

FOR NEVER, not always....

By Jennifer Peters

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For-Never not Always

ACT I

SCENE I

MICHAEL is in his late 20's and has trouble explaining what he feels. He dated Brenda a year ago for about 3 years.

BRENDA is in her mid- 20's and tends to draw her own conclusions about things she knows nothing about.

RYAN is Michael's best friend, and Brenda's fiancé.

DR. CHALLS is a therapist with a thick accent.

The stage is set with a park bench and some scenery stage right. Center stage and Stage left is set up like an apartment with a bedroom and living room.

At rise, BRENDA is sitting on a bench outside in a wedding dress, and MICHAEL is pacing back and forth nervously. His hair is somewhat of a mess due to continuously running his hands through it. His suit is wrinkled and tie is crooked.

MICHAEL: Look, I know it was bad timing but at that moment it was now or never, you know? Seeing you in that dress... it was so real, I mean it still is so real, but what was I supposed to do? Just let it happen?

BRENDA: I know.

MICHAEL: *(sits down next to BRENDA on the bench)* I didn't want to ruin this day for you, but it just didn't feel right. I had to do something.

BRENDA: I think you did exactly what you should have done, Michael. You don't need to explain. I know. I've always known deep down.

MICHAEL: You have?

BRENDA: Yeah I have. All throughout our relationship I was trying to get you to be open with your feelings, and finally you have.

MICHAEL: I'm so glad you understand. I hope that you can forgive me for what I've done.

BRENDA: I forgive you. Maybe this time apart is exactly what we needed to make us realize...

MICHAEL: Yeah, maybe we both could start fresh.

BRENDA: I would love that.

MICHAEL: I'm so glad this all worked out. I thought that you were going to have a fit. I should have stopped you and Ryan from dating the moment it happened. I'm sorry it's taken me this long. Seeing you there... with him... I had to stop it.

BRENDA: It's okay. I never should have dated your best friend in the first place. I just wanted to make you jealous.

MICHAEL: Well, I was definitely jealous.

BRENDA: Jealousy is natural when you are in love.

MICHAEL: Yeah, true. I'm glad we can finally have a mature conversation. I feel like this is the very first time we are actually communicating with each other. We never were good at the whole "communication" part of a relationship.

BRENDA: Exactly, I like that you are opening up to me with your feelings.

MICHAEL: Well, I have always tried to, but it seems that I am never able to get you to understand. But, I'm glad you do now. I'm sure I will see you around. Thanks for being so understanding. I should get going.

BRENDA: Get going? What do you mean?

MICHAEL: To tell Ryan.

BRENDA: Tell him what?

MICHAEL: That I'm in love with him.

BRENDA: Um, what? That makes no sense.

MICHAEL: I thought you understood...

BRENDA: Understood that you are in love with him?! What I understand, is that you are in love with me! That's why you broke up my wedding. You said you knew as soon as you saw me standing up there-

MICHAEL: With *him*.

BRENDA: I would know if you were into men, Michael...

MICHAEL: Ugh you always do this! I've been into men for a long time, Brenda. You know that, but you continue to lie to yourself.

BRENDA: Really... and how was I supposed to know that?

MICHAEL: For one thing, it was me who would always drag you to see movies with shirtless Channing Tatum... and Zac Efron.

BRENDA: I thought you wanted to be *like* them... not *with* them.

MICHAEL: After the movie all we would talk about was how sexy they looked and how it would be awesome to touch their abs.

BRENDA: Okay and so I should have known you liked men from that?

MICHAEL: No, not just that, but you've known I'm gay for a long time. You're in denial, you've always known!

BRENDA: I'm not in denial!

MICHAEL: When you saw that I had an account made to meet men online, you shrugged it off saying that it's good for me, because I need more friends.

BRENDA: Well, I was being nice. I thought you needed more friends than just Ryan.

MICHAEL: It was an account on a site to meet gay singles...

BRENDA: I thought you were just going through some stuff.

MICHAEL: No, you didn't. What about when we would go to the mall just to play a game to see who can find the best looking guy?

BRENDA: I thought... maybe... we could have a threesome... maybe.

MICHAEL: What?! Brenda... we never even had sex anymore at that point. Our sex was never any good anyways.

BRENDA: So... maybe that's what we needed to spice our sex life up.

MICHAEL: You make excuses for everything when all of the evidence is there right in front of you!

BRENDA: Evidence of what? None of that screams out, "Brenda, I'm gay," to me...

MICHAEL: I have literally screamed at you: "BRENDA, I AM GAY."

BRENDA: And I was supposed to *believe* that?

MICHAEL: You are impossible! Yes, you *were* supposed to believe that, Brenda. But all you would do is start to laugh and say “Oh honey, you are so funny!”

BRENDA: Well, you’re a funny guy! I thought you were joking!

MICHAEL: Do you even hear yourself? I thought that when you said you have always known deep down that you were finally admitting to yourself that I am gay.

BRENDA: No. No, no, no, no, no! I meant that I’ve always known deep down that you have always loved ME. (*Grasps onto MICHAEL’s hands*) You said you wanted to start fresh together!

MICHAEL: Not together, (*releases the grip of BRENDA’s hands*) start fresh separately! You never want to listen to what I say! Even if I wasn’t gay, this relationship wouldn’t work. You don’t want to listen to anything you don’t want to hear. There is no truth between you and me; there never has been.

BRENDA: I know what’s best for you, Michael.

MICHAEL: No you don’t. You really don’t. You don’t even know what’s best for yourself.

BRENDA: Well go then. Ryan loves me, you know. He is probably so heart broken that you destroyed our wedding. It would have been the best day of his life. Soon you will come crawling back to me.

MICHAEL: Not. Happening. (*MICHAEL starts to walk off the stage and the lights go down*)

SCENE II

(*Lights stage left go up where RYAN is organizing some things. MICHAEL walks on stage left holding two beers*)

MICHAEL: Here man, (*hands RYAN one of the beers*) you probably need this after everything that has happened.

RYAN: Thanks.

MICHAEL: I’m really sorry for everything. I ruined your wedding day.

RYAN: Yup. It’s ruined, alright.

MICHAEL: I know what I did is inexcusable. But we’ve been best friends for a long time. I’m really sorry.

RYAN: Sorry? Dude, you saved me! I’m so glad you stopped it. This morning all I was thinking about was how this was going to be the worst day of my life.

MICHAEL: What? Really? So, why were you going to marry her?

RYAN: She tricked me into it! I don’t know how, but she did. She plays so many mind games, you know how she is. I am happy for you to take her off of my hands!

MICHAEL: Okay, so we're cool?

RYAN: Yeah man, you can go to town with her... or should I say Crazy Town. I finally have a way out and I love it. I'm a free man thanks to you.

MICHAEL: Okay... um sweet. But uh I think I have had enough of "Crazy Town" too. I love you. I mean... You're awesome.

RYAN: Aw dude. Love you man. *(Gives MICHAEL a "bro" hug)* I'm so happy that we can just be buds again! My man! My brother!

MICHAEL: *(mumbling)* My person.

RYAN: Partners!

MICHAEL: Life partners.

RYAN: Ha! Your humor kills me man! How did we ever let Brenda get in between us? It's time to help each other pick up some chicks. *(Laughs)*

(RYAN and MICHAEL do some sort of "secret" handshake. MICHAEL fakes being excited)

MICHAEL: Ah yeah! Totally! Just like old times.

Door opens, Enter BRENDA.

BRENDA: Aw look at you two! *(Looks at MICHAEL)* I take it you haven't told him?

(MICHAEL gives her an angry look and BRENDA smiles back)

RYAN: Ugh Brenda, don't you knock? What are you doing here? *(Looks to MICHAEL and rolls his eyes)*

BRENDA: Well. I see you move on rather quickly. Don't sound so excited to see me, *ex-fiancé!*

RYAN: Whatever Brenda, you no longer hold any power over me. Hate to break it to you, but I stopped loving you well before our wedding was about to happen.

BRENDA: *(dramtically)* Ouch, You mean to tell me that after this whole year together.... All of those moments... meant nothing to you?

RYAN: No, not every moment. I'm sorry. I did love you.

BRENDA: Please, I'm kidding you idiot! I never loved you!

RYAN: *You* almost married me.

BRENDA: *(Gazing at MICHAEL)* Sometimes, that is just what you have to do for true love.

(MICHAEL puts his head in his hands, shaking his head)

RYAN: Marry someone you don't love?

BRENDA: Marry the dumb best friend of the man you truly love to make that man realize his love for you!

RYAN: And how did that work out for you, Brenda?

BRENDA: Good things don't come easy. I am *sorry* if that is too difficult for you to wrap your head around, Ryan. Anyways, that is not why I am here.

RYAN: Why are you here?

BRENDA: I came over here to tell you what I knew Michael would be afraid to tell you.

RYAN: And what would that be?

BRENDA: Well, Michael... Are you going to tell him... or should I?

MICHAEL: Brenda, don't.

BRENDA: Michael *thinks* he is in love with you. (*Smiles, happy with what she just did*)

(*Beat*)

RYAN: I know.

BRENDA: (*Gives RYAN a death stare*) What do you mean, you know?

RYAN: I mean... (*Grabs MICHAEL's hand*) I know. I've known for a long time... and I love him back.

BRENDA: WHAT?! This is ridiculous. You don't love each other. You are supposed to love me. Michael is not gay.

MICHAEL: I've told you hundreds of times Brenda. I'm gay. That's just something you will have to deal with. Don't you think it's time for you to move on?

BRENDA: Not this again, Michael. You know what? I don't think it's me that has problems.

RYAN: It really is just you. You put yourself in everyone's life and don't leave.

BRENDA: Ryan, I really have nothing to say to you. (*Grabs MICHAEL's other hand*) Michael, honey... you are just confused. Don't worry. I will get you help. We can get through this.

MICHAEL: I don't want your help, Brenda. I don't want you in my life at all. I want you gone. I have had enough of you prying into my life.

BRENDA: You don't mean that.

MICHAEL: Yes, I do. I've tried to be nice about it, but nothing works. For once can you please just leave me alone? You need help Brenda. Go see a therapist.

BRENDA: Fine. If a therapist is what is needed then just remember that you asked for it! (*BRENDA starts walking to the door*)

MICHAEL: All I'm asking is that you leave me alone.