

TOBY 24/7 GETS LUCKY

**a 10-minute play
by Tom Baum**

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Characters

TOBY. 20s-30s.

MARCY. 20s-30s.

The play is set in the living room of Toby's apartment, minimally suggested.

(Lights up on the front room of TOBY's apartment, suggested by a couch and a chair. TOBY and MARCY have just entered.)

TOBY: So this is me. Can I take your coat?

MARCY: Oh. Yes. Thank you.

(TOBY hangs his hat and their coats on hooks by the door.)

TOBY: Can I offer you something to drink?

MARCY: What do you have?

TOBY: Not that much, actually. Beer. Fruit juice. White wine.

MARCY: No tequila?

TOBY: Sorry, no tequila.

MARCY: It's OK. I'm past my limit anyway.

TOBY: Really? I didn't see you drink anything.

MARCY: I had two drinks before you came. And a drink before I left home.

TOBY: Yeah, some people do that.

MARCY: To get in the mood. Even to go to a bar. How pathetic is that?

TOBY: I don't think it's pathetic.

MARCY: Lori brought me there. My co-worker. She insisted.

TOBY: Why did she have to insist?

MARCY: Because I kinda hate crowded places. So where's this bike you're selling?

TOBY: *(evasive)* Oh. Yeah. The bike. It's in my storage cage, downstairs. I don't ride it that much. I don't actually go out that much. Not that great with groups myself.

MARCY: Are you kidding? Everybody seemed to know you. "Hey, Toby 24/7." And asking for selfies. Like you were a famous person.

TOBY: *(still evasive)* Yeah well, I get teased a lot. *(then)* You sure you won't have anything to drink?

MARCY: No really, I'm fine. You must be in some commercial, right?

TOBY: Well...yeah...I've been on TV.

MARCY: I knew it! I have a box that skips the commercials, that's why I wouldn't know.

TOBY: Do you ever go on-line?

MARCY: Not anymore. Why, are you a famous blogger? I wouldn't know. I'm not even on Facebook anymore.

TOBY: Yeah, I used to be. I unfriended myself.

MARCY: It was totally trashing my self-esteem. But going cold turkey sucks, because that means I don't network with anybody except at my job. Not that I'm all that friendly at work. Is it ever worth it? People, right? Mostly they can't wait to interrupt you, does that happen to you? Like they're totally bored of what you're saying.

TOBY: Like every day's their birthday.

MARCY: That's such a great way of putting it. Lori's like that. I don't think she ever let me finish a sentence.

TOBY: People suck.

MARCY: They all oughta go to N.A.

TOBY: Narcissists Anonymous. I love that. Wow, I am so glad I got up the courage.

MARCY: Yeah, well, you saw me smile at you. And I never do that ever.

TOBY: You have a wonderful smile.

MARCY: Oh gosh. "Careful, Marcy." There I go, channeling my mom. "Careful Marcy, you're getting excited." How many times did I hear that? "Don't get excited." Then two hours later, "What are you doing, just sitting there? Act like you're alive."

TOBY: "Do something but don't enjoy it."

MARCY: "Don't fidget so much, people are staring."

TOBY: "Don't call attention to yourself."

MARCY: Totally! We used to live in this apartment? Over this bitchy old lady, she was like 200 years old? She used to pound on the ceiling with a broom whenever I made any noise, not even noise, playing with my tea set or my farm animals, just talking to myself, humming to myself, whatever. I'd hear the broom, I'd feel the broom, right under where I was sitting—freaked me out every time. My mom never told her to stop, never stood up to her, if she saw the lady getting into the elevator she'd take the stairs.

TOBY: Sounds like my mom.

MARCY: Seriously?

TOBY: OK. We had this ceremony in middle school? About saluting the flag? Each class had an official flag-bearer, and the flag got transferred from one kid to the other, and my mom couldn't come to see me because she was afraid I'd forget the stupid little speech I had to give. So after that anytime I had to do anything public, like give a book report? I panicked. Like to show myself meant making her miserable.

MARCY: Wow. That is so...wow.

TOBY: So I never raised my hand in class.

MARCY: Oh me neither. I can't talk to more than one person at a time. And we have conferences all the time at work. I just sit there like a lump.

TOBY: But I'm getting over all that.

MARCY: I know. You seem very secure.

TOBY: Do I? Thank you. That means a lot.

MARCY: So what's the secret?

TOBY: Well, OK. You have to ask yourself two questions. Who am I? And what am I afraid to be?

MARCY: OK.

TOBY: If you're shy and retiring, that means you really want to show yourself, but it scares you.

MARCY: Makes sense.

TOBY: What you're afraid to be, that's what you really are.

MARCY: If you're afraid of hurting people, you're really a secret sadist?

TOBY: Uh, yeah.

MARCY: If you're a prude about sex, you're really a secret slut?

TOBY: In most cases.

MARCY: The reason I ask...my mom said I'd probably die a virgin.

TOBY: My mom wanted me to die a virgin.

MARCY: She goes, "Marcy, If you find an ugly rich man, marry him, 'cause that's your only chance for happiness."

TOBY: "You'd better make a lot of money, Toby, otherwise you'll never find a wife."

MARCY: They really mess you up, don't they?

TOBY: They can't help it. They had parents too.

MARCY: Wow. I am so glad I met you, "Toby 24/7." I never share anything with anybody. And I mean ever. But I feel very safe with you.

TOBY: Safe. OK.

MARCY: No, don't take it like that! I didn't mean...like I would never expect you to hit on me, because I think you're gay or asexual or something? Because I don't think that. I mean I sensed a connection right away, that's why I even agreed to leave with you, which I have never done anything like that in my entire life. And it wasn't because people were fussing over you, don't shake your head, they were, you are definitely some kind of celebrity—

(TOBY stops her with a sudden kiss. The kiss lasts until MARCY's phone rings.)

MARCY: Oh gosh.

TOBY: Who is it?

MARCY: It's Lori. From work. She wants to FaceTime.

TOBY: Is she wondering where you are?

MARCY: Probably. She saw me leaving with you. She's probably worried.

TOBY: You really think you have to talk to her?

MARCY: No. You're right. I don't. She's a total pest. I'm turning it off.

(MARCY silences her phone.)

MARCY: She's probably jealous I left with somebody. She goes to that bar all the time and never hooks up and still she won't lose the weight.

(Awkward pause. TOBY and MARCY are about to kiss again when the phone buzzes.)

MARCY: Maybe I should tell her I'm OK. Otherwise she'll keep calling.

TOBY: If you ignore her, she'll probably get the message.

MARCY: I won't FaceTime, I'll just answer. *(into phone)* Hi, Lori.

(MARCY falls silent, listening. And begins to look alarmed.)

MARCY: No...Ohmigod, I didn't mean to call you a pest, how did you...I didn't actually call you fat, oh gosh, this is so weird, what's going on here?...*(glancing around)* I don't see any, no, are you sure?...No...Lori... please don't do that, don't call my mom, I can take care of myself, goodbye!

(MARCY ends the call.)

MARCY: God, I am so stupid! When were you going to tell me?

TOBY: Eventually.

MARCY: Eventually! Ohmigod. You don't have a bike to sell.

TOBY: No.

MARCY: Ohmigod, I can't breathe. Where's my jacket?

TOBY: It's there on the hook. Do you really have to go?

MARCY: Ohmigod, yes, are you kidding me? Where are the cameras?

TOBY: You can't really see the cameras, they're the size of a thumbtack.

MARCY: The whole apartment? Cameras everywhere?

TOBY: Uh-huh.

MARCY: Including the bathroom?

TOBY: Everywhere.

MARCY: You perv! What about in the bar tonight?

TOBY: I have a hat-cam. Basically I'm known for never going out. But...you know...the fans...they were losing patience with Toby the Hermit.

MARCY: Does your mom know you've been doing this?

TOBY: She says she doesn't watch. She's lying.

MARCY: Like mother, like son. Goodbye, creep.

TOBY: Please don't say that. I don't want you to leave.

MARCY: I don't like the way you said that.

TOBY: How did I say it?

MARCY: Like you were planning to kill me.

TOBY: With all these witnesses?

MARCY: Maybe you want to be caught. Like a terrorist. Or just a regular psycho. No, don't touch me please. How many women have you...Never mind.

TOBY: How many women have I brought home?

MARCY: Murdered.

TOBY: Marcy...please. None. Zero. In fact you are the first other person to set foot in this apartment...not counting the pizza delivery guy, and you couldn't really see him in the doorway. I'm not a terrorist, I'm not a murderer...Psycho?...There's a lot of debate about that, but I didn't bring you here to kill you. I brought you here because I liked talking to you. In fact I love talking to you. And I'll say this now in front of all the people watching us, I've never felt so comfortable with anybody in my entire life.

MARCY: You're such a total liar.

TOBY: All right, don't believe me, I'm sorry I said it.

MARCY: How many people are watching?

TOBY: 500.

MARCY: Only 500? That's pathetic.

TOBY: 500 K. When all the hits are tallied, you'll be on a million screens and counting. You said you have trouble talking to more than one person? You're speaking to at least a million.

(MARCY's phone rings. MARCY freezes as she sees who it is.)

TOBY: Is that who—

MARCY: I asked Lori not to call my mom! Ohmigod, I have to take this.

(MARCY *answers the phone.*)

MARCY: (*into phone*) No....He's not...Because I'd already be dead and bleeding, that's why....I had two drinks before I left the house, that's my limit... I don't care if it's giving you palpitations, take a Xanax!

(MARCY *hangs up.*)

MARCY: A million people, seriously?

TOBY: Probably more after tonight.

MARCY: So you must be monetized.

TOBY: A lot of product placement. There's a chance of an IPO.

MARCY: (*to unseen camera*) Hear that, Mom? He's rich. (*to TOBY*)
What about your fans?

TOBY: What about them?

MARCY: They all saw me panic. I must look like a total dork.

TOBY: We'll wait for the comments. I'm kidding. I'm sure they'll like you.

MARCY: They weren't expecting a babe.

TOBY: They never said so.

MARCY: I mean nerds and babes, isn't that the trend now? Not that you're a nerd. I didn't mean that. (*to unseen camera*) Everybody? I didn't mean that. (*to herself*) Ohmigod, Marcy, you're getting excited.

TOBY: Why shouldn't you get excited. All those people watching, it's exciting.

MARCY: My teeth are chattering!

TOBY: Probably stage fright.

MARCY: You promise I won't die? You're not going to kill me?

TOBY: You will definitely survive the night.

MARCY: What about after?

TOBY: Depends how it goes.

(TOBY kisses MARCY. MARCY kisses back, then breaks the kiss.)

TOBY: Problem?

MARCY: You never turn off the cameras?

TOBY: It's kind of my brand, you know?

MARCY: Yes, well, could you possibly dim the lights?

TOBY: *(pause)* Yeah, I can do that.

(TOBY picks up a remote, dims the lights. Then turns toward an unseen camera.)

TOBY: Mom, do yourself a favor? Turn it off and go to sleep.

(MARCY turns toward an unseen camera.)

MARCY: Mom? Watch this.

(MARCY grabs TOBY and kisses him passionately. Lights fade on their lovemaking. END OF PLAY.)