

**Jerry** - Male, 80's. He is to be played by a young actor of any gender in absurdist stage-makeup and dress to give the faux appearance of being old.

The actor will also ideally portray him with a cartoonish old voice.

**Samantha** - Female, 7. She is to be played by an actor of any age or gender in over-the-top youthful dress.

The actor will ideally portray her with a lisp.

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(Samantha and Jerry sit on a park bench.)

**Samantha:** What's your name sir?

**Jerry:** Jerry.

**Samantha:** Jerry. My name's—

(Jerry looks out.)

**Jerry:** Look at that one. He's a priest.

**Samantha:** What's a pr-ee-s?

**Jerry:** Someone who believes in God.

**Samantha:** Like Grammy?

**Jerry:** *Just* like Grammy.

**Samantha:** Do you believe in God?

**Jerry:** I don't fucking know. Don't repeat that.

**Samantha:** Okay.

(Jerry looks out.)

**Jerry:** That kid is walking a dog.

**Samantha:** Mhm. I like doggies.

(Silence.)

(Silence.)

(Silence.)

**Jerry:** Cute dog.

**Samantha:** I'm bored.

**Jerry:** I'm old.

**Samantha:** Are you gonna die soon?

**Jerry:** Probably.

**Samantha:** That's crazy. Do you know when?

**Jerry:** Later today actually.

**Samantha:** REALLY?

**Jerry:** No.

... It's tomorrow.

**Samantha:** My birthdays tomorrow!

**Jerry:** I know.

**Samantha:** When's your birthday?

**Jerry:** Tomorrow.

**Samantha:** Twins!

**Jerry:** Mm.

**Samantha:** Can I try on your gasses?

**Jerry:** They won't fit you. Your eyes are better than mine.

**Samantha:** But I wanna!

(He hands them over.)

(She puts them on.)

(Silence.)

(She passes them back.)

**Samantha:** ...Do you always see things sad?

**Jerry:** Sure as shit don't see happy. Don't repeat that.

**Samantha:** Okay.

(Silence.)

**Jerry:** What are you looking forward to on your birthday?

**Samantha:** Well my moms gonna make a cake which is gonna be super cool and all of my friends are gonna go. I invited my whole class but I don't think that Barbra and Sharif and Owen and their friends wanna go but thats fine with me cus I dont like them anyways which isn't polite but they're mean to me which isn't polite either. For my birthday I think my dads gonna get me a dog which mamma says isn't gonna happen but I think it will cus my dad told me he will but it's a secret.

I also wanna have a party with a bounce house and mabe a dee-jay and balloon animals and other stuff. You know?

**Jerry:** I do. I think that will happen for you.

(He is melancholy.)

**Samantha:** Mom says I need to make more friends. Thats why she made me invite the whole class instead of just Mrs. Lane.

(Silence.)

(Silence.)

(Silence.)

**Jerry:** I hope everyone comes to your party. It'd be nice if they did...

**Samantha:** Yeah.

Are we friends?

**Jerry:** That's a complicated question.

**Samantha:** Compl...?

**Jerry:** It is hard to answer.

**Samantha:** I'm bored. I wanna go.

(Jerry looks out)

**Jerry:** Look at that. The hot dog cart fell over.

**Samantha:** I'm BORED!

**Jerry:** I'm OLD!

**Samantha:** Why can't we go somewhere else?

**Jerry:** Because we can't.

**Samantha:** Why?

**Jerry:** Because.

(Jerry looks out.)

(Horror.)

**Jerry:** Dear God! Sir! Put that thing of yours away! This is a public park-

**Samantha:** Huh? I wanna see!

(Jerry covers her eyes.)

**Samantha:** I wanna see, lemme go lemme go! I wanna see!

**Jerry:** I don't think you do.

(They LUNGE for each other.)

(They fruitlessly tussle, then settle.)

(Jerry looks out. Samantha follows.)

**Jerry:** Thank you sir.

**Samantha:** Did you do that cus you see so sad?

**Jerry:** What?

**Samantha:** You made it so I couldn't see.

**Jerry:** I didn't want you to see... a thing for grown ups, not you.

**Samantha:** But I wanted to see.

**Jerry:** See enough nonsense like that and you'll need glasses.

**Samantha:** Really! Will I? I think they're so cool.

(Silence.)

**Jerry:** You'll get glasses soon actually.

**Samantha:** What! How'd you know that?

**Jerry:** When you turn nine the board at school looks fuzzy.

**Samantha:** That's like, FOREVER AWAY! When I'm NINE?!

**Jerry:** Yes.

**Samantha:** How old are you?

**Jerry:** About-to-die age.

**Samantha:** Not funny.

**Jerry:** Little funny.

**Samantha:** ...Little funny.

Why are we friends?

**Jerry:** It might make you sad to know.

(Silence.)

**Jerry:** I wanted to meet you before we died. I had forgotten what it was like to be you. I like your pigtails.

**Samantha:** Thank you. My mommy did them in the morning.

**Jerry:** That's right. She used to do that...

(He remembers. She stays where she is.)

**Samantha:** I don't get it sir.

**Jerry:** That's okay. We take turns understanding.

**Samantha:** What?

**Jerry:** It's complicated.

**Samantha:** Hard to answer?

**Jerry:** Yes.

**Samantha:** Imma miss you when you die tomorrow.

**Jerry:** Try not to.

**Samantha:** Okay.

(Silence.)

**Samantha:** Can I repeat something?

**Jerry:** Okay.

**Samantha:** Whas a fuck?

(Silence. He remembers.)

**Jerry:** A very spicy vegetable.

**Samantha:** Sounds gross.

**Jerry:** It is.

**Samantha:** I think that's my new favorite word.

**Jerry:** It is.

**Jerry** - Early 20's gay man. In love for 2 months now. Lively.

**Barnabas** - Early 20's gay man. In love for 2 months now.. Sentimental.

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*It's 2021 in an apartment. The door opens.*

**Jerry:** What a waste!

**Barnabas:** Totally!

**Jerry:** She has no idea what she's talking about.

**Barnabas:** I can't even.

**Jerry:** "Emotional intimacy?" Please.

**Barnabas:** I just feel like it isn't her place, you know?

**Jerry:** Absolutely. But that's how she is, she and Katie U-Haul-ed their first week of college and feel like they know how every queer is supposed to act.

**Barnabas:** It's the lesbian entitlement of it all.

*(Jerry moves to the fridge to get them drinks)*

**Jerry:** I mean, I see where she's coming from but it just feels so... you know?

**Barnabas:** No I get it. It feels like she's projecting or something.

**Jerry:** We know so much about each other! I know your birthday, favorite color, coffee order—

**Barnabas:** I get tea.

*(Beat)*

**Jerry:** You know what I meant. Let me be mad at her!

**Barnabas:** But I order tea.

**Jerry:** Yeah yeah, here's your "tea."

*(He hands Barnabas a beer)*

**Jerry:** Should we cancel brunch next week, I'll hit her if she asks how our "exercises" went.

**Barnabas:** Maybe. Why'd you say I order coffee?

**Jerry:** Oh my god bitch move on! You make it every morning.

**Barnabas:** I make it for *you* every morning, 4 cups exactly. You never noticed it's the same every goddamn day? You're only bitch here using half and half.

**Jerry:** Let's just move on—

**Barnabas:** No, no I don't want to. Maybe we *don't* know each other all that well.

**Jerry:** We live together. I am with you minimum 12 hours of the day–

**Barnabas:** What year was I born?

*(Beat)*

**Barnabas:** Quickly.

**Jerry:** ‘99.

**Barnabas:** ‘97.

**Jerry:** Well what does that matter! I know a thousand other things about you.

**Barnabas:** You a thousand things about my dick. What about my heart Jerry? My mind Jerry? My soul Jerry?

**Jerry:** Baby I love you, I just suck at math and didn’t realize I was the only one using half and half. That’s not personal, it’s just being a dumbass. I’m sorry. I know your birthday.

*(Beat)*

*(Barnabas goes to exit)*

**Jerry:** If you wanna play the game we can play the game.

**Barnabas:** Really?

**Jerry:** Sure. We have to have a deck of cards around here somewhere.

*(Barnabas lights up a little. Walks to the kitchen and opens a few cabinets and looks in some drawers. He finds nothing. He goes off stage and returns with a deck.)*

**Barnabas:** We each get 10 cards.

**Jerry:** Can we... spice this up?

**Barnabas:** Emotional intimacy doesn’t get you going?

**Jerry:** Strip poker gets me going.

**Barnabas:** That the only way you’ll play?

*(Beat)*

**Barabas:** Fine, as a reward for answering you can strip.

**Jerry:** Now I’m excited.

*(He kisses him.)*

**Barnabas:** Okay I’ll go first. What’s your relationship like with your mother?

**Jerry:** Pass!

**Barabas:** You can’t pass.

**Jerry:** Fine. Bad. Time to strip!

*(He goes to take his pants off but Barnabas grabs his hands.)*

**Barnabas:** What about extra credit. Give me some honesty. Details.

**Jerry:** Barnabas let me take my dick out please.

**Barnabas:** Tell me about your mommy first.

**Jerry:** ... Well I wouldn't take you home to dinner.

*(Beat. Barnabas wants more)*

**Jerry:** She's... what else do you want me to say? My "lifestyle" doesn't agree with her.

**Barnabas:** That wasn't so hard.

*(Barnabas lets go)*

*(Jerry takes off a sock instead)*

**Barnabas:** Okay, Ask away.

**Jerry:** What's *your* relationship like with *your mother*?

**Barnabas:** Creative! It's good. We call a few times a week.

**Jerry:** Bullshit.

**Barnabas:** You think so?

**Jerry:** No. Not really.

*(Beat)*

**Barnabas:** Sorry about your mom.

*(Barnabas takes off a sock too)*

**Jerry:** It's fine. Ask me something.

**Barnabas:** What's your relationship like with your father?

**Jerry:** Boo. Something else.

**Barnabas:** Do you have any siblings?

**Jerry:** That's your question?!

**Barnabas:** You've never mentioned any.

**Jerry:** Surely I have.

*(Barnabas shakes his head)*

**Jerry:** I have 4. I'm the baby of the family.

**Barnabas:** What's the brother sister makeup?

**Jerry:** 2 boys and 2 girls. Marcus, Alex, Chelsea, and Danielle. I talk to all of them still, well... Alex not so much anymore.

**Barnabas:** Same as mom or?

**Jerry:** No.. His best friend and I in high school... you know. He didn't like it all too much I guess. Not even the gay shit just the complications of it all and then over time we're just growing into different men.

**Barnabas:** Yeah.

**Jerry:** We just didn't think ahead for how we'd keep knowing each other.

*(Beat)*

**Barnabas:** Thanks for being so honest with me.

**Jerry:** Sure. Now sock number 2 comes off.

**Barnabas:** Keep this up and we'll get a leg soon!

**Jerry:** What did you want to be when you grew up, like as a little kid.

**Barnabas:** A "haircut person." That's what my mom claims anyway. Apparently I was super interested in salons in kindergarten.

**Jerry:** Adorable. A far cry from insurance.

*(Barnabas dramatically throws his card across the room)*

**Barnabas:** *(taking off his over-shirt)* You can say that again.

**Jerry:** Oh a *shirt*! You dog.

**Barnabas:** Someone had to add the spice. Why not me?

**Jerry:** What's your question for me? You can make it extra juicy.

**Barnabas:** Let me think.

*(Beat)*

**Barnabas:** When did you know you loved me? Not just thinking I was sweet or nice to live with, but really really loved me?

**Jerry:** Jesus... well, I mean we met through Andy right, and I figured that was a good sign. He's a good guy and I trust people in his company and I trust his opinion and knowledge about me. So we started off on the right foot. But when I loved you... shit I don't know.

Maybe it's corny but, maybe I've been just a little bit in love with you. Like, even when I was a kid. When I'd daydream about my girlfriends in the 3rd grade or wished I was losing my virginity at 16, there are these pieces of all of those hopes and dreams that I find with you. You connect the dots I guess. It's easy. It's happy. The fact I don't have to think too hard about it is nice. I didn't wake up one day and know I was in love I just found my way there because of you. That's how I know it's real, but I don't know when it started. Sorry, I don't know if that answers your question.

**Barnabas:** It does.

*(They sit, holding each other)*

**Barnabas:** You gonna discard?

**Jerry:** Yeah. We still have like 7 more questions to ask.

**Barnabas:** This feels like therapy bootcamp. Why don't we just go down to 5?

**Jerry:** Wow! The game's savior wants to make it easier?

**Barnabas:** And the game's biggest hater wants it to last longer?

**Jerry:** Maybe a little.

**Barnabas:** I'm gonna unload the dishes.

*(He gets up, breaking their touch)*

**Jerry:** No come back, don't leave me here!

*(Barnabas continues to the kitchen.)*

**Jerry:** Wait, where are you going?

**Barnabas:** *(off)* I want to shower, I feel gross.

**Jerry:** Not unloading dishes?

**Barnabas:** *(off)* Honey I really want to shower. I need to—

**Jerry:** Are you being avoidant?

*(Beat.)*

**Jerry:** Oh my god you are!

*(Barnabas returns.)*

**Barnabas:** No, I just want to shower.

**Jerry:** No you don't what's up?

**Barnabas:** Nothing!

*(Beat)*

**Jerry:** Was it my answer? I'm sorry if it was too gross. I was just trying—

**Barnabas:** No it wasn't your fucking answer.

**Jerry:** Then what is it?

*(A long beat)*

**Jerry:** It's my turn to ask. What is it?

**Barnabas:** I said I wasn't playing anymore.

**Jerry:** No passing.

**Barnabas:** This is stupid, you said so before—

**Jerry:** If it's so stupid then just tell me.

*(Beat)*

*(Jerry holds his ground, cards in hand)*

**Barnabas:** I... I don't know if I love you Jerry.

*(Beat)*

*(Jerry asks his question implicitly)*

**Barnabas:** Hearing you say all of that I realized how little I actually feel. Not just about you but of any kind of love. I mean, how am I supposed to know? How am I supposed to understand what my love feels like? I thought I've loved people before and been wrong. I've thought I've loved women, men, my dad. Who's to say any of them are right and wrong. All I know is what I feel, I don't know what that *is*. It can feel so different at any given moment. I look at you and half the time

it's joy the other it's like I'm just fucking rotting inside waiting for this to blow up. What do I make of that? Is love the fucking awful feeling of thinking this is all doomed?

Most of the time I wonder if I'm making all this up. If I'm pretending to be me, faking how I act, what I think and believe. I'm still not sure if I'm even gay sometimes! What if this is all some sick, secret ploy for attention, so my mommy thinks I'm special, so I have something—anything—interesting about me. I can't tell if I love you because I don't even know if I'm really here in the ways I'm trying to be. I don't know if I'm real. I can't prove it. I can't prove that it's not a trick, that I'm lying to you.

*(Jerry looks at him through all of this)*

**Jerry:** It feels like love to me.

**Barnabas:** But I'm tricking you!

**Jerry:** I don't think you are.

**Barnabas:** What do you want me to do? I can't explain it. I just always feel it.

*(Jerry crosses to him)*

**Jerry:** But I'm feeling something too. Why is what you feel more “real” than what I feel?

**Barnabas:** I don't know I... I...

*(The symbols of his love become clear. A coffee pot. A deck of cards. Unloaded dishes. Maybe the lesbian “exercises” were good for something.)*

*(They embrace for a long time, an exchange of “I love you's” might ensue or might not.)*

**Jerry:** You don't have to love me.

**Barnabas:** I think I do. Sometimes at least. I still owe you some clothing.

**Jerry:** I do too.

*(They lovingly escort each other off stage.)*

**Samantha** - Early 70s. Married to Barnabas for 55 years. Disappointed.

**Barnabas** - Early 70s. Married to Samantha for 55 years. Discontent. Grows to be regretful

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*A house filled with routines and spite. Samantha and Barnabas sit in their chairs tending to their own activities silently for a moment.*

**Samantha:** I wish you'd stop doing that.

**Barnabas:** What?

**Samantha:** I wish you'd stop doing that.

**Barnabas:** Doing what?

**Samantha:** Being quiet.

**Barnabas:** I like the quiet.

**Samantha:** Well I don't.

...

Horrible outside. Just horrible.

...

What are you reading?

**Barnabas:** A book.

**Samantha:** About?

**Barnabas:** This folk singer who died.

**Samantha:** Oh, that's nice.

**Barnabas:** Yes.

**Samantha:** Why?

**Barnabas:** What?

**Samantha:** Why do you think it's nice?

**Barnabas:** She has a nice story.

**Samantha:** Is it well written?

...

The book, is it well written?

**Barnabas:** Yes

**Samantha:** I'm going to make a coffee. Do you want one?

**Barnabas:** It's seven.

**Samantha:** So?

*(Barnabas grunts strangely)*

**Samantha:** Do you know when he's getting here?

**Barnabas:** Not in this weather.

**Samantha:** When was he supposed to get here?

**Barnabas:** Six.

**Samantha:** Oh.

...

Well, hopefully he'll be here soon.

...

I hope something awful didn't happen.

...

He'd be all alone in the rain.

...

I think we should call someone.

**Barnabas:** No.

**Samantha:** Why not! He could be dying, wounded, bleeding out in the street!

**Barnabas:** He's not.

**Samantha:** I'm going to call someone.

*(Barnabas grunts strangely)*

*(She exits)*

**Samantha:** *(off)* Yes, hello. I'm calling out of concern for a Jordan Dally... He's traveling to visit my husband and myself for the weekend and he's an hour late... No, I'm sure it's a factor but to be delayed an *hour* because of a storm... He's not family no... no I mean... would you stop interrupting me! He's a hyper punctual person; he would never arrive or leave late if he could help it. I am calling on behalf of a young man likely suffering right this moment! ... Well yes, thank you, we will. Bye bye.

*(While Samantha is on the phone Barnabas stands up and begins to tend to the house, tidying up)*

*(She enters)*

**Samantha:** Well that's over! I feel much better now that I've called, don't you?

**Barnabas:** No.

**Samantha:** Why?

**Barnabas:** Because my wife hysterically called the police because someone is driving slowly in a storm.

**Samantha:** Well I don't see it that way.

*(Barnabas grunts strangely)*

**Samantha:** I hate that thing.

**Barnabas:** What?

**Samantha:** That grunt. It's so dismissive.

*(Barnabas grunts strangely)*

**Samantha:** There it is! Do you hear yourself?!

**Barnabas:** That *grunt* shows you I'm listening.

**Samantha:** It feels flippant, hurtful, and dismissive.

**Barnabas:** Flippant *and* dismissive. Well.

**Samantha:** I'd just rather you use your words to say exactly what you mean instead of hiding behind grunts and rhetoric!

**Barnabas:** Your coffee is getting cold.

**Samantha:** You—

**Barnabas:** Coffee.

**Samantha:** I can hardly stand you.

...

You know, this is why we've had to start seeing Jordan. He doesn't dismiss me.

**Barnabas:** Bully for you.

**Samantha:** I wish you'd take me more seriously Barnabas! I'm talking to you.

**Barnabas:** Yes dear and that's *all you ever do*.

**Samantha:** Forgive me for trying to speak to my husband!

**Barnabas:** You know, perhaps I'd be less tired of all this fucking talk if you'd agreed to the separate bedrooms.

**Samantha:** *It's not christian!*

**Barnabas:** And Jordan is?

**Samantha:** Jordan is an angel. How dare you!

*(Barnabas grunts strangely)*

**Barnabas:** You know, Jordan told me he finds you shrill.

**Samantha:** No he did not! When did he say that?

**Barnabas:** His last weekend here. On my morning with him.

**Samantha:** I don't believe you!

**Barnabas:** Ask him when he gets here.

**Samantha:** I just might.

...

**Barnabas:** You don't really think something happened to him, do you?

**Samantha:** I don't know, we can't be sure.

**Barnabas:** The odds of something disastrous aren't high.

**Samantha:** My heart just worries for him. Even if he's not hurt he could be afraid.

**Barnabas:** He's such a brave man, I doubt he'd be afraid.

**Samantha:** He drives a Subaru, those are good cars. Sturdy cars.

**Barnabas:** Sturdy cars.

**Samantha:** Susanna drives a Subaru.

**Barnabas:** Well that's because Susanna is a lesbian dear.

**Samantha:** She is not a lesbian! What a horrible thing to say!

**Barnabas:** She is! Why else do you think Grace is there so often?

**Samantha:** They play *bridge* together Barnabas don't be crass.

**Barnabas:** I didn't know Susanna could still "*play bridge*" at her age. Good for her!

**Samantha:** Oh you—let's focus our energies on Jordan for the time. Should we check the news?

**Barnabas:** I hate the news now. They changed the anchor.

**Samantha:** They changed the anchor?!

**Barnabas:** Yes, instead of Dale it's some kid named Dave.

**Samantha:** That's an outrage. Dale is the face of calm in this country, you can't just replace him.

**Barnabas:** So news is out of the question.

**Samantha:** Out of the question.

**Barnabas:** What else can be done?

**Samantha:** We could call him!

**Barnabas:** Oh, that's good. Let's do that. Go go go.

*(Samantha rushes off stage to call. RIIING. RIIING. RIIING. No one's home)*

**Samantha:** *(off)* He didn't pick up!

**Barnabas:** Try again!

*(RIIING. RIIING. RIIING. No one's home)*

**Samantha:** *(off)* Barnabas!

**Barnabas:** I'm thinking!

*(Samantha enters)*

**Samantha:** Dear, I'm starting to think this could be serious.

**Barnabas:** Is there anything else we can do?

**Samantha:** Mailing something would take too long.

**Barnabas:** I think we just have to wait.

**Samantha:** Oh god. I hate to wait.

**Barnabas:** I know.

**Samantha:** It brings out the worst of my worries.

**Barnabas:** I know.

**Samantha:** I need you to stay strong for me, if you begin to despair I don't know what I'll do.

**Barnabas:** Okay.

*(They wait)*

**Barnabas:** What do you think will happen to us if Jordan...?

**Samantha:** If what?

**Barnabas:** If he is...

**Samantha:** Don't say that!

**Barnabas:** I didn't! But truthfully, what do you think will happen to us? I know he is the reason you've been happier of late.

**Samantha:** You as well dear. I've never seen you more chipper than your mornings with him.

**Barnabas:** You as well.

**Samantha:** He slots so nicely into our routines.

**Barnabas:** And he doesn't get in the way.

**Samantha:** And he responds brilliantly to correction.

**Barnabas:** Like the whistling!

**Samantha:** Like the whistling!

**Barnabas:** He stopped the instant you told him to.

**Samantha:** It grates on my nerves.

**Barnabas:** I know! It's why I quit a long time ago.

...

**Barnabas:** Why did you suggest him in the first place, Jordan?

**Samantha:** Oh I don't know. I'd heard from a few friends having someone like him around kept things moving at home. Gray life isn't always thrilling.

...

**Barnabas:** I'm okay with how things have worked themselves out, but you know... you could have talked to me about some things instead of finding us a replacement.

**Samantha:** He's not a replacement.

**Barnabas:** Maybe he is.

**Samantha:** I don't want to talk about this anymore.

**Barnabas:** Typical.

...

**Samantha:** I'm beginning to despair.

*(For the first time, Barnabas gives her his undivided attention)*

**Barnabas:** Come here.

*(They hold each other)*

**Samantha:** It's so dreadful outside. I hope he's okay.

**Barnabas:** I'm sure he is.

**Samantha:** We can't know that.

**Barnabas:** We can't. But I'm sure he'd do just about anything to get to you.

...

**Barnabas:** Do you remember in Paris when we ran alongside the Seine for what felt like hours? We couldn't have looked more like tourists in our walking shoes and giant hats. You were in front of me, I watched your hair take the shape of the wind—remember how short it was then? I thought in that moment, "I've never seen anything more beautiful" and I ran twice as fast to keep up. I didn't want to lose you.

...

**Samantha:** But I was still faster.

**Barnabas:** I never did catch up.

**Samantha:** I remember you yelled at me for tripping on the way back. I lost my footing and you nearly fell into the river. You said "next time I won't catch you."

...

I've never resented you, you know. I've just always been a little bit disappointed.

**Barnabas:** I didn't mean to disappoint you as often as I have.

**Samantha:** Nothing that can be done about it now. My coffee's gone cold, would you like me to make you one?

**Barnabas:** It's 7:30.

**Samantha:** So? We could be up all night waiting for him.

...

**Barnabas:** Yes please, make me one.