

NO LOVE, PLEASE

A Ten-Minute Play by Marisa Smith

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Synopsis: Man and Woman have chemistry but as they get to know each other they run into some problems. They hit upon a solution to keep lust alive.

CHARACTERS

WOMAN 30'S-50'S

MAN 30'S-50'S

SETTING: The bedroom of the Woman's apartment. A bed. Two chairs.

TIME: The present.

(Lights up.

The Man and Woman are on opposite sides of the bed, getting dressed.

The bed is a mess; obviously they've just had sex.)

MAN

Why don't we least go out for a drink?

WOMAN

But we already had sex; we don't need to get drunk so we'll have sex.

MAN

We could just go and talk.

WOMAN

Talk?

MAN

Yeah, you know... a little. I really don't know anything about you.

WOMAN
Yeah, isn't that great?

MAN
What?

WOMAN
It's, you know...just lust.

MAN
But I think I like you.

WOMAN
Oh, that could be a problem.

MAN
So, how about it? I'll take you to a nice bar and you can have a nice pink cocktail.

WOMAN
Do I seem like a pink cocktail type of person? No. Time for you to go. But it was very nice to see you again.

MAN
Very *nice*?

WOMAN
Very...awesome.

(She smiles and extends her arm to the door.

Man exits.

BLACKOUT.

Music.

A day passes.

LIGHTS UP.

The Man and the Woman are standing near the bed, fully clothed. Their coats are on the two chairs.)

WOMAN

This feels odd.

MAN

It does.

WOMAN

I'm not sure I can do this.

MAN

Me neither.

WOMAN

Now I'm a bit ...self-conscious.

MAN

Me, too. I feel tense.

WOMAN

I was more relaxed when we were strangers.

MAN

Yeah. So, we're at a crossroads here.

(They sit in chairs near the bed.)

WOMAN

You shouldn't have said you liked me last time. I feel that created this...barrier.

MAN

I know, the minute I said it I regretted it. Now I'm worried about whether you like *me*.

WOMAN

Right. Now we're going down *that* road.

(They sigh.)

MAN

Well, we could, you know...follow that road a little.

WOMAN

What do you mean?

MAN

You know... get to know each other?

WOMAN

Oh, no, that never works. You open yourself up to irritation, disappointment, hurt, contempt, boredom, and disgust at annoying personal habits.

MAN

But it might work for the short term. Until we get to know each other *too* well.

WOMAN

True, it could be short-term solution.

(Pause.)

But if you say you like walks on the beach at sunset it's a deal breaker.

MAN

I don't like the beach.

WOMAN

Neither do I. Or the sunset.

MAN

I hate the sunset. And the sunrise.

WOMAN

Oh, I hate the sunrise. It's so...dramatic.

MAN

So emotional.

WOMAN

Gives me the chills.

(Pause.)

MAN

So, are you game?

WOMAN

Sure. You go first. What do you do?

MAN

Well, I'm a neuroscientist.

WOMAN

Really? What's your field?

MAN

Perception, but my research focuses on facedness.

WOMAN

What is *facedness*?

MAN

We each have a dominant side of the face, a side that is bigger and more active. For example, typically men are left-faced and women are right faced.

WOMAN

(touching her face)

Really? That is *fascinating*. So fascinating. So I'm right-faced?

MAN

Oh yes, definitely. Very right-faced. Classic.

(He peers closely into her face.)

And what do you do?

WOMAN

I'm a biologist.

MAN

No!

WOMAN

In the clock lab-- the circadian rhythm lab that is.

MAN

You're in bio! Traditionally, neuroscience was seen as a branch of biology but today it's more of an interdisciplinary--

(stops himself from pontificating)

--wow, bio, I'm impressed!

WOMAN

Oh, don't be-- really, most of my research involves... mushrooms.

MAN

Mushrooms. I love mushrooms. Well, on pizza mostly.

(They laugh a nerdy laugh together.)

MAN

Are you feeling better now?

WOMAN

Yes, actually.

MAN

Me too. Quite a coincidence that we're both scientists.

WOMAN

Yeah, bizarre.

MAN

I don't even know your name. Tell me your name.

WOMAN

No, I'd rather not.

MAN

Okay.

WOMAN

I don't think we're ready for that.

MAN

Alright.

WOMAN

Let's not wreck things when they're going so well.

MAN

Right, let's not get carried away.

(Pause.)

WOMAN

Maybe liquor would help at this point.

MAN

Good idea.

(Woman opens up a drawer.)

WOMAN

Johnny Walker?

MAN

(too enthusiastic)

He's my *man*.

(embarrassed)

Well, you know what I mean.

WOMAN

He's mine too!

(This cracks them up.)

She hands him a tiny bottle and takes one for herself.

They open the bottles and take a drink.

They stare at each other... lustily.)

WOMAN

Tell me something about *facedness*.

MAN

Well, musical performers are right-faced. Physicists are left-faced.

WOMAN

That is *so* interesting.

(They each take another drink.)

MAN

And psychiatrists are neither.

WOMAN

Really?

MAN

They are evenly split—some are left and some are right.

WOMAN

Well, that makes sense.

MAN

Doesn't it though?

(They drink a final slug.)

WOMAN

I think this is working.

MAN

Yes, absolutely.

WOMAN

I don't feel so...anxious.

MAN

Right, I'm starting to unwind.

WOMAN

Coming at it from this direction was a really smart idea.

MAN

Yes. These things are tricky.

WOMAN

But no names, okay?

MAN

Okay, not yet.

WOMAN

(starts unbuttoning her shirt)

Let's hold off for as long as we can.

MAN

(starts unbuttoning his shirt)

I'm with you there.

WOMAN

(taking off her skirt)

And no terms of endearment. No sappy stuff.

MAN

(taking off his pants)

Check, no sappy stuff.

WOMAN

No sweetie or darling or shit like that.

MAN

I'm in total agreement.

WOMAN

And God forbid, no love please.

MAN

No, definitely, no love.

WOMAN

Let's keep this as pure as possible.

(They stare hungrily at each other.)

MAN

For as long as possible.

(They grab each other and start kissing madly.)

END OF PLAY