



CATCH THE FISH

BY JONATHAN CAREN



DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.



CATCH THE FISH
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World Premiere at
the New York International Fringe Festival

CATCH THE FISH received its world premiere at the New York International Fringe Festival on August 18, 2007 in New York City. It was directed by Kristen Hanggi. The cast was as follows:

JORDAN LIMPSKY John Forest
GRANT SPIELMAN Dov Tiefenbach
LINDSAY SANDS Zibby Allen
ALISON VANPELT Elyse Mirto

CHARACTERS

JORDAN LIMPSKY — 21

GRANT SPIELMAN — 21

LINDSAY SANDS — 20

ALISON VANPELT — 36

PLACE

In and around Los Angeles. The locations in the world of the play should be established within the confines of a theatrical world.

TIME

Over three nights.

Scene 10 takes place three months later.

Scene 1. Moomba, a Hollywood club.

Scene 2. Grant's car.

Scene 3. Sushi Roku, a fancy restaurant.

Scene 4. Alison's Car / Grant's car.

Scene 5. Alison's hotel room.

Scene 6. A yoga studio.

Scene 7. Grant's bedroom.

Scene 8. Alison's hotel room.

Scene 9. Grant's bedroom.

Scene 10. Jordan's home.

CATCH THE FISH

Prelude

The sound of bubbles in a fish tank, a splash and ...

Scene 1

10:08 P.M.

Los Angeles.

The back restaurant of the club Moomba. Jordan clutches his hand in serious pain. Grant stammers forward like a bug on its hind legs, anxious not to make a scene.

Alison sits at the bar.

JORDAN. Nobody saw, did they?

GRANT. You better hope not.

JORDAN. Give me some ice.

GRANT. From my Jack and Coke?

JORDAN. Fish me out some ice. My hand is pulsating. (*Grant gives Jordan some ice from his drink.*)

GRANT. Next time don't punch a hole in the wall.

JORDAN. They let you and Lindsay in, and me. The bouncer says, "You. You're not coming in." I'm like, "D, you remember me." And he's like, "I don't remember you." And I'm saying, "It's Jordan." And he has to go, "The fat fuck?" Why do I deserve that?

GRANT. You used to be fat.

JORDAN. I'm talking about the fuck part.

GRANT. Well. I got you in. So you're in now.

JORDAN. What happened with Lindsay?

GRANT. I don't know. I'm in mid-sentence and poof she's gone.

JORDAN. She was talking to that dude from ICM.

GRANT. Fuck.

JORDAN. That's how he introduces himself: "Hey, I'm Jerry from ICM." It's like a mechanical doll. You could pull a string from his back and he'd say it again. "Hey, I'm Jerry from ICM."

GRANT. Stop it, man.

JORDAN. "Hey, I'm Jerry from ICM. Wanna drink? Wanna blowjob?"

GRANT. That's not funny.

JORDAN. I don't know why you put up with her. (*Jordan drops the ice back in Grant's drink.*)

GRANT. What are you *doing*? That's been all over your hands.

JORDAN. Man, you've like accidentally spit in my mouth before, who cares.

GRANT. I care. I said I CARE. Hey, I'm talking to you.

JORDAN. (*Inattentively.*) Yeah, sounds good.

GRANT. When you talk to me, look me in the eyes. Your eyes wander around the room. It makes me sick.

JORDAN. I'm just checking the place out.

GRANT. We shoulda gone to National.

JORDAN. Lemme borrow your phone.

GRANT. I'm waiting on Lindsay.

JORDAN. Lemme make some calls.

GRANT. You got a phone.

JORDAN. My phone is dead.

GRANT. Who do you really think you're gonna call?

JORDAN. All right, lend me some money, I'm going to try buying girls drinks.

GRANT. You owe me like fifty bucks on the Laker game.

JORDAN. C'mon, I'll pay you back.

GRANT. And twenty for Sushi on Sunset.

JORDAN. All right, I'll get you back!

GRANT. Your eyebrows are doing that thing again.

JORDAN. What thing? What are you talking about?

GRANT. When you get all nervous your eyebrows go up like

Elvis.

JORDAN. I'm trying not to think about my hand. Give me twenty bucks.

GRANT. (*Rudely, reluctantly.*) Here's ten. Go crazy. I'll check the car. (*Jordan walks over to the bar and sits next to Alison.*)

JORDAN. So, what do you drink?

ALISON. Martini. You buying?

JORDAN. (*Feigning casual confidence.*) I'll buy, I know how it is.

ALISON. Oh you do, huh?

JORDAN. Yeah, you're sitting here alone. You need a drink to handle a place like this.

ALISON. What's there to handle?

JORDAN. Where are you from?

ALISON. New York. What's there to handle?

JORDAN. Guys like me buying girls like you drinks.

ALISON. So you're saying I need a drink to handle a guy like you? Here's a tip, guy. If you want to talk to me, don't give it all away at once.

JORDAN. Let's do this again. I'm Jordan. What's your name?

ALISON. (*Shocked at his fortitude.*) Alice.

JORDAN. That's a nice name you don't hear every day. Don't meet many Alices. It's like a generational thing. Like if you meet a Gretchen, you know you're hanging out with the wrong generation. (*Again.*) Alice through the looking glass. What are you looking for, Alice?

ALISON. A subject.

JORDAN. I'm a subject.

ALISON. You might be ... This isn't really my crowd.

JORDAN. Yeah, you're a little old to be looking here.

ALISON. You're supposed to be flattering me.

JORDAN. I don't mean that in a bad way. I mean it in a good way. People who come here are like salmon swimming upstream. At a certain point you gotta ask why bother.

ALISON. What happened to your hand?

JORDAN. Accident in the bathroom: Door slammed on it. No big deal.

ALISON. Really.

JORDAN. I have a high tolerance for pain.

ALISON. That's very masculine of you.

JORDAN. If you distract yourself eventually it goes away.

ALISON. Are you looking to be distracted?
JORDAN. Aren't we all in one way or another?
ALISON. Not me.
JORDAN. Yeah, you are pretty focused on that martini. What else do you focus on?
ALISON. My child.
JORDAN. Oh.
ALISON. Work.
JORDAN. You're not working now.
ALISON. Yes I am.
JORDAN. What are you working on?
ALISON. I'm a writer. I'm working on a story.
JORDAN. I respect that. (*A beat.*) I'm an entertainment lawyer.
ALISON. Really.
JORDAN. I'm lying. I'm not very interesting, believe me.
ALISON. I don't believe you.
JORDAN. Seriously, my alter ego is much more interesting.
ALISON. Well if you are going to try and pick me up you better come up with something interesting to say.
JORDAN. You know there are three hundred thousand rice farmers in China who couldn't give a rat's ass who gets into this club and meanwhile I saw some dude downstairs lose his mind because the bouncer wouldn't let him past the rope. I find that interesting. (*Beat.*) So, what's this story you're writing about?
ALISON. My editor sent me to L.A. to write about the scene. What's really going on, you know? Anyway, I'm still looking.
JORDAN. You're looking in all the wrong places. Don't come *here* for a story on L.A. This is all just bullshit.
ALISON. Go on.
JORDAN. I mean there is nothing you could write about at Moomba that has any sort of relative importance ... If you want a real story, I can show you plenty of other places that you could go to ... This place is *pathetic*.
ALISON. Then what are you doing here?
JORDAN. I'm with my friend. He's with some girl. I don't know. I'm picking up chicks.
ALISON. No you're not.
JORDAN. I'm not.
ALISON. I'm too old for you.
JORDAN. That's not true. I relate much better to older girls. (*Ali-*

CATCH THE FISH

by Jonathan Caren

2M, 2W

CATCH THE FISH follows Alison, a hardened, ambitious New York journalist on assignment in Los Angeles. She casts a line out in a club and baits three young adults who seem to fit the bill — Hollywood youth obsessed with appearance and consumption. Though she thinks she's just angling for a good story, Alison finds herself unexpectedly reeled in by Jordan, a disarmingly charming and complex young man desperately trying to hide his past. Alison finds herself hooked and is surprised when the relationship results in her own self-reflection. She promises Jordan that the article she writes will benefit his career and assures him he can trust her, but the deeper they get, the more they both fear they are going to get caught.

“As subjects for theater, celebrity obsession and our image-based society are starting to wear thin, but Caren ignites his tropes with some refreshing ambiguity.”

—**Variety**

“This fish is a keeper ... The thought and work that went into this play have paid off in its authentic ‘youth’ aesthetic and its structural sophistication. Caren’s fresh dialogue doesn’t go for the all-too-easy clichés, but mines for the stuff that makes people do the things they do ... CATCH THE FISH stands out ... with the leaders of the pack. Very well written ... a solid piece of theater.”

—**CurtainUp**

Also by Jonathan Caren
THE RECOMMENDATION

ISBN 978-0-8222-2903-2



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