FOR MASTER OF FINE ARTS THESIS

HOMEMADE

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Homemade
by
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HOMEMADE

CAST OF CHARACTERS

GIDEON (m) – 30 years old. Any ethnicity.

BEN (m) – 33 years old. Gideon's partner of five years. Any ethnicity.

TORI (f) – 30 years old. Gideon's best friend from college. Any ethnicity.

JOHANNA (f) - 34 years old. Tori's latest girlfriend. Any ethnicity.

THE TIME

Now.

THE PLACE

A cosmopolitan city. Gideon & Ben's apartment and Johanna & Tori's apartment.

NOTES

One apartment set represents both Gideon & Ben's apartment and Johanna & Tori's apartment, with the actors occasionally occupying the same space but unaware of each other.

- indicates an interruption of some kind.
SCENE ONE

Late September. Early Saturday evening. Gideon and Ben’s apartment. Gideon (30), Ben (33), Tori (30), and Johanna (34) are sitting around the dining room table. They have just finished dinner and are opening another bottle of wine.

Tori
My lease was up! It made sense.

Johanna
I’ll admit, it’s fast -

Gideon
You got rid of your bed? I’m shocked.

Johanna
Please don’t bring up the bed.

Ben
I’m just glad you’re an adult.

Johanna
Which means -

Gideon
You’re old enough to drink, you don’t work behind a bar, and you don’t have any face tattoos.

Johanna
Face tattoos?

Tori
It was a small tattoo.
Ben

It was on her face!
(to Johanna)
I'll give you the details after dessert.

Johanna

Please do.

Gideon

Is anyone else warm? Should I turn on the a.c.?

Ben

It's nice with the windows open.

Tori

I'm not done with my story! So she's got on these really tight jeans -

Johanna

They weren't that tight.

Tori

And this really gorgeous shirt, with a bird painted on the back -

Johanna

A peacock. My sister got it for me when she went to St. Marteen.

Tori

And it's cut low so it's dipping down to her cleavage -

Tori!

What?

Johanna

Who can I clear?

Ben

Sit down, you are not clearing the table.

Gideon

You're our guest.

Johanna

But dessert -
Gideon will clear the table.

Excuse me?

I cook, you clean.

I really don't mind.

Sit down, please.

She doesn't like when I talk about her.

Who likes being talked about?

So I ask my friend Eli, the one who I told you was transitioning, he used to be Lisa -

Lisa's now Eli?

So I asked him if he knew her, and he said that he had seen her before because she had catered a friend's website launch or record release or gallery opening, and then she walks up with this tray of stuffed grape leaves and I was sold.

I love stuffed grape leaves.

They were Thit Bo Cuon La Luop.

Which is?

Johanna was in Vietnam for about a month before we met.

Love Vietnamese cooking.
Tori
This woman has taught me so much about food. You guys need to be more adventurous.

Ben
We're plenty adventurous.

Gideon
I love Ben's cooking!

Tori
You barely ate anything. Are you dieting again?

Gideon
I'm trying to eat better.

Tori
Please don't turn into one of those emaciated holocaust gays.

Gideon
Nice, Tori.

Johanna
Dinner was delicious, Ben.

Tori
I'm not saying Ben isn't a great cook - You're a great cook, Ben, - but I mean, Johanna's a chef. People pay her to make things to put in their mouths. She even agreed to let me design her new business cards.

Ben
Good luck with that.

Gideon
Tori worked on the redesign of the website where Ben works, and she did great work.

Ben
It just took her forever.

Tori
I met every deadline.

Gideon
Oh my god we're not talking about this again. Isn't Vietnam dangerous, Johanna?

Johanna
I was in the south of Vietnam. Totally different than the North.
Gideon
I wouldn't think Vietnam was a big tourist destination, but.

Johanna
I was taking a course.

Ben
I would have killed to go to Vietnam for our honeymoon.

Gideon
Killed? To go to Vietnam?

Tori
See, that's what I'm talking about! Adventure!

You never told me that.

Ben
I knew you would say no.

Tori
Rome is pretty typical.

Johanna
You guys went to Rome?

Ben
It was way out of our budget.

Tori
They went to Yosemite.

Ben
Shut up. It was beautiful.

Let's show them the book!

Gideon
I thought we were gonna wait till after.

Tori
After what?

Johanna
You made a book?
Gideon
Ben took all the pictures, but I put it together.

Ben
Take it to the couch. I don't want to get food all over it.

Johanna
I made one, for my parents anniversary. They look at it constantly.

Tori
I still don't understand what the two of you did for a whole week in a National Park.

Gideon
I was surprised at how much there was to do.

Tori
You mean you left the hotel room?

Gideon
Yes, Tori, we left the hotel room.

Ben
It was life-changing actually.

Gideon
It was.

Johanna
You took these pictures?

Gideon
Aren't they gorgeous?

Tori
An office manager and a budding photographer.

Ben
Shut up.

Johanna
Seriously, the composition -

Ben
It's a point-and-shoot.

Gideon
It was my wedding gift to him.
Johanna
You got each other wedding gifts?

Gideon
I like presents.

Ben
We were lucky, because they had seen a lot of snow in the winter, so the waterfalls. This one, Bridal Veil Falls. We stood right at the base. All of that water, rushing down at you. Exploding off the rocks. I've never experienced anything like that before. That force. That massive. Made completely by nature.

Gideon
If you've never been - Breathtaking.

Johanna
Looks fantastic!

Ben
The only thing that would have been nice -

Gideon
We were the only homosexuals in a five mile radius.

Ben
There was one other gay guy there, a local. He was very nice.

Gideon
He wanted to have a three-way.

Tori
Really?!

Ben
He did not. We had a drink with him in the lobby one night and then he asked if we wanted to see his butterfly collection.

Gideon
Which he happens to keep in his pants.

Ben
He was very nice.

Tori
You guys have never -

Gideon
 Doesn't interest us.
Ben
It would have been nice to spend our honeymoon some place a little more gay.

Tori
Were you expecting there to be an underwear party around a campfire?

Ben
We don’t do underwear parties.

Gideon
Some place where we felt comfortable holding hands would have been nice.

Johanna
You didn’t hold hands your entire honeymoon?

Tori
Please don’t tell me you acted like two straight guys the whole trip.

Gideon
There were so many families around.

Ben
Not everyone can flaunt their sexuality as easily as you, Tori.

I don’t flaunt.

Johanna
And two men holding hands is different than two women holding hands.

Exactly.

Tori
What was so life-changing about a couple of waterfalls?

You want to?

Gideon

Ben
I thought we were going to wait.

Gideon
I don’t care if you don’t care.

Tori
What is with you two?
We’re fine.

Tori
You’re sweating like a meth addict in withdrawl.

Gideon
No one else is warm?

Ben
We have some news.

Tori
Please don’t tell me you’re moving.

Gideon
We’re not moving.

Johanna
You’re pregnant!

Ben
You’re close!

Tori
You’re going to adopt?!

Gideon
We’re thinking about it!

Tori
Nuh uh! Are you joking?! You’re gonna be daddies?!

Gideon
Hopefully!

Tori
Oh my god you guys!!! That’s awesome! Come here!!!

Johanna
Mazel tov!

Tori embraces Gideon and Ben.

Johanna (CON’T)
One of my close friends finally got their little boy from Guatemala. I’ll totally put you in contact.
Gideon
We still have a lot to figure out.

Ben
We've got an appointment next week with a counselor at the Gay and Lesbian Center, you know, ask about lawyers, attorneys, groups for new parents.

Gideon
Figure that's a good place to start, right?

Tori
Your sister's a lawyer, right, honey? I'm sure she can answer anything.

Ben
Really?

Johanna
I'd be happy to ask.

Tori
When did this happen?!

Gideon
You know I've always wanted to have kids.

Ben
And after getting married, we figured, why wait? We're not getting any younger.

Tori
It's a huge life change.

Gideon
We're ready.

Ben
We are.

Gideon
Yosemite is a mecca for families. Everywhere. Having breakfast in the hotel. Hiking up to the waterfalls next to us. And we started to feel - jealous maybe, watching them enjoy it, together. How many pictures did we take for people?

Ben
I don't know, tons.
Gideon
One morning, we saw this little girl feeding something to a deer, and at first I wanted to run up and protect her, but then it started eating out of her hand. I've never been a nature person, but after that. It was - that's what we want.

Tori
To give your kids Lyme disease?

Gideon
To watch something experience life. To take care of something!

Ben
We want to start the process now.

Gideon
Cause it can take a couple of years.

Tori
Isn't adoption crazy expensive?

Johanna
Thousands, right?

Ben
It all depends on which route we go. Private, domestic, international.

Tori
Where're you gonna get that kind of money?

Gideon
We've been saving to buy a place.

Ben
But we realized - A house will come. We want this now.

Tori
What if you end up with a crack baby?

Johanna
Tori!

Tori
You never know! And I've heard stories about people who adopt from overseas, and those kids aren't exactly what they tell you.

Gideon
Are you purposely trying to scare me?
Tori
I saw this 20/20 episode about a couple who adopted a little girl from Russia or Germany, and she ended up being a thirty-five year old prostitute with some stunted aging disease! She killed the wife and tried to have an affair with the husband!

Gideon
That was a horror movie, Tori! You didn't see that on 20/20.

Ben
We'll do all the background checks and look at all the medical records.

Johanna
You guys'll be fine, I'm sure.

Tori
What if I had the baby?

Ben
What?

Gideon
You wanna have the baby?

Tori
Yeah, I'll have the baby!

Gideon
We can go have sex right now if you want.

Tori
I'm game!

Johanna
Tori.

Ben
You're not being serious.

Tori
You would know what you're getting with me.

Gideon
Wait, you're serious?!

Tori
How amazing would that be if I had your kid?
We're adopting.

Johanna
There are so many kids who need homes.

Ben
Exactly.

Gideon
But think about how much money we'd save.

Tori
My health insurance kicks ass.

Gideon
And we'd know where the baby was coming from.

Tori
Plus, I never did get you guys a wedding present.

Ben
Since when do you want to have a baby?

Tori
It's not any baby. It'd be your baby.

Ben
That's very nice, Tori -

Tori
Nice?

Ben
- But we're adopting. We've done the research, we've made our appointments. If you want to get us something for our wedding, we're still registered at Crate and Barrel.

Tori
Ben, think about it for a second -

Ben
There's nothing to think about! We're talking about starting a family here, Tori, not one of your crazy plans that you back out of at the last second, leaving us to pick up the pieces.

Tori
What the fuck is that supposed to mean?
Gideon
Guys. Stop it. This is a good thing that's happening. Thank you for your offer, Tori, but Ben is right. There's lots of kids who need homes. We'll find the one for us eventually.

A moment.

Johanna
Should we do dessert?

Tori
Boy or a girl?

Ben
What?

Tori
What do you guys want? A boy or a girl?

Ben
We haven't thought about it -

Tori
Yes you have.

Gideon
A boy. We'd want a little boy.

Tori
Cause you're both so good at playing catch.

Ben
Two gay guys with a little girl seems - like that's what we'd want, to dress her up - but maybe a little boy.

Tori
You could make a better little you.

Johanna
And you would be papa and he would be daddy.

Gideon
Probably the other way around.

Tori
You guys are gonna make great parents.

Gideon
And you'll tell that to the social worker when we put you down as a reference?
Tori
Anything you need, I'm here.

Johanna
A toast! To Gideon and Ben plus one!

They clink glasses.

SCENE TWO

Gideon and Ben's apartment. Later that night. Ben is clearing the plates from the dinner table, and Gideon sits on the couch with a laptop.

What should I get Karla?

The receptionist?

She registered with Babies 'R Us. Fifty bucks okay?

Twenty-five is fine.

Twenty-five dollars?

If you want to look at Quicken -

No, I trust you. Twenty-five.

A moment.

Are we gonna register?

Definitely. Diapers are expensive.

You're sure we can handle the adoption fees?

We'll have a better idea once we talk with the counselor.
Gideon
Cause some agencies tack on all these hidden costs at the end. I was reading about it in a forum.

Ben
I wouldn't trust what you read in a chat room.

Gideon
Not everything on the internet is made up.

Ben
All I'm saying is that we won't know until a professional spells it out for us.

Gideon
I'm an art teacher and you're an office manager. We're not exactly rolling in it.

Ben
If we need to take more out of our savings, that's what we'll do, okay?

Gideon
Why's it all have to be so expensive?

Ben
Because we don't have vaginas.

Gideon
Feel my forehead. Do I have a temperature?

Ben places his lips on Gideon's forehead.

Ben
You're clammy. Maybe you're catching the flu.

Gideon
Oh god, I hope not. I hate getting a sub.

Ben
Email Tori, please. Remind her to ask Johanna for the name of that couple who adopted.

Johanna and Tori's apartment. Johanna and Tori enter the apartment from the hallway.

Tori
I don't see why Ben is so against the idea.

Johanna
You didn't give him much time to think about it.
Tori
What's there to think about? I'm basically giving them a baby for free.

Johanna
You're too generous.

Tori
I thought it's what you liked about me.

Johanna
You'd be right.

Tori
You gotta admit, from a practical standpoint, it makes sense! They would save so much money!

Johanna
You need to let them do what's best for them.

Tori
I'm what's best for them!

Johanna
Obviously they don't think so.

Gideon joins Ben who is cleaning up from dinner.

Gideon
Why isn't Tori an option?

Ben
No.

Gideon
Why not?

Ben
You really think that's a good idea?

Gideon
We'd save so much money!

Ben
I love Tori, but let's face it. She's not the most reliable.

Gideon
She's reliable!
Ben
What about Frowner? He was perfectly healthy when we left him with her.

Gideon
She swears to this day he jumped out of the fish bowl.

Ben
How would she actually get pregnant,? Because in vitro fertilization is way out of our budget.

Gideon
Maybe there’s funding for it!

Ben
It’s not something you can write a grant for.

Johanna joins Tori on the bed.

Johanna
Maybe it’s a blessing in disguise.

Tori
How’s that?

Johanna
For one thing, we wouldn’t have to say goodbye to your mookie looking the way it does.

Tori
Johanna!

Johanna
It’s just a fact that it never looks the same afterwards, no matter how many Keigel exercises you do.

Tori
I’d take a picture.

Johanna
I’m sure you have some already.

Tori
But pregnant women glow! I wanted to glow!

Johanna
That’s not glow. That’s sweat. It’s strain. Do you even know what it does to your body? Veins pop out all over from the pressure. I saw what it did to my sister. It messes things up.
But after all that, you’ve got a little something to love.

You’ve got something to love right here.

I do.

Plus, I’m not sure I’d be ready to put our lives on hold for the next nine months.

You have plans for us?

I might.

Like what?

There’s a college friend’s wedding in February I thought we might attend.

I love weddings!

And I thought maybe we’d go to my parents for Thanksgiving.

Really? They’d be cool with that?

Who knows. But I know I’d like you to meet them. I think they’d like you.

What’s not to like?

That’s what I’m talking about.

Johanna takes Tori’s hand and pulls her off the bed.

Come here.
Tori
I was gonna work on your logo.

Johanna
You can do it after.

Tori
After what?

Johanna pulls Tori into the bathroom with her.

Gideon
Ben. Look at this. 
(grabbing his laptop)
It’s a kit for making a baby at home.

Ben
Where'd you find that?

Gideon
It’s totally legit. We can buy it at Duane Reade.

Ben
Looks complicated.

Gideon
It’s not! The sperm goes in that little cup, you fill up the syringe, squeeze it inside, throw your legs over your head and that’s it.

Ben
That’s it?

Gideon
And it’s only twenty to fifty bucks depending on what our insurance would cover. That’s nothing.

Ben
I don’t know. It’s exactly what all of the books say not to do. Gets too complicated when it’s someone in the family.

Gideon
But wouldn't that be nice? To know that half of our baby would physically be a part of us?

Ben
It’s not our half that concerns me.
Gideon

Tori can eat an entire pizza and look like that. She's got good genes. Like you. It would make sense that we use your sperm.

Ben

Mine?

Gideon

My family tree is riddled with early onset Alzheimer's and three types of cancer, so.

Ben

You'd be okay with that?

Gideon

Wouldn't you love to have a little Ben running around?

Ben

That would be nice.

A moment.

Gideon

Should I send her the link?

A moment.

Gideon (CON’T)

If it doesn't work, we go back to adopting. I promise.

A moment.

Ben

If it's what you want, you can send her the link.

Gideon

Good, cause I already did.

Gideon kisses Ben.

Tori and Johanna enter from the bathroom. Tori goes to check her email.

Tori

Gideon sent me something.

Johanna

Another YouTube clip?
Tori
I don't - Hold on.

Tori sits up in the bed, holding the iPad. She reads.

Tori (CON’T)
It’s a link. To a home insemination kit.

Johanna
I thought they didn’t want you to -

Tori
Looks like they changed their minds.

A moment.

Johanna
What are you thinking?

Tori
I don’t know.

Johanna
It’s a big commitment.

Tori
Huge.

Johanna
The wine was flowing, I’m sure they’d understand if you didn’t really mean it.

Tori
I think I wanna say yes.

Johanna
You sure?

Tori
I want to experience everything in my life, at least once! Don’t you?

Johanna
I think it would be an amazing gift if you wanted to have a baby for them, but I want to make sure you’re thinking through the whole thing, that’s all.

Tori
How long did it take your friends to get their little boy? And how many couples do we know that had to spend thousands on fertility treatments? All they want is a family. I could give that to them.
Johanna
You'd be giving up a lot in the process.

Tori
So my boobs sag and I gain a little weight. That's bound to happen eventually.

Johanna
I'm talking about having a child, Tori. It changes people.

Tori
Maybe it's what I need.

Johanna
I think you're fine just the way you are.

Tori kisses Johanna.

Tori
I would like to glow.

Johanna
You don't have to explain yourself to me.

Tori
I want to. I want you to know everything.

Johanna
I trust you.

Tori
Cause I'd need you, to be here.

Johanna
I'm not going anywhere.

Tori
I love you.

Johanna
I love you too.

They kiss.

SCENE THREE

Two weeks later. Saturday afternoon. Gideon and Ben's apartment. Gideon, Tori, and Johanna sit at the table, as Ben stands nearby.
Tori
It’s not that I thought you might have anything -

Ben
Gideon’s the only person I’ve had sex with in five years.

Gideon
At least you don’t have to wait a week anymore for the results.

Johanna
The whole process has gotten so much easier.

Gideon
Do you guys get tested a lot?

Tori
With each girlfriend.

Ben
Did they give you a rewards card?

Gideon
Alright, now that we know neither of you has any STDs, we’ve only got six days to get this done.

Tori
I’m like clockwork.

Gideon
Good.

(passing out packets)
If you’ll all take a look at your handouts, you’ll see that there’s a row for every day for the next six days and across the top, for the columns, is morning, afternoon and night.

Johanna
You made this yourself?

Tori
We have to do this three times a day?

Gideon
If we’re gonna make the most of your fertility, we’ve got to do it as much as possible. You can come over after work, Tori?

Tori
Ben can produce that much stuff? Three times a day?
I'm a machine.

The food Johanna made should help.

Tell us what you made, babe.

Okay. The oatmeal cookies's have dried apricots, carrots, strawberries, and pumpkin seed, so that's vitamin A and C, and pumpkin seeds are zinc, so that should help with, um, making healthy sperm. You've already got avocados, which is good for folic acid, cuts down on bad sperm.

Bad sperm?

Chromosomal abnormalities. But as long as you guys eat lots of grains and salads, nothing like that should happen. Sorry, honey.

You already said you eat lots of salmon, so keep doing that.

And turkey meat, right?

Yup, turkey meat, and I made some deviled eggs and a tomato Florentine soup. And these walnut scones have "omega-3 fatty acids which help improve blood flow to the genitals and increase sexual function."

I love it when she talks about fatty acids.

And no processed foods or caffeine or coffee, so I hope that's okay.

Totally fine.

Fuck.

What?
Gideon
(grabbing a tissue)
My nose is bleeding.

Tori
You okay?

Ben
Again?

Johanna
Maybe it's the weather.

Tori
It did get very dry outside.

Gideon
I've been putting on the humidifier and everything.

Johanna
Make sure to pinch at the bridge. That usually helps.

Ben
Should we sign the contract?

Johanna
(picking up the "contract")
Where'd you get this?

Gideon
In doing my research -

Tori
Gideon found it online.

Gideon
All it basically says is that Ben and I will cover all medical expenses that Tori's health insurance doesn't cover, and that Tori will let us adopt the baby.

Ben
We didn't want to bother your sister yet.

Gideon and Ben sign the paper.

Tori
We'll do the real papers if it takes, okay?

Johanna
If you feel comfortable -
Tori signs the paper.

Ben

Should I eat a cookie?

Johanna

If you want.

Gideon

We shouldn't be too long.

Ben

You're coming with me?

Gideon

Yeah.

Ben

I think I can manage this part on my own.

Gideon

I wanna be there.

Ben

Alright.

Tori

Aren't you forgetting something?

Tori holds out the small cup from the kit. Ben grabs it.

Ben

Back in two shakes!

Tori

Gross.

Ben and Gideon exit into the bathroom.

Tori unpacks the rest of the home insemination kit and inspect it. There are many pieces.

Johanna

Do you mind if I run to the Farmers Market? I still need to pick up some lamb for this weekend.

Tori

We'll go after.
Johanna
It gets so crowded the later it gets.

Tori
This shouldn't take too long.

Johanna
You should probably stay in bed after...

Tori
Only for a couple of minutes.

Johanna
The stuff won't fall out if you go walking around?

Tori
I don't think so.

Johanna
I also wanted to pick up some things for dinner. I'm making your favorite - southwestern mac and cheese.

Tori
I thought you were going to help me.

Johanna
You'll be fine.

Tori
But I can't exactly do this myself.

Johanna
That's the whole point of the kit, I thought.

Tori
But the logistics and the physics of it, I need your help.

Johanna
I don’t know if I could...Shooting sperm into your - Tori, what if it gets on my hands?

Tori
You'll wash it off!

Johanna starts to leave.

Tori (CONT)
You're really going to leave? Who's gonna hold up my legs?
Johanna
Ask Gideon. I'm sure he'll be thrilled to help out.

Tori
What am I gonna tell the boys?

Johanna
Tell them a client called.

Tori
Johanna, please, it'll only take a couple of minutes.

Johanna
I really don't want to, Tori. Please.

Tori
Okay.

Johanna
You'll be fine. I'll see you at home.

Johanna kisses Tori, grabs her bag, and exits. Tori sits alone on the couch for a moment, staring at the instructions for the kit.

Ben and Gideon enter from the bathroom.

Tori
Jesus, that was fast.

Ben
Years of practice.

Gideon
Where's Johanna?

Tori
She had to run out.

Ben
How are you going to - ?

Gideon
Do you need me to help you?

Tori
I'll figure it out.
Ben
Hold on. Before you go in there, you're dead positive you want to do this?

Tori
Of course.

Ben
Your job is cool with people taking maternity leave?

Tori
Totally. This woman, Rachel, practically does it ever year. They're Orthodox something.

Ben
You're gonna have to stop drinking.

Tori
I'm not stupid.

Gideon
You'll have to completely change your diet.

Tori
You act like I eat McDonalds every day.

Ben
You lived with us for two years and all I remember are your cheesy orange finger prints on everything.

Tori
Those cheese puffs were organic.

Ben
As long as we're all on the same page. Cause we're about to start a family here.

Tori
And I'm grateful that you're letting me do this for you guys.

Gideon
We wouldn't want to do it with anyone else.

A moment.

Ben
I gotta run, but we laid a towel down on the bed for you.

Gideon
Try not to get any on the comforter.
Ben

The cup is on the counter in the bathroom.

Gideon

All you need to do is stick the syringe in, pull back on the base, and then -

Tori

I read the instructions.

Ben grabs his bag.

Ben

Let me see your nose.

Gideon

I think it's fine now.

Ben kisses Gideon.

Ben

(to Tori)

Why do I feel like I need to kiss you, too?

Tori

(exiting to the bathroom)

Love you, too, Ben.

Gideon

Don't forget to orgasm. It helps the sperm get into the fallopian tubes!

Tori

I got it!

Tori shuts the bathroom door. Ben shuts the front door. Gideon is alone. He picks up his packet and checks off items on the first page. He looks at his watch. He smiles and waits.

SCENE FOUR

Two weeks later. Gideon and Ben's apartment. Ben is reading, as Gideon gets a yogurt from the fridge.

Gideon

How long has this yogurt been in the refrigerator?

Ben

Only a couple of days, I think.
Does it smell funny to you?

Ben
If it tastes funny, don't eat it.

Gideon takes another bite.

Gideon
I don't know. Tastes weird.

Ben
Throw it out then.

Gideon
I don't want to waste it.

The apartment buzzer buzzes.

Gideon (CONT)
Who's that?

Ben
Maybe it's for another apartment.

Ben goes to press the buzzer.

Gideon
So you buzz them in? What if it's a serial killer?

Ben
You can feed them your yogurt.

Gideon
I found a crib online that I want you to look at.

Ben
We don't even know if it worked yet.

Gideon
It'd fit perfectly in the office.

Ben
You didn't buy it yet, did you?

Gideon
Of course not.

(a moment)
But they'd waive the shipping and handling fee if I got it by midnight.
The front door is unlocked and Tori enters, eating from a bag of cheese puffs.

Ben
Don't you know how to knock.

Tori
I buzzed!

Ben
Why buzz if you have a key?

Gideon
Does this yogurt smell weird?

Tori
I got my period.

What?

Gideon

Ben
Shit.

Gideon
When?

Tori
This morning. At work. I'm sitting there, working on this obnoxious ad campaign for some new depression drug when, Hello!

Gideon
I thought you were like clockwork.

Tori
I used to be, until I started injecting sperm into my body.

Gideon
Do you remember if the mucus was creamy or sticky that last time? The book said it should be like egg whites.

Tori
Gideon.

Gideon
Maybe you weren't getting it up there far enough.

Tori
I was getting it in there, believe me.
Gideon, come on.

Maybe we didn't chart it correctly.

I know my body.

Then we can try again in two weeks?

I don't know -

You really want to try again?

Of course I do. You don't?

It didn't work.

We can't expect for it to happen the first time.

Gideon, I don't think I have anything left! It felt like I was squeezing water from a stone the last time.

Maybe that was the problem. Maybe we tried too many times in a row. We'll spread it out next time. Let your sperm regenerate.

Maybe that kit just doesn't work.

It's okay. We tried. We always knew it was a possibility... Sharon, in my office, she was telling me that it only took them two years to get their little boy.

That's not bad.

We have other options.
Gideon
What about... actually doing it?

Tori
Doing what?

Gideon
Sex. Having sex.

Tori
Unless you plan on having an ass baby with Ben, I don't wanna know what you're talking about.

Ben
No fucking way.

Gideon
I don't see what the big deal is.

Ben
You're joking, right?

Tori
So now you want me to have sex with Ben? What do you think Johanna would say?

Gideon
I'm sure she'd understand that we're only doing it as a last resort.

Ben
You're crazy.

Gideon
It's perfectly normal for a man and a woman to have sex if they want to make a baby.

Tori
There would be nothing normal about me and Ben having sex.

Ben
You said, if this didn't work, we'd go back to adopting. This didn't work. We tried. That's the end of it.

Gideon
But I don't want to adopt. Not knowing that we still had another option.

Tori
This isn't an option!
Ben
Why are you against adopting all of a sudden?

Gideon
I'm not against adopting. No one questions straight people when they decide to have their own babies! Why are you trying to make me feel guilty for wanting the same thing? I want to be able to say, this is where you come from. This is who you come from. I don't see how that makes me a bad person. And I want him, or her, to come from you two. You're my family. You're my blood. And I mean, really. What's the worst that could happen? It's just sex!

Tori
For the first time in, maybe, ever, I feel something with someone. Johanna sees me in a way - She doesn't care that I love organic cheese puffs!

Gideon
Give it a couple of months.

Tori
Excuse me?

Gideon
You said you would do anything.

Tori
Are you even listening to yourself? I'm sorry. Truly. But I'm not having sex with Ben.

Tori grabs her bag and starts to exit.

Gideon (calling after Tori as she leaves)
What happened to your sense of adventure?!

The front door shuts.

Gideon (CON’T)
Good thing I didn't buy the crib.

Ben
We know how much you want a baby -

Don't condescend.

Ben
I'm not! But asking me to have sex with Tori is not the answer.
Gideon
You’re gay. She’s a lesbian. What’s the big deal?

Ben
It’s still sex. With Tori!

Gideon
Exactly. It’s only Tori.

Ben
It’s too weird.

Gideon
Sex is weird. But we’re adults. We’d get over it.

Ben
It doesn’t matter anyway because Tori’s not going to do anything she doesn’t want to do.

Gideon
True.

Ben
And do you really want to be the thing that comes in between her and Johanna?

Gideon
No.

Ben
We’re still going to be parents. It’s just gonna take a little bit longer.

Gideon
I can’t explain it. This feeling. It’s in my stomach. It’s in my chest. My heart. I want us to have a family.

Ben
I’ll call the center tomorrow. See if we can reschedule our appointment with the adoption counselor. Maybe we won’t have to wait years. I’ll email Sharon. See if she can talk to us this week. Maybe she can bring her little boy over. That’d be nice, right?

They kiss.
SCENE FIVE

_Later that night. Johanna's kitchen. They are cutting up zucchini and throwing them into a big plastic bowl._

_Johanna_

So they'll adopt.

_Tori_

Yeah.

_Johanna_

You okay?

_Tori_

Fine.

_Johanna_

I'll make another lasagna after this one. Bring it over to them.

_Tori_

It's not like somebody died.

_They cut in silence._

_Johanna_

I was hoping to place an order for business cards this weekend if possible.

_Tori_

I'll have another draft of the logo for you tomorrow.

_Johanna_

There's gonna be a lot of people at this party, is all. Good opportunity. I can always use my old ones if you aren't ready -

_Tori_

I'll have a draft tomorrow.

_Johanna_

Okay.

_A moment. They cut._

_Tori_

I tried not to - I told myself, you don't know what's going to happen. But I got excited.
Of course you did.

Tori

I didn't know it was going to be so complicated.

Johanna

Life is.

Tori

And messy.

Johanna

Cut them a little thinner. Those look chunky.

Tori

Like this?

Johanna

Don't cut yourself.

Tori

We followed the charts and everything. I don't know why it didn't work.

Johanna

Maybe because it’s totally unnatural to get pregnant by sticking a plastic syringe up your own mookie.

Tori

Doctors make it work sometimes.

Johanna

Getting pregnant is a way more mysterious thing.

They cut.

Tori

I want to help them.

Johanna

You'll babysit. That’s how you’ll help.

Tori

Or I could have sex with Ben.

Johanna

You've got to be kidding me.
Tori

I'm not joking.

Johanna

Fine, and I'll have sex with Gideon.

Tori

I'm serious.

Johanna

Right.

Tori

Why don't you believe me?

Johanna

Because it's an insane idea!

Tori

What's so insane about having sex to make a baby?

Johanna cuts her finger.

Johanna

Fuck!

Tori

I'll get you a band-aid.

Tori exits, as Johanna runs her finger under the sink.

Johanna

I am never going to finish this lasagna!

After a moment, Tori returns with a first-aid kit. She patches Johanna's finger as they talk.

Tori

It's not sex.

Johanna

What else would you call it?

Tori

Insemination.

Johanna

You're not a prue bred dog, Tori. It's a little more complicated than that.
Tori
It’s not to me.

Johanna
I don’t understand why you’re so hell-bent -

Tori
Being with you makes me want -

Johanna
This has nothing to do with me.

Tori
It has everything to do with you. You’re the first person who’s ever treated me like an adult. Made me feel responsible.

Johanna
Why not just try that kit again if you want to do this so badly?

Tori
You said yourself it doesn’t work.

Johanna
And what makes you think sex is gonna do the trick?

Tori
Maybe it won’t work. But at least I’ll know I tried.

Johanna
But why do you have to be the one?

Tori
Who else are they gonna ask? Gideon’s like my brother.

Johanna
Then have sex with Gideon! Why’s it have to be Ben?

Tori
You’d be okay with me sleeping with Gideon but not with Ben?

Johanna
I don’t like the way he talks to you.

Tori
He’s Ben!

Johanna
He would see you naked!
Tori

I would not be naked.

Johanna

But he would touch you.

Tori

I would figure out a way to do it myself.

Johanna

Have you ever been with a man?

Tori

In high school actually.

Johanna

And how'd that go for you?

Tori

It did nothing for me, which is why I'm sitting here with you!

Johanna

I don't want you sharing something with him, leaving a piece of yourself with him.

Tori

I would be the surrogate, nothing more!

Johanna

You would be the baby's mother.

Tori

I would be Auntie Tori and you would be Aunt Johanna. Wouldn't that be nice? I know how much you want to have a relationship with your niece.

Tori has finished bandaging the wound.

Tori (CON'T)

I have to do this for them. I don't think I could deal with seeing that look of disappoint on Gideon's face for the rest of my life.

Johanna

Fine, but if you do this, we talk about everything. I don't want anything kept secret.

Tori

No, nothing.
It's just insemination.

Exactly. And you know you're gonna love me with a big belly. Don't deny it.

You would look pretty cute.

You can't resist me.

(Tori takes the knife from Johanna)
I'll finish this and you can tell me what to do next, okay? We will finish this together.

You sure you're okay?

I'm sure it's nothing. Probably just caught a stomach bug.

It seems like every time I see you something else is wrong.

Elementary schools are petri dishes for disease.

Do you want some seltzer to settle your stomach? Pepto?

I'm okay. Thanks.

A moment.

I love your apartment.
Johanna
Thank you.

Gideon
I love all the stoops. People sitting outside, talking. It's nice.

Johanna
I like it.

Gideon
Have you always lived here?

Johanna
Ever since I moved to the city.

Silence.

Gideon
Me and Ben are gonna go down to the Halloween parade, after. You guys should come with us!

Johanna
Not really into crowds.

Gideon
It does get a little out of control.

(a moment)
Do you guys have any plans for Thanksgiving yet? I thought maybe we could all get together.

Johanna
We're gonna spend it with my family.

Gideon
That'll be fun, introducing Tori to your folks.

Johanna
She's excited.

Silence.

Crossword?

Gideon

Johanna
Sudoku.
Gideon
I’ve never been that good with numbers. Ben is good with numbers. He handles all our bank accounts and credit cards. We really are saving so much money, having Tori... We’re gonna set up a college fund. Probably a little soon, but you can never start saving early enough.

Johanna
That’s what they say.

Gideon
(referring to a picture frame)
Aw, this is cute! When’d you guys take this?

Johanna
Our first date. One of those movies in the park.

Gideon
I’ve always wanted to do that! It’s a great picture of you two.

Johanna
Tori looks beautiful.

Gideon
She does.

(a moment)
I think they’ll make a pretty baby, don’t you?

Johanna
I guess.

Gideon
Ben barely works out and he looks like that, and Tori’s always had that body no matter how much crap she puts into it. I hate them sometimes.

Johanna
Can we not talk about this?

What?

Johanna
I’m trying not to.

Gideon
I thought you were cool -

Johanna
I’m cool with you guys, and a baby, but this part, the making the baby part - I’d rather not talk specifics.
Of course.

Johanna

I'm gonna finish the Sudoku.

Gideon

I understand.

Johanna goes back to her Sudoku. After a moment, Gideon stands.

Gideon (CON’T)

Mind if I poke around your kitchen?

Johanna

The kitchen?

Gideon

Feeling a little weak. Low blood sugar probably.

Johanna

Okay.

Gideon

I promise to leave everything exactly where I find it.

Johanna

Just don't touch any of the appliances.

Gideon

I won't.

Gideon exits to the kitchen and begins to poke around. Once he's gone, Johanna checks her phone. Nothing. She lets her head fall forward, closing her eyes.

Ben and Gideon's bedroom. Tori sits on the bed, wearing a tank top and little pajama shorts. All of the lights are on in the bedroom.

Tori

You okay in there, Ben?

Ben enters from the bathroom wearing boxer briefs and a t-shirt. He is carrying a cup of water with him.
Should we turn off the lights? Maybe it's too bright.

If we turn off the lights then it's romantic and this is not romantic. This is an exchange of... information.

Information?

Fluids sounds gross.

We're not gonna be exchanging anything if you can't get it up.

I can get it up.

Fine, keep it up. If you can't keep it up.

I can keep it up.

Then what's your problem? I told Johanna I'd be back by nine.

Rushing me isn't going to help.

You've never seen a vagina before, have you?

Ben downs his glass of water and starts to return to the bathroom.

You're five years old sometimes.

You haven't! You're scared of the unknown.

I'm not scared.
Tori
*(turning off the light and getting into the bed)*
Whatever, you're nervous. I'm telling you, we turn off the lights, we get under the covers, take off our underwear, you do what you need to do and when you're ready, move on top of me and we'll probably fumble around for a little bit and a couple of minutes later it'll be over.

*Ben enters from the bathroom.*

Ben

It's not that.

Tori

Then what's the problem? It's not gonna bite.

Ben

I've had sex with women before.

Tori

You have?

Ben

Before Gideon, I dated a couple of women.

Tori

Oh. Gideon didn't tell me that.

Ben

It's in the past. But I know what it looks like, so you can stop saying that.

A moment.

Tori

I'm gonna have a drink.

Ben

Good idea.

Tori takes out a large bottle of tequila from her purse and takes a long swig. She passes it to Ben, who does the same.

Ben (CON’T)

You've been with a guy before though, right?

Tori takes another swig from the bottle.
Tori
Once. I don't think it counted.

Ben
At least one of us knows what we're doing.

(a moment)
I took out the lube, in case we needed it.

Tori
Banana-flavored?

Ben
Gideon likes bananas.

Ben puts the lube back in the drawer.

Tori
I'm gonna pop in the bathroom real quick.

Ben
Alright.

Tori
Feel free to get started without me.

Tori exits to the bathroom, as Ben gets in the bed.

Gideon enters from the kitchen holding a box of cookies.

Gideon
I found cookies.

Johanna
Where'd you find those?

Gideon
In the back of one of the shelves. Tori always hid her food when she lived with us.

Johanna
(after a moment)
What kind are they?

Gideon
Chocolate chip and peanut butter.

Johanna
Gimme a peanut butter.
Johanna takes the cookie.

Gideon
I'm not really sure what's been going on with me lately, but I looked up my symptoms, the nose bleeds, throwing up, fever, eating like a crazy person.

Johanna
I'm sure this whole process has been very stressful for you.

Gideon
I found one website that said it might be a sympathetic pregnancy.

Johanna
A what?

Gideon
It's happened to lots of other guys before. There's even documentation about men lactating.

Johanna
Men can lactate?

Gideon
A 32-year-old guy in Germany breast-fed a baby for five months and some 55-year-old man in Baltimore did it after his wife got some infection.

Johanna
I guess a breast is a breast is a breast.

Gideon
I haven't told Ben.

Johanna
Why not?

Gideon
I don't know. He'd write it off as something on the internet probably.

Johanna
I think our bodies have a way of knowing what we need sometimes.

Gideon
I agree.

Johanna
You really want this kid.

Gideon
Maybe it has something to do with being an only child.
Johanna
Or maybe you were just meant to be a father.
(a moment)
I won't say anything to Ben.

Gideon
Thank you.
(a moment)
I figured she'd be home by now. How long does it take?

Johanna
I wouldn't know.

Gideon
You've never been with a man before?

Johanna
I dated my best friend in high school, we never did anything.

Gideon
A gay guy?

Johanna
No. We just worked on yearbook together. Co-editors. Always had a date to whatever, which was nice. Poor guy. Went through high school and never got laid.
(They laugh.)
Have you ever, with a woman?

Gideon
I was c-section so I've literally never touched a vagina.

Johanna
Impressive.

Gideon
And you've never been curious?

Johanna
Not once.

Gideon
You have a dildo though, right?

Johanna
And that's the end of this conversation.
Lights spills out of the bathroom, as Tori enters and walks over to the bed, wearing her tank top and underwear.

Tori
I'm going to get in the bed now.

Ben
By all means.

Tori climbs into the bed, and she and Ben remove their underwear underneath the covers and drop them onto the floor.

A moment.

Ben (CON'T)
Let me know when you're ready.

You're ready?

Tori
Think so.

Let's do this.

Ben turns over and lays on top of Tori.

You're warm.

Ben

Tori
I've got good circulation.

They begin to maneuver things around.

Do you want me to...

Tori (CON'T)

No, I got it.

Ben enters Tori, and she grabs the side of the bed. Ben doesn't move.

Tori
You need to move, Ben. If you want anything to happen.
Ben
I know. It's been a long time -

Tori laughs.

Ben (CON’T)

Why are you laughing?

Tori
Your leg hair tickles. That's all. It's fine. Just...start.

They begin.

Johanna inspects the cookies.

Johanna
You ever read the ingredients in this crap?

Gideon
I choose denial.

Johanna
Half of them don’t even exist in nature.

Gideon
You gotta admit, they taste good.

Johanna
I don't like that she hid these from me.

Gideon
Tori loves her secrets.

Johanna
Well if it's not organic or homemade, I don't want it in my house.

Ben
Everything okay?

Tori
I'm fine.

Ben
Okay.

Ben's rhythm picks up.

Gideon
I feel like I should say thank you, for Tori.
Johanna

For using her?

Ben

I'm getting close.

Tori

Okay.

Gideon

We're not using her.

Johanna

You can justify it anyway you like.

Ben

Are you going to orgasm? Cause it helps the...

Tori

I'm trying, shut up!

Gideon

Tori wants to do this.

Johanna

Did you really give her a choice?

Ben

I'm gonna cum!

Tori

Keep going!

Gideon

Tori doesn't do anything she doesn't want to do.

Ben

I'm cumming!

Ben and Tori climax, and as they do, Ben kisses Tori, hard.

No one moves.

After a moment, Ben slides off of Tori and rolls onto his back.

Tori

I should elevate my legs.
Ben
Good idea.

Johanna
We can talk about doing Thanksgiving if you want.

Gideon
Really? That'd be great.

Johanna
Maybe I'll make cornish hen. Or roast duck.

Gideon
How very Mayflower.

Ben pulls on his underwear.

Ben
I need to use the bathroom real quick.

Tori
You should probably call Gideon.

Johanna
I'll see if I have a recipe.

Gideon
I'll try Ben. See how it's going.

Johanna
You want anything?

Ben
You need anything?

Gideon
I'm fine.

Tori
I'm fine.

Johanna
Okay.

Ben
Okay.

Johanna starts to exit, leaving her phone on the table.

Gideon (CONT')
(holding out Johanna's phone)
Your phone! In case she calls.

Johanna
You can pick it up. She'll want to talk to you.
Ben hesitates for a moment, then exits to the living room with his phone.

Johanna stands over her cookbooks in the kitchen, as Tori slowly elevates her legs.

Gideon sits at the table with his cell phone in his hands, as Ben sits down on the couch.

After a moment, Ben dials and Gideon's phone rings. Johanna looks over to Gideon as he answers the phone.

Gideon

Honey?!

End of Act One.
To read the complete play, please contact the author:

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