



# EAT YOUR HEART OUT

BY COURTNEY BARON



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EAT YOUR HEART OUT  
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World premiere in the 2012 Humana Festival of New American Plays  
at ACTORS THEATRE OF LOUISVILLE.

EAT YOUR HEART OUT was originally presented at Actors Theatre of Louisville, opening on March 9, 2012. It was directed by Adam Greenfield. The cast was as follows:

NANCE ..... Kate Eastwood Norris  
TOM ..... Alex Moggridge  
EVIE ..... Sarah Grodsky  
COLIN ..... Jordan Brodess  
ALICE ..... Kate Arrington  
GABE ..... Mike DiSalvo

## **CHARACTERS**

NANCE

TOM

EVIE

COLIN

ALICE

GABE

# EAT YOUR HEART OUT

*Tom, mid-30s, sits on a bench in front of a David Hockney painting at the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena, California. He reaches into his messenger bag and pulls out a copy of something like The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo. He reads, well, he pretends to read. His finger finds a place that he has marked, he taps there until: Finally, Nance, late 30s, enters. Tom quickly resumes "reading," he keeps his finger at his marked spot. Nance is keeping it together. She sees Tom, offers up a meek wave. He doesn't look up from his book, though of course he's seen her.*

NANCE. Tom?

TOM. Nance? Sorry. Sorry. Just. I've got to finish this one sentence. Sorry. Okay ... reading. *(He slowly says as he reads.)* "What she had realized was that love was that moment when your heart was about to burst." Wow. Okay. Nance.

NANCE. Sorry I'm late.

TOM. I didn't even — caught up —

NANCE. Exciting book?

TOM. Have you read it?

NANCE. No.

TOM. It's unbelievable. Did you see the movie?

NANCE. No.

TOM. I'm in the small minority that like the American movie better than the Swedish. Don't tell: but I hate subtitles.

NANCE. Don't tell, but me too.

TOM. Of course, the book is better. Always, don't you think? I'll lend it to you when I'm done. But you have to promise to read it before you see the movie, okay? Promise?

NANCE. Okay.

TOM. You promise?

NANCE. Yes. Promise.

TOM. Good. I'll hold you to it.

NANCE. Okay.

TOM. I hope this is alright.

NANCE. What? The museum? Of course. It's great.

TOM. Do you come to First Fridays? I mean, before?

NANCE. No, I haven't, I —

TOM. (*Like the song "Goody Two-Shoes" by Adam Ant.*) No books? No movies? No museums? What do you do?

NANCE. Oh. Well. I garden. A bit. Just a little, but I do.

TOM. My house is a burial ground for ficus trees.

NANCE. Oh. Those are hard to keep.

TOM. Really? The guy at the garden center said they'd be easy. I'm relieved. I thought maybe I'd become the boy with ficus tattoo.

NANCE. Ficuses are hard.

TOM. Thank goodness. I was getting worried. Thank goodness we met, I feel better. (*She smiles. He is thrilled.*) These First Fridays, people come and they stay in the current exhibitions, nobody comes to the permanent collection. Although this painting is on loan. Not permanent. Still. It's like a private gallery.

NANCE. It's nice.

TOM. Sit down. I've only actually been here once before. But I thought this is better than coffee. Most people meet for coffee. I like coffee, it's good, but I don't know, coffee is the date that says, "I'm not committing to a meal." Whereas, a museum, First Friday, it gives you something to talk about. You don't worry about whether or not you should order a tall or venti. Like if you order a tall, the woman might be insulted, might think you don't want to hang around, a venti might be too much, overeager, I-want-to-sit-here-for-hours kind of message before you even start talking —

NANCE. You could order a grandé.

TOM. Good thinking. Land in the middle. That's a good idea. But you get my point. And what did we do, before Starbucks, where did people go?

NANCE. Bars.

TOM. Yeah, bars, the internet of the '90s.

NANCE. That's funny.

TOM. "Sense of humor is important," right? From your profile, one of your requirements.

NANCE. I like funny.

TOM. Do you like art?  
NANCE. Sure. Sure.  
TOM. Good, me neither.  
NANCE. No, come on, I do.  
TOM. “Sure” means “not really.”  
NANCE. I *like* art, I do. I don’t go to museums very often.  
TOM. Do you have art on your walls at home?  
NANCE. Sure, yes, we do. Do you?  
TOM. Yes. I have this. This right here, I have a poster of it, framed, in the living room over the couch. I don’t know, I was just kind of drawn to it.  
NANCE. It’s nice.  
TOM. When I’m drawn to things ... people. I react. Like I was drawn to your profile.  
NANCE. I was drawn to yours.  
TOM. That’s why I “winked” at you.  
NANCE. That’s why I “winked” back.  
TOM. We should do that now, wink at each other. (*She laughs a little nervously.*) Look, I’m winking at you, Nance. Come on, wink back at me. Make it official.  
NANCE. It’s all so strange, internet dating —  
TOM. (*Emphatically.*) Wink at me, Nance. (*She does.*) There it is! We’ve now officially winked. Now we should get the profiles out of the way. Tell each other, actually say who we are, and then the internet piece of it is erased, because I’m with you. Match dot com. Tell me, who is Nance? What’s your story?  
NANCE. If you’d only asked me three hours ago — I’m sorry. I.  
TOM. What? Am I talking too much?  
NANCE. I’ve had a day. I just need two seconds.  
TOM. Oh no, is this a tall?  
NANCE. What? No. It’s me. I just. Two seconds.  
TOM. I can do that. (*They sit and face the painting. Tom pats her back, in that awkward comforting way. Evie, 17, and Colin, 17, are coming into Evie’s bedroom.*)  
EVIE. I said, “My name is Fat Ass.” Are you hearing me?  
COLIN. Yeah, I heard you.  
EVIE. I said it to —  
COLIN. Holly Lynch. Yeah, I heard you.  
EVIE. I was literally blindsided — what did she want?  
COLIN. What *did* she want?

EVIE. I have no fucking clue. Two years with her, never a word, but I watched her coming across the cafeteria, her thong practically sling-shotting her ass towards me —

COLIN. (*He laughs.*) You're a fucking idiot, Evie.

EVIE. No, no, no, I want to have the afterschool movie moment where you reassure me. Tell me the popular kids are peaking early. They'll never leave Pasadena, hope their own kids are popular too so they can live through it all over again. Say that to me.

COLIN. —

EVIE. Colin, say *that* to me.

COLIN. You're a *stupid* fucking idiot, Evie.

EVIE. I'm not a stupid fucking idiot, in fact, I'm no longer even anonymous outcast senior number 122. No, now, now I'm "fat ass" number one.

COLIN. So everyone will call you "fat ass" for a while.

EVIE. So what?

COLIN. So what, Evie, Holly Lynch is a bitch.

EVIE. Oh really, and if everyone called you —

COLIN. What?

EVIE. I don't know. "Dumb ass."

COLIN. It's not the same. I'm not dumb.

EVIE. But I'm fat, right? So what, Evie, you are a fat ass?

COLIN. You're healthy.

EVIE. Thanks, Grandma.

COLIN. I thought you didn't give a crap what people think.

EVIE. I care that when Lynch the Winch asks me my name, I say "Fat Ass." She'll probably fucking tweet about it.

COLIN. Jen Mason is going to love you. She's been trying to downplay that text of her tits for weeks.

EVIE. Did you see it?

COLIN. Yeah.

EVIE. That's like a hard-on "yeah."

COLIN. She's got a good body.

EVIE. Jen Mason has a pig face.

COLIN. I wasn't looking at her face.

EVIE. Oh Jesus, I want to die.

COLIN. You always want to die. Download some Morrissey and write some poetry.

EVIE. I'm a fat ass.

COLIN. So go on a diet.



EVIE. I'm on a diet.  
COLIN. You ate a Snickers at lunch.  
EVIE. I only ate it because I'm really sad?  
COLIN. Are you asking me if you are sad?  
EVIE. Are *you*?  
COLIN. Nothing to be sad about. Only eight months left.  
EVIE. Eight long and lonely months, Colin.  
COLIN. I have Shauna.  
EVIE. A girlfriend in Canada is like the yeti.  
COLIN. Fuck you. New Hampshire.  
EVIE. Close enough.  
COLIN. Don't be shitty to me.  
EVIE. But you love shitty ol' me.  
COLIN. You're exhausting.  
EVIE. Do you talk to Shauna about me? Will you tell her this? About Holly Lynch? Et cetera?  
COLIN. I pretty much tell her everything and etcetera.  
EVIE. Yeah. I'm cool with you telling her.  
COLIN. We're totally completely honest. I have to tell her everything. Every night I write her a goodnight e-mail. I tell her everything. I haven't missed a single night.  
EVIE. She's lucky.  
COLIN. Seriously, Evie, I can't see what the point is if you aren't totally fucking honest all the time.  
EVIE. You're right.  
COLIN. I am.  
EVIE. Honestly, Colin, I'm totally miserable about Holly Lynch.  
COLIN. I know you are.  
EVIE. It happened at lunch, and by sixth period someone had put a sign on my locker with my new official title.  
COLIN. It's like Jen Mason's tits text, let's fix it, divert attention.  
EVIE. Divert attention from my ass? Impossible.  
COLIN. Avert attention from your incredibly charming social dysfunction —  
EVIE. I really am so charming —  
COLIN. You really are so dysfunctional.  
EVIE. And you're going to help me?  
COLIN. Yeah. Sure.  
EVIE. Why?  
COLIN. Be-cause-you-are-my-friend.

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3M, 3W

Alice and Gabe are desperate to adopt a child. Nance, a single mom just starting to date, struggles to connect with her teenage daughter, Evie. And Evie wishes her best friend Colin could fall for her rather than just trying to fix things. With both humor and aching insight, these lives are woven together in a tale of parental hopes and fears, and of hearts consumed by longing.

*“A well-written script, and plenty of humor.”*

—**Louisville.com**

*“Probing and amusing ... Making that shift from laughs to tragedy, from mockery to compassion, requires pinpoint acting and enormous range.”*

—**The Louisville Eccentric Observer**

*“Such compelling stories!”*

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ISBN 978-0-8222-2733-5



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