

Hot Air

A Play by
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“I know that if I wasn't scared, something's wrong, because the thrill is what's scary.”
– Richard Pryor

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Hot Air

Characters: (In order of appearance)

Megan: The wife. A 25-year-old woman who is shy, reserved, meticulous, and has her entire life already planned out... in her own head.

Harry: The husband. A 28-year-old man. A thrill-seeker who is also a boy at heart but is also sort of trying to grow up.

May: A woman in her mid to late fifties or early sixties. Megan's mom. Hates Harry. Not dislikes. Hates.

Willis: A man in his mid to late seventies or early eighties. He has seen the world through rose-colored glasses his whole life.

Setting: A living room and a hot air balloon.

Act One/Scene One

Scene One: The trouble begins...

(At rise, MEGAN is sitting on a sofa, or two acting blocks pushed together meant to represent a sofa. She silently reads a newspaper. After she turns a few pages and reads alone, HARRY enters the stage rather dramatically. He has a severed bungee cord hanging off the back of his ankles. MEGAN shoots him a glance but continues reading the paper in silence. She ignores him on purpose. HARRY notices this.)

HARRY

What's wrong?

MEGAN

Did I say anything?

HARRY

No. *(A beat)* Why else d'you think I asked what's wrong?

MEGAN

Nothing's wrong. Everything's fine.

HARRY

Ew, I don't like the sound of that.

MEGAN

Harry, I'm serious. Everything's fine. Everything's great. Everything's just... wonderful.

HARRY

Yikes! I had no idea it was that bad.

MEGAN

It's not bad! It's great! It's super! Everything's fantastic! Everything's just... *peachy*.

HARRY

I'm allergic to peaches.

MEGAN

Yup.

(A long pause)

HARRY *(Sighs)*

I know what this is about.

MEGEN

Doubtful.

HARRY

You want me to tell you about this, don't you?

MEGAN *(Indicating the paper)*

Can't you see I'm busy?

HARRY

It's not that interesting. I don't want to bore you.

MEGAN *(Sighs)*

I guess there's a first time for everything.

(A beat)

HARRY

Okay, fine. If you're gonna be so persistent about it, I'll tell you, but like I said, it's really not that—

MEGAN

I'm perfectly fine with you not telling me about it. *(A beat. Sincere)* Really, I am.

HARRY

This isn't that reverse psychology stuff again is it?

MEGAN

No.

HARRY

So it is.

MEGAN

No!

HARRY

Okay, I get it. You really want me to tell you.

MEGAN

No, I don't!

HARRY

Which means you do.

MEGAN

It's not reverse psychology!

HARRY

I know it is!

MEGAN *(Sighs)*

Okay. Fine. It is reverse psychology.

HARRY

I knew it!

MEGAN

No, I mean it's not!

HARRY

Which means it is.

MEGAN

AGGHHH!

(A beat. Megan silently goes back to reading the paper.)

HARRY *(Cont'd)*

ALRIGHT, FINE! I'LL TELL YOU!

(Megan sighs again and then shakes her head, folds the paper up and places it on her lap.)

MEGAN

Do you *want* to tell me?

(A beat)

HARRY
Is that a trick question?

MEGAN
What do you think?

HARRY
I think that was.

MEGAN
Not at all. By all means, if you don't *want* to tell your brand-spanking-new wife, your newlywed, your soul mate, the love of your life, the—

HARRY
Old ball and chain...

(MEGAN glares at HARRY.)

HARRY *(Cont'd)*
Oh, sorry, I thought we were playin' a game.

MEGAN
You were picked last in school for kickball, weren't you?

HARRY
Who told you?

MEGAN
Your mom.

HARRY
She would. *(A beat)* And I never would have been picked last if she wasn't holding my hand on the sidelines.

MEGAN
You think that's the reason you were picked last? *(HARRY nods.)* Who made you believe that?

HARRY
My dad.

(MEGAN shakes her head and goes back to reading the paper.)

MEGAN (*Under her breath*)

And you think my family's screwed up.

HARRY

Not your whole family, just... just... well, you know who.

MEGAN

My mom is my whole family.

HARRY

Then you're right, your family's screwed up.

(*A long pause*)

MEGAN (*Sighs*)

Why don't you just go get changed or something? You really don't have to tell me about—

HARRY

So, I'm getting off work... and bear in mind, I was all ready to come straight home to you, baby...

MEGAN

After you stopped by the florist first, right?

HARRY

Of course. I was plannin' on gettin' you the biggest floral arrangement this side of... this side of... I was gonna get you a big one. (*A beat*) That was the plan, anyways... but when I started towards my truck... guess who I saw leaning against it?

MEGAN (*Sighs*)

The Anti-Christ.

HARRY

Your nickname for Zack, not mine, but regardless, we both know who I'm talkin' about.

MEGAN

The Anti-Christ.

HARRY

Fine. Zack, the Anti-Christ, whatever. Anyway, he's standin' there by my truck with these home-made bungee cords in his hand like this. (*Demonstrates*) And you know what I thought, right?

MEGAN

“Boy, I can't wait to try ‘em!”

HARRY

No! Of course not! I thought Zack's finally lost it and he's aimin' to kill me!

MEGAN

And *then* you thought "Boy, I can't wait to try 'em."

HARRY

And then I thought "Boy, I can't wait to try 'em!"

MEGAN

So then you did.

HARRY (*Giddy*)

So then we did.

MEGAN (*Heard it all before*)

So, what'd you do?

(Harry begins reenacting all the details of his story as he goes. The broken bungee cord still around his ankles the whole time.)

HARRY

We took off in the truck towards Howard's Ravine under Fulton Bridge to try 'em.

MEGAN

Oh, no.

HARRY

You know it?

MEGAN (*Sighs*)

IT'S WHERE YOU PROPOSED!

HARRY

Oh, yeah. I forgot.

MEGAN

You forgot?!

(A long pause)

HARRY

No. *(A beat)* So, anyway, then you probably remember what a big drop Fulton bridge's got, right?

MEGAN (*Nods*)

One of the few things I didn't block outta my memory from that day.

HARRY

Well, that and the proposal, right?

(*A pause*)

MEGAN

I remember what a big drop it's got.

HARRY

Then you also probably remember what's at the bottom, right?

MEGAN

Rocks.

HARRY

Rocks? Honey, babies play with rocks. Down there are boulders.

MEGAN

Babies play with rocks?

HARRY

It's just a figure of speech.

MEGAN

Where? Siberia?

HARRY

Well, what else is there for kids to play with over there but rocks... and snow... and commies?

MEGAN

If you really think babies play with rocks then we're never gonna have one.

HARRY (*Shrugs*)

I meant pebbles.

MEGAN

The ones in your head?

HARRY

No, I need those.

MEGAN

Tell me about it.

HARRY

The rocks or the rest of the story? (*MEGAN stares at him and shakes her head and rolls her eyes. A long pause.*) In any case, babe, down there, we're not talking about pebbles, we're talkin 'bout boulders! Boulders the size of watermelons.

MEGAN

So you thought it sounded like a good idea to smash your head on 'em.

HARRY

Of course not! That's why we wore the bungee cords!

(A beat)

MEGAN

So when did they break?

HARRY

Not right away! Zack's didn't snap till he was just a few yards away from hittin' those watermelons anyway... just couple bumps on the head.

MEGAN

Who went first, you or the Anti-Christ?

HARRY

Zack went first.

MEGAN

So you went ahead and jumped even after his cord broke?

HARRY

Well, Zack did look like he was havin' a good time.

MEGAN

Until the bungee broke!

HARRY

Yeah, but hon, honestly, I never would have thought they'd both break, I mean, what're the odds?

MEGAN

With homemade bungee cords you threw together yourself? There are no odds! It's a given! (*A beat*) Vegas wouldn't take that bet!

HARRY

That's exactly what Zack said. At least I think that's what he said... or maybe he just said "AAAGGGGHHH!" To be honest, I couldn't really make out what he was yellin' about until my ears stopped bleeding.

(Megan stands up and starts to exit, carrying the paper with her. Harry takes her place on the sofa and begins untangling the make-shift bungee cords from around his ankles. Megan stops just before she is completely offstage and turns back around to face him. He looks up at her and smiles. She folds her arms over her chest in disgust.)

HARRY *(Clueless, cont'd)*

Something wrong, babe?

MEGAN

You said it was gonna stop, Harry. Two and a half months before the wedding you said—

HARRY

While I was still courtin' you...

(MEGAN dry heaves.)

HARRY *(Cont'd)*

You might want to get that checked out.

MEGAN

Harry, you said this was gonna stop back then.

HARRY

What was?

MEGAN

This Evel Knievel... garbage!

(A beat. HARRY lowers his head.)

MEGAN *(Cont'd)*

I mean, it's been two months of... day in and day out, I went bungee jumping. I went cliff diving. I went skydiving. I went—what? What's wrong?

HARRY *(Trying to hide his tears)*

Nothing.

MEGAN

Oh, for God's sake, Harry. Are you crying?

HARRY

No.

(Yes he is.)

MEGAN

Yes you are.

HARRY

No I'm not.

MEGAN

Wait. Why? All I said was—oh, my God. Seriously? Evel Knievel?

HARRY *(Through the tears)*

I... loved... that... man.

MEGAN

What are you talking about? You never even met the—

HARRY *(Bigger through the tears)*

I...LOVED... THAT... MAN!

MEGAN

Harry, stop it.

HARRY *(Makes the sign of the cross)*

Lord, I know you felt it right to—

MEGAN

Harry, stop it. I'm serious.

HARRY

I'm praying here!

MEGAN

You're an atheist!

HARRY

So what? You're sayin' they can't pray?

MEGAN

YES! You... *watermelon*. That's the whole point!

HARRY

Don't listen to her, God, I kind-of-sort-of believe in you. And I know you felt it right to take that man when you did, but I sure do miss him.

MEGAN

You act like you were brothers.

HARRY

A man's idol is like his brother, his father and his mentor.

MEGAN

Thanks.

HARRY

For what?

MEGAN

For dropping my IQ down a couple notches.

HARRY

Stop.

MEGAN

I'm serious.

HARRY

No you're not.

MEGAN

There it goes some more.

HARRY

It's not funny.

MEGAN

How low can it go?

HARRY

You're not funny.

MEGAN

Huh? What? (*A beat. Playing dumb.*) Duuuuhhhhhh.

HARRY

Knock it off.

MEGAN
Oh, my God!

HARRY
What?

(MEGAN refers to the paper.)

MEGAN
I CAN'T READ!

HARRY
Would you cut it out? *(Pleading) Please? (A long silence)* Look, what do you want from me?

MEGAN *(Sighs)*
I want you to stop all this thrill-seeking, daredevil nonsense and start acting like—

HARRY
So you want me to change who I am?

MEGAN
It's time to grow up, Harry. No more bungee. No more cliff diving. No more of any of it.

HARRY
So you do want me to change.

MEGAN
You said it would stop.

HARRY
I changed my mind.

MEGAN
You changed your what?

HARRY
I love it too much. Maybe you should be the one who changes.

MEGAN
I beg your—

HARRY
Maybe you should try it.

MEGAN

Try what?

HARRY

Try anything! Something that takes courage.

MEGAN

I married you.

HARRY

Funny.

MEGAN

Scary.

HARRY

I mean something that would be a thrill. An excitement of some kind.

MEGAN

Now you wanna change me?

HARRY

I want you to live.

MEGAN

I live.

HARRY

A boring life.

MEGAN

Drop dead.

HARRY

Not before I try ten thousand more thrills, baby.

MEGAN

I don't think this is gonna work.

HARRY

How do you know until you try something?

MEGAN

Not on your life.

HARRY

The things I try, Hon? They're the things that make life worth living.

MEGAN

My life's worth living and I don't need to jump in front of a bus to prove it.

HARRY

True, but it'd be cool if you did.

MEGAN

You want me to die?

HARRY

I want you to live.

MEGAN

And I want you to stop or we're through.

(MAY pops her head onstage.)

MAY

You mean it?

MEGAN

Not now, mom.

(MAY enters the stage.)

MAY *(Eager)*

Sorry to interrupt you both, but did I just hear that you're going to get a divorce?

HARRY

No, May, we're not going to—

MEGAN

We don't know.

MAY

Oh, I thought that's what you just said.

MEGAN

We're just talking right now, mom. That's all.

MAY

I want you to know I'll support you no matter what you decide, Megan.

MEGAN

That's nice of—

MAY

DO IT! DO IT! DO IT!

MEGAN

MOTHER!

MAY

I'm sorry, honey, sometimes I get so excited when I think of how happy you could be... if you only got divorced.

MEGAN (*Sighs*)

That's what they all say.

MAY

Well, they're all right!

MEGAN

Okay, fine. Thank you mom, now could you please leave—

MAY

I know divorce is a big decision, but sometimes it's the only thing left to do.

HARRY

We all know how you feel about—

MAY (*Biting*)

I wasn't talkin' to you.

HARRY

I know but—

MAY

I was talking to the person in this room I can stand.

HARRY

We all know how you feel about me, but that doesn't mean you can make your daughter—

MAY

Divorce you?

HARRY

Yeah.

MAY

But she's thinkin' of that all by herself. I didn't even suggest it this time.

HARRY

That's a first.

MAY

Yeah... And?

MEGAN

Alright, that's enough from the both of you. I don't know if I want a divorce yet, I'm just talkin' right now.

HARRY

That's what I want to do, too.

MAY

Divorce?

HARRY

Talk.

MAY

Fine. Then don't mind me. I'll just be in the corner. Waiting and hoping. And praying.

MEGAN

No mom, we need to talk alone.

MAY

I'll be quiet.

MEGAN

No, mom.

MAY

Please?

MEGAN

Mom, no.

MAY

Pretty please?

MEGAN
No.

MAY
Nuts!

(MAY sulks offstage.)

MEGAN *(Sighs)*
I can still see you, mother.

MAY *(Offstage)*
Well... I'm in the next room... where else do you want me to go?

HARRY
I want you to go to—

MEGAN
Don't start in with my mom again, Harry.

HARRY
I was just kidding.

MAY *(Offstage)*
The problem is you're not funny!

HARRY
And you're a—

MEGAN
Leave my mom alone, this is between you and me.

HARRY
Tell her to leave us alone then.

MAY *(Offstage)*
I am!

HARRY
If you can still hear us then you're not far enough away.

(A beat)

MAY *(Offstage)*
What?

HARRY
Very funny.

MAY (*Offstage*)
Huh?

HARRY
Stop it.

MAY (*Offstage*)
Say again?

HARRY
You know you can still hear me.

MAY (*Offstage*)
Whistles and bells.

HARRY
CUT IT OUT!

MEGAN
She's just doin' it 'cause she knows she can get a rise out of you every time.

MAY (*Offstage*)
Huh?

MEGAN
It won't work with me, mom.

MAY (*Offstage*)
What?

(A beat)

MEGAN (*To HARRY*)
See. Sometimes you have to be the bigger person and not stoop to her level.

HARRY
I'm still learnin' all the tricks of how to deal with your mother.

MAY (*Offstage*)
Huh?

HARRY
SHUT IT!

MEGAN

I noticed.

HARRY

We need to get our own place. Or maybe find her a home.

MAY (*Offstage*)

I HEARD THAT!

MEGAN

GO AWAY MOM!

HARRY

What happened to not stoopin' to her—

MEGAN

SHUT IT!

HARRY

Yikes.

MEGAN

Sorry, but sometimes you can drive me nuts.

HARRY (*Scoffs*)

Me, but not your mom.

MEGAN

She's my mom.

HARRY

And I'm your husband.

MEGAN

Maybe.

MAY (*Offstage*)

Maybe not.

MEGAN

THAT'S IT! MOM?!

(*MAY enters the stage.*)

MAY

I'm sorry, I just couldn't help myself that time. It's gut instinct.

HARRY

I'd like to give you some gut instinct.

(A beat)

MAY

Even your insults make no sense.

HARRY

I'd like to shove some sense right up your—

MAY

I rest my case.

HARRY

Well, of course it's not gonna make any sense if you keep interrupting me.

MAY

I'm doin' humanity a favor.

HARRY

I'd like to do humanity a favor all over your face.

MAY

Wow, I bet even you wished I interrupted you on that one, huh?

HARRY

I thought you were going to, that's why what I said didn't make any sense.

MAY *(Sarcastic)*

Oh yeah, that's why.

HARRY

Well, what else could it be?

MAY *(To MEGAN)*

You don't have any other plans, right? This could take a while.

MEGAN

Please. Don't. *(Sighs)* But it's fine, mom. You're just not gonna leave us alone and I understand that now.

HARRY

I don't!

MEGAN

Well, I do. And it's fine.

HARRY

No it's not!

MEGAN

Yeah, it is. You can stay.

HARRY

No she can't!

MEGAN

Yeah, Harry. She can.

HARRY

She can't be here while we're... while we're...

MEGAN

It's not any better with her in the next room spying on us, is it?

HARRY

Yes!

MEGAN

Why?

HARRY

Because she's in the next room!

MAY

I'll be quiet and you won't even notice me.

HARRY (*Scoffs*)

Yeah, right.

MAY

What's that supposed to mean?

HARRY

You'd be noticed wearing white in a blizzard.

MAY

Not after Labor Day.

HARRY

You'd still stand out. Even the Abominable Snowman would run away from you screaming.

MAY

No. Trust me, I can be inconspicuous.

HARRY

Nope. On both accounts.

MAY

No, but I can. Honest. Watch.

(A beat. MAY crosses over to the wall and tries unsuccessfully to blend into it.)

MAY *(Cont'd)*

I'm invisible.

HARRY

No you're not.

MAY

I'm a ghost.

HARRY

You're right there.

MAY

I'm Casper.

HARRY

I'm looking right at you.

MAY

You can't see me.

HARRY

Yes I can.

MAY

I'm a chameleon.

HARRY

No you're not.

MAY

I'm camouflage.

HARRY

You're delusional.

MEGAN

She's just messin' with you, again.

HARRY

I know.

MEGAN

Then why are you provoking her?

HARRY

I'm not.

MAY

I'm cellophane.

HARRY

YOU ARE NOT!

MEGAN

You see?

MAY

See what?

HARRY

I SEE YOU!

MEGAN

You are totally playing her game.

HARRY

What do you want me to do?

MEGAN

Ignore her.

HARRY

That's just what she wants me to do!

MEGAN

No, she wants—

HARRY

If I ignore her, it'll prove to her she's—

MAY (*Whispers*)

Invisible.

HARRY

YOU'RE NOT INVISIBLE!

MAY

Poof! I'm gone.

HARRY

I see you.

MAY

No you don't.

HARRY

YES I—

MEGAN (*Sighs*)

Harry, stop it.

HARRY

Then tell her she's not invisible.

MEGAN

Tell who?

MAY

Yes!

HARRY

You see?

MEGAN

See what?

MAY

Yes!

HARRY

That's what she wants you to do.

MAY

What is?

HARRY

She wants you to think she's not really here and you're letting her.

MEGAN

I'm trying anything to get back to our discussion. If that means I have to pretend my mom is invisible then so be it.

HARRY

So, that's the way it has to be, huh?

MEGAN

Either that or you sit here all day arguing with her pointlessly.

HARRY

I have a point.

MEGAN

A moot one.

HARRY

But she's not invisible.

MAY

I am... the wall.

HARRY

YOU ARE NOT!

MEGAN

Of course she's not, but I can still ignore her as if she is if it means we'll be able to get back to our initial discussion sooner.

HARRY

Fine. But just for the record... she still drives me nuts.

MEGAN

I had no idea.

HARRY
You didn't?

MEGAN
I was being sarcastic.

HARRY
Oh.

MAY
I knew that honey. I understand you. Unlike some other people... *I get you.*

HARRY
You still think she's invisible?

MEGAN
No, but I'm still trying to ignore her.

HARRY
Fine. Then you win. I'll ignore her too.

MAY
YES!

(HARRY glares at MAY.)

HARRY
But that does not mean she's invisible.

MAY *(Whispering)*
Yes it does.

HARRY *(Exploding)*
NO IT DOESN'T!!!!

(A beat)

MEGAN *(To HARRY)*
Are you through?

HARRY *(Lowers his head)*
Yes, ma'am.

MEGAN

Good.

(A beat)

MAY *(Whispering)*

I'm not.

HARRY
I'M GONNA KILL YOU!!!!!!

MAY
You can't kill a ghost.

HARRY
WATCH ME!!

MEGAN
HARRY?!

HARRY
WHAT?!

MEGAN
Enough.

(HARRY lowers his head again but remains silent this time, but he eyes MAY repeatedly. She grins at him every time but remains silent as well.)

MEGAN *(Cont'd)*
Good. Now then, as I was saying... you need to stop all this thrill seeker nonsense.

HARRY
And I think you need to at least try it once first.

MEGAN
What do you mean, first?

HARRY
I mean, I'll make a deal with you.

MAY
A marriage built on haggling. That's priceless.

HARRY
You know what, May—

MEGAN (*Whispering*)

Invisible.

HARRY

Agghhh! Fine. (*A beat. Back to MEGAN*) As I was saying before I was so rudely interrupted by someone who, apparently, isn't even here—

MAY

YES!

(*HARRY shakes his head, but keeps his cool and his focus on MEGAN this time.*)

HARRY

I'll make a deal with you, honey. You try to do one crazy, spontaneous, thrill-seeking stunt and I'll stop. I'll stop all of it. For good.

MEGAN

You mean it?

HARRY

Would you consider it?

MEGAN

I am.

MAY

Oh, no.

HARRY

Hey, guess what?

MEGAN

What?

HARRY

I didn't hear anything.

MEGAN

Then maybe you're makin' progress.

HARRY

I think I might be.

MAY

I don't.

HARRY

Still didn't hear anything.

MEGAN

Me neither. Now then... you swear that if I do one thing you'll stop doing them all together?

HARRY

Unless you like it.

MEGAN

That ain't gonna happen.

HARRY

It's a possibility.

MEGAN

No it's not.

HARRY

We'll see...

MEGAN

Well, what would I have to do?

HARRY

There's a lot of things we could try.

MEGAN

No skydiving or bungee jumping.

HARRY

Fine.

MEGAN

No cliff diving or parasailing either.

HARRY

Oh, come on.

MEGAN

No mountain climbing or—

HARRY

Look, we're not just gonna ride a roller coaster and say you're a daredevil.

MEGAN

I'm sorry, but there are some things that I just won't try.

HARRY

Tell me about it.

MEGAN

Hey!

MAY

You pervert.

HARRY

I meant daredevil, wise. You're the ones with the dirty minds. *(A beat)* Oh, now I get it. *(A beat)* Ew.

MEGAN

Look, I'm sorry, but this'll be my first and last time, I want it to be somewhat safe.

HARRY

You're looking to do a safe, life-threatening thrill?

MEGAN

Yeah.

HARRY

Okay, let me think about that for a while. But once I think of it... you're serious, you'll actually do it?

MEGAN

If it means it'll get you to stop all this nonsense, then...yes.

HARRY

And we won't have to get a divorce?

MEGAN

That wasn't gonna be an issue if you stopped.

MAY

Nuts!

MEGAN

Did you hear something?

HARRY

I didn't hear nothing.

MEGAN

Me neither.

HARRY (*Thinking*)

Thrill seeking adventure. What to do, what to do...

MEGAN

I can't believe I agreed to this.

HARRY

It'll be worth stopping, just to see you try just one risky little thing.

MEGAN

You know, you might have to stop hanging around with the Anti-Christ in order to stop.

HARRY

It'll be easy to not hang out with her while she's invisible.

MEGAN

Very funny.

MAY

I'm here now.

MEGAN

Did you hear something?

HARRY

Nope.

MAY

Yes you did. I'm here now. I'm no longer invisible.

HARRY

You never were!

MAY

I know. But I tried. But now, I can't be a fly on the wall any longer... I have to speak.

HARRY

What a shame. It was all quiet and peaceful here for about two minutes.

MAY

Megan, you can't be serious.

MEGAN

I am, mom.

MAY

But you could get hurt or even killed doing one of his stupid, lame stunts.

HARRY

There're not all stupid and lame.

MAY (*Referring to the bungee cords*)

Are those homemade?

HARRY

You want me to make you a pair?

MAY (*To MEGAN*)

You can't be serious?

MEGAN

Sorry mom, but if it means he'll stop doin' them then I must.

MAY

BUT HONEY! HOMEMADE BUNGEEES? (*A long pause*) AND HE DOESN'T THINK THEY'RE STUPID AND LAME!

HARRY

Just 'cause they're homemade doesn't mean I made them.

MAY

Did you?

(*A beat*)

HARRY

I had help.

MAY (*To MEGAN*)

Seriously?

MEGAN (*Nods*)

If that's what it takes.

MAY (*Shakes her head*)

Why he means that much to you is beyond me.

MEGAN

That's right, it is beyond you.

MAY

Don't you think you should at least reconsider the divorce option before you go and do something stupid?

MEGAN

No, mom. I don't want to get a divorce.

MAY

Why not?! Everybody's doin' it!

MEGAN

Well I'm—

MAY

These days, it's what all the cool kids are doin'.

MEGAN

Stop it, mom.

MAY

Maybe you should at least try it and see if you like it.

HARRY

It's like she's *The Divorce-Drug Pusher*.

MEGAN

You're right.

MAY

Stay out of this, narc.

HARRY

Sorry May, but I'm all kinds of in this.

MEGAN

I'm not gonna try a divorce just to see if I like it, mom.

MAY

You'd do it if you loved me.

MEGAN

Oh, for God's sake. Seriously, you've already resorted to mom guilt?

MAY

Desperate times call for—

HARRY

We're not in desperate times.

MAY

You've only been married for two months. Now's the time to get divorced because it's early still. It's just gonna get harder and harder to do the longer you put it off.

MEGAN

If I do one stunt and then he stops doing them altogether... nothing's gonna get worse. It's the only thing trippin' up our marriage in the first place.

HARRY

The only thing?

MEGAN

The main thing.

HARRY

You mean it?!

MEGAN (*Shrugs*)

My pills kicked in.

MAY

What about the dry heaves?

MEGAN

I'll take those pills next.

MAY

That's not what I meant and you know—

MEGAN

I think the dry heaves were just a one-time—

MAY

Harry courted you.

(*MEGAN dry heaves.*)

MAY (*Cont'd*)

You were sayin'?

HARRY

I think we're all well aware that back then I might have taken her for one too many dates for chimichangas.

(*MEGAN dry heaves.*)

MAY

How long you gonna keep blamin' the Mexican food instead of your face?

HARRY

I'll like to put your Mexican food in some face... I mean—

MEGAN

Mom, we all know how you feel about Harry, but you're not me and he's not your husband.

HARRY

Maybe there is a God!

MEGAN

You know, you're not helping things.

HARRY

I'm sorry. I don't even mean to say half the things I say. Sometimes they just come out all on their own.

MAY

Spoken like a true—

HARRY (*Sighs*)

Don't say it.

MAY

Say what?

HARRY

Whatever it is you were gonna call me.

MAY

But you don't even know what that was.

HARRY

I know it couldn't be good and that's all I need to know.

MAY

It could have been good.

HARRY

No, it was gonna be bad. That much is a given.

MAY

If you must know, I was gonna say spoken like a true gentleman.

HARRY

Really?

MAY (*Scoffs*)

Not even on my death bed.

HARRY

Well, then hopefully, I won't have to wait very long.

MAY

I said not even!

HARRY

God, I wish you were still invisible.

MAY

I wish you were never born!

HARRY

Have you been talkin' to my mom?

MAY

I never answer collect calls from prison.

MEGAN

OKAY, ENOUGH!

(A long pause)

HARRY

Okay, enough, but just let me say one more thing. (*To MAY*) The important thing is we're not getting a divorce. So you lose. I win.

MAY

For now.

HARRY

We'll see.

MAY

I'm counting down the minutes until—

HARRY

I GOT IT!

MAY AND MEGAN

Got what?

HARRY

I know what I'm gonna have you do.

MEGAN

What?

HARRY

Don't want to ruin the surprise. But we need to go now before it gets dark.

MEGAN

We can wait until tomorrow.

HARRY

We can, but I don't want to. I want to go right now, before it gets too late.

MEGAN

But you're not gonna tell me what it is?

HARRY

I'll give you a hint. I got the idea while I was here talking to your mother.

MEGAN

You wanna throw me out of a plane?

HARRY

No skydiving.

MEGAN

You wanna strangle me in my sleep?

HARRY

No, no, no... not at all... (*Glares at MAY*) Although... that's not a half-bad idea.

MEGAN

Then what then?

HARRY

You'll see. Now come on, let's go.

MAY

I'm goin' with you.

HARRY

Oh, no, you're not.

MAY

I'll be invisible again.

HARRY

You weren't the first time and this time you can't because—

MAY

Look, this is my only daughter and if you're gonna put her in harm's way for your own personal gratification then I want to be there to make sure she—

HARRY

Honey?

MEGAN

Don't look at me, my mom's got a point.

HARRY

But I want this to be special, just you and me. I don't want your mom to tag along just to ruin the whole thing.

MAY

I'm right here.

HARRY

Oh, sorry, I thought you were invisible again.

MAY

Not yet.

MEGAN

I understand where she's comin' from.

HARRY

Is Satan the landlord?

MEGAN

No, but she doesn't want to see anything happen to me so she wants to come along to be there in case anything does.

HARRY

She won't be able to do anything if it does. *(To MAY)* You can't come on the stunt with us so there's really no reason why—

MAY

I'll wait and watch. That's all I ask.

HARRY

Good 'cause you can't come up with us.

MEGAN

I thought you said we weren't goin' skydiving.

HARRY

We're not.

MEGAN

But you said come up with us.

HARRY

So? There are lots of things that go up besides planes.

MEGAN

Oh, great. I'm not climbing Mt. Everest either.

HARRY

Oh, man, you shoot down every idea I have.

MEGAN *(Scoffs)*

Yeah, right. Like you'd ever climb that mountain.

HARRY

You know me too well.

MAY

Too high?

MEGAN

Too cold.

HARRY

You really know me too well.

MAY

Oh, that's too bad. I wonder if Sherpas do refunds.

HARRY

A Sherpa? Why'd you need a refund from a sherpa?

MEGAN (*Playful*)

Probably a hit.

HARRY

A HIT?!

MAY

More like a push.

HARRY

WHAT?! (*To MEGAN*) I can't believe it! I can't believe your mother hired a hitman to rub me out.

MAY (*To MEGAN*)

Now I can see what you meant by "he just never listens to me, anymore." (*To HARRY*) I didn't hire a hitman, I told you, I hired a Sherpa.

HARRY

TO RUB ME OUT!

MAY

No, now you're not listening to me either, not to rub you out... to push you off.

HARRY

HOW IS THAT ANY DIFFERENT?!

MAY

Less liability.

HARRY

WHAT?

MAY (*Shrugs*)

It's a write-off my way.

HARRY

BUT IT'S STILL RUBBING ME OUT!

MAY

But didn't it sound sweeter the way I said it?

HARRY

How could "pushing me off a mountain" sound sweet?

MAY

Ask Julie Andrews.

HARRY

SHE CLIMBED EVERY MOUNTAIN!

MAY

Really? Man, I never get the lyrics right.

HARRY (*To MEGAN*)

CAN YOU BELIEVE THIS?!

MEGAN

Can I believe she's sayin' it or can I believe you're believin' it?

HARRY

WHAT?!

MEGAN (*Sighs*)

I told you before, she's just gonna keep tryin' to get a rise outta you. Especially if you keep eggin' her on.

HARRY

But she—

MEGAN

Come on, Harry, do you honestly think my mother hired a Sherpa-hitman just on the off-chance you might decide to climb a mountain?

HARRY

I wouldn't put it past her.

MEGAN

Well, you should. Right, mom?

(A long silence)

MAY

Riiiiiggghhhht.

HARRY

Did hear that?

MEGAN

What? She agreed with me, she said right.

HARRY

No she didn't. She didn't say right, she said riiiiiggghhhht.

MEGAN

So? What's the difference?

MAY

A couple more i's, a couple more g's, maybe a few more h's.

HARRY

THE DIFFERENCE IS IN THE TONE OF VOICE!

MEGAN

IS THAT WHY YOU'RE SHOUTING?!

HARRY

I'M SHOUTIN' 'CAUSE I'M AFRAID SOME SHERPA IS GONNA PUSH ME OFF A MOUNTAIN.

MEGAN

THEN DON'T CLIMB ANY!

MAY

I GOT JUST ONE THING TO SAY ABOUT ALL THIS SHOUTING... DIVORCE!
DIVORCE! DIVORCE!

(A long silence. HARRY finally calms down.)

HARRY

Okay, fine, I'm calm now. I'll stop shouting. I just can't believe... I mean, I know your mom hates me, but to actually hire a—

MEGAN

Oh, please, she didn't hire any Sherpa to kill you. Stop being a moron.

MAY

Can he?

MEGAN (*Still to HARRY*)

Honestly, where in the world would my mother find a Sherpa guide to push you off a mountain anyways?

HARRY

Have you ever heard of the Internet? What can't you find on there?

MAY

Apparently a decent husband. Stupid *PlentyofFish*.

MEGAN

So what, you just think my mom went online and typed in Hashtag Hitman?

HARRY

Maybe.

MEGAN

Oh, please.

MAY

Yeah, really. That would bring up the entire Yelp book.

HARRY

So what'd you use, instead?

MAY

Craig's List.

HARRY

Craig's List?

MAY

It lets you narrow the search and then narrow the search and then narrow the—

HARRY

I'd like to narrow your search.

MAY

Okay, so how is my online search for a hitman any different than those threats of yours?

MEGAN

Because yours sounds legit, his just sounds... dumb.

HARRY

LEGIT? DID YOU JUST SAY YOUR MOM'S SOUNDED LEGIT?!

MEGAN

Again with the yelling? Good God, Harry, I said sounded legit, but that doesn't mean it was.

(A beat)

HARRY *(To MAY)*

Was it legit, May?

(A beat. MAY looks at the desperation and frustration in MEGAN'S eyes.)

MAY *(Sighs)*

No.

MEGAN

Thanks, mom. Thank you for not messin' with him for any longer.

MAY

You're welcome, dear. *(A beat)* But I could have kept him at it all night.

MEGAN

I know, but I don't know how he could keep falling for it over and over again. I mean, Craig's List? To hire a Sherpa-Hitman? Seriously? How could any of that sound even the remotest bit plausible?

(A long pause)

MAY

Especially since I'm invisible.

HARRY

YOU'RE NOT INVISIB—

MEGAN

Alright, Harry, seriously, ENOUGH! *(A long pause)* Do you even want me to still do this stupid daredevil thing or not? It's gonna be dark soon.

(A beat)

HARRY

Yeah, you're right. We better get going.

MAY *(Checking her watch)*

Nuts! Now you see why I kept eggin' him on?

MEGAN

You were hopin' to keep it up till it was too dark for me to go be a daredevil.

(MAY nods and shrugs.)

HARRY

Oh, she's good.

MEGAN

You have no idea. Now would you at least give me another hint as to what you want me to do?

HARRY

Nope. But would you just come on, before you or your mother ruins any more of the surprise?

MEGAN

What about my mom?

MAY

Yeah, what about me?

HARRY *(Sighs)*

Fine. You can come along. As long as you stay on the ground and out of the way.

MAY

Couldn't I just give you a push?

(A long pause)

HARRY *(To himself)*

She's invisible, she's invisible, she's invisible. *(To MEGAN)* Okay, well, we better get a move on.

MEGAN

What have I gotten myself into?

HARRY

I promise, I'm gonna stop all this daredevil stuff once you try it, just keep telling yourself that.

MEGAN

What do you think I've been doing this whole time?

HARRY

Trust me, it'll be worth it.

MEGAN

I keep tellin' myself that too.

MAY

Do you both want to know what I've been tellin' myself?

HARRY

I bet it's a derogatory name for me.

MAY

Who told you?

HARRY

Cute.

MAY

Seriously, though, I've been tellin' myself, if I lived my whole life without seeing my daughter put herself in harm's way, I'd die happy.

HARRY

And if I get to see your daughter do one life threatening stunt, I'll die happy.

MAY

Guess you get to die happy and I don't.

HARRY

You don't know that for sure. I could get hit by a bus on the way there.

MAY

Don't get my hopes up.

MEGAN

Can we stop this and just get on with it?

HARRY

Are you ready, babe?

MEGAN

Not even a little bit.

HARRY (*Not hearing or caring*)

Great! Let's go.

(The lights slowly fade. End of Act One/Scene One.)

Act One/Scene Two

Scene Two: The trouble intensifies...

(At rise, WILLIS is sitting in his hot air balloon waiting. There is a small sign that reads: "Hot Air Balloon Ride – \$75" sitting at the feet of the gondola (wicker basket). A word about the hot air balloon... there needs only be a basket, with strings attached, hanging down from the fly space, the actual balloon can be unseen. The strings can be imagined as well for that matter. However, if you can mount a fully working hot air balloon, with ropes, gondola, sandbags, open flame and envelope (or balloon), it would be even better and add so much, especially to elevate the tension of Act Two. Not needed for a reasonable, minimal production though. Just a thought. After a few moments, HARRY, MEGAN and MAY enter the stage. Immediately, MEGAN turns to leave. HARRY pulls her back.)

MEGAN

Oh, no.

HARRY

Come on, this is mild.

MEGAN

Mild?!

HARRY

Absolutely.

MEGAN

This is not mild.

HARRY

This is a walk in the park kind of thrill. It's not like I'm gonna throw you out of the basket.

MAY

But she could throw you out.

MEGAN *(Scoffs)*

Yeah, right, mom! You think I'm strong enough to lift up his big...? Oh.

HARRY *(To both)*

Thanks.

MAY (*Shrugs*)

One can only hope and dream... and pray.

HARRY

I thought you were invisible.

MEGAN

Are you two ever gonna stop?

HARRY

She started it.

MAY

A divorce can stop it.

HARRY

This is the reason we're not gonna have to have—

MEGAN

You thought of this because of my mom? (*A beat*) Oh, I get it.

MAY

I don't.

MEGAN

Good, mom. It's cruel.

HARRY

It was supposed to be funny. See, May, like you, the balloon is full of hot—

MAY

Your sense of humor is as painful as your face.

HARRY

I'd like to show your face something as painful as my face.

MAY (*To MEGAN*)

You never really did look for intelligence in a guy, huh?

HARRY

I was just kidding.

May (*To MEGAN*)

You never really did like to laugh anyway, did you, honey?

MEGAN

Laughter causes wrinkles.

HARRY

Then your mom must love to—

MAY

And you must too.

(Paranoid, HARRY feels his forehead.)

WILLIS

Why, hello, there!

HARRY *(Right back into it)*

Hi!

MEGAN

Harry? I'm still not sure.

WILLIS

Not sure? You folks haven't lived until you've tried a hot air balloon ride!

MEGAN

I beg to differ.

WILLIS

Little lady, I promise you this'll be the most exciting thing you've ever tried in your life.

HARRY

That's what I said.

WILLIS

Folks, my name is Willis and I've got the best hot air balloon ride you could ever imagine having.

MAY

It couldn't be better than no hot air balloon ride.

WILLIS

Sure it could. And I'd be happy to show you, just jump in the basket.

HARRY

She's not coming with us. She doesn't need a balloon, she's got a broom. But you heard the man, Megan. Get in the basket.