

*In the dark we hear a knocking. It happens several times and then..*

*...the lights come up as Sara turns on a light near the hotel bed. She looks around, groggy from sleep. The knocking comes again.*

MARCUS (OFF)

Sara?

*Another knock. Sara drags herself from the bed.*

SARA

*(half-asleep)*

Yeah, coming...

MARCUS (OFF)

Sara!?

*She walks to the door. Marcus steps onstage. He looks as tired as Sara did before she slept.*

SARA

Hey.

MARCUS

Hey. Sorry, we said...dinner?

SARA

Yeah. Yes. Yes, we did. Sorry, I...let me just...

*She walks back into the hotel room. Marcus follows.*

MARCUS

Sorry to wake you.

SARA

No, it's cool. I need to get up. Too much sleep actually works against you, throws off the body's internal... something-or-other.

MARCUS

Should we check the science on that?

SARA

Probably not. Either way, I gotta fuel up, which means dinner.

MARCUS

We could order in. They have room service?

SARA

It's the Hyatt, Marcus, it's not Motel 6.

MARCUS

Hey now, don't knock the "Motel Sex." That served us very well, back in the day. If I remember correctly.

SARA

I'm sure you remember perfectly. Let me just--  
*(looking down at her slept-in clothes)*  
...do something about all of this.

*She exits to the bathroom.*

SARA (OFF)

How was your shift?

MARCUS

Oh, uh...it was fine.

SARA (OFF)

Anything exciting?

MARCUS

Well, I'm a hospital Chaplain, so...

*She pokes her head back on.*

SARA

Oh, shit, I'm sorry! Does "exciting" in relation to... chaplain-ship, does that mean...?

MARCUS

Chaplain-ship?

SARA

You know what I--

MARCUS

Does it mean death?

SARA

Yeah.

MARCUS

Not always, no.

SARA

Oh. Okay. Good. Did it...? Was tonight...?

MARCUS

You wanna put some clothes on?

SARA

Yes. Yes. Yes, I do.

*She exits.*

MARCUS

A lot of the time...yeah, a lot of times it does mean death.

SARA (OFF)

That must get heavy.

MARCUS

Sure. But I also have a regular round of patients, so I do a lot of checking in, lot of talking.

*(looking around, restless)*

Is there a mini-bar in here?

SARA (OFF)

It's a *Hyatt*, Marcus, for Christ's sake.

MARCUS

Right. You mind if I...?

SARA (OFF)

Help yourself. Sorry about the..."Christ's sake" thing.

MARCUS

Uh-huh.

*He finds the mini-bar, helping himself to two mini bottles of whiskey. He drinks one fast, like a shot, and pours the other out into a glass to sip.*

SARA (OFF)

Hey, sorry if I...earlier, when I told you why I was out here, I don't know...seemed like it rubbed you the wrong way.

MARCUS

It didn't.

SARA (OFF)

You sure? Cause--

MARCUS

It's fine, Sara. You want something to drink?

*She reappears, having changed. Is this a date? Cause she looks good.*

SARA

Any tequila in there?

*He wasn't expecting whatever she's wearing, but he definitely registers how good she looks wearing it.*

MARCUS

There, uh...yeah, yes, there is a...there's tequila. Yes.

SARA

You wanna pour me one?

MARCUS

Ice?

SARA

Neat.

MARCUS

Excellent.

*He pours her a drink. They clink glasses.*

SARA

So. How many sheep did you bring in from the wilderness tonight?

MARCUS

Sorry?

SARA

You know, on your rounds. Chaplain-ing to the masses and whatnot.

MARCUS

It's not like that. I do a lot of sitting and listening. It's not my job to give people Faith.

SARA

Isn't that against the commandments?

MARCUS

Which commandment were you thinking of, exactly?

SARA

Aren't you supposed to...I don't know...go forth and bear witness and whatnot?

MARCUS

Did you pay no attention on Sundays?

SARA

I was usually writing short stories about vampires in my head.

MARCUS

*(going full Gospel Preacher)*

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus! We turn now to the Book of Matthew. And Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!"

SARA

Amen, Father Marcus!

MARCUS

Naw, quit with that.

SARA

Right. Sorry. No hands laid on you.

MARCUS

Not by a Bishop.

*She has a sudden impulse and steps closer. They are almost kissing, and then he steps away.*

MARCUS

Okay...I just, I have to...Jonathan Maru?

SARA

I knew it.

MARCUS

I mean, really? You're going back to what? To see him?

SARA

It did rub you the wrong--

MARCUS

Off course it did! You know what happened, back...and that's not even the real point!

SARA

What would the real point be?

MARCUS

You're gonna write for him? You're gonna put your words in the mouth of someone who...I don't get it. Why? Is it...is it a project? A story? Time for another bestseller?

SARA

Excuse me?

MARCUS

Haven't seen your name in the New York Times Book Section lately.

SARA

Okay, you can fuck right off, Marcus. Jonathan is...what, does God's good grace not extend to him anymore?

MARCUS

God's good grace extends to all who ask for it, Sara. And Jon Maru isn't writing letters to the Almighty, he's writing them to *you*. He's going to benefit from whatever you decide to extend his way and I just...

SARA

Do you still have some bullshit high school jealousy that needs working out?

MARCUS

It's more than that and you know it.

SARA

I can't tell if you're picking this fight because you like picking fights--cause you did, before the great awakening--or if you are generally upset by this?

MARCUS

I'm upset because I spend my days, and my nights, ministering to people who are genuinely in need, and genuinely scared, and...

*He stops, suddenly, unable to continue. He turns away, finishing the whiskey in his glass. She watches for a moment.*

SARA

Marcus?

MARCUS

First thing through the door at the hospital today was a man injured in a car accident. He's all banged up...busted knee, cuts on his face, broken arm, ribs, minor internal bleeding. But he's in pretty good shape compared to the passenger, who was his eighteen-year-old son and who is dead.

*(beat)*

They had gone out for a Father-Son brunch, to celebrate the son getting a full ride to Texas Tech to play baseball, which is no small time school, but that doesn't matter because they got broadsided by a drunk driver on the way home. Some random guy who had one too many mimosas and thought he could beat the light.

I got all of this from the mother, mind you, because the dad was rushed to surgery, and I have to sit with her and tell her that her son is dead, and her husband is not looking great and all she wants to know is will the other driver go

(MORE)

MARCUS (cont'd)

to Hell for killing her family because that would be all right with her.

SARA

Marcus...

MARCUS

That was the first call. I had to leave the woman, the wife, because the next call came from the Labor-Delivery Wing, which...well, if they're calling for a Chaplain it's usually because there was a still-birth and the family is present.

(beat)

To do my job I have to imagine a world in which a family has to watch their dead child being born and an eighteen-year-old's life can be squandered like *that*. And it's apparently also my job to imagine a world in which an unhinged murderer like Jonathan Maru, after all that he's done, gets to benefit from the sympathy and the poetry of a woman like you. To say nothing of the fact that if he was Black he wouldn't even be able to write you a letter because they'd have simply shot him in his backyard.

(beat)

Sara. Jonathan Maru killed--

SARA

I know what he did, Marcus. But is that what's got you riled up, or is it the fear that maybe in high school I liked the white boy more than you?

MARCUS

That's not fair.

SARA

It isn't?

MARCUS

I'd say it's about as unfair as you driving all the way here to buy me coffee, to call me Father, to bring up that guy just because you think after all this time you need my blessing.

SARA

I don't need your blessing. If I need anyone's I need Mrs. Sullivan's, I need Sully's blessing, and I don't know, I thought maybe someone who *didn't* end up where everyone thought he would would have something to say about that. Tell me, what do you honestly believe?

MARCUS

About some psycho I knew as a teenager who finally snapped and killed his mom and three other people?

SARA

About a person with something wrong, literally, in their brain, who now that he's facing oblivion wants...I don't know what he wants, but--

MARCUS

What do *you* believe?

SARA

What?

MARCUS

Do you think he's beyond forgiveness? Beyond kindness?

SARA

I don't...doesn't it say somewhere in the Bible that Judas was damned not for betraying Jesus, but for killing himself?

MARCUS

Judas was damned because he didn't believe God's love was big enough to also encompass him. Ultimately, despair is the greatest of sins, because it implies that you have lost Faith.

SARA

And see I haven't! Not in what *I* believe, that words when spoken have power.

MARCUS

And that's all well and good, but what really matters is what he believes.

SARA

And see, how can I know that if I don't go and talk to him? What hurt can come from talking to him?

MARCUS

Maybe there isn't. Look...part of me appreciates that you would still come to me because of all the...history, but...

SARA

But you hated him then and you hate him more now?

MARCUS

The only thing I hate right now is that we're fighting about this and not what to get for dinner! But hey, if you...if you want...aaaaahhhh, for God's sake...

*He runs out of steam. He just stares at her for a beat, and in so doing notices again the outfit she has on.*

MARCUS

Look, it was a bad shift and it put me in a mood and...  
sorry.

SARA

All good.

MARCUS

I feel like I had a plan for dinner, but then you went and  
changed into that outfit, and now I can't honestly remember.

SARA

It's working, right?

MARCUS

Yes. It is.

SARA

You still hungry?

MARCUS

I am.

*Another moment and then they kiss. It surprises  
them both, fueled by hunger and history.  
Eventually, they break apart.*

SARA

Sorry.

MARCUS

For what?

SARA

Aren't..did we just, I don't want to--

MARCUS

Tempt me from the Path?

SARA

Yeah.

MARCUS

How many times do I have to tell you? I'm not a priest.

*They kiss again, and it moves to the bed as the  
lights fade.*