

TOUCH ME IN THE MORNING

a ten minute play by

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

JILL: mid-twenties, perky, engaged to Jack.

STEVE: late-twenties, restless, Peter's lover.

JACK: mid-twenties, earnest, not sure he's ready to marry Jill.

PETER: early-thirties, acerbic, Steve's lover.

For Nalty
"All I'll ever be
I owe you ..."

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TOUCH ME IN THE MORNING

Setting: Two double beds at opposite ends of a bare stage.

At rise: Sound of an alarm clock ringing. JILL leaps from one bed bursting with energy and oppressive cheer. SHE flings open a window and floods the room (her half of the stage) with light.

STEVE (from under the covers)
Is that absolutely necessary?

JILL
Rise and shine, my sleepy head! No time to be a slug-a-bed!

STEVE lowers the cover slowly and stares at JILL in mute, but unmistakable, horror.

JILL
Look at you! Such a scruffy, grumpy ragamuffin.

STEVE
Who the hell are you?

JILL
Look! It's going to be a lovely day. A perfect day. The kind of day a girl dreams of for her wedding day!

STEVE
What are you doing in my ... oh my god! This isn't my bedroom!

JILL
That's right, sweetie. It's our bedroom. After today we'll share everything in every way.

STEVE
I'm wearing pajamas. Pajamas! Last time I wore pajamas I was eleven! (looking under the covers) At least these don't have feet.

JILL (purring)
Wait 'til you see the jammies I bought for you to wear tonight!

STEVE
Are you out of your mind?

JILL

Your mother said it was bad luck to spend the night before the wedding together, but I don't think we really have anything to worry about.

STEVE

I'm not marrying you!

JILL

It wouldn't be natural if one of us didn't have a just the teensiest case of cold feet.

STEVE

Then, honey, what I've got is frostbite. For starters, I've never seen you before in my life!

JILL

Isn't that sweet! Still seeing me anew!

STEVE

This is lunacy! You can't marry me. It won't work. It can't ...

JILL

Aren't you the dearest thing to be so nervous!

STEVE

No. That's not it! Look, the plain fact is I'm queer! Homosexual!

JILL

I'm sure you'll feel better once you've had a little breakfast. Nothing worse than nerves on an empty stomach.

STEVE

No, really, when I play hide the sausage, I'm the bun!

JILL

You are always like this when you haven't had your coffee.

STEVE

You haven't listened to a word I've said. Oh dear, that sounds like we're already married, doesn't it?

JILL

It's still early. Why don't you slip back under the covers and catch an extra forty winks while I get breakfast started?

STEVE

Why don't I chase 40 Seconals with a fifth of scotch and go out gurgling "Over the Rainbow" into a toilet? IT WOULD MAKE MORE GODDAMNED SENSE!

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JILL

Since we have all this adrenaline going, I think I'll start us off with decaf.

STEVE

I must have taken the wrong combination already. (introspective) Am I dead? Is this hell?

JILL

You know perfectly well we're in Huntington, Indiana, you big tease.

STEVE

Oh my god, it IS hell.

JILL

Now you just rest here for a minute. After breakfast, we'll be ready to start the biggest day of our lives. Then soon we'll be able to start a family. And once we've bought a house, you can quit your second job. We'll have Saturday nights at home with the kids, eating homemade popcorn and watching Disney videos. You'll have a little garden to tend in the spring and summer. Christmas will be at our house since we have the kids. Our life is going to be so rich and peaceful and happy.

STEVE

Since this is hell, I can't even kill myself. What will work if I'm already dead?

JILL

Here I am yammering away with things we've said a hundred times before and you delirious with hunger. You lay back down. Come on. (HE returns miserably to the bed.) I'll be back up when breakfast is ready, pumpkin.

JILL closes the window, the light in the room subsides and SHE exits.

STEVE (from the dark)

How does that prayer go? "Oh my god, I am heartily sorry ...

A shape in the other bed stirs, sits and starts to stand. It stops suddenly.

JACK

OH MY GOD! OH MY GOD!

HE flips on a bedside lamp which gently illuminates his side of the bed.

JACK (looking under the sheet)

Oh my god, I'm naked!

PETER (groggily)

I take it there's something wrong.

THEIR eyes lock. THEY freeze as shock and disbelief mingle across their faces. Eventually PETER slides warily to the edge of the bed and turns on his bedside lamp, brightening the room considerably.

After a beat of studying one another in the light, PETER reaches under the bed and pulls up his bathrobe. HE dons the robe and walks around, then away from the bed.

PETER

Do I know you?

JACK shakes his head.

PETER

Does Steven know you're here?

JACK

Who?

PETER

Nevermind. Where did we meet?

JACK

We've never met.

PETER

Then what are you doing here?

JACK

I don't know.

PETER

How did you get in?

JACK

I don't know.

PETER

I wake up to find you naked in my bed and you expect me to believe that you don't know why you're here or how you got here?

JACK shrugs unhappily.

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PETER

I guess I've spent the odd morning running through the trinity, "oh god, where am I?" "oh god, who is he?" and "Oh god, where is my car?" This is especially puzzling since I didn't go out last night. It's not my birthday, so you're probably not a present.

JACK

I beg your pardon?

PETER

Oh, lighten up. You are, after all, naked in my bed so you're in no position to be giving attitude.

JACK

This is very confusing.

PETER

Rocket scientist, are you?

JACK

No, I'm an actuary. What about you?

PETER

I'm a Taurus, but doesn't this conversation come before we end up naked in bed?

JACK

I wish you would stop making "naked in bed" sound like it was ... like it was ...

PETER

Yes?

JACK

Something sexual.

PETER

Heavens where would I get the idea that being naked in bed could be sexual?

JACK

Well not when it's two guys!

PETER

Wanna bet?

JACK

Are you ... You're not ... Are you ...

PETER
What was your first clue?

JACK
You're a homosexual?

PETER
Top of the line. Versatile. Experienced.

JACK
I don't belong here. (reaching around under the bed) I'm getting married today!

PETER
Having a hell of a bachelor party aren't you?

JACK
Where's my robe?

PETER
I would guess in your bedroom. Steve's robe is hanging in the bathroom.

JACK
Would you get it for me?

PETER
I don't think so.

JACK
What?

PETER
You want it, you can go get it. I'm not your valet and it's a bit late in game for modesty, don't you think?

JACK
No!

PETER
Suit yourself.

PETER returns to his side of the bed, pulls back the covers, and begins to untie the belt to his robe.

JACK
What are you doing? Stop that! You are not getting into this bed!

PETER
I beg YOUR pardon?

JACK
Uh-uhn. No way.

PETER
What are you people all so terrified of? You and the Marine Corps! Am I that irresistible?

JACK
NO!

PETER
You certainly have the insouciant charm of the confirmed heterosexual.

PETER crosses out to the bathroom. As HE does so, STEVE climbs out of his bed and reopens the window illuminating his side of the stage

JACK (forlornly to the heavens)
All right. You win. I could do much worse than marrying Jill. I don't know what I was thinking.

STEVE (sings - well)
"The night is bitter. The stars have lost their glitter. The winds grow colder. Suddenly you're older. And all because of the man that got away!"

PETER returns with a bathrobe that, sad to say, matches the one he's wearing.

PETER (handing the robe to JACK)
Here. Now out of the bed.

JACK pulls the robe on and climbs out of the bed, with maximum concern for modesty. PETER sits on the bed and eyes him disdainfully, while JACK moves away from the bed and watches PETER warily.

STEVE (sighs)
I take it back. I take it all back. I'm not bored. I'll never be bored again. I renounce variety! No more scrumptious Michaels. No more sweet, sexy Jeffs. Not even the occasional smoldering Lawrence. Peter's all I'll ever need. Hmmm. What's in a name? Would a rose by any other really smell as sweet?

PETER
You tired of this yet?

JACK
Yes.

PETER
You ready to go back where you came from?

JACK
Yes.

PETER
What's holding you back?

JACK
I don't know how.

PETER
You and The Three Sisters.

JACK
I don't know how I got here, I don't know how to get back.

PETER
You're a full service package. Well, I've got an idea.

JACK
Yeah?

PETER
It's going to sound weird.

JACK (warily)
How weird?

PETER
You're going to have to trust me.

JACK
Yeah, right.

PETER
I don't hear you coming up with anything.

JACK
What is it?

PETER (moving to the center of the room)
Come here.

JACK
Forget it!

PETER
I'm not going to touch you. Come here.

JACK joins PETER.

PETER
Okay. Now click your heels together.

PETER demonstrates, JACK follows.

STEVE
Goddamnit, I want to go home!

PETER
Now keep doing it but say, "There's no place like home, there's no place like home ..."

JACK looks dubious.

STEVE
Home! (looks at his feet) How else?

PETER
Come on now!

JACK and STEVE begin to click their heels and speak in unison.

JACK & STEVE
There's no place like home, there's no place like home, there's no place ...

As they chant, lights should begin to flash and a few moments of the cheesiest possible "special effects" should ensue with sound effects continuing through a blackout.

When the lights come back up, JACK is back in his bed in his pajamas and STEVE is back in his bed, for all appearances naked under the covers. PETER and JILL enter simultaneously. Each is wearing one towel and drying his/her hair with another. When they speak, it is in unison.

PETER/JILL

Oh good, you're awake. You're not going to believe this, but I just had the strangest dream.

BLACKOUT.

End of TOUCH ME IN THE MORNING