



SCENES FROM A MARRIAGE

BY
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ENGLISH VERSION BY
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DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.

SCENES FROM A MARRIAGE
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NOTES ON IVO VAN HOVE'S PRODUCTION

In Ivo van Hove's production, there were three Johans and Mariannes. Johan and Marianne 1 are in their late twenties/early thirties. Johan and Marianne 2 are in their forties. Johan and Marianne 3 are in their fifties or older.

The stage was divided into three small rooms for the first three scenes — the first half of the play. The entirety of the first scene, "Innocence and Panic," was played with the first Johan and Marianne. The second scene, "The Art of Sweeping Things under the Rug," was played by Johan and Marianne 2. The third scene, "Paula," was played by Johan and Marianne 3. The scenes were played at the same time in separate spaces, and the audience could sometimes hear the other scenes bleeding through. This was intentional. After each scene ended, the audience moved to the next room. This means that each third of the audience watched the first half of the play in a different order, and the actors played their scene three times.

At intermission, the walls were taken down and the audience returned to one space. In Scene 4, "Vale of Tears," the lines were dispersed between the three couples and they played the scene simultaneously. In Scene 5, "The Illiterates," all characters speak at once. Scene 6, "In the Middle of the Night," is played by Johan and Marianne 3. In van Hove's production, Mrs. Jacobi and the Mother were double-cast.

This text does not reflect the character breakdown in van Hove's production. This script can be played as written, with one Johan and Marianne.

SCENES FROM A MARRIAGE was produced by New York Theatre Workshop (James C. Nicola, Artistic Director; Jeremy Blocker, Managing Director) in September 2013. It was directed by Ivo van Hove; the dramaturg was Bart van den Eynde; the production design was by Jan Versweyveld; and the production stage manager was Terri H. Kohler. The cast was as follows:

JOHAN 1 Alex Hurt
JOHAN 2 Dallas Roberts
JOHAN 3 Arliss Howard
MARIANNE 1 Susannah Flood
MARIANNE 2 Roslyn Ruff
MARIANNE 3 Tina Benko
PETER Erin Gann
KATRINA Carmen Zilles
EVA Emma Ramos
MRS. JACOBI/MOTHER Mia Katigbak

CHARACTERS

JOHAN

MARIANNE, his wife

PETER, their friend

KATRINA, Peter's wife

EVA, Johan's colleague and friend

MRS. JACOBI, Marianne's client

MOTHER, Marianne's mother

Note: Both the Mother and Mrs. Jacobi can be double-cast, as can Katrina and Eva.

SCENES FROM A MARRIAGE

Scene 1: Innocence and Panic

Marianne and Johan at home with Peter and Katrina. Peter is holding Johan and Marianne's magazine interview.

PETER. In a few words, how'd you describe yourself?

JOHAN. That wasn't so easy ... I described myself as intelligent ... successful, youthful, level-headed, sexy ... sounds like I'm bragging. Politically conscious, cultured, well-read, popular. What else...? Friendly, even to people who aren't ... so well-off ... I like sports. I'm a good father, a good son. I have no debts, pay my taxes, respect the government ... I left the church. Is that enough? And I'm a fabulous lover. Right, Marianne?

PETER. And you, Marianne?

MARIANNE. I'm married to Johan, and we have two daughters. Period.

KATRINA. That's a little perfunctory.

PETER. But listen to this! (*Reading.*) "Marianne has deep blue eyes that glow from within. When I ask her how she combines work and home, she smiles as if she were keeping a sweet little secret and says it's not hard; she and Johan help each other out. 'It's a question of being in tune with each other,' she says. She lights up when he comes into the room and joins her on the sofa, a family heirloom. Protectively, he puts his arm around her, and she cuddles up to him with a secure smile. When it's time for me to go, I sense they are relieved to be alone together again, two young people — happy, positive, never forgetting to give their love the place of honor it deserves." (*As he finishes reading, the others erupt into spontaneous applause, then applaud again as more wine gets poured.*)

MARIANNE. We were really sorry we'd agreed to the interview when we read it, and we wanted to change everything, but unfortunately the editors claimed it was too late. The article was already printed.

JOHAN. I was annoyed they didn't mention my eyes. Katrina, look! Do you see an inner glow?

KATRINA. More like something dark and sinister. Very sexy, by the way.

PETER. Katrina absolutely adores you.

KATRINA. Want to run away with me?

MARIANNE. I think it would be wonderful for Johan to have a little variety. He's been such a good husband; he's never strayed.

PETER. Are you sure?

MARIANNE. I decided from the beginning to believe everything he tells me. Right, Johan?

PETER. Did you hear that, Katrina?

KATRINA. I bet Johan lies better than you do.

JOHAN. I'm afraid I have no imagination.

PETER. But that's the point! Unimaginative people are better liars.

KATRINA. Peter always gives too many details. Sometimes, I'm actually touched.

MARIANNE. I read your article in *Technology Magazine*, Peter. I can't believe I actually understood it.

PETER. Katrina wrote it.

JOHAN. (*Amazed she's that smart.*) Really?!

PETER. I was away when they called, so Katrina wrote the article and read it to me over the phone.

MARIANNE. Then why is your name on it if she wrote it?

KATRINA. Don't worry. I'm not an "oppressed woman." We always work together.

JOHAN. I'm jealous.

PETER. Don't be. We're going through total hell right now. (*Raising his glass.*) Cheers, Katrina! I can say that to Johan and Marianne, can't I?

MARIANNE. What is it, Katrina?

KATRINA. Nothing. It's just Peter can be so ... awkward sometimes.

PETER. I'm proud of being awkward. And imaginative. I'm also a bastard, but there's nothing I can do about that.

JOHAN. Let's just enjoy ourselves tonight, you two —

PETER. Right. Let's not forget — and I'm referring to the recent magazine article — that we are in the presence of marital bliss. No emotional messes allowed here. Cheers, Marianne! Thanks for dinner.

Though I don't envy your living situation, I'd love to possess your skill in the culinary arts.

MARIANNE. Katrina's a better cook than I am.

KATRINA. Too bad Peter thinks I poison his food.

PETER. It's a running joke in our house.

KATRINA. You did know it was a joke, didn't you?

PETER. A sick joke.

JOHAN. (*A deflection.*) Want to move to the living room for coffee and dessert?

MARIANNE. No, Katrina. Don't bother. I'll have the girls do the dishes. I bribe them. They like to make a little extra money.

JOHAN. Want a cigar, Peter?

PETER. No, thanks. I quit smoking.

JOHAN. Really? Congratulations. (*The men exit.*)

KATRINA. It made him so irritable I begged him to start again, but he refuses to smoke just to annoy me, and I can't seem to stop! I guess I'll get as wrinkled as a mummy and die of cancer. Marianne, do you have an aspirin? I've had a splitting headache all day. Plus I'm starting to get a little tipsy, and I'm a mean drunk. Peter gets terrified when I drink and begins to talk complete ... garbage.

MARIANNE. Would you like to lie down?

KATRINA. No, that's all right. It's so nice and peaceful here. You're an angel, Marianne.

MARIANNE. Looks like you two are going through a rough time.

KATRINA. You could call it that.

MARIANNE. Are you thinking about splitting up?

KATRINA. On the contrary! We're going on a business trip together soon. Our livelihood completely depends on our sticking it out. The business is based on what the two of us can come up with together: The two of us have to test all these new synthetic materials, I have to adjust all the colors and patterns, and Peter's analyses are irreplaceable. A divorce would destroy everything. We can't afford it.

MARIANNE. Can't you work together and live apart?

KATRINA. We've tried that. Remember?

MARIANNE. Yes. Right.

KATRINA. Peter claims he's impotent with other women. I have no idea if he's lying, though on that one point he's probably telling the truth. He goes crazy when I turn him down. And he's a wonderful lover. I like sleeping with him — that is, if I have somebody else in my life, on the side.

MARIANNE. But you used to be good together, didn't you?

KATRINA. I have to tell you something that amazes me. In spite of everything, I have a kind of desperate affection for him. I understand his fear, his despair, his panic . . . And he understands me. He sometimes jokes that I look like a woman, but I'm really a man. He's probably right. I'm feeling better. (*The men enter.*)

PETER. Actually, it's pretty fucking moving.

JOHAN. What is?

PETER. Your marriage. Johan and Marianne. Marianne and Johan. It's pretty fucking moving. In fact, I have a lump in my throat and an incredible urge to pop your little balloon. Cheers, you two!

KATRINA. How long have you been married? Is it ten years already?

PETER. And no skeletons in the closet?

JOHAN. (*Light.*) You never know.

KATRINA. No, you never know.

MARIANNE. Johan and I clean house regularly.

PETER. Hear that, Katrina? We don't. But that's about to change. I'll call Marianne next week and she can arrange our divorce.

KATRINA. Unfortunately, Peter will change his mind before he sobers up. That's when his calculator will start working and he'll say: I'll only divorce Katrina if she gives up her Swiss bank accounts. Then I'll say: That's my money. Then Peter says: But I made it grow. I answer: How sweet of you, but what do I want with a shitty little factory that produces less and less product? Then Peter says: You'll get everything — the house, the ski lodge, the beach house, the boats, the cars, the art, the stocks, the bonds. Then I say: How sweet of you, but I have to pay *huge* fucking taxes on all that stuff. . . . I'm sorry, but I know how much Peter's had to drink, and when he'll start screaming.

PETER. Just what I've always said. Katrina is a real businessman, with an equal emphasis on both words. And she's a phenomenal artist with an extraordinarily high IQ. Plus she's pretty. She's a beautiful person in a beautiful package. That this monster of perfection ever let me get between her legs is beyond my —

KATRINA. Let's call a taxi. This scene is unpleasant for Johan and Marianne.

PETER. Johan and Marianne have little pink ribbons around their tummies and little pink bows on their backs, like marshmallow piggies. A glimpse into the pits of hell is good for their morale! (*To Johan and Marianne.*) Is there anything worse than a husband and

wife who hate each other? What do you think? Child abuse might be worse, but Katrina and I *are* children, goddamnit! Inside Katrina is a little girl who's crying because she fell down and hurt herself and no one's comforting her. I sit in the opposite corner. I never grew up, and I'm sobbing because Katrina doesn't love me, no matter how mean I am to her.

KATRINA. Well, at least we're sure nothing can be worse than it is right now. We're ripe for a divorce.

PETER. Only if you're rational, only if we sign all the papers at the very same moment in front of witnesses so we can't cheat each other. We'll call you.

MARIANNE. I'm happy to help. Our lawyers are really good on financial matters.

PETER. What do you think, Katrina?

KATRINA. Even if we find a business arrangement, you'll never let me go.

PETER. Do you really think you're indispensable, sweetheart? Where did you get that idea?

KATRINA. Let me tell you something, Peter. You make me sleep with you because you claim you can't get it up with another woman.

PETER. Now that it's over with Ian, you're panicking. True or false? All you have left now is good old Peter who still cares a tiny little bit for you and has a ridiculous amount of patience.

KATRINA. Let me tell you something else, Peter. I'm sorry, Johan and Marianne, but apparently Peter wants to hear the truth. He's in need of a little clarity. The truth is: You disgust me. Physically, I mean. I'd pay a complete stranger to fuck me just to keep you out of my pussy.

PETER. And so another day goes by never to return, and another night descends over the Earth ...

KATRINA. You are such a —

PETER. "But in Your wisdom, O Lord, You have counted our days." Whatever that means. (*Katrina throws her cognac at Peter and storms off, crying. Marianne follows.*) I hope it doesn't stain. I have no idea with cognac ... If it does, send me the bill. Can I have a cup of coffee? I'm really drunk. Forgive us. We usually behave better. Unfortunately for you, you're our friends. I'm sorry. Call me a cab and I'll take my little party girl home with me so we can finish our scene there. Usually the finale is unsuitable for public viewing.

SCENES FROM A MARRIAGE

by Ingmar Bergman

English version by Emily Mann

2M, 5W

In Emily Mann's highly theatrical adaptation of Ingmar Bergman's popular 1974 film *Scenes from a Marriage*, audiences are invited into an intimate stage space to collectively experience the human politics of a relationship, through all the stages of life — from youth to middle age to maturity. Mann's adaptation illuminates the universal themes of love, identity, and vulnerability that are at the heart of Bergman's timeless film, exposing how the universal is truly revealed through the specific.

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ISBN: 978-0-8222-3392-3



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