

RAW PROVOCATIVE HUMANE PLAYS

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RISING SENIORS
a ten minute play by
Kitt Lavoie

SARAH, 16, packs a suitcase. JEANETTE, 16, looks on.

JEANETTE

I can't believe you are going without me.

SARAH

I'm not.

JEANETTE

You are.

SARAH

I'm not going without you. I'm going and you're not going. That's not going without you.

JEANETTE

You're going and I'm not going. That *is* going without me.

SARAH

I wish you were going--

JEANETTE

No, you wish I were *coming*. As in "coming *with* you." Because you are going without me.

SARAH

That's not my fault. I chose to go. I didn't choose for you not to go.

JEANETTE

I didn't choose for me not to go, either.

SARAH

And neither did I, so...

JEANETTE

But you're going.

SARAH

Yes.

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Without me. JEANETTE

I'm just going. SARAH

You're going without me. JEANETTE

I guess I am. SARAH

Which is what I've been saying. JEANETTE

I understand. But it's not my fault. SARAH

It's not my fault either. JEANETTE

It kind of is. SARAH

A beat.

Excuse me? JEANETTE

Nothing. Just... I'm sorry you're not coming. And I wish you could be happy for me. SARAH

What does that mean? JEANETTE
(re: "It kind of is.")

It doesn't mean anything. It just means that I'm sorry you're not coming. I'm sorry you didn't get in. And I would be happy for you if the situation were reversed. SARAH

Really? JEANETTE

Yeah. SARAH

You think that? JEANETTE

I do. SARAH

Well, you just keep thinking that. JEANETTE

I think I would. SARAH

Then I guess you're just a better person than I am. JEANETTE

I guess so. SARAH

A beat.

You really just said that. JEANETTE

I didn't mean it. SARAH

Well, you said it. JEANETTE

No, you said it, and I said, "I guess so." SARAH

"You guess so" you're a better person than I am. JEANETTE

I think you're a good person. SARAH

But you're a better one. JEANETTE

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SARAH

I think we're both fine. I just wish you could be excited for me. Or at least not try to ruin it for me when something good happens for me, even if it didn't happen for you. That doesn't seem like a very "good" thing.

JEANETTE

I'm just hurt.

SARAH

So you want me to, what? Unpack my bag.

JEANETTE

I would rather you never started backing it, but sure.

SARAH

I didn't do anything to you.

JEANETTE

We had a plan. We were going to room together.

SARAH

If we both got in.

JEANETTE

When we both got in.

SARAH

Okay, but we didn't both get in. So it was always "if." It would have been great if we both got in. And we could have spent the summer there together. But we didn't. And that was always a possibility. You had to know that was something that could happen, that I would get in and you would not.

JEANETTE

Why would I ever think that you would get in and I would not? Why is that something that I would ever think? We have been best friends - or at least I thought we were - for ten years. You know what my GPA is. You know what your's is. So why would I even have imagined you would get in and I would not?

SARAH

Yeah, well, that's the way it worked out, so...

JEANETTE

You know they only let you in because you're a girl.

A beat.

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SARAH

What?

JEANETTE

They don't get many girls into these STEM programs, you know. It's, like, affirmative action.

SARAH

(pointedly)

Well, they clearly didn't take *all* the girls that applied.

JEANETTE

Well, no. I'm sure they only have, like, a certain number of rooms in the girls' dorm set aside. Because they don't get as many applications. And they couldn't take the both of us for the limited number of slots they *did* have because we're from the same school. And they probably looked at my transcript and thought, you know, I don't need affirmative action. I'll be fine.

SARAH

Yeah, that doesn't make any sense.

JEANETTE

No, it *doesn't*. I'm just trying to figure it out because it doesn't make any sense. None of it makes *any* sense. And what I am trying to figure out - what I, in the most fundamental way, don't understand, is why you would go along with it.

SARAH

Go along with what?

JEANETTE

All of it. Why you would... I mean, One, you're my friend. And Two, it's just at its basest level anti-feminist. That they would only have a certain number of slots for women. And then -- I mean, back to One -- that you would, as my friend, scrape and beg and say, "yes, please, I will take one of them" when you know what they did to your friend, who you know is every bit as deserving as you are. And, I'm just saying, that doesn't seem like you. It does not seem like something that you would do, from the years of friendship that we have had. It does not seem like you. I mean, I understand what *they* are doing. The pressures and the limitations on time and space. But I don't understand what you are doing. I'm having a hard time figuring it out. And I wish you would explain it to me.

SARAH

I can't explain it.

JEANETTE

Then you shouldn't do it. If you can't explain it, then you shouldn't do it.

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SARAH

You know, I don't think you're mad that I'm going without you--

JEANETTE

I'm not mad. I'm hurt.

SARAH

I think you are hurt -- and mad -- that *Tim* is going without you and you are taking it out on me.

JEANETTE

I'm not mad at Tim. Tim was always going. You only learned about it from Tim. So I'm not mad at Tim. I'm mad at you. And I'm not mad, I'm hurt.

SARAH

So it has nothing to do with Tim?

JEANETTE

Well, it only has to do with Tim insofar as I don't understand why you think it's okay to go away with my boyfriend for the summer. Like, as my friend I don't understand why you would think that is okay.

SARAH

I'm not "going away with him." We're both going to the same program.

JEANETTE

The same program together, yes.

SARAH

Maybe I should room with *him*.

A beat.

JEANETTE

That's not funny. And they wouldn't allow it, anyway.

SARAH

I know. It was a joke.

JEANETTE

Well then, maybe you should go to comedy camp this summer instead, because you're not very good at jokes.

SARAH

So, wait. If you had gotten in and I hadn't, you wouldn't go?

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JEANETTE

That's not the same thing--

SARAH

That's exactly, precisely the same thing.

JEANETTE

It's not because it would be, like, really weird for me to not go with Tim if I could.

SARAH

So it is about Tim.

JEANETTE

No, I'm just saying it would be weird for me to not go with him. But it's not weird for you to not go with him because he's not you're boyfriend.

SARAH

But it would be weird for me to go to this super competitive engineering program that I got into, just because you didn't get in.

JEANETTE

It's not that I didn't get in. I could have gotten in. You only got in because I helped you with your application.

SARAH

You read my essay. After I finished it.

JEANETTE

And I gave you feedback.

SARAH

You gave me *some* feedback.

JEANETTE

It made it much better.

SARAH

And I read your essay and gave you feedback.

JEANETTE

Yeah, but I didn't take it because they weren't good ideas. And, yeah, it's super weird that you're going when I'm not going and we had a plan. That's not the act, you know, of a friend of ten years. Which, you know, I always thought we were.

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SARAH

But you didn't get in. And if it was so important for you to go with him you should have worked harder on the application.

JEANETTE

I worked on the application.

SARAH

You started working on it two days before it was due. I know you're used to pulling things out of your ass at the last minute, but this isn't high school. And after next year, nothing is going to be high school. So maybe you should get used to working harder.

JEANETTE

You started working on it the same night I did.

SARAH

Yes, but this is the kind of thing *I* can pull out of my ass at the last minute. Apparently you can't.

JEANETTE

Yeah, so if I had worked harder, I would have gotten in and you wouldn't have and then how would you feel? You need to think about other people sometimes.

SARAH

Why are you having this conversation with me and not with Tim?

JEANETTE

Because Tim is my boyfriend and you are my friend. And that's different.

SARAH

Because you're afraid he'll break up with you. And you're not afraid I will.

A beat.

SARAH

You're right. This is about Tim.

JEANETTE

That's what I said.

SARAH

And it's not about me. It's about you. We have been friends since the first grade and it has always been about you. 'Cause you always liked that I was smart... but not as smart as you are. And, you know, I'll be your stupid friend in English class and in history class, and in French and biology, and I'll even be your stupid friend in art class.

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But if you need me to be your stupid friend in everything, then maybe we shouldn't be friends anymore. Because in calculus and physics, I will always be your smart friend. And you know what - you don't have a problem with the fact that Tim is better than you in physics. But you have a problem with the fact that *I* am better than you at it. And you should have that looked at.

A beat.

JEANETTE

I can't believe that after all this time, you don't want to be my friend if you can't be smarter than me. That's just sick.

Jeanette heads for the door.

SARAH

That's not what I said.

Jeanette stops in the doorway.

JEANETTE

Enjoy the program I helped you get into. It's your last summer of high school and it gets harder from here. Frankly, I don't think you'll be up to it. Not without me to help.

And she's gone.

SARAH

(after her)

I changed *one* sentence!

Sarah watches after her a moment, then returns to packing, her head caught in a frustrated shake.

END OF PLAY.