

OF LOVE AND SHAMPOO

A one-act comedy by
Jonathan Josephson

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

MILES, mid 20s, works hard.

JEFF, mid 20s, hardly works.

CONNIE, mid 20s, Miles' girlfriend.

SUE, late 20s, Miles' sister.

SETTING

A Southern California apartment, present day.

Scene 1: Evening

Scene 2: The next day

Scene 3: A few hours later

SCENE 1

(Lights rise on the living room of an apartment – it isn't sloppy, but definitely reads of bachelorhood. JEFF lies on the couch. He recites a poem.)

JEFF: Sue. Oh – Sue.
Your eyes – they are so blue.
When I think of you
I do not want to sue [people] –
Or call my crew –
Or even take a poo.
My Sue, I may not have a clue –
But this day I would rue –
If the answer of yours was true –
(which would lead me to drink many a brew)
If you, my Sue...won't go out with me.

(Beat.)

MILES (OFF): That – was – idiotic.

(MILES' voice comes behind a closed door that leads out of the living room. He stays there until we see otherwise.)

JEFF: That's not true.

MILES: That is true. Stop rhyming.

JEFF: You should have heard the first few drafts.

MILES: You did drafts?

JEFF: I did. Prick.

MILES: What do you want me to say?

JEFF: Just – whatever, say whatever.

MILES: It's great.

JEFF: You think it'll work?

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MILES: ...maybe one more draft.

JEFF: I hate you.

MILES: Have you thought about, just, asking her?

JEFF: Why?

MILES: Maybe try that first.

JEFF: Is that how you got Connie to go out with you?

MILES: Kind of.

JEFF: Though Sue is 40 times sexier.

MILES: That's my sister – thanks.

JEFF: You've got to admit –

MILES: No I don't.

JEFF: Yes you do.

MILES: No, that's incestuous and gross, I do not.

JEFF: Dude.

MILES: Keep your perverted thoughts to yourself.

JEFF: You said she'd never go out with me unless I did something to separate myself from the pack.

MILES: No – I said she'd never go out with you. Period.

(Beat.)

JEFF: I wrote a back-up –

MILES: I may spontaneously go deaf.

JEFF: You asked me to come over.

MILES: What? Can't hear you.

JEFF: I can go –

MILES: I guess I did.

JEFF: You totally did. I didn't lock myself in the bathroom.

MILES: No you didn't.

JEFF: You should be grateful for my company.

MILES: I should be.

JEFF: I can just leave —

MILES: Don't go. You're keeping me from killing myself.

JEFF: Then be nice to me.

MILES: Your poem still sucks.

JEFF: Okay, at least don't destroy all of my hopes and dreams.

MILES: ...I'll work on it.

JEFF: Joy.

MILES: You know how many ingredients are in Head and Shoulders?

JEFF: No.

MILES: Guess.

JEFF: Uh — 40.

MILES: Lower.

JEFF: 15.

MILES: Higher.

JEFF: 25.

MILES: Lower.

JEFF: 24.

MILES: Yep!

JEFF: I was gonna say 24.

MILES: Always go with that first instinct.

(CONNIE, Miles' girlfriend rushes in. She's dressed for a nice night out.)

CONNIE: *(To the bathroom door:)* Pookie!

JEFF: Hey Connie —

MILES: Hey C-Love.

JEFF: You did not just call her C-Love.

CONNIE: I got your text, I came over right away.

MILES: I know, thank —

CONNIE: How did you know?

MILES: I just texted you and now you're here?

CONNIE: So why are you making that a bad thing?

MILES: I'm — I'm not —

CONNIE: Why are you belittling my commitment to you?

JEFF: That's my cue —

(Jeff starts to exit.)

CONNIE: Jeff — did you hear what he said?

JEFF: Nope.

CONNIE: Yes you did.

JEFF: Didn't.

MILES: Yes you did.

JEFF: Don't put me in the middle of this.

MILES: Already done. Friend of mine.

CONNIE: Just tell me honestly, I won't be mad at you. You heard what he said about the text and what I said – you heard the whole thing. Did or did not Miles belittle my act of concern by anticipating my reaction rather than simply being emotionally happy to hear my voice?

JEFF: ...um, what?

MILES: I'm really happy you're here, C. I really, really am.

CONNIE: What have you been doing?

MILES: Reading...the bottles.

CONNIE: Can you, like, break down the door?

(Jeff sniggers.)

What?

MILES: I sort of tried.

CONNIE: Pookie!

JEFF: That's when he blacked out.

CONNIE: You blacked out?!

MILES: No.

JEFF: He didn't talk for like 5 minutes.

MILES: I just...didn't want to talk!

CONNIE: Pookie!

JEFF: Yeah, he blacked out.

CONNIE: But your sister is on her way? She can get you out of there?

MILES: She has a trick to get the door open.

(Connie inspects the door.)

CONNIE: There isn't a keyhole on the knob.

JEFF: Heh — "knob."

MILES: It's not a key thing. I don't know, she wouldn't tell me over the phone.

CONNIE: We're supposed to meet my parents in 15 minutes.

MILES: ...I know.

JEFF: I thought we were going bowling —

MILES: Tomorrow! That's tomorrow.

CONNIE: We're leaving for San Diego tomorrow. With my parents.

MILES: Thursday, we're going bowling Thursday.

CONNIE: You forgot? How could you forget? We've been talking about this for weeks!

MILES: I didn't forget.

CONNIE: So you're already changed and showered — as soon as we get the door open, we can just leave?

MILES: ...yes.

CONNIE: Why don't I believe you?

MILES: I don't know.

(The sounds of the SHOWER turning on can be heard.)

CONNIE: Come on!

MILES: I'm sorry.

CONNIE: You've been locked in the bathroom all this time and you never thought to take a shower?

MILES: I'll do it now!

CONNIE: You know what—it's too late. I'll just call them and tell them that we'll see them tomorrow.

MILES: I'm getting out of here soon!

JEFF: It's like a scene from a prison movie.

CONNIE AND MILES: Shut up!

CONNIE: This is really important to me.

MILES: I know! Just let me take a shower.

CONNIE: You know what—I'll see you tomorrow.

MILES: Don't leave!

(Connie exits.)

Connie? Connie don't go. Connie!

JEFF: STELLLLLA! STELLLLLLLLAAAAA!

(Jeff laughs.)

Okay that was funny.

MILES: I'm going to try and break out again.

JEFF: Don't do it man. Think of the concussion.

MILES: I don't care—I need to get out of here.

(SUE walks in—Miles' sister. She is gorgeous and very corporate looking.)

SUE: Where's the idiot?

JEFF: *(Towards the bathroom:)* All right, go for it.

(A loud THUMP can be heard from the bathroom.)

MILES: Ow!

JEFF: In there.

SUE: Miles you dolt! What are you doing to my door?

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MILES: I think I just went blind.

JEFF: (*Beginning to recite the poem:*) Sue. Oh—Sue.

SUE: Good. You're not going to want to see what I'm going to do to you when I open up that door.

MILES: Thanks for coming.

SUE: What the hell did you do?

MILES: I don't know—the door just won't open.

SUE: Fine. Stand back.

MILES: Are you going to kick it down?

SUE: I just don't want you to hear what I'm doing.

MILES: Why?

JEFF: (*Reciting the poem:*) Oh—Sue.

SUE: This trick will open any door in the building—I can't have you wielding that kind of power.

MILES: That's major constitutional rights infringement.

SUE: Getting you to your meet-the-parents date is hardly a concern for the federal judiciary.

MILES: That may not matter now... Connie just left—she said not to see her until tomorrow.

SUE: And you believe her?

MILES: I shouldn't?

SUE: Idiot! She came all the way down here, didn't she?

MILES: How did you—

SUE: Call her right now.

MILES: And say what?

SUE: Tell her that you understand why she's upset and that you want to know exactly what she thinks you could do better for next time.

MILES: That sounds dangerous.

SUE: Women are dangerous kiddo, get used to it.

MILES: Thanks for coming. Serious.

SUE: It's fine.

JEFF: *(Reciting:)* Sue. My – Sue.

SUE: Can I help you Jeffrey?

JEFF: Nope.

(Jeff grabs his jacket and leaves.)

SUE: Why are you guys friends again?

MILES: Because...he's always around. When you need him.

(Sue takes this in. The lights shift.)

SCENE 2

(Miles sits on the couch. He is dressed very casually.)

MILES: You may be the dumbest person ever to live.

JEFF (OFF): Shut up!

(It's Jeff's turn to be locked in the bathroom.)

MILES: I don't have the words —

JEFF: I kept you company!

MILES: I'm stupefied. When you called, I thought you were kidding.

JEFF: When you called me I was sympathetic.

MILES: I know — but since then, we've both learned that the door sticks. I didn't know that before I locked myself in there — but you did!

JEFF: Don't judge me.

MILES: Come on kid, buck up.

JEFF: I gave you crap because it was the first truly stupid thing I've ever heard you do.

MILES: Seriously?

JEFF: When I called you, you were probably all "well, there's another dumb thing Jeff did" — but when you called me it was all...

MILES: What?

JEFF: Maybe...my turn to help you.

(The front door to the apartment opens — it's Connie.)

MILES: Hey C-Love.

JEFF: Ha!

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CONNIE: Did he?

MILES: Yep.

CONNIE: Didn't he –

MILES: Nope.

CONNIE: Couldn't you –

MILES: Na-ah.

CONNIE: Is she –

MILES: On her way.

JEFF: Hi Connie.

CONNIE: How's it hanging?

JEFF: Funny you should ask –

CONNIE: *(To Miles:)* You ready to go?

MILES: Yeah – all packed.

CONNIE: Is that what you're wearing?

MILES: ...why?

CONNIE: You know we're meeting my parents right?

MILES: Right...

CONNIE: Great, fine, let's just go.

MILES: We can't leave yet, not right now. Jeff is still locked in the bathroom.

JEFF: I'm still locked in the bathroom.

MILES: Sue is on her way, but it may take a while.

JEFF: And I'm afraid of being alone. In this particular bathroom. It's called pooper-con-carne-obia-phobia.

CONNIE: Okay – fine.

JEFF: What?

CONNIE: Nothing.

(She sits down.)

MILES: You can't really be mad at me for not leaving him here –

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