SHE smiles or
laughs. And then...)

I used to write copy for an aggressively-unhip ad agency in Tribeca, but that was too close to writing-writing, so I entered a dark room with the Kardashians, which has very little to do with real life.

MISSY

Promo-editing job.

PETER

Promo-editing job. I planned to do it for six months. I just finished year three.

MISSY

Sounds like my dissertation. What does your father write?

PETER

This is taking the form of an interview.

MISSY

Sorry. Journalism school. I can't help myself.

PETER

J-School meets J-Date.

MISSY

Kind of funny.

PETER

My father writes books on religion ... He's always taught religion, which is bizarre, because he's sort of a closet-agnostic. My mother's a big Jew. So are my grandparents. I'm, like, a small-to-medium Jew, but a big Zionist. I went to Israel on Birthright. Loved it.

MISSY

The whole Palestinian thing doesn't bother you?

PETER

Don't believe everything you read. Israelis are great people. Crazy-brave, literate...

MISSY

And Palestinians aren't?

PETER

Some are, some aren't. It's complicated.

MISSY

Okay. Moving along. Were you Bar Mitzvahed?

PETER

There was much worse.

MISSY

Oh?

(Gets it.)

Oh. Right. Got'cha. I can only assume you were a newborn.

PETER

No. It was recent.

(And then...)

It wasn't.

MISSY

Is there, like, an overwhelmingly fishy smell in here?

PETER

Fish and chips take-out ... downstairs.

(And then...)

More tea?

MISSY

I'm okay, thanks.

(Reading message on tea-bag's tag.)

"You are looking at the one you love."

(Looks at Peter.)

That's what's written on my tea-bag tag.

PETER

Mine says the same thing.

(Beat.)

It doesn't. Mine says ... "Clean your room."

MISSY

(Laughing.)

It doesn't!

PETER

(Reads his tag.)

It doesn't. It says ... "Follow your heart."

PETER and MISSY don't move for a small moment, smile at one another. And then...

MISSY has a small silent moment of wrestling with a decision. And then... SHE goes to PETER, kisses him. It's a no-hands kiss.

PETER

Wow!

MISSY

There's always that girl-boy tension ... okay, not always .. but when it's there, it kind of takes over.. Hugs and kisses are great tension-relievers. Do you feel more relaxed?

PETER

(Moving to kitchen.)

I guess. Yuh. Well, actually, yes. You?

MISSY

I think so. Yes. I do.

PETER

I think we've just had an Annie Hall Moment.

MISSY

Love Diane Keaton. I've got nothing for Woody Allen.

PETER

I wasn't there, so I don't really know.

MISSY

I wasn't on the balcony with Dr. King, but I think it happened. Anyway ... I like the way the French do it. Kiss on the cheek, kiss on the other cheek ... then "hello".

PETER

You're amazing.

THEY don't move for a few moments, continue to smile at one another. They want to kiss. They don't. And then...

PETER

So, what are you writing about? Your dissertation.

MISSY

(A thoughtful pause. MISSY smiles.)

Serendipity.

MISSY goes to PETER. THEY kiss again, passionately.

END OF SCENE ONE.

SCENE TWO.

LIGHTS UP in Miranda's apartment,
night. Miami (Wynwood).

The table has been set through earlier
scenes. Now candles are lit, center of
table.

MIRANDA faces ALI, who wears a trendy
designer-suit, dress shirt, no tie..

MIRANDA

What's Ali short for?

ALI

Nothing. That's it. Ali is Ali. I was named for my
grandfather.

MIRANDA

Oh.

(Small hesitation. And then...)

Where was he born ... your grandad?

ALI

He's Palestinian. My father came here when he was a
teenager.

MIRANDA

Miami?

ALI

Upstate New York. Near Albany. My mother's family
moved to New York -- Queens -- when my mother was an
infant. My parents met at N.Y.U. and moved down here
for grad school... U. Miami was looking for diversity,
so my mother and father both got free rides. They're
both academics ... math.

MIRANDA

And they stayed living here ... in Miami?

ALI

Yup. I was born in Jackson Memorial.

MIRANDA

Me too! That's crazy! ... How old are you?

ALI

28.

MIRANDA

No way! When's your birthday?

ALI

June 6th. D-Day ... and the anniversary of Bobby Kennedy's assassination. You?

MIRANDA

Ah. I'm younger. I'm December 7th. Same day as the invasion of Pearl Harbor. Larry Bird and I share a birthday. I'm a big Celts fan. I think you share a birthday June 6th with Björn Borg.

ALI

I do. Also Thomas Mann and Bradley Cooper. The three of us meet up a couple'a times a year for a beer.

MIRANDA

Funny.

(Without warning.)

Are you Muslim? I mean, you are, right?

ALI

Why? Does that bother you?

MIRANDA

Not at all.

(Small pause. And then...)

Are you observant?

ALI

No. Not at all.

MIRANDA

Your parents?

ALI

My dad is, big-time. My mom not so much.

MIRANDA

Brothers? Sisters?

ALI

Just me.

MIRANDA

I have one brother.

(And then...)

I'm nothing. My mother was born Catholic but never practiced. My father was some kind of Protestant. He died two years ago.

ALI

Sorry.

MIRANDA

I didn't know him really well. They split up when I was little. I get my height from him. He was six-ten.

ALI

He play basketball?

MIRANDA

He made the Heat but ruptured a buncha' disks rookie season. Ended up with a cocaine probem. Divorce. Disappeared for like ten years. Had a bunch more kids. One of them emailed my mom to tell her he'd died.

ALI

Rugged.

MIRANDA

You deal with stuff.

(Adds...)

I don't remember either of my parents ever talking about religion. My brother's sort of Catholic.

ALI

Older?

MIRANDA

Two years.

ALI

Tall?

MIRANDA

Tall, but not huge. Extremely clean-living. Wife, two little kids, serious tech job. My mom and I don't hear from him much.

(And then...)

I didn't mean to bring up religion. I... I don't know many Muslims. Well, actually, like none, really. Just you. With all the crazy shit that's happening in the world now, I'm really ... interested.

(Sniffs the air... And then...)

The chicken must be ready. Have a seat, please.

(MIRANDA goes to broiler, looks at cooked chicken.)

ALI

Can I help?

MIRANDA

(Calls from broiler.)

It's not quite done.

(Re-enters.)

I'm curious. Did you pay a lot for me?

ALI

You were expensive.

MIRANDA

I'm sure Federer brought in more.

ALI

Ten thousand.

MIRANDA

Wow!

ALI

You were cheaper.

MIRANDA

I'm sure.

ALI

But not cheap.

MIRANDA

Sorry.

ALI

But well worth it. I would have bid higher.

MIRANDA

But nobody was interested?

ALI

Two other bidders stayed with me. They dropped out at five.

MIRANDA

Hundred?

ALI

Thousand.

MIRANDA

You paid five thousand?!

ALI

I did. You cost half a Federer.

MIRANDA

Wait up! Wait up! You paid five thousand dollars to have dinner with me?!

ALI

I did.

MIRANDA

OMIGOD! That so embarrasses me. That's a ton.

(Looks at label on bottle of wine.)

I should have opened a better wine.

ALI

I brought the wine.

MIRANDA

Oh shit! Sorry. I forgot.

(And then...)

I have extremely limited social skills. Like most tennis players on the tour.

ALI

You're doing fine.

MIRANDA

We practice and we travel and we play and we practice and we travel and we play. That's about it.

ALI

When do you sleep?

MIRANDA

We sleep on planes.

ALI

And eat chicken.

MIRANDA

But rarely cook chicken.

(Beat.)

I cooked for my mother last week and she told me I should never cook food for myself or anybody else ... that I was born to order out.

(THEY share a laugh. And then...)

ALI

I saw you play at Wimbledon last year. You were great.

MIRANDA

Omigod, no! I lost in straight sets!

ALI

Both sets were amazingly close.

MIRANDA

Wimbledon is something else. Such a big stage. I was scared stupid.

ALI

I thought you played brilliantly to hold her off that way. You totally had the crowd.

MIRANDA

But I lost.

ALI

You'll have a ton of other chances.

MIRANDA

Changing the subject, she asks ... What flight are you on tomorrow?

ALI

United from Lauderdale. Changes planes in Newark.
(Looks at calendar on his phone.)
Takes off from Lauderdale at 4:30.

MIRANDA

I'm on Air France, non-stop Miami-Charles deGaulle.

ALI

Just as well. I'm definitely in the cheap seats.
(Adds.)
I blew all my money on dinner.

MIRANDA

I would give it back to you if it went to me. It goes directly to the relief fund.

ALI

I was kidding. I've got a conference-meeting set up at Newark Airport. And I used miles to upgrade. I fly a lot.

MIRANDA

No, really. I'm embarrassed you spent so much.

ALI

I was kidding! I can afford it. I would have made the donation anyway ... without the chicken.

MIRANDA

Whew. Thank you for saying that. I find this whole thing really embarrassing, but the cause is a good one ... you think so, right?

ALI

Definitely.

MIRANDA

It still makes me feel weird. Maybe we can meet up for a dinner in Paris. Cut your losses.

ALI

No charge?

MIRANDA

On me.

(Laughs.)

The dinner. I meant the dinner would be “on me”, not ... omigod!

(Laughs again, nervously.)

ALI

I figured. I'd really like that.

(Explains.)

Meeting up for dinner in Paris.

(Checks calendar on his iPhone.)

I'm shooting a concert on Friday. It starts late. How about dinner on you and a concert on me?

MIRANDA

I'd like that.

(And then, without warning...)

Was it difficult for you after 9/11? You know ... being a Muslim.

ALI

Yuh, well ... Not so much, no.

(And then...)

A bit, maybe, yuh. I mean, close friends were, like, protective, but they would offer up weird things around me, like I was going out with this girl - also a tennis player - we were playing at Crandon Park and she introduces me to this guy we got put with for doubles ... She tells this guy my name and then goes “He's not a committed Muslim.”

MIRANDA

No way.

ALI

It's different now. Being a Muslim isn't so bad for business.

MIRANDA

Seriously?

ALI

With what's going down in the world, right now, yuh, sure ... Blue State people like doing business with me, having a Muslim friend.

MIRANDA

That's a tad cynical.

ALI

Yuh, well ... I earned my stripes. I got a lot of "Ali Baba" growing up. I was in grad school at F.A.U. in Boca and got hit with "Boca Mocha" more than a couple of times. The hard-core Muslim shit's more recent. There weren't a lot of Muslims around when I was growing up. Lotta' Cubans. The Palestinian thing's a problem sometimes around Jews. I spend a bunch of my life debating Israeli-Palestinian politics, which, of course, I know nearly nothing about and have less than zero interest in ever discussing.

MIRANDA

Honestly, I hate religion. Religion fucks up people more than it helps. My-team's-better-than-your-team kinda' thing.

ALI

I dunno. To each his own, really.

MIRANDA

Yuh, you're right. It's just ... I dunno.

(Beat.)

I've got these French friends ... they live right near the Charlie Hebdo thing. I was playing a tournament in Switzerland, kinda' close ... so I called to make sure they were okay and all. They're really angry, really against immigrants. I mean, their politics got suddenly very weird, very right-wing-Bush-Trump-Le-Pen-ish. I was kind'a shocked.

ALI

Yuh. I get it. I mean I *don't* get it, but I get it. I was in high school when 9/11 happened and it was kinda' worrisome. I mean my parents were really really scared. My father was getting into a cab, downtown Miami. The driver was Indian or Pakistani ... wearing a turban ... and what my dad said was a well-dressed, normal-looking businessman walks up to the window on the driver-side and spits on the driver and just walks away ... like he'd done a good thing.

MIRANDA

So, do you worry about being in Paris? ... About having, you know, a Muslim name in Paris? After the people from the magazine got shot and all ...

ALI

I don't feel worried. Not so much. Yuh. Maybe a little.

MIRANDA

And you're going for work?

ALI

I am. I'll be filming a couple of concerts. My production company works in partnership with a French guy who makes documentaries from time to time. Mostly my company does commercials, so this should be fun ... kind of a working vacation. I...

(Looks off in direction of kitchen.
And then...)

I think something is seriously burning in there.

MIRANDA

(Turns, looks. Realizes.)

Oh, shit! Oh, shit!

BLACKOUT.

END OF SCENE TWO.

SCENE THREE.

LIGHTS UP in main room of
Pierre-Edouard's attic-loft.
Paris. 11th Arrondissement
(Passage Saint-Pierre
Amelot).

MARIE-LAURE and PIERRE-
EDOUARD are in mid-
conversation. Both are
uncomfortable. MARIE-LAURE is
extremely uncomfortable.
There will be a lot of
nervous laughter from each of
them throughout the scene.

NOTE: PIERRE-EDOUARD speaks
English with an obviously
French accent.

Two laundry bags are in
evidence.

Marie-Laure. MARIE-LAURE

Yes. I knew that. PIERRE-EDOUARD

You did? MARIE-LAURE

I did. PIERRE-EDOUARD
(Explains.)
You told me in the *boulangerie*.
(Laughs nervously.)

MARIE-LAURE
(Laughs nervously.)
I did. Yes. Sorry. I'm a bit nervous. I thought you
were saying we'd met each before that or something.
(And then...)

And you're ... (Hesitates ... remembers his name.)
Pierre-Edouard.

I am. PIERRE-EDOUARD

MARIE-LAURE

And you live here?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Euh, ouais... I do.

MARIE-LAURE

Long time?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I've had this place for six years. It was my uncle's ... He was a architect ... and he died ... and he didn't have any kids. He liked me, so, I got it.

MARIE-LAURE

Lucky. I love it.

(Laughs nervously.)

PIERRE-EDOUARD

It's tiny.

MARIE-LAURE

(Looking out of window as SHE speaks...)

Yuh, but the light is beautiful, and you have a balcony, and you can see the gorgeous theatre from both windows. So cool. What is it?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

It's a concert hall. Mostly rock concerts. Everybody in my building gets free tickets ... because of the noise.

MARIE-LAURE

It's beautiful. When was it built?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Mid-1800s. Back in the day, Parisian parents always bought their kids their first apartment. This was the one my uncle chose. Later on, he lived in a huge apartment that looked into Jardin du Luxembourg, but he kept this place as his studio. And he went to rock concerts downstairs, constantly. He knew much more about contemporary music than I do.

MARIE-LAURE

(Turns from window.)

You're lucky to have this.

(And then...)

I love Paris. I really do. I'm like a walking cliché ... the American in Paris ... but, yuh, I do. I love it here.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I love that you love Paris.
(Laughs nervously.)

MARIE-LAURE

Your English is amazing. I'm really impressed.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

(Laughs nervously.)

Thank you.

MARIE-LAURE

My French is non-existent. Where'd you learn English?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Lycée, then university. And I spent a year of grad school in New York. Teachers College at Columbia ... I go to New York as much as I can.

(Laughs nervously.)

I'm the Parisian *cliché*: I love New York.

MARIE-LAURE

We love what we don't have.
(Laughs nervously.)

PIERRE-EDOUARD

C'est ça. I was just in New York last summer for a brush-up course at Columbia. I teach high school English on the other side of the river in the 6th *Arrondissement*.

(Smiles at MARIE-LAURE, notices her body. And then...)

May I take your coat?

(PIERRE-EDOUARD takes MARIE-LAURE's coat, turns to hang coat on coat-hook, when suddenly...)

MARIE-LAURE

(Without warning.)

This is a mistake. I shouldn't have come up. I ...

(And then...)

I have to leave. This isn't who I... I don't ever do this. I've watched way too much Truffaut. I... I'm sorry.

And with that, MARIE-LAURE picks up her laundry bag, walks to the door, leaves, closing door behind her.

PIERRE-EDOUARD doesn't move, stands frozen, holding Marie-Laure's coat. HE is a bit dumbfounded.

There is a knock at the door.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Hello? *Qui est-ce?*

MARIE-LAURE (OFF.)

It's me. Marie-Laure. You have my coat.

PIERRE-EDOUARD goes to the door, opens it. MARIE-LAURE is profoundly uncomfortable, embarrassed.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Do you want to come back in? I can make coffee. We bought *croissantes*...

MARIE-LAURE

No! I... I think I should go. I want to go. I'm sorry.

And with that, SHE turns and starts to leave, realizes PIERRE-EDOUARD still has her coat. SHE turns, returns to his door. HE hasn't moved.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I'm not intending to...

MARIE-LAURE

No, I know, I'm sure you're not. I'm just really really... My coat?

MARIE-LAURE takes her coat, never finishes her thought. SHE turns, leaves.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

(Watching her disappear; quietly speaks to closed door.)

Bye.

PIERRE-EDOUARD takes his iPhone from his pocket, hold down command button. SIRI'S VOICE is heard from phone amplified through loudspeakers in the theatre.

SIRI (OFF.)

How may I help you?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

(To SIRI, quietly derressed.)

Siri, am I boring?

SIRI (TAPED VOICE, OFF.)
If you have to ask, you already know the answer.

END OF SCENE THREE.

THE LIGHTS SHIFT TO...

SCENE FOUR.

Peter's loft, Cobble Hill, Brooklyn.
7pm, same day.

PETER and MISSY sit facing one another,
eating fish-and-chips from take-out
containers.

The room is dimly lit by two lamps.

MISSY

My parents had a certifiably terrible marriage. They
both cheated on each other ... a *lot*. My mother saw my
father making out at a ball game, and he caught her
making out at a restaurant.

PETER

Risk-takers. Tiger Woods syndrome.

MISSY

Funny you should say that.

(Beat. SHE explains.)

She was cheating on my father with her golf
instructor. Classic, right? And my dad was sleeping
with a 6-foot-something Austrian volleyball player
aptly named Katrina.

PETER

Like the hurricane.

MISSY

Like the hurricane.

PETER

Sounds like your parents both really liked tall.

MISSY

My mother's my height, but her golf pro was kind of
smallish, more your height. Sorry. I didn't mean that
in a bad way.

PETER

No, no ... I love being small. Small's great ...
especially in a crawl-space situation.

MISSY

My dad's Austrian volleyballer was humongous, way way
taller than me. Serious pituitary gland disorder.

(Beat. And then...)

I think they both *wanted* to get caught. When I was
really little - maybe four or five - I used to wear

ear-muffs in my room so I wouldn't hear them yelling at each other.

PETER

That sucks.

(And then...)

My parents got divorced when I was ten. I lived mostly with my father.

MISSY

Did they get married again?

PETER

They both got married again, divorced again, and married again. The really crazy thing is they're all like best friends. They go on vacations together every Christmas, all the various husbands and wives and all their various kids. I could never keep track of all their kids. I have one step-sister who's forty-something, and one half-brother who's four.

MISSY

Serial marriers.

PETER

Exactly.

MISSY

My crazy parents got re-married to each other, re-divorced, re-married, and re-divorced.

PETER

To each *other*?

MISSY

To each other.

PETER

Holy shit! You win.

(Beat.)

Did they ever marry other people, or just each other?

MISSY

Their 1st other-people just happened, finally. Recently. Both of them. First her, then him.

PETER

Excellent role models.

MISSY

Excellent.

(And then...)

This is why you have to promise never to marry me.

(Beat. And then...)

PETER

I'm afraid I can't promise that.

(A substantial pause. And then...)

MISSY

Excuse me?

PETER

This is possibly an insane thing to tell you, but, from what I'm feeling right now, I really can't honestly promise I would never marry you.

MISSY

Really?

PETER

Yuh. Well ... yuh, really.

MISSY

Did you just say what I think you said?

PETER

I, yuh, I did. You're super smart, beautiful, funny, strong ... pretty much what I've been hoping for all my life. Don't you think it's magical how people find each other? I mean, it's such a fucked-up crowded planet and, I dunno, somehow...

(Stops himself. Takes three deep breaths, exhales. And then...)

I'd better slow down.

(And then...)

When I was in high school, my French girl-cousin Lucie lived with us for three months. She used to call me "*Coeur d'artichaut*" ... means "heart of an artichoke" ... meaning, from her observation of me, every time I met a beautiful girl, I instantly fell apart like an artichoke.

(Beat.)

And that definitely just happened. My petals are totally open.

MISSY

(Smiles, then sings lyric from Beatles' "With A Little Help From My Friends".)

"Would you believe in a love at first sight...?"

PETER

(Speaks his reply.)

Yes, I'm certain that it happens all the time.

MISSY

(Speaks.)

What will you see if you turn out the light?

PETER switches off lamp.

END OF SCENE FOUR.

SCENE FIVE.

LIGHTS UP in main room of Pierre-Edouard's attic-loft, Paris. Later, same night.

Doors to balcony are open. WE HEAR ROCK-MUSIC playing from nearby building.

PIERRE-EDOUARD sits at his computer, writing a letter. HE stops, reads what he's written, sips from a glass of red wine.

His room is in darkness, thus, HE is lit by the light from his computer's screen.

There is a knock at his door.

HE calls out.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Oui. Qui est-ce?

MARIE-LAURE (OFF.)

It's me. Moi. Marie-Laure.

PIERRE-EDOUARD, amazed, goes to the door, opens it.

MARIE-LAURE stands in light from overhead bulb in hallway.

MARIE-LAURE

I would have called you or sent a text, but I don't have...

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Come in, come in. Please.

HE turns on overhead light.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

(Motions for her to come inside apartment.)

Please.

MARIE-LAURE

If I knew your phone number, I...

PIERRE-EDOUARD

(Motions to his computer.)

I was writing you a letter.

MARIE-LAURE

To me?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

To you. I never imagined you'd come back...

MARIE-LAURE

Moi non plus.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

You speak French?

MARIE-LAURE

Basically just "*Moi aussi*" or "*Moi non plus.*" My grandmother was French. My mother's mother. I'm named for her. I tracked down a bunch of distant cousins on Facebook. That's mostly why I'm here.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Please come in. Please.

(MARIE-LAURE hesitates, then enters awkwardly. THEY stand facing one another, awkwardly.)

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I'm so happy you... I've been thinking about you nonstop ... trying to relive this afternoon ... differently, so that I didn't scare you off, like I did.

MARIE-LAURE

Nooo! You didn't scare me off. I managed to do that on my own.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Would we like to drink some coffee?

MARIE-LAURE

Sure. We would. Yes.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Good.

(PIERRE-EDOUARD moves to kitchen, calls to MARIE-LAURE.)

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Most Americans I know don't drink coffee at night.

MARIE-LAURE

(Calling to PIERRE-EDOUARD in kitchen.)

I don't have any problem with coffee keeping me awake ... if that's what you mean.

(SHE wanders to door to balcony...)

You can hear the music from the concert hall pretty clearly up here. It's not so loud on the street.

(PIERRE-EDOUARD calls from kitchen area...)

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I've got a bunch of tickets for the concert tomorrow night. *Merde!*

(re-enters.)

I'm out of coffee.

(Shrugs.)

How's a glass of wine? I only have one choice, but it's a really nice Margaux. I just opened it a couple of hours ago.

MARIE-LAURE

Ah, no, really. I don't think...

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I'm not trying to get you drunk and... you know...

MARIE-LAURE

No, oh no! ... That's not what I'm saying.

(Beat.)

Red gives me a headache.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Ah. I only have the red. My grandmother just gave it to me for my birthday.

(Beat.)

That was stupid of me to think you meant...

(PIERRE-EDOUARD stops himself, doesn't finish thought.)

HE crosses to doors to balcony, closes them. MUSIC can no longer be heard.

And then...)

MARIE-LAURE

When was your birthday?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

It's just about to happen. November 13th. Right: Friday the 13th.

MARIE-LAURE

Friday the 13th.

(Realizes...)

Oh, wow, this Friday. Do you have plans?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Nothing big. Just to have lunch with my grandmother.

MARIE-LAURE

Oh ... well ... Maybe...

(Doesn't finish thought.)

My birthday's April 4th. Same day Martin Luther King was assassinated. A day of national mourning.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Must be complicated.

MARIE-LAURE

Tell me about it!

(Small pause while PIERRE-EDOUARD finds his courage.)

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Listen, there's a concert downstairs Friday night. I was thinking that maybe we could go ... together. Us.

MARIE-LAURE

Oh.

(A pause. And then...)

Okay. Sure. I'd like that.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Genial!

(Small embarrassed pause. And then...)

Your grandmother was French?

MARIE-LAURE

Did I tell you that?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

You did.

MARIE-LAURE

Right. I must have. She was. She's dead. I guess she's still French. I mean, like, Napoleon's dead and *he's* still French, right?

(Beat.)

I'm really nervous. I'm not usually so...

PIERRE-EDOUARD

No, you're fine. I'm sorry if I'm making you feel uncomfortable. I do that to people. My panic-level is always way way up, and it kind of spreads to people I'm with. I...

MARIE-LAURE

No, no, it's not you!

(And then, hesitantly.)

I just broke up with my boyfriend. Well, not just. Actually, not yet. I haven't told him yet, so I feel really awkward being up here and...

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Understandable. Is he in Paris?

MARIE-LAURE

Oh, no. I'm on my own.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Where are you staying?

MARIE-LAURE

Just at the corner. I did an online apartment-swap with a woman from the d'Orsay Museum. I work in acquisitions at MOMA, so, you know ... Her place is next door to the *boulangerie*.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Ah.

MARIE-LAURE

Do you have a girlfriend?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Not exactly.

MARIE-LAURE

(Suddenly worried.)

Are you *married*?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

What? ... No! Of course not!

MARIE-LAURE

Sorry. That was so stupid.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

No, no, not at all. It's understandable.

MARIE-LAURE

I did that once. In college. Hooked up with my art history professor. He was French. Married. Kids.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

That's the *other* French cliché.

MARIE-LAURE

I hated myself. And him. Both of us.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Understandable.

(And then...)

My girlfriend broke up with me.

MARIE-LAURE

Ohhh. How come?

(Beat.)

You don't have to answer that?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

No, no, I want to. I just don't have an answer. It was kind of a shock, really.

MARIE-LAURE

I'm so sorry. Did it just happen?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Oh, no. Couple of years ago. I just haven't, you know...

MARIE-LAURE

Found anybody as good?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

No. I definitely wouldn't put it that way. I just haven't really gone out much since then. Like, almost not at all.

MARIE-LAURE

Were you, like, traumatized?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I just didn't see it coming.

MARIE-LAURE

Oh. Were you, like, deeply in love?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I don't think so. I mean, I think that's why she dumped me, really. Neither one of us...

(Doesn't finish thought. Smiles.)

Anyway. I get it ... about your boyfriend. I mean, it's understandable that you'd be gun-shy.

MARIE-LAURE

Oh, I'm not gun-shy. I just didn't want him to think the reason I'm breaking us up is because I hooked up with some cute French guy.

(Beat.)

I can't believe I just said that. I need an exorcist!

(There is a long, embarrassed pause.
PIERRE-EDOUARD breaks the silence.)

PIERRE-EDOUARD

My wife... I called her my wife because we were together for four years. We weren't actually married ... and she never introduced me as her "husband", so it was a little stupid of me to introduce her as my ... "wife". That actually annoyed her quite a bit.

MARIE-LAURE

Did you want to marry her?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Oh God NO! Never! That was never meant to be, never on anybody's radar. I don't know why I did that ... call her "wife". She *hated* that.

MARIE-LAURE

Maybe that's why you did it?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Oui, peut-être. She's extremely hip. She sings, does stand-up comedy, wrote her own one-man show. Her father and mother are ex-pat American jazz musicians. My family's from a different planet. My father drove a bread-truck and my mother worked as a secretary in an insurance office...

(Adds.)

Also, she was black.

MARIE-LAURE looks up, not understanding. HE explains.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Not my mother ... my girl-friend.

MARIE-LAURE

She probably still is.

PIERRE-EDOUARD looks up, not understanding. SHE explains.

MARIE-LAURE

Black.

(PIERRE-EDOUARD laughs.)

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Knowing her, maybe not.

MARIE-LAURE

Do you still see her?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

No. Never. She's living in the south. She has a new baby ... a little girl named Simone-Holliday ... Simone after Nina Simone and Holliday...

MARIE-LAURE

...after Billie Holliday.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Oui.

(Beat.)

The baby's definitely not mine. The baby's father's a musician ... from Mali.

(Adds...)

I haven't seen my old girlfriend for maybe two years.

MARIE-LAURE

But you still care?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I think mostly I'm still just pissed off. The way she did it ... broke it off with me ... it wasn't very nice.

MARIE-LAURE

In fairness to her ... your old girlfriend ... it's always tricky. I have to figure it out. I don't want to hurt him ... my boyfriend ... but I need to be clear and definite. And I don't want to make an enemy of him, because I really like him ... I love him ... but absolutely *not* a wife-husband kind of love. It's tricky.

(Beat.)

What did your old girlfriend do that I *shouldn't* do?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

It's not something I ever talk about.

MARIE-LAURE

Oh. Sorry. I'm being selfish. Sorry.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

No, I...

(Long pause. And then...)

I came home and she was in our bed with this other guy. An extremely large other guy. Russian. I didn't

say much, but the Russian guy threw a punch at me and there was a fistfight ... and let's just say I didn't win.

MARIE-LAURE

OMIGOD! That's terrible!

PIERRE-EDOUARD

It wasn't very nice.

MARIE-LAURE

I'm so sorry.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Ca n'a pas été vraiment très agréable... pas été tendre. Sorry. I'm speaking French. I should be way way over her by now. I don't know what the hell's wrong with me. Believe me, I'm not in love with her. I don't think I ever was, really. It was just so cool being in her world ... so totally different from anything I ever knew.

(Beat.)

Her name's Chardonnay.

MARIE-LAURE

Chardonnay? Like "I'll have a glass of Chardonnay"?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Exactly. Her parents were drunk on Chardonnay when they conceived her.

MARIE-LAURE

Could have been worse. They could have been drinking *Gigondas*.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

(Smiles.)

Or *Chateau Neuf du Pape*.

MARIE-LAURE

St. Emillion!

(THEY share a laugh.)

PIERRE-EDOUARD

(Yells.)

Dom Perignon!

THEY are both convulsed by obviously nervous laughter.

When THEY stop laughing, THEY look at one another silently. And then they

kiss. It is a sweet kiss, with far less
lust than understanding.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Wow!

MARIE-LAURE

Wow.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Was that a mercy kiss?

MARIE-LAURE

That was so not a mercy kiss.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Are you sure?

(MARIE-LAURE steps into a 2nd kiss.
This one is much more passionate,
much more lust than understanding.

When THEY break from the kiss...)

MARIE-LAURE

Not a mercy kiss, right?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Definitely not a mercy kiss.

(THEY are both a bit shocked by what
they feel for one another. MARIE-
LAURE brings her boyfriend into the
conversation.)

MARIE-LAURE

My boyfriend is mixed ... his dad's black, his
mother's Spanish ... light-skinned ... from Argentina.
His name's Bolton, same as his dad. His dad was born
in Northern England ... in Bolton ... hence ...

(Shrugs.)

His dad's called Big Boo and Bolton's Little Boo.
Growing up, Bolton's nickname in school was "Zebra"...

PIERRE-EDOUARD

(Overlapping...)

'Cause he's mixed?

MARIE-LAURE

(Overlapping...)

Because he's mixed.

(Beat.)

Bolton's very smart. He's a doctor. He went to Harvard undergrad and then med school at Yale. He's in pediatrics, works exclusively with ghetto kids...

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Admirable.

MARIE-LAURE

He's a really caring guy. He tells the kids to call him "Doctor Boo". They like that.

(SHE is fighting back tears. 1st time confession follows.)

I... I was never totally in love with him. I admire him, enormously ... but I... I never should have let it go as far as it did.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

He wants to marry you?

MARIE-LAURE

(Sobs.)

YES!

PIERRE-EDOUARD

You've got a problem.

MARIE-LAURE

YES!

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Did he, like, physically ask you? Ring in a box?

MARIE-LAURE

(Sobbing.)

AT THE AIRPORT!

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Ah.

MARIE-LAURE

(Sobbing.)

ON HIS KNEES!

PIERRE-EDOUARD

And you said?

(Starts to control her emotion. Wipes her tears from her cheek.)

MARIE-LAURE

I couldn't bring myself to just say "no". I thought that would be way too shitty and maybe God would make my plane crash?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Yuh, God does that. Every plane that crashes has at least one person onboard who's done something way too shitty.

MARIE-LAURE

(Smiles. And then...)

I promised I'd tell him when I got back to New York.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

When do you head back?

MARIE-LAURE

I'm here two more weeks.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Good. That gives me time.

MARIE-LAURE

(Instantly worried.)

What? Oh. No. Please, don't, okay? That would be such overload. Just be my friend. I've got to figure this out clearheaded. Please? Friends?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Okay, sure. I can do friends.

MARIE-LAURE

Thank you.

MARIE-LAURE hugs PIERRE-EDOUARD, leans her head on his shoulder. After a beat, SHE looks up at him, kisses him.

THEY break from the kiss and then they kiss again, passionately. When they break from the kiss...

PIERRE-EDOUARD

This is sort of a mixed signal you're sending.

MARIE-LAURE

It's helping me make a decision.

THEY kiss again, even more passionately.

MARIE-LAURE

Okay. Made it.

THEY kiss again, as LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK.

END OF SCENE FIVE.

SCENE SIX.

LIGHTS UP in main room of Miranda's apartment. Miami. Later same night.

MIRANDA and ALI sit on the sofa eating pizza from two cardboard boxes.

The TV is on. We can see flickering light from the screen, but the angle is such that we cannot see the screen. We hear an announcer announcing a tennis match with the WILLIAMS SISTERS.

MIRANDA

(Flatly. SHE'S dsaid all this before.)

I love Wozniacki, but Kerber really outclassed her in Stuttgart. Indoor clay. Kerber can play on any surface. In Caroline's defense, it can be tough playing a lefty. Even when she loses she's great. She came so close to beating Serena in Singapore.

ALI

Yuh, but I don't think Wozniacki will ever get over the Irish golfer-kid dumping her ... McIlroy.

MIRANDA

(Annoyed.)

That's what men think. I don't know if most women players would agree.

ALI

Had to be humiliating.

MIRANDA

(More annoyed.)

Yuh, but you leave that stuff off the court. Trust me.

(Sound of crowd cheering from TV.)

MIRANDA

(Changing the subject.)

A Serena happens once in a lifetime.

ALI

She's definitely a phenom. Have you ever played her?

MIRANDA

Just once, in an exhibition match in Delray Beach, just after she won the Miami Open. Chrissie Evert organizes a day of celebrity matches every year to raise money for Florida charities ...

ALI

How'd you do?

MIRANDA

(Really annoyed.)

What would be your guess?

ALI

I didn't ask that facetiously. I'm really interested in how a top athlete like you processes competition. I can barely close a door, let alone close a tennis match. Going into the match, or during the match, did you think you could beat Serena?

MIRANDA

Hah! Mostly I was thinking about how I could ask her to take a selfie with me.

(And then...)

Yuh, I s'pose somewhere in my warped brain I thought I might have a shot ... like, maybe she was having an off-day.

ALI

Was she?

MIRANDA

Definitely not. Straight sets: 6-2, 6-3.

ALI

You get the selfie?

MIRANDA

I did.

(MIRANDA shows photo to ALI on her iPhone.)

ALI

Nice.

MIRANDA

It's also the wallpaper on my laptop. And last year's Christmas card.

(And then...)

More wine?

ALI

I'm okay.

MIRANDA

Something else? Beer? Juice?

ALI

I'm okay, thanks.

(MIRANDA pours herself another glass
of wine, drinks, and then...)

MIRANDA

You must be doing well if you can afford to buy \$5000
dinners with a gay female tennis player.

ALI

I dunno. I do alright. You can make a small fortune
making documentaries, as long as you start out with a
large fortune.

(Checks to see if his joke landed.
And then...)

Did you tell me that so I wouldn't make a move on you?

MIRANDA

I dunno. Maybe. Probably.

ALI

Have you always been gay?

MIRANDA

No. I've had serious boyfriends from time to time. I
guess I alternate, but, yuh, mostly women. When you're
on tour playing womens' tennis, you're mostly in a
lesbian world. You don't sleep with your coach, man or
woman... and you don't sleep with other players'
coaches, so, what's left is tennis fans and other
female players.

ALI

And tennis fans ask annoying questions like me?

MIRANDA

I'm not saying that at all. I'm as interested in your
being Muslim as you are in my being a tennis pro. And
we're both being polite and careful. But how the fuck
can Donald Trump get away with saying what he says?
How can this be?

ALI

Because he's saying out loud what so many Americans
are thinking but scared to say out loud.

MIRANDA

You think?

ALI

I know.

MIRANDA

You think he's gonna get elected?

ALI

It could happen.

MIRANDA

Never! It could never happen! He'll get votes from a couple of crazies, but Trump President? Never!

ALI

We'll see what happens in November.

MIRANDA

You think most Americans want to put a wall around Mexico?

ALI

Mexico, Cuba, Canada, Manhattan, L.A., Boston... All the Blue States. The Religious Right in this country is just as crazy as Radical Islam ... maybe crazier. You ever think about who owns the guns and who gets shot? Don't get me started.

(Beat. And then...)

The racism my parents dealt with started way way wayyyy before 9/11. Trust me.

(Speaks simply, clearly...)

I think about race every day of my life. I walk into a restaurant anywhere in America, people look up, and I know what they're thinking. I know. It isn't even like "Not a white man! Get him out'ta here!" ... It's just that "not a white man" registers immediately, and then they go back to their designer-cheeseburgers. Yuh, sure, I know that when a white man walks into a restaurant in Cairo or Nairobi it's kind of the same deal ... but only *kind of*, because it's usually a positive thing ... like, "Wow, here comes The Man!". I mean, okay, I know I sound a little stupid saying this shit out loud, but it's what's in my head and my heart: nowhere I know about do Americans just accept anyone different. It's always a *bad thing* to be on the wrong side of their normal, and it makes me so sad and so sick of it. We elect a very decent black man as President and this is, I think, *amazing*, but can he get a fucking thing *done*? No, he can not. The last time America was this divided was the Civil War. Same issues. Most Americans see Obama's election as a massive national fuck-up ... something groovy the pansy-liberals sneaked through while the grownup real-Americans had their backs turned. A Donald Trump brings 'em out of the woodwork, turns them face-

forward! They hate Obama. They love Trump! It doesn't matter that Trump tells lies. It's doesn't matter that he is a living hate-crime. They ... fucking .. love him!

(Beat.)

I've had enough. If I had any idea where I could move to and have a life, I would move there. Find me a so-called civilized country where racism isn't rampant. England? France? Germany? Japan? Russia? China? I don't think so. Try having my brown skin and living in any of those places. Try walking down any street anywhere on the planet in your tennis skirt? Try being a lesbian anywhere on this planet other than San Francisco and who the fuck can afford to live in San Francisco?

(Beat. ALI takes a deep breath. Exhales. And then...)

You brought Trump up, not me. I'm just sayin'.

MIRANDA

Would you like a hug?

ALI

Yes.

(MIRANDA walks to ALI, opens her arms. ALI stands frozen.)

ALI

Am I dreaming this?

(MIRANDA takes ALI's face in her hands, kisses him, gently.)

ALI

I don't know if my rant prompted this, but if it did, just say the word and I'll show you some serious ranting.

MIRANDA

We're all looking for a safe place. Let's be that for each other.

THEY kiss again.

MIRANDA

Are you sleepy?

ALI

Is that a trick question?

MIRANDA

You wanna sleep over?

Yuh. I do. A lot.

ALI

THEY kiss again ... passionately.

THE LIGHTS FADE OUT.

END OF SCENE SIX.

SCENE SEVEN.

Friday night, November 13th, 2015.
9:40pm. Bataclan. Boulevard Voltaire,
Paris.

Scene plays totally in darkness but for
a projected still photograph of the
exterior of Bataclan.

WE HEAR: the sound of a rock concert.
EAGLES OF DEATH METAL singing/playing
"Kiss The Devil".

And then, WE HEAR: GUNSHOTS and
SCREAMS.

The MUSIC stops. GUNSHOTS and SCREAMS
continue.

Mayhem. Murder.

One half minute of this. And then...

The photographic image of Bataclan
catches fire, burns.

IMAGE FADES OUT.

END OF SCENE SEVEN.

SCENE EIGHT.

Friday, November 13th, 2015. 10:15pm.

We begin in darkness. And then...
NEWSREEL VIDEO of Bataclan attack is
seen on TV SCREEN in silence, without
sound.

MIRANDA, PETER, MISSY, and MARIE-LAURE
will speak his/her monologue/testimony
singularly, and then, after each has
testified, EACH OF THE PLAY'S SIX
CHARACTERS will repeat *in unison* the
same monologues they spoke singularly
earlier in the play.

START WITH ...

OPEN IN TIGHT SPOTLIGHT on PIERRE-
EDOUARD's face. HE speaks directly to
audience.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

(Deeply emotional.)

I knew this emergency staircase, and I led everybody
down it and out this backstage door. We had to crawl
over dead people, over people wounded, bleeding and
moaning. You could hear this crazy mixture of screams
and gunshots and hundreds of cell-phones ringing,
because it must have already been on TV and families
knew. Crazy ring-tones mixing in. When we ran past the
band's dressing room, there were a whole bunch of kids
hiding inside. Two of the terrorists were in there
with them, shooting them in cold blood. They were
kicking kids on the floor to see if the kids were
still alive. If they were, they shot them again.

SHIFT TO... EXTREMELY TIGHT SPOTLIGHT
on MIRANDA's FACE. SHE speaks directly
to AUDIENCE.

MIRANDA

(Holding back tears.)

I think about this happening a lot. We all do.
Whenever we're playing a tournament, it's on all our
minds. Is somebody gonna fly a \$50 drone into the
stadium with a bomb? Did some lunatic sneak in to blow
himself up? In some crazy way, I felt some kind of
relief that it was happening HERE, not at Wimbledon.
Maybe I just felt relief that it was finally
happening. I stayed calm. I felt cold but calm. Ali
was freaking out, so were a couple of the others. I

got them to get down under our seats. It went on for maybe another ten minutes before the police came in. I tell you, you're not thinking "Where's God?" ... You're thinking "Where are the fucking police?"

SPOTLIGHT OUT on MIRANDA and UP on PETER.

PETER

(Directly to AUDIENCE, enraged.)

This motherfucking Arab's wearing this black hoodie screaming "Allahu Akbar" and just shooting kids in this crazyassed random way. He's, like, in a feeding-frenzy and he re-loads and fucking runs right into this crowd of kids in front of the stage and he he's just gunning them down. It was like "Mad Max 6" or some fucking ridiculous action movie ... body parts flying all over the place. It looked fake. I keep thinking this: it looks fake!

SPOTLIGHT OUT on PETER ... UP on MISSY.

MISSY

(Directly to AUDIENCE, tearfully.)

At first I thought the shots were drumbeats. And then I saw the shooters and I thought it was, like, some kind of bad-taste performance, in keeping with the Eagles of Death Metal kind of humor... A young guy two rows ahead of us got shot and his blood spattered us. He didn't even scream. He made more of a thudding sound. He was next to this other guy who stood up and started screaming like crazy in French. And then they shot him, too.

SPOTLIGHT OUT on MISSY ... UP on MARIE-LAURE.

MARIE-LAURE

(Directly to AUDIENCE, tearfully.)

I kind of knew right away. I mean, for a long time now, since the Boston Marathon bombs, whenever I'm in crowds I think about some suicide bomber blowing himself up or something crazy happening with terrorists... so, I knew right away it was really bad. These kids in front of us got shot, first one and then his friend. It was horrible. I wanted to get under my seat but I couldn't move. I couldn't stop watching. They rushed at the kids in the mosh pit and just kept shooting at random.

SPOTLIGHT OUT on MARIE-LAURE ... UP on ALI.

world! I hear myself screaming at them "YOU MOTHERFUCKERS ARE THE INFIDELS, NOT US! I AM A MUSLIM. YOU ARE NOT MUSLIMS. YOU ARE FUCKING MURDERERS!"

MARIE-LAURE

(In unison with OTHERS.)

I kind of knew right away. I mean, for a long time now, since Charlie Hebdo, whenever I'm in crowds I think about some suicide bomber blowing himself up or something crazy happening with terrorists... so, I knew right away it was really bad. These kids in front of us got shot, first one and then his friend. They rushed at the kids in the mosh pit and just kept shooting at random.

PETER

(In unison with OTHERS.)

This motherfucking Arab's wearing this black hoodie screaming "Allahu Akbar" and just shooting kids in this crazyassed random way. He's, like, in a feeding-frenzy and he re-loads and fucking runs right into this crowd of kids in front of the stage and he he's just gunning them down. It was like "Mad Max 6" or some fucking ridiculous action movie ... body parts flying all over the place!

MIRANDA

(In unison with OTHERS.)

I think about this happening a lot. We all do. Whenever we're playing a tournament, it's on all our minds. Is somebody gonna fly a \$500 drone into the stadium with a bomb? Did some lunatic sneak in to blow himself up? It went on for maybe another ten minutes before the police came in. I tell you, you're not thinking "Where's God?" ... You're thinking "Where are the fucking police?"

And, suddenly, their cacophony of testimony ends with absolute silence. And then...ALL LIGHTS OUT ON SWITCH, leaving a SINGLE SPOTLIGHT on PIERRE-EDOARD who speaks directly to AUDIENCE. His face is tear-stained.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I knew this emergency staircase, and I led everybody down it and out this backstage door. Somehow, I got everybody out on to Passage Saint-Pierre Amelot and up into my apartment...

END OF SCENE EIGHT.

THE LIGHTS WIDEN TO...

SCENE NINE.

Saturday, November 14th, 2015. 6AM.
PIERRE-EDOUARD'S attic-loft, Passage
Saint-Pierre Amelot, overlooking the
concert-hall BATACLAN.

WE HEAR... NEWSREEL FOOTAGE of the
massacre at Bataclan, as TV SCREEN
fades up, revealing the source of the
sound, now joined by newsreel footage
of the attack and aftermath.

THE TV now faces up-stage, so that
AUDIENCE can't see screen, only
flickering light from screen. Volume of
sound from TV is low, but audible.

WE also hear POLICE AND AMBULANCE
SIRENS from the street below.

MARIE-LAURE, MIRANDA, ALI, PETER and
MISSY are huddled together sitting on
floor in front of TV screen.

PETER has been sleeping. His head rests
on his backpack.

PIERRE-EDOUARD is in kitchen area,
reviewing video footage in his camera.

ALI calls across room to PIERRE-
EDOUARD.

ALI

What the hell are we watching?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

BFM. It's a really terrible news channel.

MISSY

It looks like a French version of Fox News. They're
showing video from somebody's cellphone...

ALI

They keep calling the shooters "Muslims" and "Islamic
extremists", not "terrorists", not "murderers"... It's
racist bullshit, man!

MIRANDA

(To ALI.)

You speak French?

ALI

Enough to understand *that*.

MIRANDA

(Watching TV screen.)

This is when the cops came in...

PETER wakes up. Speaks to MISSY.

PETER

Was I asleep a long time?

MISSY

Maybe 3 hours.

PETER

Nerves. I'm still shaking. Whenever I feel stressed, I fall asleep. All my life.

(Looks at balcony door.)

It's still dark out. What time is it?

MISSY

Nearly 6.

PETER

Jesus, 3 hours. I was dreaming that we were watching this shit on TV, like *reliving* it ... I mean, like we are, only I was asleep dreaming it.

(And then...)

My mother use'ta say if I was stressed, I would sleep through a war.

MISSY

Basically, you just did.

PETER

That's what I'm sayin'.

(And then...)

I smell bad. I need a shower.

(To MISSY.)

Your French friend ... should I call him "Pierre" or "Pete"?

MISSY

"Pierre-Edouard" ... or "Petey". I think he likes "Petey" when he's around Americans.

(PETER stands, starts to cross to PIERRE-EDOUARD. Stops. Watches TV screen. Explosion is heard from street below.)

PETER

Fuckin' Arabs are lunatics!

(Referencing TV screen.)

It looks like the cops were just downstairs here.

(And then...)

Maybe I can see something from the balcony.

MISSY

No! Don't go out there! They're telling people to stay inside ... well back from windows.

PETER pauses at door to balcony, peeks outside, craning his neck to see the street below.

PETER

There are still a bunch of ambulances ... I can see two stretchers with bodies covered with white sheets.

(Leans out further.)

A bunch more are on the ground covered with those gold shiny-things they give you when you finish a marathon.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I wouldn't go out there, really.

MISSY

It's disrespectful, Peter. It's not a show.

MIRANDA

Really! Come inside, Peter, huh?

PETER

Ok. Fine. I'm inside.

(and then...)

This really happened.

PETER re-enters room. HE closes balcony doors, calls to PIERRE-EDOUARD.

PETER

Yo, Petey. Pierre-uh-Edward...

(PIERRE-EDOUARD turns to PETER.)

Hi. Could I possibly take a shower?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Bien sûr. No problem.

(Points to closed door.)

The blue door's the bathroom with the shower ... There should be a fairly clean towel on a hook next to the sink.

PETER

Thanks, man.

(Looks at TV, adds...)

This really happened.

PETER exits into the bathroom.

MARIE-LAURE's cell-phone rings. SHE takes the call, moves off to one side, away from the others.

ALI sits on floor next to PIERRE-EDOUARD closer to the kitchen. THEY are both checking images on their video-cameras.

ALI speaks to PIERRE-EDOUARD without looking up.

ALI

You saved our lives, man. If we had been standing in the pit in front of the stage where our tickets would've put us...

(Doesn't finish thought. And then...)

That whole section...

(Doesn't finish thought. Fights back tears. HE looks up at PIERRE-EDOUARD, laughs embarrassedly. And then...)

Looking at this footage really freaks me out.

(Beat.)

You already knew the girl from New York?

(PIERRE-EDOUARD glances at MARI-MARIE-LAURE. ALI sees this, nods at MISSY.)

No, the tall girl. African-American.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Missy. Yuh. We hung out together a little last summer. We were taking the same post-grad course at Columbia.

ALI

She kept her head all through it, man. I was totally freaking out. She's strong.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Yuh, she's a strong woman.

ALI

If we had been in front of the stage, like we were supposed to be...

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I heard you guys speaking English and I spotted Missy, which was, like, amazing...

(Suddenly, extending his hand...)

I'm Pierre-Edouard. Petey. What's your name?

ALI

Al.

(And then...)

Ali. We were introduced last night.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Sorry. My brain isn't working.

ALI

Totally understandable. We're all still shaking in our shoes.

THEY shake hands.

WE NOW HEAR MISSY'S VOICE emanating from camera.

MISSY (FROM CAMERA)

Get down, everybody! Get down!

(Yells.)

Ali, get down! Ali, get down!

MISSY hears her own voice from Ali's camera, turns and call to PIERRE-EDOUARD.

MISSY

Was that my voice? Was that me screaming at you to get down?

ALI

Yuh.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Yuh.

MISSY

(To ALI.)

You were standing up yelling at the shooters.

ALI

I was totally freaking out.

MIRANDA

(Moves away from TV.)

I can't watch this. This is like some fucked-up reality-show ... like real-unreal, 'cause it's edited into an entertainment. It's sick!

(To MISSY.)

Are cell-phones working?

MISSY

(Checks her phone.)

I've got a weakish signal. Marie-Laure's on her phone now.

MIRANDA

I've gotta' call a couple'a people. I can't watch this.

MISSY

(Referencing TV.)

TV-guy's saying it's okay to go outside now, but to use extreme caution.

MIRANDA

I'll try nearer the balcony.

MIRANDA moves near balcony doors, dials number on her iPhone.

ALI is on the floor near PIERRE-EDOUARD, off-loading video footage from his camera to his computer.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

(As HE checks footage on his own camera.)

Did you get any of their faces?

ALI

I hope so. I was almost entirely on the band. When the first shots went off, I got the band re-acting. I knew something was crazy-wrong when the drummer dove behind his drumset. Then I got what I could. I got a couple of seconds of the main shooter. I'm hoping some of this video will blow up bigger.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

We should give all our footage to the police.

ALI

Definitely.

(Beat. And then...)

I wonder if the band got out okay?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

They did. They got out the back door. I saw it confirmed on TV.

(And then...)

You're Arabic?

ALI

Yuh.

(Beat.)

My parents were both born in Palestine.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

You were speaking Arabic when you were screaming at them, right?

ALI

I was, yuh. My Arabic's pretty rusty but it was, like, automatic. It just came out of me.

(Explains.)

My parents spoke Arabic at home when I was growing up.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

So, you could understand what they were saying?

ALI

My parents?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

(Smiles.)

No. Sorry. The gunmen [at Bataclan]. Could you understand what they were screaming?

ALI

Not so much when they were speaking French.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

When they were yelling in Arabic?

ALI

Yuh, sure, I got most of it.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

And?

ALI

The one main guy kept screaming they were getting even for France bombing Syria.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

That's insane!

ALI

It was weird. I kept thinking that he was screaming almost like he was acting, like he was, ya' know, acting for camera.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I thought that, too. Like it was a violent movie and he was acting.

(And then...)

You're American?

ALI
Yuh. I am. Sure.

PIERRE-EDOUARD
New York?

ALI
Florida.

PIERRE-EDOUARD
Born in Palestine?

ALI
I'm American. I just told you.

PIERRE-EDOUARD
That's cool. How do you know the others?

ALI
Why are you asking me?

PIERRE-EDOUARD
No reason.

ALI
Bullshit! You figure I'm an Arab so maybe I'm one of them!

PIERRE-EDOUARD
Absolument pas! That's crazy! ... Chill out!

(There is a small pause.)

PIERRE-EDOUARD
Yuh, well, maybe on some level, maybe. I mean... I'm sorry I had that thought ... It's understandable ... I'm sorry. I apologize.

ALI
Yuh. Okay. Me, too. Nobody's thinkin' straight.

(THEY fistbump, lightly. A small pause. And then...)

ALI
I came to the concert with the tennis player: Miranda.

PIERRE-EDOUARD
Miranda.

(Realizes.)
Ahhh! *Miranda!* Of course. I thought she looked familiar. I saw her play at St. Cloud last year.

ALI

That's her. She's playing a match there next week.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

And you're a couple?

ALI

It's complicated.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

It's always complicated.

ALI

We just met for the first time in Miami the day before yesterday, and we met up here last night for dinner and the concert. I got all-access passes 'cause I'm shooting footage for a documentary about American bands in Europe. And I guess you heard your girlfriend speaking English with us...

PIERRE-EDOUARD

She's not exactly my girlfriend. I'm gonna' be working on that.

(Laughs.)

It's complicated.

MISSY moves from TV to PIERRE-EDOUARD and ALI.

PETER exits from bathroom, wiping his wet hair with towel, looks for MISSY, sees she is now with PIERRE-EDOUARD.

MISSY hugs PIERRE-EDOUARD. SHE starts to cry. When SHE is able to rein in her tears, SHE speaks...

MISSY

Sorry. Sorry. I've been holding it in.

(Embarrassed laugh. And then, quietly.)

I never thought I'd see you again.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Nor I you. *Le destin*. Serendipity.

(MISSY sobs again. PIERRE-EDOUARD comforts her.)

It's over, Missy. We're okay.

MISSY

You always think this shit happens *out there*, you know, someplace *abstract* ... The Sudan, Syria, Iraq, whatever.

(And then...)

Look at me. I'm like Jello. I wasn't when we were in there, while it was happening. All the time it was going on, I was, like, cold, no emotion, just like "How do I get out of this?".

(Sobs.)

I guess I was holding everything in, big-time.

(Laughs. And then SHE sobs again.)

I'm a wreck.

MISSY does Yoga breathing to calm herself. Wipes tears from her cheeks.

SHE looks at PIERRE-EDOUARD, laughs another embarrassed laugh. And then...

MISSY

You live here, Petey?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I do. Bataclan gives neighbors free tickets.

MISSY

Because of the noise.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Exactly.

MARIE-LAURE finishes her phone-call, turns, watches MISSY and PIERRE-EDOUARD hugging.

MISSY

It's amazing that you live so close, that you knew the place so well, that you could get us out... up here...

(And then...)

The most amazing thing is that we saw each other in the middle of a thousand other people.

(SHE sobs again.)

I feel really sick still. I keep seeing the faces... hearing the ones who were still alive, moaning, calling for help. I feel so fucking guilty I didn't help any of them.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Me too. But I don't think we *could* have helped.

MISSY

I don't agree.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Oui. Je parle des conneries. I'm talking bullshit. I don't agree, either. We could have pulled some people out of there.

MISSY

But we didn't.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

No. We didn't. The impulse I had to save myself was incredible. Like a huge magnet pulling me. Mindless. I saved nobody but myself.

MISSY

And all of us. You saved us.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I only said "follow me". I didn't carry you.

MISSY

You saved us, Petey. We all feel that.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Well ...

(After a pause.)

Merci, Missy.

MISSY

We're gonna' hav'ta live with this.

(Beat. SHE sobs.)

Hard game.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

We both need to breathe.

THEY both do Yoga breathing. And then,
THEY share a smile...)

MISSY

Nice apartment.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Thank you. My uncle bought it because it was so close
... to Bataclan.

(And then...)

My uncle was a kind of "Bobo" hippie. "Bobo" means
Bourgeois-Bohemian. I think that's what the French
Arabs hate most: the Parisian "bobos".

PIERRE-EDOUARD becomes aware that
MARIE-LAURE and PETER are both staring.
HE breaks from the embrace with MISSY.

FROM TV: WE CONTINUE TO HEAR screams,
moans of wounded people, sounds of
AMBULANCE SIRENS, POLICE CARS,
BULLHORNS.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Did you know Marie-Laure before tonight?

MISSY

Not at all. Is she, like, your girlfriend?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Is Peter, like, your boyfriend?

MISSY

Whoa! I asked first. Is she your girlfriend?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Oui et non.

MISSY

That's not profoundly decisive.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

It's an honest answer. You and Peter?

MISSY

Just met him in New York.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Recent?

MISSY

Yuh. Day before yesterday. Oh, God... You were dead right to call me "Messy".

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I called you "messy"?

(And then...)

Ouais. je me suis juste un peu trompé... I forgot about that.

(Smiles.)

Yuh, well, you can call me that, too: messy.

A small pause. ALI turns from viewing his footage to ask PIERRE-EDOUARD a question.

ALI

Do you think they picked this concert for some specific reason? Like they had something against the band?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Non, pas vraiment. I think it's the venue. The owners are aggressively pro-Israel. And there are always pro-Palestinian protests.

MISSY

Is that true?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Je suis sûr. The combination of Parisian “bobos” at the concerts and the pro-Zionist owners... I think Bataclan has been a target for a long time.

ALI

Too bad the cops didn't think about it.

MARIE-LAURE walks from TV to PIERRE-EDOUARD, who opens his arms and hugs her.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Are you feeling any calmer?

MARIE-LAURE

It comes and goes. I can't watch the TV anymore. It's like watching a re-run of a movie from hell.

(Referencing TV screen.)

There was a bomb at a big soccer game.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I saw that. Hollande and Angela Merkel were there at the match. France was playing Germany.

MARIE-LAURE

Did people get killed?

ALI

No, it was just one lunatic outside the stadium. Blew himself up.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Suicide bomber. They figure he tried and failed to get inside, so he just blew himself up outside.

ALI

But they stopped the game.

MARIE-LAURE

A Muslim or a Frenchman?

ALI

Excuse me?

MARIE-LAURE

Was he a French guy or a Muslim?

ALI

Is there a difference?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Ali is Muslim.

ALI

Would you ask me if he was a French guy or a Catholic?

MARIE-LAURE

Oh, shit. I'm really sorry. That just came out from a really bad place. I'm really sorry.

ALI

Yuh, fine. Don't sweat it.

ALI walks from PIERRE-EDOUARD and MARIE-LAURE. Joins PETER and MIRANDA at TV.

MARIE-LAURE

Shit, shit, shit! That was horrible. I'm really ashamed.

MISSY

Don't beat yourself up. It's understandable.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

After Charlie Hebdo, we all had thoughts like that. I think Muslims are the most victimized by terrorism.

MISSY

(To PIERRE-EDOUARD.)

How about the people who get shot?

(Beat.)

Do you have anything non-alcoholic to drink?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Bien sûr. Look for yourself. There should be some Badoit and *jus de pomme*.

MISSY walks to refrigerator. MARIE-LAURE talks to PIERRE-EDOUARD discreetly. SHE knows what she has to do.

MARIE-LAURE

Bolton just called from New York. When I spoke to him yesterday, I told him I would be going to the concert at Bataclan last night ... and he saw stuff on TV about the shootings. He was terrified.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

He loves you.

MARIE-LAURE

Yuh. He does.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

It's great to be loved.

MARIE-LAURE

Yuh. It was nice to hear his voice and remember that this isn't the whole world. Yuh. I'm lucky.

MISSY

(Eavesdropping as SHE pours Badoit into glass.)

Are you in, like, a serious relationship?

MARIE-LAURE holds up her hand, shows MISSY her engagement ring.

PIERRE-EDOUARD sees.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Oh.

MISSY

Wow! Were you wearing that last night?

MARIE-LAURE

No.

(And then... To MISSY...)

Can I talk to Pierre-Edouard alone?

MISSY

(Glances at PIERRE-EDOUARD. And then...)

Sure.

MISSY joins ALI and PETER in front of TV screen. MIRANDA is still talking on phone.

MARIE-LAURE

I told him yes.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

You're going to marry him?

MARIE-LAURE

I am. We love each other and I...

(Doesn't finish thought. And then...)

I shouldn't have done what I did with you, Pierre-Edouard. I'm ashamed of myself. It was terrible.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I thought it was *beautiful*.

MARIE-LAURE

I had no right. I was just so scared of saying 'yes' to Bolton and committing to, you know, being *married*. It was wrong to make you think I was in any way available. I'm so sorry. I...

PIERRE-EDOUARD

(Interrupting.)

No! Stop! You don't ever have to apologize to me. I am so grateful for what you did for me. And Bolton will never ever have to know.

MARIE-LAURE

I told him. He knows.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Ah. He knows.

MARIE-LAURE

He said he forgives me. I hope he really can.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Of course he can. He will. Totally.

MARIE-LAURE

And you? Can you forgive me?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

There's nothing to forgive, Marie-Laure. I can only say thank you for a beautiful night that I will never ever forget.

MARIE-LAURE is suddenly a bundle of tears.

MARIE-LAURE

Oh God!

MARIE-LAURE moves into Pierre-Edouard's arms. HE succumbs to her embrace for a moment. THEY almost kiss. PIERRE-EDOUARD pulls back.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

This is not a good idea.

MARIE-LAURE

(Sobbing.)

Oh God! I know! I'm a mess! I'm so sorry, Pierre-Edouard. You're such a nice guy... and you're so fucking handsome!

PIERRE-EDOUARD puts his arms around MARIE-LAURE ... tentatively, making sure their bodies don't touch.

SHE continues to sob.

MISSY is watching.

MISSY and PIERRE-EDOUARD exchange a look. PIERRE-EDOUARD shrugs. MISSY gives him a thumbs-up.

MARIE-LAURE

Should I not have said "yes"? Am I making a terrible mistake?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

This is possibly not a good moment for you to be making enormous life-decisions.

MARIE-LAURE

(Sobbing.)

I can't stop crying.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Come with me on the *balcon*.

MARIE-LAURE looks up. And then...

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Don't worry. I'll keep a safe distance.

PIERRE-EDOUARD steps out on to the balcony. After a moment's pause, MARIE-LAURE follows.

PETER is watching TV screen. HE calls out, suddenly.

PETER

Fucking Arabs!

ALI looks across at PETER. Unaware, PETER continues.

PETER

I was a high school kid when the Twin Towers came down. I had a 1st cousin at Stuyvesant High, right across the road. We were close ... like brothers. When the towers came down, we didn't know for three hours whether my cousin was dead or alive. I remember my uncle sayin' the Western World countries should expell all the Arabs. Get 'em the fuck out. I totally agree.

ALI crosses to PETER.

ALI

Yo! Am I hearing what I think I'm hearing?

PETER

Why? You think having gazillion Arabs living here in France is good thing?

ALI

Look at me! Look at me!

PETER

What?

ALI

Just look at me!

PETER

I'm looking at you.

MIRANDA

Ali is Palestinian.

PETER

Yuh. So?

MISSY

So say you're sorry, Peter.

PETER

Why would I do that?

MIRANDA steps in. SHE slaps PETER.

PETER reacts without hesitation or thought. HE slaps MIRANDA's face.

MISSY

Hey! You hit her!

MIRANDA recoils, winds up, punches PETER. It is a solidly professional end-of-the-jaw punch, sending PETER reeling backwards, across the room against the wall.

PETER comes off the wall, ready to punch MIRANDA. HE throws a right, which MIRANDA blocks. SHE punches PETER, twice, knocking him to the ground, dazed, nearly unconscious.

Suddenly, ALI points at the fallen
PETER, yells...

ALI

It's a Jew, right? It's a fucking Jew!

MIRANDA

(To ALI.)

What? Shut up with that shit, Ali! Just shut it!
What's the matter with you?

(SHE rubs her right hand.)

I hurt my hand.

PIERRE-EDOUARD and MARIE-LAURE have
heard the scuffle; enter from balcony.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Qu'est-ce qui se passe?

PIERRE-EDOUARD sees ALI standing over
PETER. HE calls out to ALI.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Did you hit him?

MISSY

She hit him.

MIRANDA

(Worried about her hand.)

I hurt my hand.

PETER tries to stand. Suddenly, ALI
kicks PETER, who falls backwards,
knocking plates and glasses from the
table.

MIRANDA

Ali! No!

MISSY

Stop him!

PIERRE-EDOUARD steps into the fray.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Arrête! Tu lui fais mal!

ALI is poised to kick PETER again.
PIERRE-EDOUARD grabs ALI, who shoves
PIERRE-EDOUARD backwards.

ALI

Get off me, motherfucker!

Suddenly, PIERRE-EDOUARD karate-kicks ALI, who grunts. HE is hurt.

MISSY jumps between ALI and PIERRE-EDOUARD.

MISSY

Knock it off, you guys! Stop it!

ALI rushes at PIERRE-EDOUARD, grabs him in a headlock. THEY wrestle, chairs fall over.

PETER rushes at ALI from behind, punches him violently.

Suddenly, MARIE-LAURE screams.

MARIE-LAURE

STOP! STOP IT! STOP FIGHTING! STOP IT!

MISSY rushes at PETER, pulls him away from ALI.

MISSY

Stop it, Peter! Stop it! Everybody stop it! Everybody chill out!

The fighting stops as suddenly as it began.

There is a silence, broken only by MARIE-LAURE's crying. And then...

PIERRE-EDOUARD

This is terrible.

MISSY

So messed up.

ALI packs his camera and computer into his backpack, while yelling at everyone.

ALI

I'm out'ta here, motherfuckers! I get it! I really do! I get it! I'm out'ta here.

ALI goes to door, opens it, pauses.

ALI

I gotta' stop acting like I don't get it, 'cause I totally fucking do. It's us and them, and you all are

definitely them. A big storm is coming, motherfuckers, so get ready. Get fucking ready!

And with that, ALI exits the play, never closing the door behind him.

We see him in the blue light of the hallway.

HE disappears down the staircase.

There is a hideous silence.

MIRANDA

He doesn't mean that. He's a really good guy. He's just feeling really really hurt.

(SHE looks at PETER.)

That was bad. What you said was bad.

PETER turns away, doesn't reply. Instead, HE punches the wall, three times, violently ... venting his anger.

PIERRE-EDOUARD closes the door, leans his back against door, speaks to ALL.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

We have this thing in France called *la Laïcité* ... supposedly to keep a division between church and state. Me, I think it's being used now in a racist way... to stop Arab girls from wearing veils in school. I hate ISIS ... but I also hate what my country did to French Jews and now what it's doing to our Arabs. The way Arabs live in this country is something horrible ... unthinkable. I am ashamed.

(Beat. References balcony.)

As soon as the police downstairs see the color of Ali's skin, they're going to question him. Guaranteed.

(To ALL.)

You have your Evangelical right-wingers and we have our *Front National*. They're all the same people, really. Ali is correct: those people are walking hate-crimes. But they speak for so many people. So many ordinary people agree with them. It breaks my heart.

MISSY goes to PIERRE-EDOUARD and gives him a loving hug.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Okay, I'll shut up.

MISSY

Nooo. I'm hugging you because you're so nice.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Thank you.

(And then...)

We'd better clean up the broken glass.

PIERRE-EDOUARD takes a broom and begins to clean up the mess.

MISSY kneels and begins to pick up shards of broken dishes.

MIRANDA kneels next to MISSY, helping her.

MISSY

That was an impressive punch.

MIRANDA

Yuh. Well. It comes in handy from time to time.

MISSY

How long are you staying in Paris?

MIRANDA

Another couple of weeks. If my hand's okay, I'm playing a match here next week.. then to Switzerland for two more matches.

(And then...)

Wanna' come with me?

MISSY

What?

MIRANDA

Whatever. It would be nice if you came with me. No pressure. I'm just sayin'.

MISSY

That's pretty crazy.

PIERRE-EDOUARD picks up his computer from the floor.

MARIE-LAURE

Is it messed up?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Screen's cracked.

(And then...)

It's dead.

MARIE-LAURE

Oh shit. That's awful.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Nothing in there anybody cares about. Not really.

For a moment, ALL (except PETER) busy themselves clearing up the mess. PETER packs up his belongings.

HE crosses to MISSY.

PETER

Will you meet me back at the hotel?

MISSY

I don't think that's such a great idea, Peter. Do you?

PETER

Probably not.

PETER crosses to PIERRE-EDOUARD.

PETER

I'm going.

(To ALL, quietly...)

I'm sorry I lost my mind for a while there.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Understandable.

PETER

(To PIERRE-EDOUARD.)

You saved my life, man. I owe you.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Not really. I was saving my own life. You just followed me out.

PETER

Yuh, well, whatever. Thank you.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Yes. Well. You're welcome.

PETER throws his backpack over his shoulder, goes to MIRANDA.

PETER

I'm really sorry, I...

MIRANDA

(Interrupting.)

No need. I hit first.

PETER

Can you tell me where Ali is staying? I wanna try to apologize to him.

MIRANDA

Good. Yuh. Good.

(Hands him card from hotel.)

Here's a card from his hotel. It would be great if you guys could talk.

PETER

Yuh. Well. Bye.

MIRANDA

Bye.

PETER

(To MISSY.)

I'll clear my stuff out of the hotel.

MISSY

Sure. Good. Thanks.

PETER

Yuh. Right. Take care.

MISSY

Bye, Peter.

MARIE-LAURE

Bye, Peter.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Bye, Peter. *A bientôt.*

PETER exits the play, closing door behind him.

MISSY moves to MIRANDA.

MISSY

(To MIRANDA, discreetly.)

Sure, why not? I'll go.

MIRANDA

Good.

(To PIERRE-EDOUARD, referencing TV screen.)

It looks like it's quiet down there.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Oui. The doors are closed. I guess they've gotten everybody out.

MIRANDA

You think it's safe to go?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Probably safer than ever. There are police and soldiers everywhere.

MIRANDA gathers her belongings. SHE crosses to PIERRE-EDOUARD.

MIRANDA

Thank you.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I'm sorry for all of it.

MIRANDA

Not your fault.

MIRANDA kisses Pierre-Edouard's cheeks in the French way. And then SHE kisses MARIE-LAURE'S cheeks.

MARIE-LAURE

Bye, Miranda. Good luck with your match.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Right. Good luck with your match.

MIRANDA

Thanks. I hope my hand calms down. I have some time.

MISSY has gathered her belongings, crosses to PIERRE-EDOUARD.

MISSY

I'm going.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

I don't know what to say. It seems stupid to say "Nice to see you again". But it was ... so nice to see you again.

(And then...)

None of this seems real yet. Maybe tomorrow.

(Beat.)

Please, will you stay in touch?

MISSY

Of course I will. We're in each other's lives.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Yes.

PIERRE-EDOUARD and MISSY embrace. And then THEY kiss, lightly.

MISSY

Bye, Marie-Laure. I hope we'll see each other again.

MARIE-LAURE

Me too. Bye, Missy.

MISSY and MARIE-LAURE embrace. And then... MISSY turns to MIRANDA.

MISSY

All set?

MIRANDA

All set.

PIERRE-EDOUARD, MISSY and MIRANDA walk to the door. THE WOMEN exit the play.

PIERRE-EDOUARD closes the door, turns, faces MARIE-LAURE.

MARIE-LAURE

I should go.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Yes.

MARIE-LAURE

Are you okay? I mean, are you okay to be alone?

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Yes. Of course.

MARIE-LAURE

I promised Bolton I'd call him back. And I have to call my mom.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Yes.

MARIE-LAURE

I don't know what to say to you. I wish I had the words.

MARIE-LAURE goes to PIERRE-EDOUARD, hugs him. Then SHE kisses him. SHE breaks from the kiss, steps backwards, leans against wall, stares at PIERRE-EDOUARD.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

It is a lot of emotion. I know.

MARIE-LAURE

Goodbye, Pierre-Edouard. Thank you.

PIERRE-EDOUARD

Goodbye, Marie-Laure. Thank you.

MARIE-LAURE exits.

PIERRE-EDOUARD closes the balcony doors. HE then goes to the TV, shuts it off. HE picks up his broken computer, puts it down again. HE sits at the table, lets his head fall forward, covers his face with his hands.

There is a knock at the door. PIERRE-EDOUARD looks up.

THE LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK.

THE PLAY IS OVER.

I.H.,

Lake Worth – Tampa – Richmond – NYC –
Chatillon-sur-Chalaronne – Boca Raton – Gloucester - Orlando,
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