

STARS

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A Short Play for Two Women

By Evan Guilford-Blake

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS

JEN, 16, White or Asian. A romantic who is intellectually sophisticated but not especially mature. There is a fragility about her.

TINA, 16, Black or Hispanic. Charismatic. She has always been mature for her age. Having spent her early childhood in the projects, however, she is streetwise, a little cynical and sometimes a little "tough"; and she is capable of bouncing back and forth between the two "personas" at will.

**TIME:** Approximately the present. About 10:00 PM on a late summer evening.

**SETTING:** A hilltop on the outskirts of a still-developing suburb of a major American city.

Depending on the needs of your production, you may also make the following line alterations:

Change Tina's line (p.7)  
from: What the fuck're you - hey: Cut that shit out.  
to: What the f- Hey: Cut that shit out.

Change Tina's line (p.8)  
from: Shit... (Pause) Hey; look.  
to: Man... (Pause) Hey; look.

For Janis Ian and Barbara Cook

JEN is seated alone as if on a hilltop, memorizing from a book, with a small flashlight as her illumination. NIGHT SOUNDS are heard.

JEN

"...Thou art more lovely and more temperate.  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
And summer's lease hath-

TINA enters.

TINA

Hey, babe; how you doin'?

JEN

Oh; hi. Okay. How 'bout you?

TINA

Yeah, I'm fine. Writin' poems?

JEN

I was memorizing one, actually. Shakespeare.

TINA

*Shakespeare? Jen; man...*

JEN

Hey, Tina: He's cool.

TINA

Yeah, right.

JEN

He is.

TINA

I said: right. Okay?

JEN

Okay... Nice sky, huh.

TINA

Yeah.

JEN

(Beat)

So, you, um, what d' you think about it *now*?

TINA

'Bout what?

JEN  
Here. Living here, I mean.

TINA  
I'm gettin' used to it.

JEN  
Yeah.  
(Small laugh)

TINA  
What?

JEN  
It's only been four months. Feels like longer. Like I've known you longer, I mean.

TINA  
(With a laugh)  
It *feels* like you been makin' yourself my personal welcome wagon.

JEN  
I don't, I mean, it's just I like you. You're interesting.

TINA  
Hey - you are too. It's cool. I just wish you could shoot a basketball.

JEN  
(As they both laugh)  
I'm learning.

TINA  
Yeah. Yeah.  
(A long beat, while they listen.)

Man, you c'n hear ev'rything out here.  
(Whistles)  
And you were sure right about seein' things. Really bright out tonight.

JEN  
Yeah; this is my - *private* spot. You're the first person I ever asked to come.

TINA  
Not some boyfriend? Not even your brother?

JEN  
Unh-uh.

TINA  
I guess I'm honored.

JEN

I guess you should be.

TINA

Shee-it.

JEN

I really do love it here. You can see everything.

TINA

All those stars.

JEN

That's the 'burbs for you; you can see 'em 'cause there's so few streetlights. In the city everything gets washed out.

TINA

Now, what do you know about the city? 'Specially at night.

JEN

I've been there. Sometimes.

TINA

Um... This's somethin' else, though. Reminds me of the woods or somethin'.

JEN

You've never been in the woods!

TINA

Sure have.

JEN

(A challenge)

When?

TINA

Three years ago. My folks rented this cabin, by this lake; spent two weeks there.

JEN

That's not the *woods*.

TINA

Yeah, it was. Four 'r five miles off the road, practically nobody else around; *fished for our supper*. Even had to pump water, from a well.

JEN

Yeah?

TINA

Yeah.

JEN  
 Sounds - neat.

TINA  
 "Sounds neat;" shee-it.

JEN  
 Never mind. Tell me.

TINA  
 'Bout the woods?

JEN  
 Yeah.

TINA  
 Well...the coolest thing? It was at night, after they both went to bed. First night we were there, I snuck out and I just - sat, in the back, lookin' at the water; and the stars. There was a million of 'em and I could see every one, bright and clear and shining, like they were angels or somethin'.

JEN  
 Maybe they were.

TINA  
 What?

JEN  
 Maybe they were; angels, I mean. There's this legend I read, from the Incas or somewhere: Every human soul becomes a star.

TINA  
 Yeah?

JEN  
 When we die. That's why the universe is endless: There're all these souls up there that've turned into stars, everyone who's been born since the day God made the world, and every moment, *this one*... Just look; you'll see it.

TINA  
 What?

JEN  
 Just *look*, Tina.

TINA  
 (Pause; then)  
 I don't see anything.

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