

At The Bottom Of The Sea, or The Bathtub Play

By  
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*NOTE: This play is designed to be done in a bathroom, and I specifically wrote it to be done in the home of 2425 Cromwell Circle, Apt. 212 Austin, TX 78741, with the idea a presentation would allow about four to five audience members into the space (or bathroom) at a time with flashlights to light the actors. However, almost any bathroom can support this play, at least most of the bathrooms I have come to know. Furthermore, this play could easily be done on most stages, with the actors in a bathtub.*

*(A cool autumn night. I think. The sounds of a carnival are heard.)*

*(Children laughing.)*

*(A roller coasters racing.)*

*(Charlie and May are in the bathtub. It is filled bubbles, surrounded by candles, and the two drink from a bottle of vodka. The bubbles create a "screen" or "curtain" so they actors are not nude. It is important the audience never see the actors fully nude. They kiss. He rubs her neck.)*

MAY

That dress looked good on me.

CHARLIE

Looked good on you.

MAY

It's short in the sleeves. It doesn't cover my wrists.

CHARLIE

What kind of fabric is it?

*(He runs his hand down her stomach. It disappears in the water.)*

CHARLIE

I asked you what kind of fabric the dress is made from.

MAY

Don't know. I have some mail for you.

CHARLIE

Still? What kind?

MAY

Personal letters. Birthday cards.

CHARLIE

Who are they from?

MAY

How would I know? You're not supposed to open other people's mail.

CHARLIE

That never stopped you before.

MAY

That was hurtful.

*(The sounds of a rollercoaster can be heard. She then guides both of his hands under the water.)*

MAY

*(Yelling.)* Both hands! Both hands! *(Whispering.)* Good. Good boy.

*(May runs her fingers over his lips in a figure eight pattern. Then she drinks from the bottle of vodka and kisses Charlie.)*

MAY

So, do you kiss your new wife in front of my daughter?

CHARLIE

I'm leaving. Drop the kid off at my place in the morning.

MAY

Please don't...

CHARLIE

She's our kid, not your daughter. I am doing the father thing for you.

MAY

You don't have to brag about it.

CHARLIE

You know, Candace wanted to come here this weekend.

MAY

Why didn't she?

CHARLIE

She felt like she would be infringing on your time with the kid.

MAY

My time the kid? That's nice of her. After all, Candace gets to see our daughter five days a week. Does Candace smoke in front of my daughter, like her father does? Does Candace drink in front of my daughter the way her father does?

CHARLIE

I want the kid home in the morning.

MAY

Please. I'm sorry. I would just like to spend some time with you and Molly.

CHARLIE

You mean Molly. Spend some time with Molly.

MAY

She is asleep right now. And the new wife thinks you got a hotel room.

*(Silence. Then, he drinks from the bottle of vodka.)*

CHARLIE

Are you still job hunting?

*(She takes his hands again and puts them under the water again.)*

MAY

Both hands, Sweetie! Both hands!

CHARLIE

Don't yell. You will wake the kid.

*(She rubs her thumb over his lips in a figure eight.)*

CHARLIE

Are still looking for a job?

MAY

We are in a recession.

CHARLIE

Of course.

MAY

Molly wants to go to the carnival tomorrow, but I don't think she should be riding things like carnival things at her age.

CHARLIE

We used to ride carnival things like that.

MAY

No. We used to ride the ferris wheel. She wants to ride roller coasters. Do you remember the first time we kissed?

CHARLIE

By the roller coaster at Coney Island.

MAY

No. It was under the ferris wheel. We had pink cotton candy. That was the first cotton candy I ever tasted. The crystals stuck to your lips, and made them taste like strawberries.

*(She kisses him.)*

CHARLIE

You wore a white Ramones t-shirt that night. With a blue flower behind your ear.

MAY

You pulled the flower out my neighbor's lawn. Like you owned the street. You looked good that night. You won me a stuffed animal. A purple Tasmanian Devil, Molly calls him Dizzy Devil. You won him playing the coin toss game. On the glass plates. The first time we made love I was wearing that Ramones shirt. You ripped it in half, right down the middle. You said "I would go to the bottom of the sea with you."

CHARLIE

That was a long time ago.

MAY

No it wasn't. It was yesterday to me.

*(Silence.)*

*(Then. She takes his hands and puts them under the water once again.)*

MAY

*(Whispering.)* Both hands. Both hands, baby.

*(Silence.)*

*(Then. Charlie drinks from the bottle.)*

CHARLIE

I got a promotion. Last Monday.

MAY

Charlie, that's wonderful.

CHARLIE

The company wants me to move to Sacramento. Candace wants to take the kid.

MAY

Please.

CHARLIE

You will still have some weekends and the holidays.

MAY

I won't let you.

CHARLIE

You don't have custody.

MAY

California?

CHARLIE

I'll pay for plane tickets. So the kid can visit.

MAY

What about you?

CHARLIE

What about me?

MAY

You need to say something. You need to say something to me now.

*(The sounds of a rollercoaster can be heard.)*

MAY

I looked nice in that dress today.

CHARLIE

Yes you did. What kind of fabric did you say it was?

MAY

I don't know.

*(She takes a drink. She then takes his hands and places them under the water.)*

MAY

*(Softly.)* Both hands. Both hands. Both hands. Both. Hands.

*(Children playing can be heard in the distance at a carnival. Then a carnival caller can be heard.)*

THE END