

Waiting for Roger

by

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Setting

A bus stop.

Time

Now and then.

Characters

SHARON - Woman in her 20s-50s.

FAITH - Woman in her 20s-50s.

Lights up on a bench at a bus stop. SHARON sits, immersed in her phone, as FAITH approaches and sits down. FAITH has a large purse, and she keeps her right hand inside it for the duration of the play.

FAITH

Anything exciting happening in phone-world?

SHARON

I'm sorry?

FAITH

Anything exciting happening?

SHARON

Oh, no, not particularly. Just scrolling through stuff and waiting for the bus.

FAITH

Well, it's just a phone. Just a screen to stare at to pass the time. It's not real life. Real life is where exciting things happen... sometimes out of the blue. Sometimes completely out of the blue. There you are living your life, everything calm, everything under control, one day disappearing into the next, then out of nowhere... BOOM!!!

SHARON

Boom?

FAITH

Your head explodes. Or your world. It's messy. Really, really messy. So messy you just know you're never going to be able to clean it up without some drastic action. You ever had a mess like that?

SHARON

Hasn't everyone?

FAITH

Don't get me wrong, I like men...for the most part. But there are some of them...hoo daddy. I mean, fill in the blank for me. All men are...?

SHARON

Men? Don't get me started. I was married once, and on our honeymoon, my ex decided he liked one of the waitresses at the resort more than me.

FAITH

I know, right? All men are...

(beat)

Pigs...dogs...swine...which I guess would be technically pigs again, and that's unfortunate because my understanding is that pigs are very intelligent and sweet animals.

(MORE)

FAITH (cont'd)

(beat)

Did you know that female Komodo dragons can get pregnant all by themselves? It's true. They don't need a male. That's an amazing evolutionary adaptation if you ask me.

SHARON

Sounds like it.

FAITH

I think human beings should seriously think about heading in that direction...a society in which men are completely irrelevant and unneeded for procreation purposes...which means they would be completely irrelevant and unneeded in general. Wouldn't that be nice? I think that would be nice. It would be peaceful, and people could finally get a decent night's sleep. Am I rambling? I am, aren't I? I'm sorry. You go back to your phone-world.

SHARON

No, no, it's fine. That's really interesting about the Komodo dragons. Are you waiting for the uptown bus?

FAITH

Oh yeah. You bet your sweet ass that's what I'm waiting for.

SHARON

Where are you headed?

FAITH

Me? Nowhere.

SHARON

So, you're not...getting on the bus?

FAITH

Nope. No bus for me. Not today.

(beat)

Parthenogenesis.

SHARON

Excuse me?

FAITH

That's what it's called when females inseminate themselves. Parthenogenesis. I figured you secretly wanted to know what it was called, but were too shy to ask.

SHARON

That's good to know...so, are you waiting for someone who's on the bus?

FAITH

What makes you ask that?

SHARON

Nothing! Nothing. It's just...you're not going anywhere, so I figured maybe you were waiting for someone.

FAITH

Oh, I see what you did there! That's like a detective deal... deducing and whatnot. Sure...I can see I'm going to have to watch out for you! You're a smart one!

SHARON

No, not really.

FAITH

Oh, you are! I can tell! You've got that edge to you...like you actually understand what's going on in the world and it pisses you off that other people don't understand what's going on in the world, but you've kind of resigned yourself to being surrounded by morons and figure you're going to be dead soon anyway, so you just keep things to yourself and try to get through the day. That's the kind of vibe you give off. You're not a cop, are you? Like one of those undercover detective types?

SHARON

No.

FAITH

Have you been following me?

SHARON

No! I'm just sitting here waiting for the bus. I was here when you walked up. How could I be following you?

FAITH

Oh yeah. Yeah, that makes sense. Although that would be a very clever way to follow someone...the old sitting on a bench pretending you're not following them strategy. It's just...you're kind of looking at me funny.

SHARON

I'm not! No, I--oh, you know what it is? It's your purse! I love your purse!

FAITH

Oh really? Thank you!

SHARON

It's a Gucci?

FAITH

No. I mean, I know the label says that, but I bought it off some street guy for ten bucks. It's a fake. Just a big, fat fake. Like so many things in life...

SHARON

Well, it's still nice. It matches your...your eyes.

FAITH

Thank you! That's really nice of you to say.

SHARON

I notice that you're kind of keeping your hand inside it.

FAITH

My hand?

SHARON

Inside your purse. Like you're holding onto something.

FAITH

Am I? Oh, I am! How do you like that? How do you like them apples...? Huh. But it makes perfect sense.

SHARON

It does?

FAITH

I'm waiting for someone.

SHARON

That's...yeah. Who are you waiting for, exactly?

FAITH

Oh, I bet you can guess!

SHARON

I'm not sure I can.

FAITH

Now you stop that! You're a smart one! Go on, take a guess.

SHARON

I really don't...

FAITH

Oh, you want a hint? I'll give you a hint. I am waiting for...let's see, vegetable, animal, mineral...it's an animal! More specifically, a man. A man I live with. A man who is my fiancé. His name is Roger Epstein and he works at Aramark Industries in their packing division. His boss is Wendy, who is married, but apparently getting divorced, at least according to her Facebook page, which is public and probably shouldn't be if she knew what was good for her. I mean, why do people post pictures like that?

SHARON

Like what?

FAITH

Like with her wearing my dead mother's necklace. That was a bit of a shock, seeing that, let me tell you. A gift from Roger, apparently. He just helped himself to it and gave it to her. I mean, the cheating is one thing...

SHARON

But your mother's necklace? Seriously? That's really crossing the line.

FAITH

It is, isn't it? But I love the photos of Wendy's dog! Dogs are amazing, don't you think? I mean, has anyone ever been betrayed by their dog? I say no... unless maybe bacon was involved. Do you think that's what's going on here? Is Wendy kind of like bacon from Roger's point of view? Just some delicious salty, apple-smoked meat that's there one second and then gone the next? Because that I could understand...there's a lot of things I would do for some decent bacon, although from an ethical point of view I guess I should really become vegetarian, because like I said, pigs are apparently pretty exceptional creatures.

SHARON

You know, you're clearly under a lot of stress. I mean, you seem a little distracted.

FAITH

Yes and no. Yes and no. On the one hand I feel incredibly focused, like I'm being pulled into the ocean by a rip tide and there's only one tiny little outcropping of coral that I can grab onto and I am totally focused on that because my life depends on it...

SHARON

And?

FAITH

And what?

SHARON

You said, "on the one hand." That usually means there's another hand.

FAITH

Does it? Oh. Then maybe there isn't another hand. Maybe that's the only hand I've been dealt...aces and eights. And you know what that means.

SHARON

I'm not sure I do.

FAITH

Aces and eights. In poker, that's known as the dead man's hand. Wild Bill Hickok was holding those cards when he was murdered in cold blood, but then the jury in Deadwood found his killer not guilty, even though a bunch of people watched him put a bullet right through Wild Bill's head. Justice is funny that way sometimes. Shouldn't the bus be here by now?

SHARON

You know, we never properly introduced ourselves. I'm Sharon.

FAITH

Faith. I'm Faith. Like the word. Or the George Michael song. Or the famous geyser in Yellowstone National Park. Except without the "old" and the "ful."

SHARON

Well, Faith, I may be completely misreading the situation here, but I'm a little worried that you might be about to do something that maybe you shouldn't do.

FAITH

Like what?

SHARON

I don't know exactly, but I'm kind of adding things up.

FAITH

Really? What do your things add up to?

SHARON

Well, you're here at the bus stop waiting for Roger, your fiancé, who is apparently in a relationship with his boss, the about-to-be-divorced Wendy, who has your deceased mother's necklace because Roger gave it to her, not to mention your very detailed story about the murder of Wild Bill Hickok. And then...

FAITH

Then...?

SHARON

Then there's the whole purse thing...how you won't take your hand out of it. That's a little concerning.

FAITH

Oh, I see. Well, maybe I'm rubbing a rabbit's foot, you know, to change my luck. Or maybe it's licorice. Or maybe it's a Glock 9mm handgun. Or maybe this hand gets cold easily because I once got frostbite camping in the Yukon. People keep their hands inside purses for all kinds of reasons.

SHARON

I'm just worried that you're going to do something you'll regret.

FAITH

What makes you think I'll regret it?

SHARON

Faith, please listen to me. I know we just met, but everything that's happened, everything you're going through...I think maybe you just need to take a step back and try to get a little perspective. It doesn't have to be like this.

FAITH

But it is like this. This is the way it is like.

(laughing to herself)

(MORE)

FAITH (cont'd)

You know when I was little, my mom used to buy these cookies that had trains and boats on them. Not all the time. Just after my father had been slapping her around after he got a few beers into him. We'd go to the store and get these cookies after he passed out on the sofa. They were a special treat. For both of us. I think it was her way of trying to say that everything was going to be okay...which it never was. But I loved those cookies...and my mom...and it's been a long time since I had a special treat to make me feel better.

(deep breath)

You know what's weird? I haven't slept in three days, but I have never felt more awake in my life.

SHARON

See, that's my point! You're not yourself! You can't go three days without sleeping and not get a little crazy! Why don't you let me call someone for you? How would that be? Maybe a friend or a relative?

FAITH

It's not their problem. I'm the one with the problem. It's up to me to fix it.

SHARON

Then a counselor...or maybe there's a hotline you can call or something?

FAITH

You know, I've heard of suicide hotlines and appliance repair hotlines, but I don't think there's an I'm Going to Kill a Lying, Cheating, Stealing, Scumbag Man hotline...although if there was, let's face it, they'd need about eight hundred operators.

SHARON

Faith, you can't just kill a man for cheating on you!

FAITH

No? Check your religious texts. Plenty of them are very enthusiastic about killing women for committing adultery. Well, you know what I say? I say it's time to even things up.

SHARON

I...okay, between us, I agree with you. I do! Especially with that business about your mom's necklace. But it's against the law!

FAITH

Oh no no no. It's only against the laws written by men. And you see, that's where we women have made a big mistake, thinking those laws should apply to us. But I've pretty much had it with men and their laws, and telling women what we can and can't do. Haven't you?

SHARON

Actually, that's a really good point. But you'll still be arrested!

FAITH

Sure. I know that. But get me a jury of twelve women and I walk. Justice is funny that way sometimes.

SHARON

Like with Wild Bill Hickok?

(off FAITH's smile)

You know, I'm beginning to realize, you've thought this through pretty thoroughly, haven't you?

FAITH

Me? No. Not at all. I'm completely deranged by grief and sleep deprivation. Like you said, I'm not in my right mind. So, I just need you to do me one favor.

SHARON

Anything!

FAITH

Remember that when they call you as a witness.

Long beat as they look at one another,
then SHARON looks over FAITH's
shoulder.

SHARON

The bus is coming.

FAITH

(turning)

So it is.

FAITH stands up and SHARON gets up as
well.

FAITH

Would you like to meet Roger?

SHARON

Not particularly.

FAITH

Good call. I knew you were a smart one. In fact, you're so smart that I'll bet you know what time it is.

SHARON

It's special treat time.

FAITH

You bet your sweet ass it is...

Lights fade...

THE END.