

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SKY

By
Kevin D. Ferguson

Copyright (c) 2020 by Kevin D. Ferguson

CAUTION: Professionals and Amateurs are hereby warned that performance of **THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SKY** is subject to payment of a royalty. It is fully protected under the copyright laws of The United States of America, and of all countries covered by the International Copyright Union (including the Dominion of Canada and the rest of the British Commonwealth) and of all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention, the Berne Convention, and of all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations. All rights, including without limitation professional /amateur stage rights, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all other forms of mechanical, electronic and digital reproduction, transmission and distribution, such as CD, DVD, the Internet, private and file-sharing networks, information storage and retrieval systems, photocopying, and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved. Particular emphasis is placed upon the matter of readings, permission of which must be obtained from the Author in writing.

The English language stock and amateur stage performance rights in the United States, its territories, possessions and Canada for **THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SKY** are controlled exclusively by Next Stage Press. No professional or nonprofessional performance of the Play may be given without obtaining in advance written permission and paying the requisite fee. Inquiries concerning production rights should be addressed to licensing@nextstagepress.net

SPECIAL NOTE

Anyone receiving permission to produce **THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SKY** is required to give credit to the Author as sole and exclusive Author of the Play on the title page of all programs distributed in connection with performances of the Play and in all instances in which the title of the Play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the Play and/or a production thereof. The name of the Author must appear on a separate line, in which no other name appears, immediately beneath the title and in size of type equal to 50% of the size of the largest, most prominent letter used for the title of the Play. No person, firm, or entity may receive credit larger or more prominent than that accorded the Author.

DEDICATION

The Other Side of the Sky is dedicated to two of the best friends ever, Thom and Mindi Penn at Atlantic Stage, who gave me an artistic home.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge Todd Ristau, founder of the Playwrights Lab at Hollins University without which I would not be a playwright. Also Bob Moss, founder of Playwrights Horizons, who pushed me to revise and revise some more.

The Other Side of the Sky premiered in Myrtle Beach, SC on January 31, 2019 at Atlantic Stage.

MILLA BLACKWELDER as MAGGIE
COLIN GALLAGHER as TROY
AUSTIN DARE as ADAM
AIDEN FLETCHER as JOE

Directed by THOM PENN
Assistant Directed by PENNY LANGLEY

SCENIC DESIGNER.....THOM PENN
LIGHTING DESIGNER.....FAITH CRAIG
SOUND DESIGNER.....KALEB SALEEBY
COSTUME DESIGNER.....CANDACE BORROS
DRAMATURG.....HEATHER HELINSKY
STAGE MANAGER.....JIMMY JESTER

The Other Side of the Sky received staged readings in NYC at the Governor's Island Laboratorium by Rising Sun Production Company on October 7 & 8, 2017.

EMILY SZAJNUK as MAGGIE
TERENCE SCHWEIZER as TROY
TRAVIS MARTIN as ADAM
TREVOR LYONS as JOE

Directed by HOLLY PAYNE-STRANGE
Artistic Director of Rising Sun is AKIA SQUOTIERI

The Other Side of the Sky received a reading at the 5th Annual New Voices Playfest at Atlantic Stage in Myrtle Beach, SC on April 30, 2016.

MADDIE PENN as MAGGIE
ADDISON BRUNO as TROY
DANIEL KEITH as ADAM
BEN TABIB as JOE

Directed by THOM PENN

The Other Side of the Sky (as Orders) received a workshop at the Tesseract Theatre Company in St. Louis, MO in November, 2014.

BRENNA WHITEHURST as MAGGIE
DAVID SMITHSON as TROY
JARRIS WILLIAMS as ADAM
MALIK SHAKOUR as JOE

Directed by TAYLOR GRUENLOH

STAGE MANAGER.....JACKIE CHAMBERS

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(1 adult female, 3 adult males)

MAGGIE, a young woman

TROY, her boyfriend

ADAM, her best friend

JOE, Adam's boyfriend, a Marine

The characters can be any ethnicity.

SETTINGS

A confessional.

Maggie's studio apartment.

Inside a bar.

A coffee shop.

Inside a church.

Joe's space.

(Perhaps a prie-dieu (kneeler) for the confessional, a couple of bar stools and a small bar for the bar, a small bistro table and two chairs for the coffee shop, a cross for the church, and a change of lighting to represent Joe's space.)

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SKY

ACT 1 SCENE 1

MAGGIE is in confession.

MAGGIE. Bless me father, for I have sinned. My last confession was – a while ago. I don't recycle. I tell people I do, but I don't. There isn't any recycling pick-up where I live, and I always mean to take it to the recycling center, but I get busy, and then I throw it in with the trash. I passed a homeless man on the street and pretended not to see him. I didn't have any spare change – all I have is a debit card – so I just kept walking. I turn the channel when the commercials for abused animals or hungry children come on. I didn't always answer the phone when my mom called. I told her the phone died. Then I felt guilty. I knew she was lonely. But there were times I didn't feel like talking. And now that I feel like talking she isn't there. I don't like watching the news. It's always horrible. When I pray, I look up into the blue sky. And I can feel God on the other side, looking back at me. And I wonder why God doesn't do something. Then I feel guilty for second-guessing God. I guess He wants me to do something. But I don't know what I'm supposed to do. And sometimes I look up into the blue sky and all I see is sky. So I don't do anything. Except cry. I cry for the world, and I cry for the homeless man, and I cry for those dogs and cats, and I cry for the hungry children, and I cry for my mom. I feel so helpless. And I've had impure thoughts and actions with my boyfriend. I am sorry for these and all my sins.

SCENE 2

Maggie's studio apartment. Bed, night-stand, dresser, bookcase, desk, chair. Tiny kitchenette with mini-fridge, microwave, hot-plate. A door to an unseen bathroom completes the miniscule student studio. Hanging on the bedpost is a rosary. Laundry basket of neatly folded clothes on the bed. Telephone and jar of change on night-stand. On the dresser is a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Family photos, photos of boyfriend, photos of best friend on night-stand, dresser, bookcase, and desk. Posters on the wall. Also on the wall, over the bed, is a crucifix. None of the religious items are especially prominent. Just all a part of the cluttered studio apartment, which is a reflection of Maggie's life.

Maggie and TROY, a young man roughly the same age as Maggie, burst through the door, kissing passionately. Troy fumbles with her bra. Somehow in the fumbling the basket of neatly folded laundry goes tumbling off the bed and spills onto the floor. Troy had juts come over to talk before beginning his shift at the bar, but talking led where it usually does for Maggie and Troy.

MAGGIE. Wait, wait, wait. *(Maggie's cell phone rings. She fishes it out of her pants, but Troy grabs it and turns it off, tossing it aside.)*

TROY. Where were we? *(Troy starts to kiss her again when the phone on the night-stand rings.)* Don't get it!

MAGGIE. It might be Mom.

TROY. Maggie, it can't be your mom. Your mom is –

MAGGIE. *(Groping for the land-line and answering the phone.)* Hello? Mom? Sorry I – oh.

TROY. *(Mouthing this to Maggie.)* Who is it?

MAGGIE. *(Mouthing back.)* Adam.

TROY. God damn it!

MAGGIE. *(Pointing to the jar.)* Jar! Watch it, mister!

TROY. Going to the bathroom. *(He exits to the bathroom.)*

MAGGIE. *(Pausing throughout speech to listen to Adam's replies.)* No, not you. Troy. No, I just forget sometimes. Why didn't you text? None of your business! Look, he's coming right back so – He's in the

bathroom. None of your business! Just come over – he has to be at work soon. It's not a dead-end – Listen, I'm not having this conversation right now. I'm not – How many new ones did you make? Rosemary and what? No. Not that one. What else? That sounds good. Yes – bring that one. The chocolate one. Dark. Sea salt. That's the one. No, it's not a bribe! It's an apology. None of your business! Chocolate! I'm not listening. La la la la. Bye. Bye! (*Maggie hangs up. She waits a second, tidying a little, sighing at the spilled laundry. Troy enters.*) Sorry about that.

TROY. Maggie, your mom –

MAGGIE. I just forget sometimes, okay? The mom-phone rings, I expect to hear Mom. She insisted on a land-line.

TROY. Okay. You wanna talk about it? Your mom?

MAGGIE. Not really.

TROY. Oh. What did *he* want?

MAGGIE. Wanted to know if we were hanging out tonight.

TROY. Jesus.

MAGGIE. (*Pointing at him.*) Jar! That's twice.

TROY. (*Dropping two quarters in the jar.*) How does he always call right when – What, he have cameras hidden? Cause he always calls at *just the right time.*

MAGGIE. Told him to call. Sorry. Forgot.

TROY. Why'd you do that?

MAGGIE. You're supposed to be at work, remember?

TROY. Don't like sharing you, Maggie.

MAGGIE. He's my best friend. We're a package deal.

TROY. Don't swing that way, babe. (*Pilling Maggie close to kiss her again.*) Swing this way.

MAGGIE. (*Pushing him away.*) Stop. Troy. Stop.

TROY. What's wrong?

MAGGIE. I can't.

TROY. What?

MAGGIE. (*Taking a deep breath.*) I can't keep having sex with you and going to confession and then doing it all over again. I can't. I'm sorry.

TROY. (*Caught off-guard.*) What? You're not serious.

MAGGIE. If you want to break-up with me, I'll understand.

TROY. Whoa, whoa, whoa. Break-up? Slow down. *(beat)* You think I'm just here for sex.

MAGGIE. Look, I know it isn't fair to spring this on you, but –

TROY. Maggie, it's not just about sex. It's about us. You know that, right?

MAGGIE. I-

TROY. Shit. This is gonna be a long talk. And I'm gonna be late. They're gonna fire me.

MAGGIE. They're not gonna fire you.

TROY. Give a few vets a round of beers on the house, and-

MAGGIE. Hey, you're too good for that place.

TROY. No, I'm not. Just good enough.

MAGGIE. Want me and Adam to swing by later? Keep you company?

TROY. Nah. Talk later? Just us. Long talk. Yes? Just us? Yes?

MAGGIE. Yes. Sure you don't want us to come by?

TROY. You and Adam? Yeah. I'm sure. You cramp my style anyway.

MAGGIE. Hey!

TROY. It's true. Make less tips when my hot girlfriend is around. Intimidates the customers.

MAGGIE. Oh, yeah. That's me. Miss Intimidator.

TROY. That you are.

MAGGIE. You just can't flirt as much, you mean.

TROY. Bartender's got to flirt. In the job description.

MAGGIE. Yeah, but you don't have to be so good at it.

TROY. Don't you like that I'm good at it? I mean, we can still flirt, right?

MAGGIE. I like that you're good at it. We can flirt. And do – some stuff. *(Troy kisses her, tentatively testing their new boundaries. She breaks the kiss first.)* You'll get fired.

TROY. Maybe I'll quit.

MAGGIE. You mean that?

TROY. ...No. Gotta go. *(Troy heads out, turns around, kisses Maggie once more.)*

TROY. Bye, babe. See you after work?

MAGGIE. Yeah. Text me.

TROY. You want to figure this out, right?

MAGGIE. Yeah, I do. *(Troy exits. Maggie straightens up some more after the almost-but-not-quite-love-making and checks her clothing and make-up. Instead of folding clothes, she gets a bottle of water from the mini-fridge, crosses herself, and grabs the rosary off the bedpost.)* I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary – *(Maggie gasps and bolts upright.)*

SCENE 3

*Maggie is very still, thinking. She has a laptop open.
Knock on the door.*

ADAM. *(v.o.) (Pauses in between sentences awaiting Maggie's response.)* Decent? Or at least dressed? I come bearing chocolate!

MAGGIE. Come in, bearer of chocolate! *(Maggie closes the laptop.)*

ADAM. *(ADAM enters, presenting a thermally insulated bag as if it were a precious gift.)* Behold, the sacred chocolate. Dark. Sacred Sea salt. And just a touch of olive oil drizzle. *(Maggie reaches for the bag. Adam holds it out of reach,)* Not so fast. The sacred chocolate is only bestowed after the sacred dishing of dirt. Spill.

MAGGIE. Nothing to spill.

ADAM. Liar! Troy was in this very room. I can sense it. Also, you told me on the phone. The question is, *did you tell him?* Enquiring minds want to know.

MAGGIE. Enquiring minds better give me the chocolate before enquiring minds get slapped upside the head. Also before the sacred chocolate melts and drips all over the place.

ADAM. Oooh, testy.

MAGGIE. Someone got interrupted by a phone call at a very – inconvenient – time. Shit-head. *(Maggie snatches the bag and removes a home-made pint of chocolate ice cream. She grabs a spoon from the kitchenette and devours ice cream.)*

ADAM. Oh. Sorry.

MAGGIE. Should be. Oh, my God, this is good.

ADAM. *(Pleased to catch Maggie at her own game.)* Jar.

MAGGIE. I don't have a quarter. I'll put it in later. Seriously. This one's my favorite.

ADAM. I aim to please.

MAGGIE. Way to blow up my phone.

ADAM. You didn't text back. And you don't check voice mail.

MAGGIE. No one checks voice mail.

ADAM. Said I'm sorry.

MAGGIE. But you didn't grovel.

ADAM. I don't grovel.

MAGGIE. Grovel! Or I will never dish the sacred dirt again!

ADAM. No! Not that! Anything but that!

MAGGIE. Don't see any groveling.

ADAM. *(Adam rolls his eyes, falls to his knees, and grovels. Enthusiastically.)* Please, please, please forgive me.

MAGGIE. This is some piss-poor groveling.

ADAM. I'm out of practice.

MAGGIE. No, you're not.

ADAM. No, I'm not.

MAGGIE. Good thing you come bearing chocolate.

ADAM. *(Adam gets up, grabs a spoon from the kitchenette, and digs in.)* I know my girl.

MAGGIE. Hey, get your own.

ADAM. Share and share alike. Your chocolate is my chocolate. *(Adam goes for another spoonful. Maggie holds it out of reach.)*

MAGGIE. My chocolate is my chocolate. This is really good. How's your boyfriend?

ADAM. Alas, my boyfriend in in a foreign land. Serving his country. Now, I dished the ice cream. You dish the dirt!

MAGGIE. No dirt to dish. Really.

ADAM. Really. No dirt? You didn't tell him?

MAGGIE. I told him.

ADAM. Are you okay?

MAGGIE. I'm okay.

ADAM. Is he okay?

MAGGIE. He's okay.

ADAM. You're okay, he's okay. I'm not okay! Details, woman. I need details.

MAGGIE. Nope. No details for you. We're going to talk later.

ADAM. But he didn't break-up with you?

MAGGIE. No.

ADAM. When is this "later" talk happening?

MAGGIE. After he gets off.

ADAM. Sounds like his days of getting off are over.

MAGGIE. I will hurt you.

ADAM. I shall never bring the sacred chocolate again.

MAGGIE. You will so bring the sacred chocolate. You are my sacred chocolate bitch.

ADAM. No she didn't!

MAGGIE. Yes, she did!

ADAM. Come on. You have to throw me a bone.

MAGGIE. Doubt I could throw you a bone.

ADAM. Troy could throw me a bone, since you're no longer interested.

MAGGIE. Joe wouldn't like it if Troy threw you a bone.

ADAM. Joe is on the other side of the world.

MAGGIE. Well, Troy doesn't like other dog's bones.

ADAM. Troy doesn't know what he's missing.

MAGGIE. Troy isn't missing anything.

ADAM. Oh, really? Seems like he'll be missing a little "something-something" in your new relationship plan.

MAGGIE. You're living without sex.

ADAM. Too true. And I'm not sure I can take it much longer.

MAGGIE. Like you'd cheat on Joe.

ADAM. Long-distance relationships are hard. Long-distance makes a lot of things – hard.

MAGGIE. You and Joe are good together. You're just going to have to stay celibate until Joe gets back from overseas.

ADAM. Good luck with that. I am not you. Maybe Troy has a brother?

MAGGIE. Nope. All sisters.

ADAM. Well, that won't work. What a waste.

MAGGIE. Don't start.

ADAM. Well, I just think it's unnatural.

MAGGIE. Here we go.

ADAM. If God had intended for people to be heterosexual, he wouldn't have made the homosexuals so fabulous.

MAGGIE. God just wanted straights to have nice weddings. (*Maggie and Adam eat ice cream. Maggie stares at the carton.*) Is this recyclable?

ADAM. Think so. Why?

MAGGIE. When you open your ice cream shop, everything should be completely recyclable.

ADAM. I think you mean if I open my ice cream shop. I'm waiting for Joe to get back to talk the plan over. He's the one with the business sense.

MAGGIE. You have business sense.

ADAM. Anyway, what's with this interest in recycling?

MAGGIE. I'm recycling now.

ADAM. Uh huh.

MAGGIE. I am! (*Maggie and Adam eat ice cream.*)

ADAM. Have you thought about what you're doing after graduation?

MAGGIE. (*After a slight hesitation.*) Applying for graduate programs. Or joining the Peace Corps. Probably applying for graduate programs.

ADAM. Ah, so putting the real world off is your strategy.

MAGGIE. Was thinking of a Masters in Social Work.

ADAM. I thought you wanted a PhD on Philosophy?

MAGGIE. I don't know. Not all of us know what we want to do, you know. Not like you and Joe –

ADAM. I'm worried that Joe is getting too serious.

MAGGIE. You're a couple. How much more serious does it get?

ADAM. There's being a couple and *being a couple*. Being Joe and Adam, and being *Jadam*.

MAGGIE. Jadam? How about Adoe?

ADAM. Because we're not living in a production of *Oklahoma*, that's why.

MAGGIE. I do. But he's talking long-term now. *Long-ass long-term.*

MAGGIE. Like, call the caterer for the ceremony long-term?

ADAM. Like, adopt two-point-five kids, get a cat, join a car pool, buy a home, send two-point-five to college, retire, but matching rocking chairs, move to a retirement community together long-term.

MAGGIE. But you already have a cat.

ADAM. Exactly. *I* have a cat. And that's not the point.

MAGGIE. What's the point?

ADAM. The point, sister, is he is talking about *us* getting a cat. Together.

MAGGIE. You're a good cat daddy.

ADAM. I'm a terrible cat daddy. Lady Gaga has practically raised herself. If she could work a can opener and change the litter box, she'd probably get her own place.

MAGGIE. You love kids.

ADAM. I love playing with other people's kids. And getting them jacked up on sugar. Then I love handing them back and watching their parents go insane while I smile and wave and head out the door to my happy child-free existence. Joe loves kids.

MAGGIE. I think a little Adam or a little Joe would be adorable.

ADAM. You do realize we're gay, right? There will be no actual procreation involved.

MAGGIE. You could get a surrogate.

ADAM. We're not getting a surrogate! Not when there are so many kids who need a good home out there.

MAGGIE. Ooh, listen to you. Mr. Cynical has a heart.

ADAM. I do *not* have a heart. Joe has a heart.

MAGGIE. *(Singing.)* Adam's got a heart. Adam's got a heart.

ADAM. No, I have a cold, black ball of ice screaming "You're too young to get married and have kids." And two big blue –

MAGGIE. But you admit you and Joe would make good daddies for little two-point-five.

ADAM. Maybe. Someday. And what about you?

MAGGIE. What about me?

ADAM. You're pushing kids on me; are you sure you're not the one feeling all maternal?

MADDIE. No. I'm definitely not ready for kids.

ADAM. But you're so sure I am?

MAGGIE. It's different with you. You have Joe. I have –

ADAM. Whoa! She's going there.

MAGGIE. You know what I'm saying. Troy – isn't ready for kids.

ADAM. Troy isn't ready for a cat.

MAGGIE. He's allergic.

ADAM. See?

MAGGIE. Besides, he's more of a dog person.

ADAM. Knew there was a reason Lady Gaga didn't like him.

MAGGIE. I have feelings for Troy, but-

ADAM. You can't have a mixed marriage. You're a cat person, he's a dog person. It would never work out. Think of the children. The someday-in-the-future-but-as-of-now-non-existent children.

MAGGIE. (*Quietly.*) Not sure I could commit to man with no faith.

ADAM. (*Singing.*) "Gotta have faith, FAITH, FAITH. Gotta have FAITH."

MAGGIE. I'm serious.

ADAM. (*Quietly.*) I know.

MAGGIE. He's a lot of fun..

ADAM. Meaning, the sex was great.

MAGGIE. And, I'm really attracted to him.

ADAM. Meaning, the sex was great.

MAGGIE. And, we get along really well.

ADAM. Meaning, the sex was great.

MAGGIE. Not everything is about sex!

ADAM. Bit your tongue, of course it is. And now you have given it up! And inexplicably, he still wants to be with you.

MAGGIE. Can't raise kids with a man who has no faith.

ADAM. Wow, you've really thought about this.

MAGGIE. Yeah.

ADAM. Honey, who goes to church anymore, really?

MAGGIE. Plenty of people.

ADAM. Plenty of old people, that's who. Who goes that's our age?

MAGGIE. I do, that's who.

ADAM. Church attendance is going to be a deal breaker? I'd be worried about all the other stuff.

MAGGIE. Like what?

ADAM. No degree. No job. No prospects.

MAGGIE. He's got a job.

ADAM. One out of three.

MAGGIE. Job's a job.

ADAM. He's got one this week. Bartending.

MAGGIE. Bartending's a job.

ADAM. Fine. No career, then.

MAGGIE. He's going back to college.

ADAM. No, he's not.

MAGGIE. Might. You don't know.

ADAM. *(Adam picks up scattered laundry, neatly folds it, and returns it to the basket. He holds up a shirt.)* Oh, honey. No.

MAGGIE. Mom gave it to me. She said sometimes a girl needs a shirt that's practical. *(Maggie takes the shirt and carefully puts it in a dresser drawer.)*

ADAM. *(Dubiously.)* Well, I suppose she meant well. What are you going to do?

SCENE 4

Maggie and Troy are in the apartment. Troy has finished his shift at the bar and rushed over to have this conversation with Maggie at 2:00 AM. He feels accused by Maggie of being too shallow and stupid to have a relationship without sex. They love each other but are about to have at least an hour-long fight that is continuous and ends with scene six.

TROY. "Us" means something to me. You mean something to me.

MAGGIE. You mean something to me too.

TROY. Not a lot of things really mean anything in my life. I mean, what do I do? Play Call of Duty all day? Tend bar? Maybe I should quit bartending. Been six months since I left school. Student loans are coming due any day.

MAGGIE. Quitting your job cause loans are due makes no sense.

TROY. Just a job. I need something – Dunno. I want to do something that makes a difference. And I’m not making enough tending bar to pay my bills and pay off my loans. *(Pause.)* Not a ton of options out there.

MAGGIE. Get a deferment.

TROY. My life is a deferment.

MAGGIE. Well, what do you want to do? Go back to school?

TROY. Thinking of enlisting in the Marines. *(Maggie does not respond.)* What?

MAGGIE. Why?

TROY. Because- Because you keep pushing me. To finish my degree. And I don’t think that’s where my head’s at right now.

MAGGIE. But- the Marines?

TROY. Don’t think I’m tough enough?

MAGGIE. *(Playfully.)* You’re tough enough.

TROY. No. Seriously. You don’t think I’m tough enough?

MAGGIE. Well...

TROY. *(Seriously.)* And who is tough enough? Adam’s boyfriend? Joe?

MAGGIE. Joe is Joe. You are you. Don’t know. Joe is sort of like a gay action hero.

TROY. Never mind.

MAGGIE. No, no, no.

TROY. Just thinking about it. Christ.

MAGGIE. *(Pointing at the jar.)* Jar.

TROY. Sorry. Just an idea. It’s nothing. Never mind.

MAGGIE. Well, what would you do? If you decided. To enlist.

TROY. Guys at the bar say boot camp. Probably Parris Island. Got one in California too, but I’d probably get sent to Parris Island.

MAGGIE. That’s where Joe went. How long?

TROY. Twelve weeks. Then deployment.

MAGGIE. Really want that?

TROY. Maybe. Think so. Think I want to serve my country.

MAGGIE. Could serve your country in some other way.

TROY. Marines seems right to me.

MAGGIE. You don't have to probe anything, Troy.

TROY. Jesus, Maggie. *I know.* "Jar." Sorry. Never thought I had anything to prove until now. Guess I was wrong.

MAGGIE. Have you told anyone you're thinking about this?

TROY. Yeah. I'm telling you.

MAGGIE. Your mom is not going to be too happy.

TROY. Doesn't matter what she thinks. Matters what you think. What do you think?

MAGGIE. Think I want you to be happy. And you haven't been happy in a while.

TROY. Happy with you.

MAGGIE. That's not what I meant. Really think the Marines will make you happy?

TROY. Maybe. Think I need to be a part of something. Bigger than me. Something that matters. The more I talk about it, the more I think it's what I need to do. Maybe I do need to prove something. To myself.

MAGGIE. Semper fi.

TROY. Semper fi.

MAGGIE. Means "always faithful."

TROY. Would you be?

MAGGIE. What?

TROY. Faithful. If I enlisted- would you wait for me/ We've never talked about- the future and stuff.

MAGGIE. "And stuff?"

TROY. Maggie. You know how I feel about you. You know- you know you're the only reason I stuck around. After I dropped out. But. I've been waiting for you. To graduate. Would you- wait for me? (*Maggie doesn't say anything.*) Oh. Wow.

MAGGIE. Wait.

TROY. Well?

MAGGIE. It's complicated.

TROY. It's not.

MAGGIE. Yeah. It is.

TROY. Well, maybe for you. Maybe for you it's complicated. For me, it's simple. I know you don't think I'm as smart as you. And maybe I'm not. But I'm smart enough to know how I feel. I love you, Maggie.

(Maggie just looks at him.) You're really not going to say it back.

MAGGIE. I love you too. Doesn't make it less complicated.

SCENE 5

A letter for Adam from JOE, a handsome Marine.

JOE. Dear Adam. Never know how much to tell you about what's happening here. But I want you to know you're the only one I think about when I need to smile. You can always make me smile. You're who I think about when I need to be strong. You always say I'm the strong one, but sometimes it's hard to be strong. Be strong for me, too, okay? I know it's rough on you, me being gone so far for so long. But I think God put you there for me – for us – to show the world what love really is. Every night I take your picture out and kiss my fingers and touch your face. You're the last thing I see before I sleep. I dream about you. You keep me safe, Whenever you feel lonely for me, close your eyes and imagine me and I'm there. You're my guardian angel. More to say, but not in a letter. Keep the faith, babe. Love, Joe.

SCENE 6

Maggie and Troy are still in her apartment.

MAGGIE. Got something to tell you... I'm thinking of becoming a nun.

TROY. What!?!

MAGGIE. A nun. I'm not kidding.

TROY. How can you- I mean we- do they still even have nuns?

MAGGIE. Yes. They still have nuns.

TROY. You don't- we've had- you can't-

MAGGIE. You don't have to be a virgin to become a nun. You take a vow of chastity.

TROY. You talk to Adam about this?

MAGGIE. No. Telling you first.

TROY. Huh. So, what, was I just somebody to fool around with before you enlisted?

MAGGIE. It's not like that.

TROY. Then what's it like, Maggie? Because it feels just like that.

MAGGIE. I haven't been planning this. I just- I've been feeling the call. You know?

TROY. No. I don't know. Because it seems like you've been feeling a lot of things with me, but the call hasn't been one of them.

MAGGIE. Troy-

TROY. No. No. A nun? A *nun*?

MAGGIE. A nun.

TROY. Bet Adam will think that's real funny, dating me turned you into a nun.

MAGGIE. It's not about you. It's about me. And God.

TROY. You said you loved me.

MAGGIE. I do love you.

TROY. Then how can you-

MAGGIE. There's different kinds of love.

TROY. What does that even mean?

MAGGIE. Remember when you told me you wanted to be a part of something bigger than you? Serve your country?

TROY. Yeah.

MAGGIE. That's the way I feel. I want to be part of something bigger than me. Serve God.

TROY. There's other ways you can do that, Maggie. Social work- you've talked about social work. I mean, I didn't want you to go back to school for three more years, but-

MAGGIE. There's other ways you could serve the country. The Marines might feel right to you. This feels right to me. I think.

TROY. You think? This is pretty big for "I think", Maggie. This is pretty damn big.

MAGGIE. I know.

TROY. This why you weren't sure you'd wait for me? Thinking about it then?

MAGGIE. Yeah.

TROY. Jesus, Maggie.

MAGGIE. Jar.

TROY. Fuck the jar. (*Silence.*) (*Troy throws loose change in the jar.*)
Happy?

MAGGIE. Ecstatic.

TROY. Why didn't you say anything?

MAGGIE. Nothing to say till now.

TROY. You know what? You don't have to say anything. Because we're good together. We've always been good together. Don't I make you feel good? (*Troy pulls Maggie close and tries to kiss her. She pulls away.*)

MAGGIE. Don't. I'm confused enough. Don't do that.

TROY. (*Punching the wall.*) Damn it, Maggie!

MAGGIE. I'm sorry.

TROY. Don't we mean anything? Don't *I* mean anything to you?

MAGGIE. You know you do.

TROY. No. I don't. I don't know anything anymore.

MAGGIE. This is hard for me.

TROY. Really? This is hard for you? Because it's a walk in the fucking park for me, Babe. Christ.

MAGGIE. Watch it, mister.

TROY. You don't get to tell me to watch it, Maggie. Because I'd like to give Jesus a good punch in the throat right now.

MAGGIE. (*Shocked.*) Troy!

TROY. Cause as far as I'm concerned. Jesus just stole my girlfriend. And I want her back. (*Troy exits, slamming the door.*)

SCENE 7

Adam and Maggie hang out in her apartment the next day. She is rolling change from the swear jar.

ADAM. Joe skyped me last night.

MAGGIE. That's great! How is he? Is he okay?

ADAM. He's good. I think. Hard to tell. You know Joe. Never complains.

MAGGIE. Doesn't want you to worry.

ADAM. More of a Marine thing.

MAGGIE. Well, how'd he look?

ADAM. Hot.

MAGGIE. Joe always looks hot.

ADAM. Temperature hot. And dirty. And wet. Muddy. He hasn't showered in a while.

MAGGIE. Oh. That's not hot.

ADAM. Yeah, it is. He really believes in what he's doing. Making a difference and all that. His unit was clearing some roadside bombs.

MAGGIE. Yikes.

ADAM. I know. Scary. And they're supposed to interact with the locals. Joe taught these local kids to shake hands. He can't help himself around kids.

MAGGIE. Talk about the shop?

ADAM. Uh. No. Not bothering him about that. He has enough on his plate.

MAGGIE. Did he get my letter?

ADAM. Oh, yeah, he told me to say thank you. Means a lot to him, getting mail.

MAGGIE. When's he coming home?

ADAM. Soon. But the way the military is, he could get new orders pretty fast. Sent back. Quick turnaround.

MAGGIE. Well, what'd you talk about?

ADAM. Nothing much.

MAGGIE. Nothing?

ADAM. You know, the usual. How're you? How's Lady Gaga? How's Maggie?

MAGGIE. Figures I'm after the cat.

ADAM. How've you been doing, how's the weather here- it's terrible there-

JOE. *(Joe enters in his own space. He is muddy. Damp.)* Will you marry me?

MAGGIE. What was that last thing?

ADAM. How's the weather?

MAGGIE. No, asshole. The other thing.

ADAM. How've you been doing?

MAGGIE. The "other," other thing.

JOE. Will you? Will you marry me?

MAGGIE. He proposed! Holy shit!

ADAM. He proposed. Holy shit.

MAGGIE. Oh my God. That's- that's-

ADAM. *(Enjoying catching Maggie again.)* Jar!

MAGGIE. *(Putting a quarter in the newly emptied jar.)* What'd you say?

ADAM. Don't remember.

MAGGIE. What!?!

ADAM. Well, it all happened so fast-

MAGGIE. Bitch, you better have said yes.

ADAM. As it happens- I said- *(Adam turns to Joe. He is no longer talking with Maggie. He is on the skype call.)* You've got to promise me you'll come home.

JOE. Will you?

ADAM. Promise me.

JOE. I promise.

ADAM. Then I'll tell you when you get home. *(Joe reacts, then exits. Adam is back with Maggie.)*

MAGGIE. "I'll tell you when you get home?"

ADAM. Yeah.

MAGGIE. That's a terrible answer!

ADAM. Yeah.

MAGGIE. Well, what are you going to tell him?

ADAM. Got no idea. Guess I'll know when the words come out of my mouth.

MAGGIE. You know you love Joe.

ADAM. Uh huh. But I don't know if I'm ready to be a military spouse.

MAGGIE. You mean military wife.

ADAM. Girl, I will cut you. "Military spouse," thank you very much.

MAGGIE. You're getting married!

ADAM. Maybe. Seems like yesterday when it annoyed me if he left a butt impression in my couch cushions. Now I won't sit in his damn spot in case his tushie marks go away.

MAGGIE. *(Singing.)* You miss your boyfriend.

ADAM. I miss sex.

MAGGIE. *(Singing.)* You miss your boyfriend.

ADAM. I miss sleeping with my boyfriend.

MAGGIE. Bull-shit. You miss falling asleep next to him. Rubbing his back-

ADAM. You want a man to fall asleep, it's not his back you rub.

MAGGIE. I've got your number, mister. You talk all tough, but you are just one big sentimental softie.

ADAM. Well- maybe.

MAGGIE. No maybe about it. Did you set a date?

ADAM. No. Did you not hear me say we're going to wait until he gets back?

MAGGIE. Your mom is going to-

ADAM. Try to control every aspect of my wedding planning? Yes, she is. *(Awkward silence as Maggie rolls change.)* Maggie, your mom would have-

MAGGIE. *(Interrupting quickly.)* Would you have a big wedding?

ADAM. He's got a ton of brothers and sisters. I've got a ton of brothers, we've both got big families- yes, I think it would be an epic wedding. Don't worry, Mags. You're my best friend. You are totally going to be involved in our hypothetical wedding.

MAGGIE. Well, yeah. That goes without. *(Beat.)* I'm sorry. I'm happy for you. I'm just thinking about Troy.

ADAM. Of course you are. Because my life is all about you and Troy.
Oh, wait. Not!

MAGGIE. Well, we never talk about me. You are your favorite subject.

ADAM. We never talk about you because when I try to talk about you, you change the subject. Like when you call me at 4:00 in the morning – thank you very much – crying about some fight with Troy, but don't tell me what's really going on.

MAGGIE. It's just that- I mean- never mind.

ADAM. See what I mean?

MAGGIE. It's nothing. I don't want to spoil your moment.

ADAM. "Spoil my moment?" I'm not having a moment. And you don't think I'm going to let *that* go, do you?

MAGGIE. (*Insistently.*) It's nothing. Really.

ADAM. I will wear you down.

MAGGIE. Let's just celebrate the almost-not-quite-big news!

ADAM. I'm not letting it go. (*Beat.*) Celebrate how? With ice cream?

MAGGIE. Uh-

ADAM. (*Temptingly.*) Got a new one. Coffee. With an almond pastry swirl. Plus there's chocolate-

MAGGIE. No-

ADAM. You're resisting ice cream? Even *chocolate* ice cream?

Something's wrong. Seriously wrong. What's wrong?

MAGGIE. Nothing's wrong.

ADAM. You're pregnant. Oh, my God. The bastard got you pregnant.

MAGGIE. Not pregnant. And he's not a bastard! And jar!

ADAM. Right. You'd have cravings, not the opposite. And you're not having sex. So pregnant, not so much. So what's wrong?

MAGGIE. Nothing.

ADAM. Come on. I know my girl. Something's wrong.

MAGGIE. Nothing's- I'm fasting, okay?

ADAM. Oh, Fasting. What is it, the Feast Day of Saint Anorexia?

MAGGIE. Shut up, shit-head.

ADAM. Then why are you fasting?

MAGGIE. It's Wednesday.

ADAM. So.

MAGGIE. Fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays now.

ADAM. Why?

MAGGIE. Just cause.

ADAM. Nobody “just” fasts on Wednesdays and Fridays.

MAGGIE. I do.

ADAM. Is this a confession thing? Doesn’t he usually just give you ten “Hail, Mary’s” and what-not? Since when do you fast?

MAGGIE. Since now. What’s up with the third degree, anyway? I’ll fast if I want to fast. I’ve been praying a lot lately, okay?

ADAM. Okay, Okay. Someone woke up on the wrong side of the crucifix today.

MAGGIE. Again, shut up.

ADAM. Been praying about lover-boy?

MAGGIE. Yes. He’s thinking about joining the Marines.

ADAM. Oh. Well, I wouldn’t cry about that. He never follows through with anything. And even if he did, no way is he making it through boot camp. Now Joe, he’s good on the follow through.

MAGGIE. Don’t start on Troy again, please.

ADAM. Well, he doesn’t. Troy doesn’t stick with anything. Thank God he’s pretty.

MAGGIE. He stuck with me.

ADAM. Like a drowning man clinging to a lifeguard.

MAGGIE. Lay off.

ADAM. Just be careful he doesn’t drag you under.

MAGGIE. You’re such a bitch.

ADAM. That’s what you love about me.

MAGGIE. He told me he loved me.

ADAM. Shut up! What’d you say?

MAGGIE. Told him I loved him too.

ADAM. Do you?

MAGGIE. *(Taking a long time to answer.)* Yes.

ADAM. *(Sarcastically.)* That was convincing.

MAGGIE. I do. I love him. But-

ADAM. But- This is what made you cry? Troy told you he loves you?

MAGGIE. What does the word love even mean? I love rainy days. I love jazz music. I loved walking in the door when Mom was baking snicker doodles and smelling the cinnamon. I love your shoes. I love you. I love Troy. I love God! None of that is the same thing! Did you know the ancient Greeks had eight different words for love? They had a word for that feeling you get when you're flirting with someone and there's chemistry. Ludos. And erotic love, where you lose your mind, and you lose control, and it's all sweaty and sticky and messy, that's eros. Is that what I feel for Troy? Eros? Do I feel anything else?

ADAM. Oh. Crap.

MAGGIE. I loved mom so much it felt like someone cut part of me out with a knife when she died. And they called that storge. Such a stupid sounding name for something so powerful. *(Adam hugs Maggie. After a moment she pulls back.)* My love for you is called philia. Brotherly love. And then it deepens into pragma. Love between friends who are so close they don't need words anymore. Philautia is when you're so comfortable in your own skin that you don't find fault with yourself anymore. Who gets that? And agape. Selfless love for all mankind. God has that. So what does it mean to say I love Troy? Does Troy have any idea how he really feels about me? He's just scared. Things are changing so fast. And I don't have any idea how I feel.

ADAM. So. I take it you're writing a paper on "Love?"

MAGGIE. Yes.

ADAM. You said there were eight types of love. You only named seven.

MAGGIE. I left out mania. Obsessive love. It's like codependency. And it's what I'm worried I have with Troy.

ADAM. Well, now you've got me feeling sorry for Troy. *(Beat.)* And I told you I'd wear you down. *(Beat.)* I don't like this. Sympathy thing. Now I feel guilty. Oh, well. "*Guilt, be gone.*" Much better.

MAGGIE. I'm thinking about becoming a nun.

ADAM. *(Laughing uproariously.)* Thank you. Nun. Oh, I needed that.

MAGGIE. I'm serious. I'm thinking about becoming a nun. A Discalced Carmelite.

ADAM. "Discalced" what?

MAGGIE. Discalced. Carmelite. Discalced means "barefoot."

ADAM. I knew that. Okay, I didn't know that. A barefoot nun.

MAGGIE. Think I'm being called.

ADAM. Well, honey, that is one call I would not answer.

MAGGIE. That's why I'm praying. Fasting. I'm not sure. But I think so.

ADAM. Aren't you- a little past the basic requirement. For "nun-hood?"

MAGGIE. You don't have to be a virgin to become a nun.

ADAM. Well, I was just saying.

MAGGIE. You take a vow of chastity- (*Adam smirks at her.*) You really are an ass-hole. (*Adam continues to smirk. Brief pause.*) Went to confession, Ass-hole.

ADAM. Honey, my "ass-hole-ness" was well-established long ago in our platonic love affair. Philia. Pragma. Thingy. Let's move on.

MAGGIE. I think I am being called. To the Discalced-

ADAM. Carmelites. Yeah. (*Brief pause.*) What happened to philosophy? What happened to social work? What happened to the peace corps?

MAGGIE: I just think- I mean- I have this feeling- yesterday I had this moment- while I was praying. Like someone was speaking to me. Like someone was answering me. It was just a moment. I can't explain it. It was juts- a feeling. That something was coming. Something important. Someone. Who knew me. Knew my sorrow. Knew to the hour and the minute and the second the tears I'd shed. Knew their weight. Their measure. And was trying to tell me something. If I could just listen.

ADAM. Uh huh. You know nun clothes are dreadful.

MAGGIE. It's not about the clothes.

ADAM. Habits are very unflattering. No one looks good in one.

MAGGIE. Think possibly that's the point.

ADAM. But I would definitely visit you in Italy.

MAGGIE. Arlington.

ADAM. What?

MAGGIE. Arlington, Texas.

ADAM. Oh, honey. This gets better and better. A nun. In Arlington, Texas. What is there to do in Arlington, Texas?

MAGGIE. Pray.

ADAM. And?

MAGGIE. That's it. Pray. The Discalced Carmelites are a contemplative order.

ADAM. You just- pray?

MAGGIE. Well. Yes. You get up at 5:30-

ADAM. You are not a morning person.

MAGGIE. At 6:00 you pray the Angelus – Lauds.

ADAM. Not before your coffee, you won't.

MAGGIE. At 7:30– mass. Terce. 11:40- Middle Prayer. Sext.

ADAM. “Sext” sounds interesting.

MAGGIE. Don't do that.

ADAM. Sorry. Couldn't help it.

MAGGIE. Noon- Angelus.

ADAM. Oh. They do repeats.

MAGGIE. 4:30- Evening Prayers. Vespers. 6:00- Angelus.

ADAM. Repeats!

MAGGIE. 8:15- Night Prayer. Matins. Great silence. 11:00- bed.

ADAM. Sounds like a laugh a minute.

MAGGIE. There's laughter. And work. And prayer.

ADAM. You can't be serious.

MAGGIE. Very serious.

ADAM. A nun? Can't wait until you tell Troy this one. *(Realizing she already did and that was what the fight was about.)* Oh!

MAGGIE. Already told him.

ADAM. You told him before you told me?

MAGGIE. He kind of needed to know, Adam.

ADAM. It's like I don't even know you anymore.

MAGGIE. He needed to hear it first.

ADAM. And you're doing this just like that?

MAGGIE. Not just like that. First I explore whether or not I have the vocation. Like I'm doing now. Then there's a period of discernment. Then a postulancy. One and half years. Novitiate- two years. Temporary vows- three to six years. Then solemn perpetual vows. I'd take orders. Become a bride of Christ.

ADAM. Ten years? And then you'd be a nun? Grad school would be quicker.

MAGGIE. Yeah. About ten years.

ADAM. Why the hell would you want to do that?

MAGGIE. Look at the world. Don't you think the world needs prayer? Maybe without prayers, things would go spinning out of control. Maybe these prayers are what keeps God holding the world cupped in his hands, and not just opening his hands and letting creation spill out.

ADAM. Girl, please. Let someone else do it.

MAGGIE. Who else?

ADAM. The unattractive, of course. Pretty people are not made for a life of prayer. Ugly people are.

MAGGIE. I will pray for you when you are in purgatory.

SCENE 8

Maggie kneels on a prie-dieu in confession.

MAGGIE. Bless me father, for I have sinned. It's been a few days since my last confession. I fasted on Wednesday and Friday. And prayed. A lot. But I've had impure thought. For these and all my sins, I am sorry. *(Beat.)* Father, I don't know understand why I'm having impure thoughts if I'm being called. If I'm being called. And my best friend is probably getting married. And I'm happy for him. He's marrying the greatest guy. They love each other. And I don't think it's wrong. But that doesn't go with the teachings of the church. Maybe I'm crazy. Maybe I'm not the right person. For this. Whatever this even is. How can I be called if I don't agree with all of the teachings of the church?

SCENE 9

Troy and Adam at a bar, drinking.

ADAM. There's no such thing as Catholic de-programming. Are you stupid?

TROY. Don't call me-

ADAM. Stupid.

TROY. Do you want to step outside so I can whip your ass?

ADAM. Might enjoy it, yes. Been awhile. Didn't know you were into that. Do you want me to whip yours?

TROY. Fuck you, Adam.

ADAM. There's that witty repartee. Or do you mean that literally? And you don't want to fight me. Cause I got three brothers. Fought all the time. Oh, and my boyfriend's a *marine*.

TROY. Only got sisters.

ADAM. Was the only "sister" in the family.

TROY. You're her best friend.

ADAM. Since we were kids.

TROY. Why's she doing this?

ADAM. Hell if I know.

TROY. Thought she loved me.

ADAM. She loves you.

TROY. How could she?

ADAM. I honestly don't know. But she does.

TROY. Shouldn't that be enough?

ADAM. Should be. Isn't.

TROY. Must get a bog kick out of this.

ADAM. Seriously? Full circle to "are you stupid?"

TROY. I'm not stupid.

ADAM. I don't think you're stupid.

TROY. You never liked me.

ADAM. Oh, Jesus. How drunk are you?

TROY. Pretty drunk. How come you never liked me?

ADAM. You're not my type.

TROY. Seriously.

ADAM. Fuck. I like you fine.

TROY. They why you make fun of me?

ADAM. I make fun of everybody. Kind of my thing.

TROY. Don't like to be made fun of.

ADAM. Then quit making it so damn easy.

TROY. She loves you more than she loves me.

ADAM. No, she doesn't.

TROY. Yes, she does.

ADAM. Known her since we were twelve years old. Been best friends for ten years. Know her better than anybody. Including you. And I'm telling you she loves you.

TROY. You want her to leave me.

ADAM. Listen to me, you straight moron. Think I want this? I. Love. Her. She. Loves. Me. Not the same way she loves you. Not the same way you love her. But we love each other. And I will lose my shit if she does this.

TROY. (*Stubbornly.*) She loves you more than she loves me.

ADAM. No. She doesn't. Idiot. Seriously. Why do you think I make fun of you? Really?

TROY. Because you're a bitch?

ADAM. Yes. But.

TROY. (*Dawning realization.*) You're jealous.

ADAM. Now he ahs insight.

TROY. You're jealous of me.

ADAM. Sometimes.

TROY. Shoe's on the other foot now, isn't it?

ADAM. My feet are bigger than yours.

TROY. My shoes are bigger than yours.

ADAM. That makes no sense.

TROY. I know. I'm drunk.

ADAM. Points for trying.

TROY. Thanks.

ADAM. Welcome.

TROY. What are we going to do?

ADAM. She's probably going to leave us both. Nothing we can do.

TROY. We'll fight for her.

ADAM. God has bigger feet than both of us.

TROY. Yeah. Damn it.

ADAM. Maggie needs to figure out what she wants. Or God wants. Her calling. Whatever.

TROY. Damn her calling.

ADAM. *(Pointing at Troy and looking up into the sky.)* Lightning strike that way, Lord.

TROY. *(Pointing skyward.)* Believe in Him?

ADAM. Sure.

TROY. But he hates your people.

ADAM. “My people?”

TROY. Don’t take it personal. Know what I mean.

ADAM. God doesn’t hate “my people.”

TROY. Pope does.

ADAM. No, he doesn’t.

TROY. Church does.

ADAM. Not my church.

TROY. How can you be friends with Maggie, her being so- Catholic?

ADAM. Maggie’s fine with me. She loves me.

TROY. Right. Hate the sin, love the sinner.

ADAM. Maggie’s not like that.

TROY. Her church is.

ADAM. That shit does get old. I can’t tell you how many times folks have said we’d get along fine- if I just acted straight.

TROY. Don’t have to act straight around me, buddy.

ADAM. Thank you, I think.

TROY. You lover her too.

ADAM. Yeah.

TROY. Somebody’s got to do something.

ADAM. Okay. So go and do something.

TROY. I don’t know what to do. About anything. I never knew why Maggie wanted to be with me in the first place. Hell, I can’t even get the courage up to walk into the recruiter’s office. Marine. Yeah. Sure. You’d probably whip my ass in a fight. How am I going to be a marine?

ADAM. Pretty sure they train you.

TROY. I can’t even get Maggie to talk to me. She talks to you.

ADAM. Maggie doesn’t really tell me how she’s feeling either.

TROY. More than me.

ADAM. And I can’t really talk to her.

TROY. What are you talking about? You do nothing but talk.

ADAM. Maggie is so “Team Joe” that I can’t really tell her everything. I don’t know if I want to get married. I mean, I love him. But we’re not perfect. We fight.

JOE. *(Entering his own space.)* You dipped into our savings? For a commercial ice cream machine? Without talking to me?

ADAM. It was a good deal/ They go for over a thousand dollars. I got for \$850!

JOE. We agreed we’d wait until I got back.

ADAM. Well, when is that going to be? By the time I could even get in touch with you, someone else would have snatched it up.

JOE. Adam, we’ve got to crunch the numbers. We might not be able to open the shop for a few years. We can’t afford to go into debt.

ADAM. It’s an ice cream machine! Not a lifetime commitment.

JOE. You know I wanted that money to go towards our honeymoon.

ADAM. I wish you wouldn’t worry about money so much.

JOE. And I wish you’d just give me an answer, but we don’t always get what we want, do we? *(Joe exits.)*

TROY. Tell me about it. Seems like all Maggie and I do is fight.

ADAM. At least you’re together.

TROY. For now.

ADAM. Well, there’s one way to make it permanent.

SCENE 10

A letter for Maggie from Joe.

Dear Maggie. Thanks for the letter. Mail makes bad days better. And thanks for the cookies. They didn’t really survive the trip but- crumbs were good though. Don’t have any way to get the tins back to you. Sorry. Bug spray you sent came in handy. Lots of fleas over here. Adam tells me your boyfriend is thinking of joining up. Let me know if he does. He gets to basic, gets deployed, if I can. I’ll look out for him. Might not run across him, but stranger things have happened? Thanks for looking after Adam for me. He acts tough, but we both know what he’s really like. If he didn’t have you, he’d lose it. Me being away so

much. He has a hard time handling it. Keep looking out for him. He needs us more than he lets on. But you know that. Need you to do me a favor. If something happens- I told him to go find you. And you've got to get him through it. You're a good friend, Maggie, and a good person. Thanks for the prayers. Write again soon. My buddies told me to ask for more bug spray. And cookies. Bye. Joe.

SCENE 11

Maggie is in her apartment wearing bedclothes. She puts the chain on the door, then grabs the rosary off the bedpost.

MAGGIE. I believe in God the Father Almighty- *(Pounding at the door startles Maggie. The door opens but is caught by the chain.)*

TROY. *(Through the door.)* Let me in, Maggie!

MAGGIE. Troy?

TROY. *(Still through the door.)* Open the door. Need to talk to you.

MAGGIE. Are you drunk?

TROY. *(And still through the door.)* A little. Open up. Please? *(Maggie takes the chain off the door. Troy comes in, pulls a ring box out of his pocket, and gets down on one knee.)* Marry me. Marriage is a sacrament, right? You take vows. Take your vows with me.

MAGGIE. Troy, please don't do this.

TROY. Stay here. With me. You could do a lot of good. You could pray. I'll go back to the church. Our kids will be Catholic. I'd do that for you. For us. Don't leave me. I need you. I love you. Don't say anything. Don't answer right now. Don't say- think about it. Take your time. I'll wait. *(Troy leaves the ring box and exits, shutting the door behind him.)*

MAGGIE. *(Picking up the rosary.)* I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth- *(A light shines on Maggie from above. A beatific look illuminates her face. Her lips move but no sound is heard. Maggie is in conversation with someone only she can see and hear, deeply affecting, moving and mysterious. The nature of Maggie's*

conversation is a private matter- a matter of faith. The visitation moment should not be rushed, neither should it go on too long.)

END ACT ONE

***THE PLAY IS NOT OVER!! TO FIND OUT HOW IT ENDS –
ORDER A COPY AT WWW.NEXTSTAGEPRESS.NET***