

MORE OF YOU

By Debbie Lamedman

MORE OF YOU

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MORE OF YOU

For Minke and Annette. The two loves of my life.

MORE OF YOU

More of You was originally produced as part of the Pop-Up summer staged-reading series at Theatre 33 in residence at Willamette University, Salem, OR. The production was directed by Mia Apodaca and the cast was as follows:

EVIE.....Christa Fenton
MIRIAM.....Raissa Fleming
LUMIE.....Mathieu Voisine
MICAH/KEWPEE.....Jillyn Chang
CLAUDE CAHUN.....Spike Iverson

MORE OF YOU

CAST: 2F/1NBM/1NBF/1Any Gender
6 Characters/5 Actors

EVIE: (Pronounced Eve-ē.) Female, late 30s, early 40s. Caucasian. Jewish. Scattered and chronically anxious, but very smart and intuitive. Profoundly sad for a variety of reasons but always tries to cover it with humor. She is a professional photo retoucher/graphic digital imagist.

MIRIAM: Female. Late 70s, early 80s. Caucasian. Evie's Mother. She is the quintessential New York Jewish mother but should not be played as a stereotype. She is not a caricature. She is kind and loving, and only wants her daughter to find happiness and fulfillment.

LUMIE: (Pronounced Loom- ē.) Nonbinary. Assigned male at birth. Any race or ethnicity. Evie's husband. Lumie is just coming to terms with his/their nonbinary status. He is a perfect blend of masculine and feminine. He hasn't come out to anyone except his therapist. Lumie is very much in love with Evie but is afraid to tell Evie for fear it will negatively impact their marriage.

*MICAHA: Nonbinary. Assigned female at birth. Lumie's therapist. Any race, ethnicity, or gender. Feels it's very important for Lumie to come out to Evie and is encouraging. Micah realizes the longer Lumie waits to tell Evie, the harder it will be for both of them.
*Doubles as KEWPEE.

*KEWPEE: Any age. Any gender. Any race or ethnicity. Is the personification of everything that is right, beautiful, and celebratory about being queer. Bold, over-the-top, larger than life, and very benevolent.
**KEWPEE Dolls were created by cartoonist Rose O'Neill. She described the characters as "a sort of little round fairy whose one idea is to teach people to be merry and kind at the same time." Their name, often shortened to Kewpees, is derived from Cupid, the Roman god of erotic love. *Doubles as MICAHA.

CLAUDE CAHUN: Nonbinary. Early 20s. Assigned female at birth. Caucasian. Claude was a real person (25 October 1894 – December 1954) a French surrealist photographer, sculptor, and writer. Claude did not stipulate pronouns, and mostly went by the pronoun "she." For the purposes of this script, I will refer to Claude as "she." Her birth name was Lucy Schwob, and she adopted the pseudonym Claude Cahun in 1914, at the age of 20. She is best known for her self-portraits, in which she assumes a variety of personae. The actor playing Claude must understand French and use a French accent.

MORE OF YOU

Setting

The living room of Evie and Lumie's small bungalow in Portland, OR. Also, Evie's car, and Micah's office. *The car and office settings do not need to be fully realized.

Time

Fall 2018

Notes on Staging

The primary set is the living room of Evie and Lumie's house. The other locations should be done very minimally. Micah's office is two chairs facing each other on a lit downstage portion of the stage. The same thing can be done for Evie's car. Please try to alleviate any blackouts after the scenes. Each scene should easily flow into the next with light shifts that don't include blackouts. *The play should run without intermission but, if necessary, please take the Act Break after Scene 8.

Text in Brackets

The italicized text in the brackets is the literal English translation of the French Claude speaks. It is not meant to be spoken; it is merely there to guide the actor. The quotation marks that appear around some of Claude's lines are specifically their words written in their memoir *Disavowels*.

Scene Breakdown (*No spoken lines)

Act I

Scene 1: EVIE, MIRIAM, LUMIE

Scene 2: MICAH, LUMIE

Scene 3: LUMIE, EVIE (*MIRIAM), CLAUDE

Scene 4: EVIE, MIRIAM

Scene 5: EVIE, LUMIE

Scene 6: EVIE, KEWPEE

Scene 7: EVIE, LUMIE

Scene 8: EVIE

~Act Break~ (If taking an intermission, please put the act break here.)

Act II

Scene 9: LUMIE, MICAH

Scene 10: EVIE, CLAUDE

Scene 11: EVIE, MIRIAM

Scene 12: EVIE, LUMIE, *MIRIAM, *CLAUDE *KEWPEE

MORE OF YOU

MORE OF YOU

ACT I
SCENE 1

Late afternoon in fall. A living room in a small bungalow in Portland Oregon.

The living room flows into the dining area. We see a small area of the kitchen just off the dining area. MIRIAM is setting the table for dinner. EVIE enters holding a laptop, tote bag, reusable grocery bags, and her cell phone. She is out of breath. She tumbles into the room and drops everything onto the nearest piece of furniture.

EVIE. Aaaahhhhhh!

MIRIAM. Bad day at the office, Eveala?

EVIE. I am a traitor to my gender! I hate myself.

MIRIAM. *(Crossing to Evie, retrieving the grocery bags.)* What happened?

(Evie plops down on the couch. She opens her laptop and shows something to Miriam.)

EVIE. Look at this! Look at what I did.

(Miriam stares at the laptop for a moment. Is silent. Shakes her head.)

MIRIAM. Uh ... that's a picture of whatshername. Looking perfect like a typical Hollywood shiksa. So?

EVIE. She does look perfect, right?

MIRIAM. They always look perfect. That's why women are all so messed up. No one looks that good without help.

EVIE. I know! She looks perfect because I made her look perfect. Take a look at the before. *(Evie clicks on laptop and hands computer to Miriam.)*

MIRIAM. *(Laughing.)* This is the before picture?

EVIE. Yup.

MORE OF YOU

MIRIAM. No make-up? (*Evie shakes her head.*) I think that looks better than all that crap she has on her face.

EVIE. Well, yeah! Look closer. (*Miriam leans in closer to view the photo.*)

MIRIAM. Hmm ... I don't know. Looks like she's got a little bit of a skin problem, maybe?

EVIE. Exactly. And check out her cellulite. She's got cellulite! Just like every other woman in her 40s.

MIRIAM. She does not have cellulite. I'll show you cellulite.

EVIE. (*Pointing to the screen.*) Right there. And there. Little pockets of cottage cheese. Just like me. Except I have big pockets.

MIRIAM. I still think she looks good. Pockets of cottage cheese and all. And I think you look beautiful always, my Shayna Maidel. (*Miriam caresses Evie's face and looks at her adoringly.*)

EVIE. Thanks Mom. Yes, she's lovely. And I like this photo better than the retouched one too.

MIRIAM. So that's why you're in such a snit?

EVIE. I'm in a snit, because the "powers that be" don't want to use the before picture. The Hollywood Shiksa doesn't want to use the before picture. They like my work. I'm almost too good at what I do!

MIRIAM. Of course, you're good. My Eveala can do anything she sets her mind to ...

EVIE. Yeah! I'm also a total sell-out to women. And men. No one looks this good. No one.

MIRIAM. But Eveala, it's your job.

EVIE. It's a horrible job. I'm what's wrong with the world today. I'm why little girls have eating disorders!

MIRIAM. We go through this every time you work on people. On the faces. On the bodies. You don't ever seem to have this problem when you manipulate photos of nature. That big mountain in the snow? You didn't care about smoothing out those wrinkles ...

EVIE. Yes, I did. It pains me. It hurts my heart to retouch mountains and sky and animals in their natural habitat.

MIRIAM. But you do it so well.

EVIE. Sadly. It's a cruel joke.

MIRIAM. You make a good living.

MORE OF YOU

EVIE. But how do I live with myself?

MIRIAM. *(Still laughing.)* Oh, Darling. Stop being so dramatic. You're not a traitor. You're just trying to make your way in this fakakta world.

EVIE. *(Flat.)* This is my life.

MIRIAM. So, what's wrong with your life? It's a very nice life.

(EVIE slams down the cover of the laptop, leans back on the couch and lets out a big sigh.)

EVIE. I'm so sad.

MIRIAM. Sweetheart, come. I roasted a chicken. *(Evie crosses to the table and sits. Miriam sits next to her and puts her hand over Evie's hand.)*

MIRIAM. Don't be so sad, darling. You have a wonderful life. A wonderful husband. You have always made me so proud of you. *(Beat.)*

EVIE. I have to put the groceries away.

MIRIAM. Sit. Sit. Let me do it. You rest. *(Miriam takes the grocery bags and exits to kitchen. We hear her unpacking the bags. She calls from offstage.)* Oy Gevalt, Evie. Why do you buy so much drek, huh? Frozen dinners, cookies, ice cream. Well ... the ice cream, I understand.

EVIE. I need comfort food. All I really want is to eat your roasted chicken. It's the best. *(Miriam enters carrying a roasted chicken and a large bowl of salad.)* Your chicken is way better than Costco's.

MIRIAM. Well, I should hope so!

EVIE. Your chicken has healing properties or something in it. Always makes me feel better after I eat it. *(Miriam crosses to Evie on the couch.)*

MIRIAM. Oh, my Shayna Punim, it's time you started roasting your own chickens.

EVIE. I can't cook.

MIRIAM. You never wanted to learn.

EVIE. Are we really going to have this argument again?

MIRIAM. I'm not arguing with you Mamaleh, I only want happiness for you. And roasting a chicken is not the hardest thing in the world. You should cook for that husband of yours once in a while.

EVIE. He cooks for me.

MIRIAM. That's what I mean. You should cook for him once in a while.

EVIE. Why should I cook a chicken when I can get a perfectly delicious rotisserie chicken at Costco for \$4.99? It's the best bargain in the world.

MORE OF YOU

MIRIAM. I do like a good bargain. *(Evie's cell phone buzzes. She takes it out and reads the text.)*

EVIE. From Lumie. He's on his way. He wants to know if he should pick anything up for dinner.

MIRIAM. Tell him I made a chicken. He should come home right now and eat it while it's still hot!

EVIE. *(Texting.)* Come home! Exclamation point. We have chicken! Exclamation point.

MIRIAM. Very good. You and your little contraption, there. *(She stands.)* I'm going to go.

EVIE. I thought you were staying for dinner. You cooked!

MIRIAM. You should have a quiet, decent meal with Lumie. You don't need an old lady intruding.

EVIE. You're not intruding, Mom. I love having you here. *(Miriam kisses Evie and heads for the door.)*

MIRIAM. It's better I go. I'll see you tomorrow, darling. *(Miriam exits. Evie sighs and drops back down on the couch. Opens her laptop again.)*

EVIE. *(Scrutinizing her work.)* Maybe if I only asked for projects that didn't involve people ... I could keep my dignity? *(Looking closely at the screen.)* Ohhhhh ... I don't know. *(The door opens. Lumie enters. Evie continues to stare at her computer screen.)*

LUMIE. *(Crosses to Evie and kisses her.)* Hello, my Love. Whatta ya doin' sitting there talking to yourself?

EVIE. Suffering.

LUMIE. What? Why? What happened?

EVIE. I hate my job ...

LUMIE. You love your job.

EVIE. No. I love what I do. But I hate the people I do it for.

LUMIE. What happened? *(Evie shows Lumie the image on the laptop. Lumie looks at laptop.)* Oh, that's whatshername ... she looks good. Or did you do that?

EVIE. No! I mean, yes, I did that. But she looks good without my help. She looks great, in fact. And they won't let me run the before pic. They want to use this one.

MORE OF YOU

LUMIE. Let me see the before. (*Evie brings the other image up. Lumie studies it for a moment.*) What's wrong with this one?

EVIE. Nothing! Nothing is wrong.

LUMIE. Okay...what does your boss say is wrong?

EVIE. This. (*She points.*) And this. (*She points.*)

LUMIE. (*Leaning in closer to look.*) It's so minor.

EVIE. I know! That's exactly what I said.

LUMIE. So?

EVIE. They said the client wants to be retouched. She is self-conscious about her skin and thighs.

LUMIE. Oh, please ...

EVIE. That's what I said! She has an opportunity to take a stand here. A stand for all women. She can say, "This is what I really look like. I am forty-five years old, and this is what I look like, and I'm proud of it." But instead, she wants to perpetuate the myth that you can be forty-five and look twenty. What's wrong with looking forty-five?

LUMIE. Oh, Love. You're so upset.

EVIE. I am. I want to quit. I hate that this is what I do. That I'm adding to the eating disorders of the world. And providing income for plastic surgeons.

LUMIE. Don't take that on! You can't be responsible for the entire "I want to be beautiful" culture.

EVIE. Why not? I'm part of the problem. I'm not making this world a better place. I'm making it worse. And I hate myself for it.

LUMIE. Evie ...

EVIE. I should go be a social worker or something.

LUMIE. Really? You?

EVIE. (*Chuckles.*) Shut up!

LUMIE. You have a skill that you're really good at. And then you found a job that pays you to use your skills. So many people don't get that opportunity.

EVIE. I might as well have sold my soul to the devil.

LUMIE. Can you please stop beating up my wife?

EVIE. No. (*Beat. Lumie sighs. He has been through this many times.*)

LUMIE. I'm not exactly saving the world in my job, am I?

MORE OF YOU

EVIE. No, but you are helping humanity. In a way. You're building lovely little helpers who will make life easier.

LUMIE. I don't love my job, either. It's not art!

EVIE. But engineering *is* art. Sort of. Little androids who will help us clean up the world!

LUMIE. And what happens when the robots take over?

EVIE. Oh. Well. I say let 'em have it. I'm sick of this world.

LUMIE. Oh, E! *(Beat. Lumie changes the subject.)* I smell chicken! And I'm starving. You texted we had chicken. We have chicken, right? Or am I hallucinating that aroma? *(Evie is still staring at the laptop, lost in thought.)*

EVIE. What?

LUMIE. Dinner? Chicken?

EVIE. Oh. Yeah. We have chicken. We should eat.

LUMIE. Where'd it come from? Costco?

EVIE. ...

LUMIE. Come on. Evie! Forgot about work for now. Put the laptop away, and let's just have a nice dinner, okay? *(Lumie crosses to the table, sees the chicken, and the set table.)* You already set the table? And put out the chicken. You're amazing. You feel like crap, but you did all this anyway. You're the greatest! *(Evie closes the laptop and moves to the table. She seems almost surprised to see the table set with the chicken.)*

EVIE. I didn't ... I ...

LUMIE. And salad. This looks delicious. *(Lumie sits and starts cutting the chicken. Evie seems dazed.)* Thanks for doing this. I'll pick up dinner tomorrow night, and I'll cook this weekend, okay?

EVIE. Yeah. Sounds good. *(Evie sits and slowly dishes up the salad. Lumie takes a bite of the chicken.)*

LUMIE. Mmm. So good. Where'd you get it?

EVIE. The chicken?

LUMIE. Yeah. It's really good. This didn't come from the grocery store, did it? It's too good.

EVIE. The chicken?

LUMIE. *(Laughing, then speaking slowly, succinctly.)* Is there an echo in here? Yes! The chicken. It. Is. Good! Would you like some?

MORE OF YOU

EVIE. Why are you talking like that?

LUMIE. Because you're repeating everything I say, silly! (*Piling chicken on her plate.*) Here. Eat this. We'll both feel better.

EVIE. Food as reward.

LUMIE. What's wrong with that? (*They dig into their food and eat in silence for a moment.*) Where did you say this came from? It tastes homemade! Must be Costco, yeah? (*Lumie continues to eat. Evie stares at the chicken. Lights dim on Evie as we move immediately into Scene 2.*)

SCENE 2

Lumie stands and crosses to another part of the stage and sits in a chair. MICAH, Lumie's therapist enters and sits opposite Lumie. Evie remains onstage in dim light, clearing the table and then exits to the kitchen.

MICAH. Do you have any idea why you're putting off talking to Evie about everything?

LUMIE. Oh, that's easy. Fear.

MICAH. What's the fear? What's the worst-case scenario?

LUMIE. She'll leave me.

MICAH. Yes. That's a possibility. But the reality is that if you don't have the conversation, you'll remain in limbo. Living in limbo, essentially. You have to stop hiding from her, Lumie.

LUMIE. I know. I know. I feel sick about it all the time. Every day I think, "today's the day," and something happens that completely throws me off track, or Evie says what a horrible day she's had, and I can't make it more horrible by telling her. So, I don't know what to do.

MICAH. I've asked you this before, I'll ask again. Would it help to bring Evie in here with you for a session?

LUMIE. No. She'll feel trapped. She'll feel like we're ganging up on her. I can't do that. It has to be one-on-one just me and Evie.

MORE OF YOU

MICAH. Okay. I see how distressed you are over this. Would it help to set a timeline? Make a date?

LUMIE. I've tried that. It doesn't work. I'm very good at talking myself out of things.

MICAH. Okay. Well, let's switch tactics for a minute. Let's decide, hypothetically, that you're not going to tell Evie. And you continue living your life as you are currently. What does that look like?

LUMIE. *(Big sigh.)* Oh, God.

MICAH. Mmm ...

LUMIE. I'm so screwed. *(Lumie starts laughing, the laughter quickly turning to tears. Micah gives Lumie space to have these very full emotions. Lumie reaches for the Kleenex box. Blows nose. Wipes eyes. Takes a deep breath. Beat. Voice quivering.)* I don't know what to do.

MICAH. Okay. So, for the time being, you keep doing this. You keep coming to see me. At least you'll have an outlet of sorts. You don't have to keep everything bottled up.

LUMIE. This does help.

MICAH. Why don't we try acting out a scenario?

LUMIE. What do you mean?

MICAH. Talk to me as if I were Evie.

LUMIE. Oh ...

MICAH. Think of it as a test drive. There is nothing to lose here. So, let's see how a conversation between the two of you might go. Okay?

LUMIE. Okay. *(Lumie adjusts his position in the chair. Takes a deep breath and shakes out his arms to prepare himself. Takes another breath, then looks up at Micah.)* Hi Evie.

MICAH. Hi.

LUMIE. Can I talk to you about something?

MICAH. Of course.

LUMIE. Something that's been weighing on my mind for a long time.

MICAH. Oh? Tell me.

LUMIE. I ... well ... I think ... I mean, I know ... I know that ... *(Lumie breaks the scene and talks to Micah as Micah and not as Evie.)* I can't do this.

MORE OF YOU

MICAH. *(Staying in the scene)* What do you know, Lumie? Obviously, this is very important. Just talk to me. I'm your wife. *(Lumie takes another deep breath.)*

LUMIE. You know how you mentioned the other night that it's been a really long time since we had sex?

MICAH. Yes?

LUMIE. And I said it's because we're both so tired all the time ...

MICAH. And I agreed ...

LUMIE. And that's definitely part of it. And also, you know, you're just now starting to feel better from all the stress and anxiety you've been going through ...

MICAH. What are you trying to tell me, Lumie?

LUMIE. I'm trying to tell you that — First of all, I want you to know that I love you very, very much. Okay?

MICAH. Okay.

LUMIE. And I would never do anything to intentionally hurt you.

MICAH. LUMIE! You're stalling! What are you trying to say?

LUMIE. That I ... I've known for a while now. I've known for quite some time ... that ... I'm —

MICAH. Gay? Are you gay?

LUMIE. *(Startled.)* What? Micah, you know I'm not gay!

MICAH. I'm not Micah! I'm Evie.

LUMIE. Oh. God. She's gonna think I'm gay!

MICAH. *(as Micah.)* Then you need to tell her who you are. And you need to be confident about it.

LUMIE. But I'm not confident about it.

MICAH. Who are you, Lumie? *(Lumie clears his throat, sits up straight in the chair and looks directly at Micah.)* Evie?

MICAH. *(as Evie again.)* Yes?

LUMIE. I've known for some time now that I am ... I feel like ... I ... my true self ... I believe ... *(runs the next sentence together very quickly.)* I am a nonbinary person ... *(Lights shift.)*

SCENE 3

MORE OF YOU

During the shift, Micah exits, and Evie takes Micah's place. We are now back in Evie and Lumie's living room as Lumie and Evie continue this conversation.

EVIE. Nonbinary?

LUMIE. Yes.

EVIE. But what does that mean, exactly?

LUMIE. It means um ... there is no binary?

EVIE. Oh my God.

LUMIE. What, Love? It's not a bad thing.

EVIE. Nonbinary? You're calling yourself something you can't even explain! I don't understand what you're telling me.

LUMIE. Okay ... well, it's —

EVIE. *(Interrupting.)* Why are you telling me this now? What does this mean, Lumie? Does it mean you don't want to be married to me anymore? That this whole marriage was a fraud? That you want to be with another woman? Or a different ... I don't know ... *person?*

LUMIE. No! No! It doesn't mean that at all. I'm so very much in love with you and there isn't anybody else I'd rather be married to. But I haven't been honest with you or myself. I've been questioning my gender identity for a long time now. You've known about some of it, right?

EVIE. I guess. I just ... I'm not sure I understand. You think you're a woman?

LUMIE. No!

EVIE. ...

LUMIE. But I don't think I'm all man either. Fuuuuuck!! Why is this so hard to explain? *(Long pause. Evie is visibly upset. Lumie is struggling. Evie is struggling. There is a long, awkward silence.)*

EVIE. So ... you're saying you don't want to be a woman. You don't want to be a man ...

LUMIE. I know. It's very confusing for me. And now for you.

EVIE. I am confused. This feels like it's coming out of nowhere.

LUMIE. It's not out of nowhere. It's been going on for a while for me.

EVIE. And you decided to tell me now.

LUMIE. Yeah. I had to work up some cour —

MORE OF YOU

EVIE. *(Interrupting. Getting angrier.)* — ooh ... your timing is incredible.

LUMIE. I'm sorry. But when would have been a good time?

EVIE. I'm just now starting to come out of the worst —

LUMIE. Evie! I know that. But how long would you want me to wait?

This is what I'm going through now and I need to share it with you.

EVIE. *(Angry.)* Uh-huh. So not a man. Not a woman. Then what the hell are you? An alien?!

LUMIE. Evie! *(Evie stands and looks at Lumie and shakes her head with incomprehension. The front door opens. It's Miriam. Evie sees her, Lumie does not. Miriam holds her arms open, and Evie runs to Miriam, and they exit out the front door. Lumie, left alone, bursts into tears. Lights fade on Lumie on the couch. A figure appears in another part of the stage. The figure is not in the living room. The figure exists in time and space. As lights come up, we see CLAUDE with a cocktail in her hand. Laughing. Posing. Proud. Claude is wearing something fabulous.)*

CLAUDE. Bonjour! je m'appelle Claude! You have not heard of me, no? Early 20th-century artiste, oui? Surrealist photog, oui? No? You have not heard of me? Ah. Many of my contemporaries were shining very bright; I was often ignored. And maybe my androgyny? Maybe that hurt my exposure? I do not know. I do not care! I do not need fame. Only love. With my Marcel. I need only art. Only peace for my people. My work, always under the glare of a Nazi regime just waiting to take away our glorious roaring 20s as you Americans called it. They called me Jew. They called me Queer. I was lucky to escape them. Barely. But I fought hard to try and help the others. And I was not successful. And my heart. So full of sorrow. Still ... that loss will always be a great weight to bear. The roaring '20s are coming again, are they not? The 21st century version. My goodness, nothing has changed. They will still call me Queer. They will still call me Jew. They will still come after me for being different. But ... Viva La Difference, oui? We have always been here. We will always be here. Acceptance is so much easier than denial. The 21st century. I used to think I was born out of my time. I used to think I belonged to this future. This time. And I simply assumed by now people would have come to their senses and would finally understand what I have known all along. We are

MORE OF YOU

all the same in one way or another, oui? We all bleed the red blood, do we not? So ...

I am working on a new self-portrait. It must be just so. Juste ce qu'il faut! [*Just right.*] Composition is everything, oui? (*Claude looks around. Looks at the audience. Laughs again.*) Today I am he. Tomorrow I am she. Next week? Who knows? I am me. Claude. "Masculine? Feminine? It depends on the situation. Neuter is the only gender that always suits me." (*Claude begins walking back and forth across the downstage area and addresses the audience directly. Perhaps even singling out specific people.*) Are you a girl? Or are you a boy? C'est quoi le problème? [*What is the big deal?*] Why should that matter? As an artiste, I am a personne, n'est-ce pas? [*a person, isn't that so?*] The meaning of my artistic endeavors? To grab a hold of your heart, oui? And squeeze. I can be either man or woman to do that, n'est-ce pas? (*Claude raises her glass to the audience.*) Salut! (*Claude takes a hearty swig of the drink, blows a kiss to the audience, and disappears into the shadows.*)

SCENE 4

*Solo light up on Evie. Having come from the house, she is now sitting in her car. A dim overhead car light glows. *Note: the following poem Evie speaks should not be singsong. She doesn't recite it like a rhyme — it's more extemporaneous.*

EVIE. I am alone
Adrift at sea
And then I spot
So suddenly
All the people
Who once loved me
I row and row and row till when
The sun has set
I'm soaking wet
And where have all my loved ones gone?
They disappeared with the

MORE OF YOU

dawn and now again alone at

sea I'm tired and needing company

Why do my loved ones always leave me? (*Miriam enters the car.*)

MIRIAM. Really? This is how I taught you to be?

EVIE. What are you talking about?

MIRIAM. Sitting here in the dark. Feeling sorry for yourself?

EVIE. I'm not.

MIRIAM. You are. (*EVIE sighs.*)

EVIE. I am.

MIRIAM. Yes. And that poem ...

EVIE. What about it? I thought it was good. Spontaneous.

MIRIAM. Drek. Don't try getting it published.

EVIE. Mama!

MIRIAM. I'm not going to coddle you.

EVIE. It's how I feel. It just came out.

MIRIAM. You're lonely.

EVIE. Very. And now ...

MIRIAM. Now?

EVIE. Lumie ...

MIRIAM. Lumie is a gift. Lumie loves you like a love I've never seen before.

EVIE. But he's not what he appears to be.

MIRIAM. And who is?

EVIE. Me?

MIRIAM. Really? Ask yourself if that is the truth. We all have our deep secrets, darling. Lumie is open to sharing his with you.

EVIE. But it's his identity! He's not who I thought he was.

MIRIAM. I'm trying to tell you no one is who they think we are. Your father certainly wasn't.

EVIE. Daddy? He was a good man.

MIRIAM. Yes. Of course. But he kept his secrets from me. And that was fine. I had my own. You cannot possess a person, Eveala. Mind, body, soul. You can't. It's not healthy.

EVIE. What were your secrets, Mom?

MORE OF YOU

MIRIAM. (*Smiles slyly*) Oh ... I always wondered what if I had married Bernie Lowenstein.

EVIE. The boyfriend before Dad?

MIRIAM. And during!

EVIE. You dated two guys at the same time?

MIRIAM. I sure did! I wanted to be certain.

EVIE. And after you married Daddy? Were you sorry?

MIRIAM. No, darling. Never sorry. But everyone has moments when you think, “what would my life have been if I went down this path instead of the one I went down?”

EVIE. I wouldn't be here, that's for sure. Or I would be here, but I wouldn't be me. I'd be part Bernie Lowenstein.

MIRIAM. Yes, true. And I wouldn't trade you for the world. Just as you are. That's love.

EVIE. So ... you're saying ...

MIRIAM. I'm saying you would be a fool to throw away the love of someone like Lumie.

EVIE. But he says he's not a man!

MIRIAM. That is not true! Hear him out.

EVIE. I thought you, of all people, would be horrified. I thought you'd tell me to get away from him as fast as I could.

MIRIAM. Eveala. I have always known that love should never be wasted, or haphazardly thrown away. Especially not the way you and Lumie love each other.

EVIE. I don't know if I can love him in the same way now.

MIRIAM. Yes. Love changes. (*Beat.*) It's like when you spill water on the table.

EVIE. I'm not following you.

MIRIAM. Okay. You spill a little water. Maybe on a plastic tablecloth or something. The water pools. And then it rolls. And it moves out of a perfect circle and becomes another shape. But it's still water. (*Evie looks at Miriam blankly.*)

MIRIAM. You still don't follow?

EVIE. No. I get it. It's a weird analogy, but I see what you're saying.

MORE OF YOU

MIRIAM. Good. So Lumie doesn't feel like a man. Doesn't feel like a woman? He's still a person. A human being. And he's still Lumie. Still filled with all the love he has for you. Why would you throw that away?

EVIE. I don't want to. But I'm scared. And I don't understand what he wants or what he needs. And what if he does decide to transition?

MIRIAM. Transition? Like me?

EVIE. No. Not that kind of transition. That's what they say now when someone wants to change their gender.

MIRIAM. Did he say he wants to change?

EVIE. No. But that would seem to be the next step.

MIRIAM. So, wait for that step. And then we'll figure it out. It may never come.

EVIE. Oh boy. I'm so confused.

MIRIAM. So is Lumie. That's why he told you. He needs you to help him with this.

EVIE. I'm no help. I'll make it worse.

MIRIAM. Promise me something, Eveala.

EVIE. What?

MIRIAM. Don't run. That only complicates things. You're in a marriage. You stay. You talk. You work things out together.

EVIE. This is a big one, Mama.

MIRIAM. All the more reason to stay.

EVIE. What if we can't work it out?

MIRIAM. What if I married Bernie Lowenstein? What if, what if? You can't know until you know.

EVIE. That makes no sense.

MIRIAM. That makes perfect sense.

EVIE. Oh, Mama. I miss you so much.

MIRIAM. What? What? I'm right here. And I'm right here. *(Puts her hand on Evie's heart)* And we're talking now, yes? *(Evie puts her head on Miriam's shoulder. Miriam strokes her hair.)*

EVIE. Yes.

MIRIAM. Will you go into the house, now?

EVIE. Yes.

MIRIAM. And don't go to bed angry. That's no good.

MORE OF YOU

EVIE. We might be up all night talking this out.

MIRIAM. So? Isn't your marriage worth losing a little sleep?

EVIE. Yes. Of course it's worth it. Okay. I won't go to bed angry.

MIRIAM. My Eveala. You always take the hard road. Make things simple for yourself. Tell Lumie how you feel. You two are a good match, and he's scared too.

EVIE. Okay. I will.

MIRIAM. Good girl.

EVIE. Mama?

MIRIAM. Yes, my darling?

EVIE. I love you so much.

MIRIAM. I feel it all the time. I do. And you ... my love for you is ... I don't know. I don't have the words. But it is enormous.

EVIE. I know. *(Miriam kisses Evie on the top of her head.)*

MIRIAM. Now, go. Go to that husband of yours. And work this out. Goodnight, my Eveala. You have my permission not to go to that facackta job you hate so much if you wind up talking all night. *(Evie laughs.)*

EVIE. Thanks, Mom! I appreciate that! You want to write me a note?

MIRIAM. I would if I could. *(Miriam is gone. Evie is once again alone in the solo light. She lets out a big sigh and enters the house.)*

SCENE 5

Lumie is lying on the couch, with a pillow over his face.

EVIE. Lumie? *(Lumie, surprised, jumps up abruptly.)*

LUMIE. You came back.

EVIE. I never left.

LUMIE. You're so mad at me.

EVIE. I don't know what I am. Mad. Surprised. Betrayed. Surprised.

LUMIE. Betrayed?

EVIE. Well ... yes ...

LUMIE. How?

EVIE. You must have known all along about this ... what do I call it? Predilection?

MORE OF YOU

LUMIE. It's not a predilection. That makes me sound so creepy. This isn't a fetish, Evie.

EVIE. Then what? I want to understand. But this scares the shit out of me.

LUMIE. What scares you?

EVIE. I don't know. That you'll leave me? Or you're gay and you're in love with a man. Or you're trans and want to be a woman. And even if you want to stay with me, I don't know if that's something I could do. Be with you if you want to be a woman. But maybe I could. I mean, I like women. I've been —

LUMIE. (*Interrupting*) First of all ... could you please come and sit by me? (*Evie reluctantly sits next to LUMIE on the couch.*) I'm not gay. And I'm not trans. I don't feel male or female. It's very hard to explain because I haven't completely wrapped my brain around it. But the best way I can explain it to you is ... You know how you've told me how sometimes you just hate your body. You hate your stomach, you hate your thighs, breasts, arms ... you think you should lose weight, you don't feel attractive, and you have even said to me you wished you could get another body?

EVIE. Yeah. That's been an ongoing thing since forever. I can remember thinking that when I was 10 years old.

LUMIE. Okay. Right. And it feels horrible! That feeling is constant, always with you, right?

EVIE. Of course. I remember one time, I was walking into work, and I saw myself in the reflection of a window, and I thought, "oh my God, I look awful! I'm so fat. I can't go to work looking like this." And I turned around and came home and took a sick day. I mean, that's CRAZY!

LUMIE. But it's not. It's not crazy. Everybody feels that way from one time or another. Even your so-called "perfect" models and actresses.

EVIE. Yeah. That's true.

LUMIE. So, for me ... it's not a weight thing. It's a gender thing. There are times when I hate my body. Sometimes I hate the masculine parts of me. I hate my hairy chest and/

EVIE. (*Overlapping*) I love your hairy chest/

LUMIE. /you know how sometimes I'll just shave everything off my face, and you get sad 'cause you love it, but I can't bear to look at myself anymore with a beard.

MORE OF YOU

EVIE. I just thought you changed your facial hair because ... because you wanted a change. A new look. I always envied that you could change how you look just by shaving.

LUMIE. Yeah. Well ...

EVIE. But that's how you feel? You hate looking at yourself with a beard? Really?

LUMIE. Sometimes. It's body dysmorphia. In my case, it's called gender dysphoria.

EVIE. Gender dysphoria ... *(Beat.)* So, when you shave your facial hair, do you want to ... I don't know ... wax your whole body?

LUMIE. I've thought about doing it.

EVIE. NO! Sorry. But ... no!

LUMIE. I've thought about it. I don't know if I will or not. I used to shave my legs, you know?

EVIE. For cycling.

LUMIE. That's what I told people.

EVIE. Oh my God! See, that's why I feel betrayed.

LUMIE. I'm sorry. I'm dealing with a lot of shame. That's why I'm seeing Micah. They're helping me.

EVIE. This is a lot.

LUMIE. I know.

EVIE. Is this the real reason why you haven't felt like you wanted to be intimate with me?

LUMIE. Yes. Maybe. You were so fragile for so long because ... And we've both been under a lot of stress. But the body/gender stuff certainly doesn't help. *(Beat.)*

EVIE. You hate your penis.

LUMIE. You hate your stomach.

EVIE. We're quite a pair, aren't we?

LUMIE. We are the perfect pair. Just stay with me, Evie. Stay with me. Don't give up on me. We can work through this.

EVIE. It just feels like I'm losing all the people I love.

LUMIE. You have not lost me. I am still very much here! And you are my bashert.

MORE OF YOU

EVIE. I used to think we were meant to be. Bashert. But now I don't know.

LUMIE. We are. We make a great team. And bashert is my favorite word, and you are my favorite person ever!

EVIE. I'm not leaving. I have nowhere to go. But this is a lot ... this is like, this is big!

LUMIE. I know it's a lot. But I had to tell you. I want to help you understand this, as much as I want to understand it myself. I want us to go through this whatever it is, together. Does that make sense?

EVIE. I guess.

LUMIE. I need you, Evie.

EVIE. I know. I need you too. But this ... it feels so soon after ... I mean, I just went back to work ... I'm still having a hard time coping ... and now this ...

LUMIE. I know. Bad timing.

EVIE. (*Anger starting again.*) If you know, then why didn't you wait? Why did you have to tell me now?

LUMIE. Because ... I thought it was better for you to know. It's not going away, and I've been going crazy sitting on this. Micah encouraged me to tell you.

EVIE. Micah, huh?

LUMIE. My therapist.

EVIE. Yes, I know who Micah is.

LUMIE. Well ... they encouraged me to talk openly with you about it.

EVIE. Uh-huh. And do they know what I've just been through?

LUMIE. Yes. Of course.

EVIE. And I guess they thought I was done being the needy one and now it's your turn?

LUMIE. No! Evie ...

EVIE. I'm going to bed.

LUMIE. You're so angry.

EVIE. No, I'm not. I'm processing. This is me. Processing. (*Beat.*) I'm gonna sleep in the guest room.

LUMIE. Wow. You *are* mad.

MORE OF YOU

EVIE. I just ... I need to be alone tonight. I need to figure out what I'm feeling. Don't take it too personally.

LUMIE. Really? You don't want to sleep in the same bed with me, but I shouldn't take that personally?

EVIE. It's not all about you, Lumie.

LUMIE. No. It's not. But it's not all about you either!

EVIE. Fine. We both need a little space. *(Beat.)*

LUMIE. Don't ... sleep in the guest room.

EVIE. *(Sharply.)* Lumie, just let me take some time!

LUMIE. No, I meant ... take the bed. I'll sleep upstairs. *(Beat.)*

EVIE. *(Softer)* You sure?

LUMIE. Yeah. You hate that bed. I want you to get some rest.

EVIE. Don't you hate that bed, too?

LUMIE. *(Smiling.)* I'm not as much of a "Princess and the Pea" as you are.

EVIE. I know. Sorry.

LUMIE. Don't be. Just ... try to get some sleep. We'll figure this out, okay?

EVIE. 'Kay. *(Lumie starts to cross to Evie, who doesn't move. He decides against it.)*

LUMIE. Okay. G'night. *(Evie nods. Lumie exits. Evie crosses to the couch and sits. She yawns and lies down on the couch. She pulls a blanket over her and closes her eyes. Lights change as Evie falls asleep on the couch.)*

SCENE 6

*Lights change again as we enter Evie's dream state. A character, KEWPEE, in shadow appears. Evie sits up on the couch rubbing her eyes. Kewpee steps out of the shadow and sits on the arm of the couch next to Evie. Kewpee pulls out a nail file and starts filing their nails. Kewpee is startling in their presence and larger than life. Kewpee could be covered in positivity slogans for LGBTQ+ in rainbow colors, of course. *This scene should have a surreal, dreamlike quality to it.*

MORE OF YOU

KEWPEE. (*Filing nails. Almost nonchalantly.*) You've gotta stop blocking me, baby.

EVIE. Who the hell are you? Why are you in my house?

KEWPEE. You know exactly why I'm here. You need to let me stay.

EVIE. No. You're a stranger.

KEWPEE. (*Laughs.*) A stranger? Hardly. I'm you.

EVIE. Bullshit.

KEWPEE. I'm you. I'm Lumie. I'm Miriam. I'm everyone.

EVIE. You are what is wrong with the world.

KEWPEE. Harsh! Honey, I am what's right in the world. If people understood that, there would be no damn war!

EVIE. You think pretty highly of yourself, don't you?

KEWPEE. Why shouldn't I? There's nothing wrong with me. Or you. Or Lumie. There's a huge, beautiful bell curve out there, and we all have our place on it. But ... people fear difference. I'm not what they expect. And when I enter their lives, they run. Some run. Not all. Lumie stopped running. You need to stop running too.

EVIE. You're trying to take him away from me.

KEWPEE. On the contrary, dearest ... I am bringing you closer.

EVIE. Not true. (*Kewpee tosses the nail file, leaves the couch and commands the living room.*)

KEWPEE. Why so afraid, sweet'ums? We've met before. Remember? (*Kewpee does a twirl, a dance, some type of fitting movement.*)

EVIE. Yeah. That was a flock. A phase. I was so young.

KEWPEE. There are no flocks. There is experimentation, granted. But no flocks. And love is love is love is love is love/is love is love is love is love

...

EVIE. IT WAS NOT LOVE. IT WAS —

KEWPEE. (*Sings the word.*) LOVE!

EVIE. No! (*Beat.*) Curiosity.

KEWPEE. Um ... I seem to recall you said you wanted to spend the rest of your life with her!

EVIE. That was a long time ago ...

KEWPEE. I seem to recall you always dressing in men's clothing.

EVIE. It was trendy.

MORE OF YOU

KEWPEE. I seem to recall you contemplating changing your name to something more gender —

EVIE. *(Interrupting)* I WAS A BABY. Twenty years old! It was a *phase!*

KEWPEE. I seem to recall ...

EVIE. STOP!

KEWPEE. *(Laughing kindly.)* But if the shoe fits, baby ...

EVIE. I was naïve and easily influenced!

KEWPEE. No, doll. You were searching for your true self, and you weren't scared back then to seek it out. Why so scared now, hmm? *(Beat.)*

EVIE. Lumie hasn't explored as much as I have. I suppose he needs to do this now.

KEWPEE. But with Lumie, it's more than exploration. I think this is who Lumie is meant to be.

EVIE. I don't think so. *(Kewpee beckons to EVIE. Extends hand.)* What are you doing?

KEWPEE. Come to me. I have something for you.

EVIE. No! I don't want you here!

KEWPEE. But you just said ... Lumie needs to do this.

EVIE. No, he doesn't. He's confused.

KEWPEE. Uh-uh. Nope. Not even in the slightest. Lumie is clear-headed. Lumie knows now who they are.

EVIE. Stop calling him "they."

KEWPEEE. Preferred pronouns, buttercup!

EVIE. *(Sadly.)* I'll leave him. I know I will.

KEWPEE. You can't.

EVIE. Why not?

KEWPEE. You need each other. You and Lumie are Soulmates. Two lobsters in the same pot! Bashert.

EVIE. How do you even know that word? Are you suddenly Jewish?

KEWPEE. I am you. I am Lumie. I am everyone. I have an extraordinary vocabulary. Polylingual! Including Hebrew and Yiddish! *(Beat.)*

EVIE. He is causing me hurt right now. Just when I thought I was healing

...

KEWPEE. *(Lovingly.)* You never fully heal from any loss ... especially this current one, moi chérie.

MORE OF YOU

EVIE. I know.

KEWPEE. But you're doing so much better, darling. And you mustn't hold Lumie back. Or hold yourself back. *(Beat.)* Come to me.

EVIE. I don't think I can. *(Kewpee reaches for Evie's forearm.)*

KEWPEE. Oh, honeybun. You're shaking. You're so scared.

EVIE. I'm just cold.

KEWPEE. What if I promised you — what if I could guarantee your life with Lumie would not only remain solid, but the two of you would thrive?

EVIE. You can't do that.

KEWPEE. Why not?

EVIE. Because there are no guarantees in life.

KEWPEE. But this is your dream, my Love Bucket. I can show you what your life would look like.

EVIE. So now I'm in a Dickens novel and you're the ghost of Christmas Future? No! Go away! Leave me alone! I'm going back to sleep. *(Evie rolls over on her side with her back to Kewpee and lights go down on the living room. It is dark. We see shadow. Lights shift and change, and we see Kewpee lying on the other end of the couch with Evie. They are toe-to-toe. Kewpee is playing footsie with Evie. Evie rolls onto her back. Eyes closed she is laughing as she plays footsie. Abruptly she sits up with a start and sees she's been playing with Kewpee. Evie immediately gets off the couch and crosses away from Kewpee.)*

EVIE. I thought I told you to get out of here!

KEWPEE. You were having fun. You were laughing.

EVIE. I thought you were someone else.

KEWPEE. Lumie?

EVIE. Yes.

KEWPEE. I am Lumie.

EVIE. No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no!

KEWPEE. I am Love.

EVIE. No! You are the destruction of my marriage.

KEWPEE. Why are you clinging to that? It is false. You know it is.

(Beat.)

EVIE. *(Fearful.)* I don't want Lumie to transition to a woman.

MORE OF YOU

KEWPEE. Oh, snuggle bunny ... Lumie doesn't want to transition into a woman either.

EVIE. It's the next inevitable step.

KEWPEE. (*Singsong.*) You weren't listening ...

EVIE. Yes, I was.

KEWPEE. Okay. Good. You have been through a lot of difficult change, my Sweetness. No wonder you're fearful. But now you must listen to me, muy bonita!

EVIE. What?

KEWPEE. You have to open your arms. Let Lumie be who they are. If you shut Lumie out, or box them in, you will lose them. Accepting Lumie will enhance everything you already have. This change will be for the better! (*Beat.*)

EVIE. I'm so scared.

KEWPEE. Thank you for your honesty, doodle bug.

EVIE. I don't want another partner.

KEWPEE. Of course you don't. But GOOD NEWS!!! (*Kewpee does a little dance as if in a musical.*) You have the one you're meant to be with. You don't need to look for another.

EVIE. My Bashert.

KEWPEE. Yes ... (*Beat.*)

EVIE. Please. Go away.

KEWPEE. Please. Embrace me before I leave. Let me give you a gift.

EVIE. Don't take Lumie away.

KEWPEE. (*Sighs. Not impatiently. Always kind.*) Oh, Treasure ... You haven't heard me ...

EVIE. Yes, I have!

KEWPEE. Listen clearly, babycakes! I'm not taking Lumie away. I'm not interested in taking Lumie away. Lumie is there for you. Lumie loves you. Lumie needs your acceptance. But if you don't ever give it, Lumie will not change for you. That would be impossible. To go against nature. Accept. Embrace. Love. Stay.

EVIE. If I say yes, can I go back to sleep?

KEWPEE. If you say yes, you must show me. Show us. Show yourself.

EVIE. You want me to give you a hug?

MORE OF YOU

KEWPEE. Yes, I do. And I want to give you a gift.

EVIE. Now?

KEWPEE. Now. *(Kewpee rises from the couch. Evie stays where she is. Kewpee starts to cross to EVIE.)*

EVIE. *(whispers.)* Now?

KEWPEE. *(hushed tone.)* Yes. *(Kewpee reaches Evie. Holds out arms as Evie closes her eyes. Breathes heavily. Kewpee wraps Evie in the embrace. Evie lets out a whimper, ducks down and away from Kewpee and runs off. Kewpee stands alone. Kewpee sighs.)* Poor little jitterbug. So close to understanding. But not close enough. *(Kewpee takes out a little plastic Kewpee doll from inside their clothing and places it on the couch cushion where Evie had been sleeping. Kewpee speaks directly to the doll.)* Do your thing, little Kewpie doll. Make your magic. Shoot your cupid's bow and help these two lovers unite once again. *(Kewpee exits out front door. Lights shift.)*

SCENE 7

Morning. Evie, in her bathrobe, enters from the kitchen with a cup of coffee. She goes to the couch and sees the doll. She picks it up and looks at it in wonder.

EVIE. *(To the doll)* Oh my goodness! I haven't seen you in ages! Where did you come from all of a sudden? *(Evie continues looking at the doll. Then gives it a quick kiss and sets it back down on the pillow. She drinks her coffee and stares at the doll. Beat. Lumie enters dressed for work, sees Evie and starts to cross to her. Then moves back to the kitchen for coffee. Lumie returns with coffee and crosses to Evie. Evie sees Lumie and raises her cup as if in a toast. Lumie smiles and reciprocates. There is awkward silence between them. A long beat as they both drink and ponder.)*

LUMIE. Thanks for making coffee. *(Evie nods.)* Are you ... are you going to work today? *(Evie sniffs and rubs her eyes. It's clear she's been crying. She takes a tissue out of her robe pocket and blows her nose.)*

EVIE. No. I don't see how I can. *(Lumie crosses to the couch and sees the doll. Picks it up so he can sit down.)*

MORE OF YOU

LUMIE. What's this?

EVIE. Oh. It's a ... ya know, it's a ... Kewpie doll.

LUMIE. I know what it is. Where did it come from?

EVIE. *(Slight chuckle)* From another lifetime.

LUMIE. Yeah? And you brought it out of retirement? *(Lumie chuckles and drinks coffee.)*

EVIE. I guess I must have. But I don't remember doing that. I didn't even know I had it anymore. *(Lumie holds the doll, examining it.)*

LUMIE. How long have you had it?

EVIE. Ages and ages. Someone I used to know won it for me at an arcade. That night ... at the arcade ... that was quite a night. *(She gets lost in the memory.)* Everything was different then, and I ... oh God ... I was so young and ... *(Beat.)* Anyway, it doesn't matter anymore. The doll ... it became something special, I guess.

LUMIE. Someone you used to know?

EVIE. *(Still lost in the memory.)* Yeah.

LUMIE. Someone special?

EVIE. Yeah.

LUMIE. An ex? *The ex?*

EVIE. Lumie ...

LUMIE. I'm just interested.

EVIE. It doesn't matter anymore. It was a long time ago.

LUMIE. But she broke your heart.

EVIE. Yeah. She did. But that's ancient history now, and I've been told the heart is resilient.

LUMIE. It is.

EVIE. I'm not so sure about that. I'm not sure my heart can take one more break.

LUMIE. I know. I'm sorry. *(Looking at the blanket pushed aside and the creased pillow.)* Did you sleep out here last night?

EVIE. Yeah. I must have fallen asleep on the couch. And then in the night, I had this weird dream, and it woke me up, so I went inside. The doll was on the pillow when I came in. So strange. But maybe I got up again sometime in the night? I don't know. God, I hope I'm not sleepwalking!

LUMIE. Do you want me to stay home with you?

MORE OF YOU

EVIE. No!

LUMIE. Okay. Do you want some breakfast? I have a little time to make you something to eat.

EVIE. Stop it!

LUMIE. What?

EVIE. Stop trying to take care of me. Stop mothering me.

LUMIE. I'm not. I wasn't. I was gonna scramble some eggs.

EVIE. (*Sharp inhale trying not to cry.*) I can't eat. I can't work. I can't sleep. I just want to sit and stare and think of nothing. My brain can't handle one more thing.

LUMIE. I get it.

EVIE. Really? What exactly do you get?

LUMIE. I get that you're running through so many emotions right now and you're feeling overwhelmed.

EVIE. (*Mutters to herself.*) You always know everything, don't you?

LUMIE. No. I don't. But I know you're hurting. And I will do anything to help you through this.

EVIE. This? What is this?

LUMIE. Evie! You're being so antagonistic. It's not a good time for us to talk.

EVIE. You just said you would do anything to help me get through this.

LUMIE. I will. But you're really angry with me.

EVIE. SO? You won't let me pick a fight with you? That's not doing anything to help.

LUMIE. How would fighting help you?

EVIE. You are the object of my rage!

LUMIE. I know. But I'm not ...

EVIE. You're not what? Gay?

LUMIE. That's not what I was going to say. But no! I'm not gay. I told you that.

EVIE. Then what is going on? What's happening to us?

LUMIE. Love, you're mixing up two things. Two very important things. It's not my sexual orientation that's in question.

EVIE. Then why don't we have sex anymore?

LUMIE. I explained why last night. I thought you understood.

MORE OF YOU

EVIE. Then why do you act like my roommate instead of my husband?

LUMIE. That's not true. That's absolutely not true and you know it.

EVIE. I don't know it.

LUMIE. I don't think I've been acting like a roommate. I've struggled with telling you what's going on with me because this is exactly what I was afraid would happen. I'm not pushing you away; I'm trying to bring you closer. By telling you this. By not hiding anymore. *(Beat. Breathes.)* And the sex? It's all wrapped up in this confusion I'm having. Not sexual confusion. Gender confusion. This is about gender. I tried explaining all this last night and obviously didn't do a very good job. *(Beat.)* Sometimes you make me tongue-tied. Nervous. I'm a nervous wreck talking to you about this. Saying it out loud to someone other than Micah. Saying it out loud to you! I don't want this to change our relationship, but obviously it's going to. I just hate ... I sometimes hate my body. And it's got nothing to do with you, or your body, or not being attracted to you, because I am so very attracted to you. It's me. It's my ... equipment. I loathe it. And I've been trying ... so hard ... to make it easier for you ... but I can't pretend any — *(Lumie is emotional and starts to break down slightly. Evie takes a sharp breath and looks at Lumie. She softens slightly.)*

EVIE. Like me and my stomach.

LUMIE. Exactly.

EVIE. I don't like you to touch me there.

LUMIE Right.

EVIE. And you don't like it when I touch you?

LUMIE. Of course I like it. It feels good. And it's you! But then I get in my head about it, and I feel ashamed, and I imagine you're as disgusted as I am, and so I want you to stop.

EVIE. Wow. That's fucked up!

LUMIE. No kidding. *(They look at each other, and after a moment, they both burst into laughter. Very spontaneously. They share the same deep-seeded issues and at this point, all they can do is laugh about it.)*

EVIE. *(Still laughing.)* We're both so fucked up!

LUMIE. *(laughing.)* I know! *(The laughter winds down. Lumie takes Evie's hand.)* I can stay home with you today if you want.

MORE OF YOU

EVIE. No. I think ... I think I need to quit my job today.

LUMIE. Really?

EVIE. The worst possible time for me to quit, but I can't tolerate going there one more day.

LUMIE. I support whatever you decide.

EVIE. It's all a lie. Everything I do in my work is a lie.

LUMIE. If it's making you this upset, you should definitely quit.

EVIE. But I need to work. I need money.

LUMIE. We're doing okay. I think you should take some time off considering everything that's going on. Take the time to find something you really like.

EVIE. But I need money.

LUMIE. We're okay.

EVIE. *I* need money.

LUMIE. Whatever I have is yours, you know that.

EVIE. So, if I ask you for a hundred grand, you'd give it to me?

LUMIE. For what?

EVIE. To run away. Start a new life. Be someone else. You want to be someone else, why can't I?

LUMIE. (*Despondent.*) Evie ... you still want to leave me?

EVIE. I want to keep my options open.

LUMIE. Oh, God.

EVIE. I'm sorry. I can't help thinking about it. I know that's not what you want to hear, but ...

LUMIE. I would be devastated.

EVIE. I didn't say I'm doing it.

LUMIE. But you're making an escape plan.

EVIE. It's how I've always handled all the shit in my life. I run away. Fight or flight, ya know?

LUMIE. And how did that work out for you in the past?

EVIE. Ha, ha! Yeah, yeah. Doesn't work. I know that. I don't really want to go ...

LUMIE. Then ... stay. Stop trying to fight with me. Stop trying to push me away. Stay and we'll work together to work this out. (*Beat.*)

EVIE. Should I really quit my job?

MORE OF YOU

LUMIE. Yes! It's making you miserable. Quit!

EVIE. But then I'll be one of those women I despise.

LUMIE. What do you mean?

EVIE. Living off my husband. Taking knitting classes and life-drawing classes to occupy my days. And complaining about the world and doing nothing to fix it. And spending your money to buy myself trinkets to make me feel better about myself. You'd come home from work, and I'd be lounging in bed eating truffles. How disgusting! (*Lumie laughs in spite of himself.*)

EVIE It's not funny.

LUMIE. (*Still chuckling.*) I'm sorry. But I was imagining you lounging in bed with some fancy negligee and taking bites of chocolate and spitting them out.

EVIE. (*Serious.*) I would totally do that. I would totally take one bite of each piece. And then spit them out. (*Beat.*)

LUMIE. First of all, it's our money, not my money. You're not living off me. Our income is our income. And I can't imagine you taking meaningless classes just to occupy your days.

EVIE. (*Half-joking.*) You never know. I've always wanted to learn how to use a potter's wheel.

LUMIE. (*Sighs.*) You need a break. A mental break. A physical break. The people at your work don't appreciate you. You need to find a place where you're appreciated.

EVIE. It doesn't exist. I'd have to work for myself. And I don't even appreciate me.

LUMIE. If you want to freelance, I think that might be a good transition for you.

EVIE. Ohhhhhh ... transition! There's that word again! Hey! How did we get to talking about my career? I thought we were talking about our marriage. (*Beat. Lumie grabs his backpack.*)

LUMIE. I have to go.

EVIE. No eggs, then?

LUMIE. You should have spoken up sooner. I've got a busy morning. I need to get gas, have a session with Micah, and meet with my supervisor.

EVIE. Session before work? Is that wise?

MORE OF YOU

LUMIE. It was the only time available this week. It's fine. I'll be fine.

EVIE. And meet with your supervisor? Whatta day and it's not even 8:00. What's wrong? Not enough output?

LUMIE. Just the opposite. I think I'm getting a bonus.

EVIE. Mazel Tov. Lucky you!

LUMIE. My money is our money, remember?

EVIE. Sure. So... we're not done right? Talking?

LUMIE. We are so far from being done talking about this. You'll be here when I get home?

EVIE. I told you ... I have no place else to go. *(Beat as Lumie looks closely at Evie.)* I'll be here. *(Lumie crosses to Evie and kisses her on the cheek. Evie steps away from Lumie, then reconsiders and grabs him in a huge bear hug that almost knocks him over and kisses him passionately. The kiss lasts for a long moment. They move out of the kiss. Lumie holds on to Evie.)*

LUMIE. *(Hugging Evie.)* It's okay. It's gonna be okay. I got you.

EVIE. But who's got you? *(They move apart from each other. Lumie picks up his backpack and starts for the door.)*

LUMIE. You do. *(Lumie exits as we move immediately into ...)*

SCENE 8

Evie crosses to pick up her cell phone. She sits on the couch holding the phone and stares at it. She rehearses her side of the conversation.

EVIE. Hey, Joe. *(Stops.)* No. Too informal. *(Clears throat and begins again.)* Hello, Joseph. *(Stops again.)* What the fuck? Nobody calls him Joseph. Nobody says hello. Why is this so hard? Just call him and quit! Jesus! *(Evie scrolls through her phone, finds the number and pushes the call button. Holds phone up to her ear. Evie speaks into the phone)* Joe? Oh. Hey Allie, is Joe in yet? No? Oh. Okay. Um ... can you tell him ... can you give him a message for me, please? Yeah. Just tell him ... um ... tell him I'm not coming in today and — What? The client's coming in today? No! It was scheduled for next week. Check your calendar.

Check it. I'm absolutely positive — they changed it to today? Well, I can't make it in. Sorry. I can't. Everything you need is on my des — *(Beat.)* No,

MORE OF YOU

Allie. You're not my boss. You don't get to tell me whether or not I come to work. I don't care if the client is coming. It's not my problem they changed the appointment without notice.

(Beat.) You know what you can tell them? You can tell them I quit! I quit because I'm sick and tired of retouching the cellulite of a 45-year-old woman and attempting to make her look 25. I'm sick of it. I'm not doing it anymore. I'm not lying anymore. You can tell that to the client. And you can tell that to Joe. And you can put that in your pipe and smoke it! I. Quit. You got that? Don't call me back. *(Evie hangs up and throws the phone onto the sofa.)* Oh my God. I think I'm gonna be sick. *(Evie runs off.)* [**If taking an Intermission, please put the Act Break here.**]

END OF ACT I

***THE PLAY IS NOT OVER!! TO FIND OUT HOW IT ENDS—
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