

# Five Frickin Winters

By  
Kim E. Ruyle

# FIVE FRICKIN WINTERS

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## FIVE FRICKIN WINTERS

*Five Frickin Winters* was originally produced by Gotham City Players at Viera Studio for the Performing Arts in Melbourne, Florida, in June 2022.

### Cast

Roger Quill.....Ben Ruyle  
Carm Ruiz.....Nancy Matican-Bock  
Kat Robins.....Becky Behl-Hill  
Kev Robins.....David Hill

### Production Crew

Director..... Nancy Matican-Bock  
Stage Manager.....Leslie Roth  
Production Design.....Nancy Matican-Bock  
Tech Supervisor.....Mike Mellen  
Lights and Sound.....Alkh Schoolfield  
Costumes.....Nancy Matican-Bock  
Tech Crew.....Haley Osborn  
Tech Crew.....Tali Schreiber  
Tech Crew.....Ciara Trotter  
Tech Crew.....Rayne Schoolfield

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CAST: 2 Women, 2 Men

<u>ROGER QUILL</u>	Male; 60-ish, intelligent but some rough edges; in reasonably good shape. A writer.
<u>CARM RUIZ</u>	Female; 50s, bouncy, brainy, and brash. Employed as a golf pro.
<u>KAT ROBINS</u>	Female; 50s, a simmering, volatile brew of intensity. Employed as a nurse. Kev's wife.
<u>KEV ROBINS</u>	Male; 60s, retired, simple, and amiably tottering through life. Kat's husband.
<u>COURIER</u>	Doubled off-stage voice by actor playing Carm.
TIME:	Summer 2017.
SETTING:	The adjacent condos of Roger and Kev/Kat somewhere in Florida.
SET:	Condo living area consisting of kitchen/dining area with dining table, four chairs; a living area with sofa, a couple of armchairs, and one or more end tables and lamps; door to exterior; door to bedroom; door to bathroom. The set is rapidly modified between scenes to reflect differences in the living areas in adjacent condos. There's a large, prominent painting on the wall in Roger's condo of a fierce, sword-wielding Celtic warrior. The condo of Kev and Kat can be distinguished by slightly repositioning the furniture, changing or adding a tablecloth, adding a throw to the sofa, and changing the painting on the wall to a prominent surrealist print that suggests absurdity, perhaps a work by Picasso, Dali, or Magritte.
RUNTIME:	~110 Minutes.

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## ACT 1 SCENE ONE

*Early Saturday afternoon in Roger's condo. An unopened bottle of scotch in the middle of the dining table. A t-shirt thrown over a chair. A pair of men's tennis shoes and pair of women's sandals on the floor near the table. Roger lies face down on the sofa wearing only jeans. Kat, wearing just a sun dress, straddles him, massages him, and sweetly spins her story.*

**KAT.** And then the old gal said in this feeble, shaky voice: *Thank you, Alice. I looove you.*

**ROGER.** *Alice?*

**KAT.** She thought I was her daughter.

**ROGER.** Oh.

**KAT.** Her mind's going, you know... But I didn't correct her. Just kept massaging her legs. Her calves and feet... And she just laid there with her eyes closed, humming. Every once in a while, she'd murmur. *Alice... Alice... I looove you, Alice.*

**ROGER.** You've got a tender way, Kat.

**KAT.** Yep... Funny thing. Well, not really funny. She can be so damn sweet, but then when her daughter – when Alice – does come to visit, the old gal can suddenly turn real nasty. You wouldn't believe the words fly out of her mouth. She calls her the C word, you know, cunt this, fucking cunt that.

**ROGER.** *Jesus.*

**KAT.** Yep. One minute, a sweet old lady. The next, she's a witch just... Just projectile vomiting awful, poisonous words.

**ROGER.** Well, the clinic's lucky to have you to – *(Kat grabs and jerks Roger's waistband.)*

**ROGER.** Hey!

**KAT.** Loosen your pants.

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**ROGER.** What for?

**KAT.** Easier to get your lower back.

**ROGER.** It's just my shoulder.

**KAT.** I know. Do it. Loosen your pants. *(Roger turns, gives a skeptical look. Kat gives a commanding nod to: Do it! Roger reluctantly unbuttons and unzips his jeans and lies back on his belly. Kat rubs his lower back. Moves up and down the back, gradually becoming slow, sensual.)*

**ROGER.** What the hell are you doing? Use some pressure. *(Kat yanks his jeans halfway down his butt. Roger jerks and turns which throws Kat to the floor. Roger stands, hikes up, and buttons his jeans as Kat stands and throws her arms in the air.)*

**KAT.** What the hell?! You trying to kill me!

**ROGER.** The hell is right! *(A doorbell rings. Kat dashes to the bedroom closing the door.)* WHO'S THERE?

**COURIER.** *(Off, raised voice from outside.)* Package for Roger Quill.

**ROGER.** A MINUTE! *(Roger grabs the t-shirt and pulls it on as he crosses, barefooted, to open the door. He steps partly through open door. A beat, then he steps back in holding a thick overnight envelope. The unseen courier giggles as Roger closes the door. He throws the package on the table then notices he's unzipped.)*

**ROGER.** Shit. *(Roger zips up, falls into chair, looks toward bedroom, then cradles his head in his hands. Kat peeks out from bedroom.)*

**KAT.** Why don't you come to the bedroom? We'll finish the massage.

**ROGER.** No way. *(Aside.)* No fucking way. *(Roger shifts his gaze to the bottle of scotch and pulls it near. He picks up the package, studies it. Kat enters, hair a bit mussed, barefooted. Roger sits and stares at the package as Kat comes behind, wraps her arms around his neck and kisses his ear.)*

**ROGER.** Christ! What the hell are you doing? A wet willy? *(Kat smiles, leaves her hands on his shoulders. She looks to the bottle of scotch and grin turns pensive.)*

**KAT.** You didn't open it. *(Roger slaps the package down, turns to Kat.)*

**ROGER.** Come on, Kat. You've got to tell me. What were you doing there? You just said a massage. And then you go and... And... I think you should leave now. *(Kat sits and wears a smirk. No response.)* You're just going to ignore –

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**KAT.** I meant the scotch. You didn't open it. *(Roger gives exasperated sigh, grabs scotch bottle.)* Fifteen years. You can't backslide now.

**ROGER.** Hell, I can't. And stop changing the subject. What the hell?

**KAT.** But you won't. Backslide, I mean. Let me take it home, give it to Kev. *(Indicating the package.)* Is that...?

**ROGER.** Yeah. And you're still avoiding –

**KAT.** Open it. *(Roger just stares, no response.)* Or we can finish the massage. Still have some time.

**ROGER.** He drives the golf cart slowly as he drives his car, yeah, probably lots of time. But that's not the issue. There's no way we're... God! What were you thinking? *(Uncomfortable pause.)* Are you going to leave? Go home?

**KAT.** You never go out with him. Golfing. You really should. He'd love it. You know he adores you.

**ROGER.** *(Sighs, dismissively wagging head.)* I need to think.

**KAT.** Think about golf or the package? Or the scotch? Or maybe you're thinking about me.

**ROGER.** Yeah. Wondering what the hell's going on with you. *(Turning attention from Kat to the package.)* And asking myself if I can endure five fucking winters in Minnesota.

**KAT.** But why five?

**ROGER.** At least five. What I need to sock something away.

**KAT.** Thirty years you've worked. Already. Thirty years!

**ROGER.** So, what's another five? But for those fucking winters.

**KAT.** You're doing okay. Stay. *(Kat rises, hugs Roger's neck and kisses his cheek in spite of his attempt to shrug her off.)*

**ROGER.** Damn it, Kat. Stop it! Just stop it! *(Roger stands, crosses room, turns back.)* What's wrong with you?! *(Kat approaches, but Roger avoids her and returns to the table. Kat takes a moment, thoughtfully studies the fierce Celtic warrior in the painting, then turns.)*

**KAT.** Please stay. Things are dead in the winter. Here, we're alive! You've got a good life here, Rog.

**ROGER.** I've got shit.

**KAT.** No interest in Judy?

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**ROGER.** I'm talking about assets. I've got no bank. No capital. Worst of all, no goddamn inspiration.

**KAT.** I was afraid you might like her.

**ROGER.** A woman isn't an asset. And she's no inspiration, either. Bored hell out of me.

**KAT.** Good. I don't like to share.

**ROGER.** *Share?* Christ, what do you think's happening here?

**KAT.** I can be your inspiration. Or maybe you find me boring, too.

**ROGER.** Didn't say that. But *sharing*? Shit. You can't... This... This is not a thing. We are not a thing! You understand that, right? We're not doing this. God, what's going on with you? You okay?

**KAT.** More than okay. Simply adjusting my priorities. About time I did, too. And what *thing*? I'm not making any demands, and don't tell me you wouldn't enjoy it. Damnit, Rog! You're so uptight. Relax. Get comfortable.

**ROGER.** *Comfortable?*

**KAT.** Don't tell me you're conflicted.

**ROGER.** Fucking A. Exactly what I am.

**KAT.** God! Get over it! *(Tapping on the door. Kat gasps, grabs sandals, and rushes to exit to bedroom. Roger hesitates, then crosses to open the front door. Kev enters.)*

**KEV.** Hot out there.

**ROGER.** Yeah. Get you something to drink?

**KEV.** Uh, sure.

**ROGER.** I've got water... Or scotch. *(Kev shrugs, takes a seat at table, looks around. He studies scotch bottle as Roger retrieves water.)*

**KEV.** Thought Kat might be here. Car's in our drive, but she ain't home.

**ROGER.** *(Taking a seat.)* Uh, yeah. She's in the bathroom. You've got a good wife, Kev. Just gave me a hell of a shoulder massage.

**KEV.** *(Noticing bathroom door ajar, confusion clouds face.)* She in the bathroom?

**ROGER.** Uh, yeah. The second bath. Guess she wanted some privacy.

**KEV.** Oh. *(Pause.)* Hey! Ya think ya could handle nine holes? With the shoulder?

**ROGER.** *(Rubbing shoulder, wincing.)* Maybe one of these days. *(Kat*



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*enters, flushed but otherwise put together.)*

**KAT.** You're back early. *(Kat gives Kev a pat on the shoulder, steals a glance at Roger, then takes a seat.)*

**KEV.** Too hot. Just played nine.

**KAT.** Did Roger tell you? He just received his package. We were about to open it.

**KEV.** And... You were... You were –

**ROGER.** Yeah. That, too. *(Rubbing shoulder and looking to Kat.)* I admitted to getting a massage. *(Kat rises to clinically massage Roger's shoulder and perhaps sneak a look at his crotch.)*

**KAT.** And you're still stiff.

**KEV.** Still? I was hoping he could –

**ROGER.** Keep on nagging, Kev. Maybe one of these days. *(Twisting around to address Kat.)* Wants me to go golfing.

**KAT.** What I told you.

**KEV.** What's with the scotch? You don't – *(Kat reaches over and slides the bottle toward Kev.)*

**KAT.** Rog got it for you. Isn't that sweet? *(Roger intercepts the bottle, chides Kat with a look, then slides it to Kev.)*

**ROGER.** Yeah. I'm a sweet guy. Here you go, Kev.

**KEV.** For what?

**ROGER.** Uh... Reciprocity. *(Kev gives a puzzled look.)* For sharing.

**KEV.** Sharing?

**KAT.** What he means –

**ROGER.** Your stories.

**KEV.** What stories?

**KAT.** What he means –

**ROGER.** You're a storyteller, man.

**KEV.** Whatcha talkin' 'bout? You're the writer.

**ROGER.** Yeah, but where do my best ideas come from?

**KEV.** Uh...

**ROGER.** Think I'm not paying attention when you're describing your riveting adventures on the golf course?

**KEV.** Thought you didn't like golf.

**KAT.** I think Roger –

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**ROGER.** I don't like it! Tell the truth, I hate it. The pointless activity, I mean. But, the stories, Kev! The stories! Thanks to you, I vicariously get all the pleasure and none of the aggravation of chasing a little white ball for hours in the sweltering sun.

**KEV.** Aggravatin', but taint pointless.

**ROGER.** Yeah. And a beetle's making a point when it rolls a little ball of shit through the dirt.

**KAT.** Roger's got that job in Minnesota. If he wants it. But don't you think he should stay here?

**KEV.** Tell me 'gain. What's it for?

**ROGER.** Account manager. A goddamn account manager.

**KEV.** And this the contract?

**ROGER.** It's not a contract.

**KEV.** Yeah but, ya know. The offer?

**KAT.** Let's open it.

**ROGER.** Not a contract.

**KEV.** Well, okay, but it's 'fficial, right? Got your salary and bennies. An account manager. That's sumpin.

**ROGER.** A glorified salesman.

**KAT.** I thought it was consulting. Managing consulting accounts.

**ROGER.** They don't want my consulting skills. It's all about selling. Business development. Damn consultants. You eat what you kill.

**KEV.** Why you should golf! That's the point of it. Best place to develop business, on the golf course.

**KAT.** Maybe when it cools off. And when your shoulder loosens up. (*Kat gives the shoulder a final rub and takes a seat.*)

**KEV.** Golf is relaxing. Whatcha need. Lately, you been wound tighter than —

**KAT.** Yep! Wouldn't hurt to slow down. Relax a little.

**KEV.** Teaches patience, golf does.

**ROGER.** Patience is for pussies. And what do you mean slow down? Been coasting the past two months.

**KEV.** Ya think Jack Nicklaus is a pussy? Arnold Palmer? *Tiger Woods?*

**KAT.** Not coasting. You've been writing.

**ROGER.** Yeah, couple pages on a good/ day.

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**KEV.** /The Golden Bear ain't no pussy.

**KAT.** The problem is, you stew.

**KEV.** Your mood, what she means. Last coupla days ya been kinda –

**KAT.** You imagine problems that aren't even there.

**ROGER.** God.

**KEV.** Hey! Whadja think 'bout Judy?

**KAT.** He found her boring.

**KEV.** What I figgered.

**ROGER.** I'm not really looking.

**KEV.** Remember Carmen? Carm? Ya know, the one –

**KAT.** *From the club? The golf pro?*

**KEV.** Yeah! She's separated from her husband and –

**KAT.** She's not his type!

**ROGER.** How old?

**KEV.** She's nice lookin'. What's his type? Dontcha think she looks good?

**KAT.** I guess. But –

**ROGER.** How old?

**KEV.** Younger 'n you, that's for sure.

**KAT.** *How old?* That's your first question? Jesus.

**ROGER.** Just the first. First of many.

**KAT.** You can be an ass, you know. Thought you weren't looking.

**KEV.** Take it easy. I 'vited her over for drinks later.

**KAT.** *You what?*

**KEV.** I knew Judy wasn't goin' to hold his interest. Jes knew it.

**KAT.** When? *Tonight?*

**KEV.** Judy. She was too –

**ROGER.** Please! Kev. You can stop playing the pimp.

**KAT.** *Tonight?* What time?

**KEV.** 'Bout six. When she's off. And just so ya know, I tol' her all 'boutcha.

**ROGER.** Told her what? Oh, God. You told her I'd be there tonight?

**KAT.** For drinks or dinner? *(Kat puts fingers to her temples. Turns to Roger.)* Damn. You got any aspirin? *(Roger points, and Kat exits to bathroom.)*

**ROGER.** You can't convince me to golf, but figure she can? That it?

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**KEV.** She's interestin', Rog. And she's funny.

**KAT.** (*Off, projecting from bathroom.*) Oh, yeah. Hilarious.

**ROGER.** But she golfs?

**KEV.** Club pro. And she's smart, too.

**KAT.** (*On entering from bathroom.*) Six o'clock. That means dinner.

**ROGER.** Kev, you must think my balls are bluer than a peacock's.

**KEV.** You're my best friend. Just wantcha be happy.

**KAT.** Well, come on then. I've got to get some steaks out of the freezer. Thanks for the notice.

**KEV.** She's smart, Rog. You'll see. A reader.

**ROGER.** Really? She can read?

**KEV.** You know. Like, she's super literal.

**ROGER.** You mean literary?

**KEV.** Smart. Real smart.

**KAT.** A literary bimbo.

**ROGER.** Literary bimbo. High price to pay for a slab of steak. Six o'clock?

**KAT.** Let's go then. Six o'clock! What were you thinking?!

**KEV.** Go on ahead. I'll be over in a minute. I wanna see Rog's contract.

**ROGER.** It's an offer is all. Not a contract.

**KEV.** And she ain't no bimbo.

**ROGER.** You really grilling steaks? Remember, I like mine rare. (*Kat gives icy stare, exits abruptly without a word.*) Oh, oh. She's pissed.

**KEV.** Naw. Not really. She likes t' entertain. (*A pause. Studies the package. Appears very troubled.*) Rog, lemme ask ya sumpin'.

**ROGER.** What's wrong? You okay?

**KEV.** Lemme ask ya, what's longest ya ever hadda pair a shoes?

**ROGER.** Shoes? I don't know. There's a pair of cowboy boots in my closet I've had, must be at least twenty years? What? Are you collecting shoes for the needy?

**KEV.** They still fitcha?

**ROGER.** The boots? Well, sure. What are getting at, Kev?

**KEV.** But if'n they dint fit, who d'ya blame? Not the boot's fault, is it?

**ROGER.** You want a pair of old cowboy boots, you can have them.

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**KEV.** We're married thirty years. She always tol' me I was like an ol' pair a shoes ya never gonna throw way cause ya got used to 'em. Got sentimental value. Might look like crap and stink, but they're comfortable, ya know? Ya jes never gonna throw 'em way.

**ROGER.** I'm sure she doesn't –

**KEV.** A joke! She always said it like a joke. Ya know, like she was teasin' and dint really think I stink or look like crap.

**ROGER.** Oh... Good.

**KEV.** Last coupla weeks, she skipped church. And you noticed she's gettin' a real potty mouth?

**ROGER.** Now you mention it.

**KEV.** Use t' be, she made sweet tea ever day. Always got me a glass, I come in from golfin'. She thinks I drink more tea, I won't drink so dang much beer. Ya know? Nuther joke tween us.

**ROGER.** Sure.

**KEV.** And her books.

**ROGER.** Huh?

**KEV.** You know how she's always readin'? I'd come in and start talkin' 'bout my golfin', and she'd listen a bit then tell me if'n I was gonna talk golf, she's gonna talk 'bout her dang novels. It was kinda of joke. Ya know, like jokin' 'bout the tea keepin' me t' not drink so dang much beer... Last coupla weeks, she ain't been readin'. Says maybe she needs new glasses. But, Rog, she ain't makin' sweet tea neither. We ain't been jokin'.

**ROGER.** Yeah. You've got a sense there's something –

**KEV.** And then... It seems you been kinda... Is sumpin' wrong?

**ROGER.** With me? No. I mean, well, I've got a lot on my mind.

**KEV.** I's jes wonderin' if'n it's me that's changed. Ya know, maybe now the shoes don't fit so good no more. For Kat. Maybe for you, too.

**ROGER.** Oh, God, Kev. No. Don't get down on yourself. It's not you. I haven't been myself lately, and look, I was just being a jackass giving you a hard time about the golf. Sorry, but you know I didn't mean it. Sometimes I can be a real jackass.

**KEV.** It's okay, man. I know my stories ain't gonna grab ya by the throat and shake ya. Kat says I'm so danged boring, could put me in a room with

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a Tasmanian devil hopped up on cocaine. Inside a five minutes, the critter'd be in a coma.

**ROGER.** Predictable's a better word. I'd say you're predictable. Most predictable guy I know.

**KEV.** That don't sound so –

**ROGER.** No! It's good. Predictable suits you. You're always upbeat. I count on that. Most people pay too much attention to all the shit going on around them. It affects them. But Kev, you're steady. That's what you are. Steady. And you see the good in people. You ever notice that most of the time when you come to visit, how it puts me in a good mood? We have some laughs, don't we?

**KEV.** Not so much lately. So, I's thinkin' maybe I'm wearin' on ya. Wearin' on Kat.

**ROGER.** Wearing on me? No way. You're not just predictable. You're a nice guy. I guess the nicest guy I know. Tell the truth, Kev, I think about that. I wish I was more like you.

**KEV.** Like me?! Daaang! (*Overwhelmed by this, nearly choking up, wags head in disbelief.*) Ya really wanna be like me?

**ROGER.** More like you, for sure. Nicer.

**KEV.** Kat always tole me she kep' me 'roun cause I's a nice guy. But now... I don't know. (*Uncomfortable pause, getting very serious.*) Sumpin's off. With Kat. I mean weird off.

**ROGER.** I see it, too. Something's going on. Different.

**KEV.** Ya know, my birthday's a coupla days ago, and –

**ROGER.** Oh, man! I missed it!

**KEV.** Naw. No big deal. But Kat...

**ROGER.** Yeah?

**KEV.** You're my friend. I can tell ya stuff... My birthday. I come in from golfin'... And Kat... Uh... She's on the bed... On her knees... Hind end in up in the air like a dang chimpanzee.

**ROGER.** Oh.

**KEV.** Butt nekked on her knees jes waitin' for me.

**ROGER.** God, Kev, you paint a picture. I guess you got your birthday present.

**KEV.** Tol' me I could... Take. My. Pick.

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**ROGER.** Huh?

**KEV.** I tell ya, Rog, I never, never, *never* tol' her I's lookin' for a rectum as a birthday present.

**ROGER.** Wow. I really don't know what to say here.

**KEV.** Thing is, one minute she's bein' all nice and tryin' t' be sexy, and then, I guess cuz I wasn't jumpin' at the chance, next minute she's freakin' out. Yellin'. Cussin'. Dang! She can be downright mean, I tell ya.

**ROGER.** Look. I'm going to be straight with you. I do think somethings off. With Kat. Would it be okay if I try to find a therapist for you? I mean, would be for Kat.

**KEV.** You mean like a shrink?

**ROGER.** Someone for her to talk to.

**KEV.** Oh, man. She's never gonna go for that.

**ROGER.** Maybe you can go first. On your own. Don't even have to tell Kat about it. Talk to someone other than your next-door neighbor. You might get some ideas to convince her to go, too.

**KEV.** You're a good friend, Rog. Jes glad I can talk with you but don't know 'bout no therapist.

**ROGER.** You don't have to decide anything right now. But we have to do something. (*Stands, crosses room, turns, determined.*) I have to do something. Let me do some investigation, let you know what I find. No pressure.

**KEV.** Thanks. (*Nods, bucks up, and after a moment, picks up, studies package.*) Gonna open it?

**ROGER.** Go ahead.

**KEV.** Yeah?

**ROGER.** Sure.

**KEV.** (*Opens and peruses cover letter. Gives a low whistle.*) You'll be rollin' in chalupas. I know Kat wants ya should stick 'round so she can find ya a lady.

**ROGER.** You think?

**KEV.** But this ain't bad. Chalupas like this might 'tract lotsa ladies.

**ROGER.** You're the one always trying to set me up. Besides, those are commission-based chalupas. Nothing's guaranteed.

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**KEV.** But a dang good offer. Ya gonna take it? *(Roger returns to table and takes a seat.)*

**ROGER.** I don't know, Kev. I don't know. *(Pulling the scotch back over and studying the label.)* It means. Five. Fucking. Winters. *(Blackout.)*

### SCENE TWO

*A bit later, same day, we're in the condo of Kev and Kat. Kat sits on the sofa looking at a photo album. She silently weeps. Kev enters from bedroom having changed clothes. He moves to look over Kat's shoulder.*

**KEV.** Why ya cryin'?

**KAT.** *(Startled. Wipes her tears.)* At the lake. Remember? This was the best day.

**KEV.** Thought ya dint like t' fish. *(Kev sits next to her. Kat leans against him, flips page. She begins tearing up again, points to a picture, gives a sad smile.)*

**KAT.** Sitting around the campfire. *(Kev looks at her with concern. Kat looks up at him. They kiss.)*

**KEV.** Hey! Maybe Roger and Carm –

**KAT.** *What? (Kat flips as on a switch, tosses album on coffee table, and leaps to her feet wiping her eyes, suddenly annoyed. Kev is shocked by the sudden transformation.)* We need some diet soda!

**KEV.** Oh. Uh... Well, we got –

**KAT.** For Roger. All we've got is beer and regular soda.

**KEV.** Uh, we got water.

**KAT.** For God's sake! We've got guests!

**KEV.** And we got the scotch. And 'sides, Rog ain't no guest.

**KAT.** But Carm will probably expect some wine.

**KEV.** Carm? Naw. I seen her drink beer.

**KAT.** You're the one invited them, so get your butt to the Publix for diet soda and a bottle of wine. Get two, a good red and a white. And maybe some decent snack crackers. Assuming they stay, I'll grill the steaks and toss a salad.



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**KEV.** Might not stay to dinner.

**KAT.** If there's steak, Roger will stay.

**KEV.** So, ya think he'll take to Carm?

**KAT.** Hell no, I don't. What are you thinking?

**KEV.** He's a picky son of a gun. No beer. No regular soda. No woman good enough.

**KAT.** Not picky. Selective. Man just knows what he wants. You don't know him well as you think.

**KEV.** Oh. Ya think ya know him better 'n me?

**KAT.** That's not what I mean. Get going now. It's coming up on six.

*(There's a knock on the door. Kat looks at her watch, sighs, shakes her head, and quickly exits to bedroom. Kev watches her go and opens door to greet Carm.)*

**KEV.** Hey, Carm. Come on in. *(Carm enters carrying a fruit tray and looks around.)*

**CARM.** Thanks. This still a good time? You said when I finished my last lesson.

**KEV.** Sure. Kat'll be right out. *(Kev sets the fruit tray on the table as Kat enters.)* Thanks for the— Oh. Here she is. *(Kat greets Carm with perfunctory hug.)*

**KAT.** Hi, Carm. How have you been? What can I get you to drink?

**CARM.** Thanks. Whatever you've got. Maybe a glass of white wine.

**KAT.** Sure. Kev was just heading out to pick up some wine.

**CARM.** Oh, no! Don't make a trip!

**KAT.** We need diet soda anyway.

**KEV.** We got beer.

**CARM.** Beer's fine.

**KAT.** *(Kat hands keys to Kev and pushes him to and through the door.)*  
Wine, diet soda, crackers. Go!

**KEV.** *(Voice fades on exiting.)* But we got beer...

**CARM.** I'm sorry. I didn't mean to —

**KAT.** No, no! Kev's good-natured but can be a real boob. Sometimes he needs a good goosing.

**CARM.** Some men do need a nudge, don't they?

**KAT.** *(Retrieving water for Carm.)* A hot poker up his butt what he needs.

## FIVE FRICKIN WINTERS

Wish I could tell you he'll be right back, but he gets in Publix and it's like a goddamn obstacle course. For God's sake, it's just a grocery store! But he's like a rat stuck in a maze. Drives me fucking crazy. I'm living with a constant headache. Sorry. Anyway, here's some water until the wine arrives. Let's have a seat.

**CARM.** Okaaay. Thanks. Are you sure this is a good time? If you've got a headache...

**KAT.** We didn't have plans for tonight so it's nice to have some company. And I pretty much live with the headache. *(Aside.)* Married to it.

**CARM.** Okay, if you're sure. *(Pause.)* I got the feeling Kev's trying to set me up with your neighbor.

**KAT.** Roger. From next door. What'd Kev say about him?

**CARM.** I guess he's a writer.

**KAT.** Out of work writer.

**CARM.** Oh. Well, I guess writers –

**KAT.** *(Jumping in forcefully.)* Are you really interested? Uh, I'm sorry, but I didn't even know about you and Marco.

**CARM.** We've been over for a long time. You met him, right? At the tournament last year?

**KAT.** He seemed a nice guy, but I only met him that once at the club.

**CARM.** Oh, he's a great golfer. You need a scratch golfer to round out your foursome, fine. But around the house, he was a... No. Not going to say it. I almost said he was a mean prick.

**KAT.** A tall, athletic, handsome prick. The worst kind.

**CARM.** So, what about this Roger?

**KAT.** You ready to get back in the saddle?

**CARM.** A writer would be quite a change from a prick athlete. Roger's not a prick, is he?

**KAT.** I think he's going to be moving. Kev should have told you. So, I'm not sure –

**CARM.** My divorce will be official any day.

**KAT.** I don't know. Maybe all writers are pricks.

**CARM.** Moving when? I'm not looking for anything long-term.

**KAT.** Oh?

## FIVE FRICKIN WINTERS

**CARM.** What's he like? I kind of imagine writers to be brooding and intense.

**KAT.** And impatient.

**CARM.** Is he?

**KAT.** You know how Kev's motor's always idling? With Roger, the opposite. Always revved to the red line.

**CARM.** Ooh, a race car.

**KAT.** I mean, he just hates to waste time. Can't stand to be idling.

**CARM.** Well, that's not so –

**KAT.** Guy needs to take a leak, whips his dick out on the way to the toilet to save time.

**CARM.** Well, then. I guess you know him pretty well.

**KAT.** Just an illustration. I don't know anyone who's so... He's so goddamn self-critical. Dissatisfied. With his life, you know?

**CARM.** I'm not looking for /gloomy.

**KAT.** /Down on himself.

**CARM.** Someone who'll make me laugh. Doesn't take life too seriously.

**KAT.** You must meet lots of guys at the club.

**CARM.** None I can date. Fraternizing with members would just lead to trouble.

**KAT.** Must be tough. Like working in a candy store. Or maybe an outdoor meat market.

**CARM.** I'm no vegetarian, but none of the club sausage appeals to me.

**KAT.** Aren't most of the members pretty well-heeled?

**CARM.** I'm not looking for a sugar daddy or a young buck just shooting for the hole-in-one.

**KAT.** Guess I don't have to be concerned about Kev, then.

**CARM.** Just a regular guy who's got, I don't know. Energy. Wit. Who's got a pair but doesn't have to wear them outside his jeans for all the world to see.

**KAT.** Got a pair. Yep. Definitely not Kev.

**CARM.** Intelligence! God! Wouldn't that be sweet? Find a guy who's smart but not a smart ass.

**KAT.** Roger is a total smart ass.

## FIVE FRICKIN WINTERS

**CARM.** Well, no worries then. I'll be polite and we'll just have a drink or two and I'll be on my way.

**KAT.** I don't mean to be negative, but also... About Roger...

**CARM.** There's more?

**KAT.** He worries about money. Worries a lot.

**CARM.** Must be tough to make it as a writer.

**KAT.** I think he's moving soon to take a job up north. Guess he's looking to climb out of a hole.

**CARM.** Needy, is he?

**KAT.** God, no! Stubborn? Sure. Independent? For damn sure. Whoever said no man is an island hadn't met Rog. He'd be the lone island in a sea of introverts.

**CARM.** But unsuccessful.

**KAT.** He *was*. Successful, I mean. Free-lancer, but one by one, magazines have been folding. Couple of months ago, he lost his major source of income. To top it off, he just lost a wad of savings in a bad investment. Some asshole relative shined him on. Hit him hard. His ex-wives had already mostly cleaned him out. I know he's hoping to get something from his novels, but so far –

**CARM.** *He's a novelist?*

**KAT.** Several ex-wives.

**CARM.** He's got a real publisher? Not self-published?

**KAT.** Well, yeah. He's –

**CARM.** What kind of novels?

**KAT.** Trashy novels, according to Rog. Actually, not bad. Easy to read. He writes about... Let's see. How does he put it? Uh... *Sneaky Scoundrels. Dizzy Dames. And Reluctant Rescuers.*

**CARM.** Guy's really into alliteration. Kev makes me laugh. You should hear him go on about Roger in the clubhouse. To hear him tell it, Roger is a brilliant, successful writer. He goes on and on about his writer friend.

**KAT.** Yep. That's Kev. Easily impressed. A year ago, he golfed a round with the mayor of DeFuniak Springs and still talks about it like it was yesterday. Totally star struck. You'd think he'd been part of a foursome with Obama, Trump, and Dalai Lama. *(There's tapping at the door. Kat admits Roger who steps in carrying a couple of books. He nods and*

## FIVE FRICKIN WINTERS

*mumbles a greeting to Kat, then locks eyes with Carm as she stands. Roger extends a hand without waiting for an introduction from Kat.)*

**ROGER.** Hi. I'm Roger.

**KAT.** This is Carmen.

**CARM.** It's Carm. Nice to meet you, Roger.

**ROGER.** Yeah. You, too. *(Looking around and setting books aside.)*  
Where's Kev?

**KAT.** Ran to the Publix for some diet soda.

**ROGER.** Oh, hell. He didn't need to do that on my account.

**CARM.** Kat tells me you're a novelist.

**KAT.** Why don't we all sit down. I'll grab you a water. *(Roger takes a seat next to Carm. Kat returns with a bottle of water and takes a seat.)*  
Roger doesn't drink alcohol.

**CARM.** Oh?

**ROGER.** Probably explains my failure to achieve notoriety as a writer.

**CARM.** So, alcohol's a lubricant for creativity?

**ROGER.** No doubt.

**CARM.** Guess it was for Hemingway.

**ROGER.** And Steinbeck.

**CARM.** *(A pause considering and growing a smile.)* And Patricia Highsmith.

**ROGER.** *(Grinning. Another pause, then game on.)* Truman Capote.

**CARM.** *(Accepting the challenge.)* Uh, huh. Dorothy Parker.

**ROGER.** *(Big smile.)* Robert B. Parker!

**CARM.** Okay. Uh, William Faulkner!

**ROGER.** Eugene O'Neill!

**CARM.** Tennessee Williams!

**ROGER/CARM.** *(Simultaneously).* F. Scott Fitzgerald! *(Roger and Carm share a moment. In ensuing conversation, Roger and Carm mostly ignore Kat who repeatedly attempts to insert herself.)*

**KAT.** Jesus! What was that?

**ROGER.** So, a golf pro...

**CARM.** I coach duffers on their grip and swing.

**KAT.** Uh, Carm's married to –

**CARM.** No! Not really married.

## FIVE FRICKIN WINTERS

**ROGER.** Me neither.

**KAT.** Marco's a financial advisor.

**ROGER.** Marco's your –

**CARM.** My ex. So, what do you write?

**ROGER.** You mean –

**CARM.** Your genre.

**ROGER.** I don't know. I write about capers of one sort or another.

Ordinary people trapped in extraordinary circumstances with extraordinary antagonists.

**CARM.** Cool. After Elmore Leonard or do you lean to Carl Hiaasen?

**ROGER.** God, to be able to write like either one of them! *(Takes a moment considering Carm.)* How'd a golf pro score literary chops?

**CARM.** I might have had a golf scholarship, buddy, but I was also a lit major. Duke University.

**ROGER.** No shit?

**CARM.** No shit, *Shakespeare.* *(Roger and Carm share another moment to Kat's annoyance.)*

**KAT.** Roger's moving.

**CARM.** What have you written that I might have read?

**KAT.** Moving to Minnesota!

**ROGER.** Probably nothing unless you're into obscurity. I guess that's my genre.

**KAT.** Roger! Why don't you tell us about your new job?

**ROGER.** *(A beat before turning attention to Kat.)* I thought you wanted me to stick around.

**KAT.** Well, I –

**CARM.** Okay. Who do you emulate?

**ROGER.** I'm too old to emulate.

**CARM.** Mature, not old. And authentic, too? *Sui generis!*

**ROGER.** You speak Latin.

**CARM.** Not really. But I do appreciate authenticity.

**ROGER.** The very essence of art appreciation.

**CARM.** Authenticity?

## FIVE FRICKIN WINTERS

**ROGER.** Sure. Young artists. Aspiring artists. Musicians. Writers. We all start out imitating our idols. But if you're still imitating when you're geriatric, like me, then you've failed to achieve artistry.

**CARM.** Stop! Not geriatric. But tell me your titles so I can check them out, judge your originality.

**ROGER.** If you're into judging, stop by my place later and help yourself to a complimentary copy.

**KAT.** Roger says all writers suffer from insecurity.

**CARM.** Don't we all?

**ROGER.** Even golf pros?

**CARM.** It's a general human condition. *(To Kat's discomfort, Roger and Carm continue to regard each other intently, leaning in a bit.)*

**KAT.** Well, I guess Kev should be back soon if you want to wait for the wine and diet soda.

**ROGER.** No hurry.

**CARM.** I'm good. *(Kat rises and moves to kitchen.)*

**KAT.** I have some steaks but didn't know if you would be staying for –

**ROGER.** Great!

**CARM.** That sounds wonderful, Kat. Thank you. *(Kat watches with dismay as Roger and Carm share another moment until...Blackout.)*

## SCENE THREE

*Later, Kev, Roger, and Carm sit around the table sipping coffee, the remnants of a meal evident. Kat refills cups, returns coffee to kitchen, and takes a seat. Banter between Roger and Carm is frisky and flirtatious even when the topic is serious.*

**CARM.** Nothing beats a thick, juicy steak. Thank you, Kat. It was perfect.

**ROGER.** Yeah, thanks. Good and bloody. Just the way I like it.

**KAT.** Mm-hmm.

**CARM.** Bloody sounds so... Better to say juicy.

**ROGER.** What? And deny my bloody barbarian roots?

## FIVE FRICKIN WINTERS

**CARM.** But you don't have to use the term bloody in order to express appreciation for a good steak. And enjoying red meat doesn't make me barbaric.

**ROGER.** Lots of women would disagree with you.

**CARM.** Oh. So, it's about gender?

**ROGER.** Everything's about gender.

**CARM.** Maybe for you. But I won't deny that describing yourself as a barbarian is a thoroughly masculine trait. No female –

**KEV.** Conan the Barbarian! Now, he was cool. (*Awkward silence. Kat glares at Kev as Roger and Carm, amused exchange glances.*)

**ROGER.** My people, the Celts, according to the Romans, were fierce, barbaric warriors who beheaded their victims slain in battle.

**KEV.** Conan whacked Doom with his daddy's sword! Good ol' Schwarzenegger!

**KAT.** Oh, God.

**CARM.** Your people? The Celtic roots run deep, do they?

**ROGER.** Celtic soldiers, my ancestors, spiked their hair with lime so it stood straight up and ran bare-ass naked into battle screaming and swinging their swords.

**KEV.** Dang!

**KAT.** Your ancestors. Right.

**CARM.** That's a terrifying picture. A horde of screaming, spiky-haired streakers. Swords swinging. And that's probably not all that was swinging. Maybe the origin of the phrase, *every swinging dick*.

**KEV.** (*Laughing boisterously.*) Swingin' dicks! Those were some brave dudes. What if'n we hadda golf like that? (*A pause as glances are exchanged.*) Tol' ya she was funny!

**ROGER.** And again, gender raises its head.

**CARM.** *Raises its head?* Writers and their double entendres.

**KEV.** Naked sword fights! Dang! Well, least they wouldn't be messin' their pants if'n they got scared.

**KAT.** Christ.

**ROGER.** What about you, Kat. Steak or salad?

**KAT.** What? No, I'm full.



## FIVE FRICKIN WINTERS

**ROGER.** Which do you prefer? Men are more likely meat-eaters and women vegetarians.

**KEV.** I like meat.

**CARM.** You really hold such a simplistic view?

**ROGER.** Not simplistic. Intellectually honest. It's not honest to deny differences. I know, I know, we're all individuals, but when we look at the collective, the big picture, it is possible to make some generalizations. If there are anatomical differences in men and women and differences in body chemistry, why is it so difficult to believe there are all manner of psychological differences? Personality differences? Differences in preferred diets? Don't you agree that, on average, men are more likely to be meat-eaters than women?

**KEV.** I hate Brussel sprouts.

**CARM.** Well, I happen to like meat but don't care to be stereotyped. *(Standing and giving her winningest smile.)* And on that note, excuse me. The loo?

**KAT.** Right behind you, or you can go through the bedroom.

**CARM.** Thanks. *(Carm exits to bathroom.)*

**KEV.** What I tell you? She's hot. Right?

**KAT.** Don't be a jackass.

**KEV.** Jes sayin'. *(Leaning in to Roger.)* Well? Whaddya think?

**ROGER.** Great meal. Good company. Thanks for the invitation.

**KEV.** She likes ya. Can tell, she really likes ya.

**KAT.** Yep. You've got such insight into the female psyche. You know, she's still married.

**ROGER.** Technically.

**KAT.** And you're taking a job in Minnesota.

**KEV.** Ain't there jobs here? Then ya wouldn't hafta shovel snow and ya could get to know Carm.

**ROGER.** She's definitely not what I was expecting.

**KEV.** Yeah. She 'preciates a good steak.

**KAT.** Why don't you mind your own goddamn business?

**KEV.** I's jes... Okay. Let's go sit in there. *(Kev and Roger take seats in living area. Kat follows more slowly. Carm enters and studies the painting on the wall a moment before taking a seat.)*

## FIVE FRICKIN WINTERS

**CARM.** Interesting print. What do you think it's saying?

**KAT.** *(Awkward pause before curt response.)* I like it. *(Another awkward pause as glances are exchanged. Kev picks up, studies one of the books Roger brought.)*

**KEV.** *All the Odes.* What's an ode?

**CARM.** It's poetry. From Pablo Neruda. *(Slight smile, turning attention to Roger.)* Very sensual poetry. *(Kat grabs the book and cheerlessly pages through.)*

**ROGER.** Hope you like it, Kat.

**KAT.** Mmm. *(Kev picks up the other book.)*

**KEV.** Well, I love this one. Thanks, Rog. Carm, didja see this? *The Mechanics of Swing.* This is so cool! *Tuning Your Golf Game.*

**CARM.** That's a new title. I'll need to check it out. *(Long awkward pause while Roger and Carm alternately look at each other and at Kev and Kat who flip through the books.)*

**CARM.** Yes. Definitely. I'll... Check it out. *(Awkward pause continues.)* Oh! Did anyone see the new Kenneth Lonergan movie?

**KEV.** About the bodyguard and the dwarf?

**KAT.** Jesus, Kev!

**ROGER.** No, it's nothing like a CGI-driven action movie. More of a... A small screen story.

**CARM.** Small screen?

**ROGER.** Well, what do you expect from a playwright?

**CARM.** Says the novelist. And what about Gangs of New York? Was that small screen?

**ROGER.** But that was... Wait. Wasn't Lonergan just one of the writers? It was Scorsese directing.

**CARM.** *Just* a writer?

**ROGER.** No, I'm not saying that. Lonergan can definitely write. *Lobby Hero* is frickin brilliant.

**CARM.** But a playwright can't be a film director?

**ROGER.** No, I'm saying –

**KEV.** What about Bruce Willis? *(Roger and Carm consider Kev. Kat shakes head, gives exasperated sigh, rises, begins clearing dishes.)*

**CARM.** *(Beginning to rise.)* Oh, let me help you.

## FIVE FRICKIN WINTERS

**KAT.** No, no. You relax. Carry on with your movie discussion. Kev will give me a hand.

**CARM.** Are you sure? *(Carm sits back. Kev reluctantly stands to help.)*

**ROGER.** Lonergan's wheelhouse is dialogue, not cinematography.

**CARM.** Directing's a lot more than cinematography. Playwrights can direct! Mamet wrote a book about film directing, for God's sake!

**ROGER.** Nicely played. I'd love to discuss the virtues of Mamet with you.

**CARM.** I suppose we all have a wheelhouse.

**ROGER.** Aha! We agree. Okay. Here's one. What's Sam Shepard's wheelhouse?

**CARM.** Good one. Well, I'd guess most people – I mean the general public – I guess they'd consider him to be an actor.

**ROGER.** But what about you? Actor? Playwright? Screenwriter? Or director?

**CARM.** Playwright. Definitely playwright. I think Sam Shepard, I think *True West. Buried Child.*

**ROGER.** Yeah! And don't forget *Fool for Love.*

**CARM.** What's your wheelhouse, Mr. Novelist?

**KEV.** I been tryin' to convince him to go golfin' but he hurt his shoulder.

**CARM.** Oh? *(Discreetly, so Kev doesn't see, Roger wags his head and moves his shoulder. Kat does see, groans, and curls her lip in disdain.)*

**CARM.** If you're going to share your novels, maybe I can reciprocate. Give you a lesson or two.

**KAT.** What is it you said about golfing, Rog? Just this afternoon I was massaging your shoulder, and you said, what was it? Something about the activity of it?

**ROGER.** Well, just because I never developed a love for golf doesn't mean I can't love golfers.

**CARM.** Oh, is that right?

**ROGER.** Tell the truth, until you, I've only gotten to know one golfer.

That's Kev, and I love him like a brother. *(Kev dramatically drops a dish on the table. In excited rush, he moves behind Roger and attempts to wrap him in a bear hug.)*

**KEV.** I love you, too, Rog!

## FIVE FRICKIN WINTERS

**ROGER.** Okay, Kev. Watch the shoulder.

**KEV.** *(Releasing hug in exaggerated motion.)* Oh! Sorry, man!

**ROGER.** No problem.

**CARM.** *(Teasing.)* How'd you hurt your shoulder?

**ROGER.** Playing in my wheelhouse.

**KAT.** Oh, God.

**KEV.** Yeah, Carm! Give him lessons!

**CARM.** Maybe. We'll see.

**KEV.** Rog? Whaddya think?

**ROGER.** I think it's time to rustle up a book for Carm. Would it be rude if I leave now?

**KEV.** Ya don't hafta go.

**ROGER.** *(Standing.)* Next time, dinner at my place. I'll grill some mahi-mahi.

**KAT.** Okay. Maybe.

**ROGER.** Kat?

**KAT.** What?

**ROGER.** Thank you for a wonderful dinner.

**KAT.** Mm-hmm.

**CARM.** Well, I think I'll be going, too. Thank you so much for the invitation. The dinner was fantastic.

**KAT.** You're welcome. *(Roger holds door for Carm. They exit. Kat closes one eye and glares at Kev while putting fingers to temple. After a moment, she heaves a plate. Kev ducks as the plate crashes to the floor.)*

**KEV.** The heck I do?! *(Kat grabs a dish towel and advances toward Kev whipping the towel at him as Kev circles the table to avoid her.)* Dang, woman!

**KAT.** You know this isn't going to end well!

**KEV.** Whatcha mean?

**KAT.** He'll hurt Carm! He'll get her all worked up and then dump her when he moves to Minnesota.

**KEV.** He's not even sure –

**KAT.** Or she'll hurt him! She's not even divorced, yet, for God's sake!

**KEV.** Well, I don't know.

**KAT.** Of course, you don't know. You don't think.

## FIVE FRICKIN WINTERS

**KEV.** Lighten up. Was just a dinner.

**KAT.** You saw them! Going on and on and on about their goddamn books and movies. Fucking F. Scott Fitzgerald. Kenneth Lonergan. What the fuck?!

**KEV.** I don't understand why you're so upset. I dint do nuthin wrong.

**KAT.** Right. You *dint do nuthin wrong*. (*Kat exits to bedroom, slamming the door. Kev sighs, takes scotch from kitchen to the table, pours a drink, takes a sip.*)

**KEV.** Right. I dint do nuthin wrong. Daaang! (*Blackout.*)

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