



SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER

BY CHISA
HUTCHINSON



DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.

SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER
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SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER was produced by Second Stage Theater (Carole Rothman, Artistic Director; Christopher Burney, Curator/ Associate Artistic Director), New York City, in June 2017. It was directed by May Adrales, the scenic design was by Lee Savage, the costume design was by Sara Ryung Clement, the lighting design was by Seth Reiser, the original music and sound design were by Kate Marvin, and the production stage manager was Lori Ann Zepp. The cast was as follows:

KATE WU	Jeena Yi
ALEX CHAN	Michelle Heera Kim
REGGIE WARD	Rodney Richardson
MILLIE CHAN	Vanessa Kai
RICHARD CHAN	David Shih
RUSS MITCHELL	Collin Kelly-Sordelet

SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER was developed in part during a Dramatists Guild Fellowship.

CHARACTERS

KATE WU, mid-30s, Asian-American, a guidance counselor

ALEX CHAN, 15, a wisp of an Asian-American girl

REGGIE WARD, mid-30s, Kate's black boyfriend

MILLIE CHAN, very-late-30s, Asian-American, Alex's mother

RICHARD CHAN, early 40s, Asian-American, Alex's father

RUSS MITCHELL, 16, wiry white guy, Alex's classmate

PLACE

Irvine, CA

TIME

Present

SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER

ACT ONE

Scene 1

The guidance counselor's office. Kate is seated behind her desk, flipping through a file. Alex is seated on the other side and very still.

KATE. God, files like yours sure do make my job easy. Four-point-five GPA, four APs, skipped ahead *twice*. Congrats on the National Merit distinction, by the way. It says here that you speak four languages fluently and that you can play... (*Counting.*) One, two three...*five* different instru...you play the *harp*?

Alex nods.

Huh. So then nine languages, really. That's how I think of it, anyway. I don't play *any* instruments, if you can believe that. An Asian chick who doesn't play an instrument, right? It's like a lion that doesn't eat meat. Friggin' *vegan* tiger or something...

Kate laughs a little at her own joke. Alex does not.

Um...okay. Well. All this to say, you've really got a lot going for you, but—and I say this with as much love as is appropriate to feel for a student—you gotta work on your sense of humor.

Pause.

You know...you gotta...do...something.

Beat.

Listen, I'm gonna be straight with you. This list you put together?

Stanford, Harvard, Princeton, MIT...Columbia as your *safety*...they see kids like you all the time. Don't get me wrong, your accomplishments are...huge. You've accomplished a lot and you should be proud. But...well...there are an awful lot of Chans in the applicant pool, if you catch my drift. And I would know. I was on admissions at Cornell for three years. Which was just long enough for me to want to get out. I mean *literally*, I had colleagues rolling their eyes, going "Lucy Wong, yearbook editor. Surprise, surprise..." Problem was, nine times out of ten, Miss Wong probably didn't have a single silly picture in that fuckin' yearbook. Not a shred of evidence that she had fun or a personality or anything that might set her apart from the eight hundred other Wongs who applied. If she'd only pulled a massive prank on an evil teacher and written about it in her college essay. Demonstrated her flaming need to question authority. If only she'd joined the African-American Cultural Association just to throw bitches off. *That...that* would have made it very difficult for those button-down bastards to roll their eyes. And that's why I'm here. To catch'em early. To let you guys know that you have more to offer than test scores and certificates. *Please* tell me you know that...

Alex just looks at Kate, dumbfounded.

Come on. Give me something. What do you think sets you apart from all those other ridiculously high-achieving Chans out there? Hm? You must have a fire in there somewhere...a secret wish maybe?

Alex slowly opens her mouth. Kate looks hopeful.

ALEX. I think I want to kill myself.

Scene 2

Kate's living room. On the sofa sits Reggie, scarfing down some Chinese takeout and watching television in his sweatpants. Kate enters.

REGGIE. Hey.

KATE. Hey. (*Noticing that he's eating Chinese takeout.*) What the fuck. I thought we were going to Rubio's for dinner?

REGGIE. This is lunch.

KATE. (*Kicking off her shoes.*) Ah. Well, you better be hungry again in two hours.

REGGIE. 'S'why I got Chinese.

She sits next to him and gives him a quick kiss.

KATE. That is *not* Chinese.

REGGIE. (*He's heard it before.*) Yes, yes...

KATE. If there's French fries on the menu, it does not qualify as Chinese.

REGGIE. It's terrible, I know. How was your day?

KATE. ...Rough. What about you? You get any writing done?

REGGIE. I've been...a little distracted today. And I just can't seem to muster up enough enthusiasm for my new assigned subject.

KATE. Which is...?

REGGIE. Spelunking.

KATE. Because you know so much about spelunking.

REGGIE. I did come up with a short list of titles... (*Reads off a list on the coffee table.*) "So You Want to See a Hole in the Ground"...

KATE. Mm-hmm...

REGGIE. How 'bout this one: "Spelunking: Like Being Born, Only Bigger and Backwards"...

KATE. I dig it...

REGGIE. "Caves: They're Not Just for Fugitive Terrorists Anymore"...

KATE. Might be a little too political.

REGGIE. And finally: “The Many Orifices of Mother Earth”...

KATE. Ooo!

REGGIE. Wait for the sub-title: “You Don’t Have to Get Her Drunk to Probe’em.”

Reggie puts his hands up in mock self-satisfaction.

KATE. Wow. You’ve had a rough day, too. Maybe we should both crawl into a cave.

REGGIE. You know what always makes me feel better, though?

Reggie turns off the television, picks up two fortune cookies, hands one to Kate, opens the other.

Fortune cookies. And I think that, just for the fuck of it, we should add “in a cave” at the end... (*Reading.*) “Let your light shine.” In a cave. Brilliant. What does yours say?

KATE. Let’s see...

Kate plays along and opens her cookie. As she does, Reggie digs into his sweatpants pocket.

Will you marr...

Kate stops reading and looks up at Reggie, who is holding out a diamond ring to her.

Reg...oh...

Beat.

Y—you want me to marry you in a cave?

Reggie kneels before her.

REGGIE. In a cave. Up a tree. In the eye of a hurricane. I don’t care. I just want to make you my wife.

Kate did not see this coming. A few awkward moments of stunned silence before...

KATE. (*Totally flat-footed.*) I had a student tell me she wanted to kill herself today.

REGGIE. ...Okay. I don’t—I don’t quite know how I’m supposed to respond to that...right now...

KATE. No, it’s—I’m sorry, I know that was an inappropriate response

to your...proposal...um...but that's kind of the...it just—I just wanted to let you know... I mean, I hesitated. Clearly. I hesitated. And I just wanted to let know...one of the reasons *why* I did that...

REGGIE. (*Overlapping.*) One of the reasons...?

KATE. It just doesn't seem appropriate to be all gushing and jumping up and down and thinking about...*weddings* when I know there's a young girl who's hurting—

REGGIE. (*Getting off his knee.*) There are young girls hurting all the time, all over the world, Katie.

KATE. I know...

REGGIE. And you said, “one of the reasons”...

KATE. ...Yyyeah...

REGGIE. Which implies there are more. Reasonsssss. Plural.

KATE. ...Well. You...want kids, for starters.

REGGIE. I said that I was flexible on that.

KATE. Yeah, but when a man says he's “flexible” after he's already proclaimed that he wants like, eight kids, what he really means is that he plans on spending the rest of your child-bearing years trying to convince you to pop'em out...

REGGIE. (*Overlapping after “eight kids.”*) I never said I wanted eight kids. I said I wanted a *bunch* and that it would have to be an even number so that technically there was no middle-child.

KATE. Well a bunch is still not quite zero. Which is how many I want, so...

REGGIE. I'm flexible. Really.

KATE. And I'm pretty sure you'd want me to take your last name.

REGGIE. What's wrong with my last name?

KATE. There's nothing *wrong* with your last name...

REGGIE. (*Overlapping.*) Kate Ward...it sounds nice. I'm okay with a hyphen, if you'd rather do that...

KATE. (*Overlapping after “hyphen.”*) I'm not going to hyph—Katherine Wu-Ward? Are you fucking kidding me?

REGGIE. What? It's alliterative. Everybody loves alliteration.

SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER

by Chisa Hutchinson

3 men, 3 women

Alex is a fifteen-year-old Asian-American girl going to extremes to get her own mother to notice her. She's a dream child—except to her parents who wish she was a boy. Luckily she finds a sympathetic ear in Kate, her irreverent guidance counselor who knows all too well what it's like to walk in Alex's shoes. As three generations of women find their identity in question, each needs to decide who makes the rules and what happens when you break them.

"...[A] smart and insightful play... Hutchinson is equally adept at depicting adolescent angst, quarter-life quandaries and sexual muddles of middle age. It's exciting to be drawn into a multilayered drama in which female characters are the driving force. Hutchinson's engaging drama leaves you questioning the scripts that women are still too often heir to."

—**Time Out New York**

"SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER is a gripping work that touches on female infanticide, interracial relationships, [and] domestic abuse... Ordinarily, any one of those topics would be enough to sustain a play, but Hutchinson cleverly ties them all together in one deeply satisfying drama. She is undeniably a playwright to watch..."

—**TheaterMania.com**

"[An] exhilarating dramedy...with a buoyant sense of humor... SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER never loses its appeal. It delivers a steady stream of hearty laughs, while at the same time truly engaging the audience on a compelling emotional level."

—**TheaterPizzazz.com**

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