

YOU'VE GOT TO TELL HER

A 10-Minute Play

By

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The play takes place in Row G of a large Broadway theatre.

Cast:

Professor-- stylish man in his, let's say 40s, shall we?

Girl—a perky High School senior, seventeen and rather Midwestern-ish.

Boy—a perhaps even perkier High School senior, seventeen and also a Midwesterner.

What follows is a true story. The names have been changed to protect the fabulous.

This is dedicated to Christian, who is forever fabulous.

(A THEATRE. There is a row of seats before curtain, and seated on the aisle is PROFESSOR. A stylish man in his, let's say 40s, shall we? PROFESSOR is nattily dressed with requisite tortoise-shell glasses and a casually-perfect bow tie. HE excitedly checks out his Playbill and his surroundings. Within minutes--or since this is a 10-minute play, within moments--a young couple arrives. GIRL and BOY are 17, fresh-faced and what generously could be called, "perky.")

What's our row?

GIRL

Row G. Here we are.

BOY

(Shows GIRL tickets)

GIRL

Oh no, we're not seated together.

BOY

OMG, what?

GIRL

See...

(Shows tickets)

...One is Seat #4 and the other is Seat #6.

BOY

Major fail.

GIRL

What'll we do?

BOY

I'll go to the Box Office.

PROFESSOR

Pardon me, I couldn't help overhearing. This side of the theatre is Even Numbers. I'm 2, therefore 4 and 6 makes you my next-door neighbors.

GIRL

Thank you.

PROFESSOR

Certainly.

(BOY & GIRL giggle as they slide past the now standing PROFESSOR)

GIRL

I feel silly.

BOY

You don't look silly.

GIRL

Oh, you.

BOY

Oh, me.

PROFESSOR

Oh, my.

(ALL sit. BOY in #4, GIRL in #6.)

BOY

These seats are great, we're SO close.

GIRL

I'm bummed we couldn't get tickets for WICKED.

BOY

Tell me about it.

GIRL

What's this about? La...

(Pronounces like the confined enclosure.)

...Cage?

BOY

Not sure. Just know it's a...

(Sings the word)

...MUSICAL!

GIRL

Who's the sweetest boyfriend ever?

BOY

Guilty!

GIRL

I'm going to ask our new neighbor. Pardon me?

(GIRL gets PROFESSOR'S attention.)

GIRL (Continues)

You seem like you know things, do you know what this show, La Cage is about?

PROFESSOR

I do. However, first, the title is pronounced La Cage, La Cage aux Folles. It's a musical based on a movie of a French sex farce. A couple that own a nightclub are visited by their son who is marrying the daughter of a conservative politician and so they have to pretend they're something they're not. Mistakes are made, misunderstandings happen, problems ensue, songs are sung, dances are danced, and love and laughter prevails.

GIRL

I knew you'd know.

BOY

What do they have to pretend?

PROFESSOR

That they're straight!

BOY

O...M...G.

GIRL

You mean they're... "Gay?"

PROFESSOR

Yes, they're.... "Gay."

GIRL

(To BOY)

You didn't know anything about it?

BOY

NO! I'm SO Alicia Silverstone.

PROFESSOR

Alicia Silverstone?

GIRL

Clueless. The movie?

PROFESSOR

Oh of course, based on Jane Austen.

LOLz.

BOY

It's true.

PROFESSOR

Shut. Up.

GIRL

Really. Based on her novel, Emma."

PROFESSOR

You're like, Google.

BOY

"Guilty."

PROFESSOR

(BOY looks at GIRL, then back at PROFESSOR. THEY all look away. A pause; awkward but with a small "a.")

(Quietly to BOY)

GIRL

For real? This is a total surprise?

As much to me as you. Maybe more.

BOY

It's just that...

GIRL

(SHE looks at him for a moment. PROFESSOR retreats to the neutral corner of his Playbill.)

Just what?

BOY

Just...I'm not sure...I'm not sure how I feel about this.

GIRL

I'm really sorry. Please, please don't be mad. What can I do?

BOY

GIRL

(Stands)

Think I'll use the Ladies Room before the show starts.

(GIRL scooches past BOY; PROFESSOR hastily stands.)

Excuse me, please.

(GIRL exits up the aisle. BOY tears up. And now it's awkward with a capital "A." PROFESSOR makes a handkerchief appear, politely clears his throat to get BOY's attention and offers it. It's accepted which, as acts of kindness sometimes do, engenders more tears. Eventually with a honk, BOY finishes and returns the now soggy item.)

PROFESSOR

You have to tell her.

BOY

I can't!

(Tears return, as does PROFESSOR'S handkerchief)

PROFESSOR

I know.

BOY

You don't know.

PROFESSOR

Oh, but I do. Which is precisely why I know you can.

BOY

This will *kill* her.

PROFESSOR

I'm not saying it won't hurt, or there won't be tears. It will and there will be. Lots. And from her too. But listen, every day, every single day you don't live your true self is a day wasted. You're just ripping a page off your own calendar, crumpling it up and throwing it away. That kind of life is a lie, to her and to you. And the longer you put off the inevitable the more pressure accumulates, until what seems difficult becomes more and more impossible.

BOY

She'll be devastated, she has no idea.

PROFESSOR

Maybe. But maybe not.

BOY

What do you mean?

PROFESSOR

There are always clues if one knows where to look.

BOY

Clues?

PROFESSOR

Clues. Holy Hannah, my gaydar app was switched to “airport” and you still set if off with your first “OMG.”

BOY

Gaydar?

PROFESSOR

“iGay.”

BOY

You?

PROFESSOR

Moi. Union card and everything. I even know the secret handshake.

BOY

There’s a secret handshake?

PROFESSOR

No.

BOY

Oh! Sorry I am SO slow today.

PROFESSOR

Shame dulls the senses.

BOY

When did you know?

PROFESSOR

Oh, I always knew, always. Since flipping through a JC Penney’s catalogue and being mesmerized by Casual Menswear. To this day if I see a man in a pair of crisp chinos and a work shirt rolled smartly to, the elbows I get weak-in-the-knees. However, it wasn’t until college that I shakily emerged from my closet on uncertain legs like a young colt. I still exchange sweet Christmas cards with my ex-fiancé.

BOY

She didn't hate you?

PROFESSOR

Not even a little.

BOY

So you know.

PROFESSOR

I do. I presume you're fairly recent in joining the choir. What was it for you?

BOY

I don't even know how to answer that.

PROFESSOR

Well, was it Mario Lopez on reruns of Saved By The Bell?

(Nothing)

Perhaps a paperboy with an especially good toss?

(Nope)

Was it...One Direction?

(Bingo!)

BOY

OMG, they're so gorge, like a scrumptious Bakery of Boys.

(Pause)

OK. So, I have to tell her.

PROFESSOR

You have to tell her. And not in dribs and drabs, do it like a Band-Aid, one quick--

(Makes a tearing sound and action)

--"whhhht!"

BOY

OK here she comes--

(Resolved)

--Wish me luck.

(GIRL approaches)

PROFESSOR

When I said, "Tell her," I didn't mean—

GIRL

I'm back!

(GIRL has a gift bag, SHE scooches past PROFESSOR & BOY and returns to her seat.)

GIRL (Cont'd)

The line was ginormous. And I may have had chocolate.

BOY

(Deep breath)

I have something I need to tell you.

GIRL

You're gay.

BOY

I'm gay.

PROFESSOR

O.M.G.

BOY

What?

GIRL

I knew.

BOY

You did?

GIRL

I've been waiting for you to tell me.

BOY

But if you knew, why did you wait?

GIRL

I wasn't sure you knew. There were a lot of times I thought, "OK, here we go" but no. I kept on trying to bring up the topic, let you know I was onboard, but you'd always manage to start singing from Rent.

(BOY starts to say something but--)

And yes, it's a phenomenal score. I even wrote you a letter, but wound up not sending it.

BOY

Why?

GIRL

Because it's your story to tell. Not mine. I knew we'd get there.

(BOY is emotional: relieved, happy, a little sad and did I say relieved?)

BOY

Who's the sweetest girlfriend?

GIRL

Guilty.

(At PROFESSOR)

I think I need to thank you.

PROFESSOR

Me? Whatever for?

GIRL

Call it Woman's Intuition. I think you helped.

PROFESSOR

To quote Tennessee Williams, "The kindness of strangers."

GIRL

A kind word...

(Looks at handkerchief BOY holds)

...A shared moment.

PROFESSOR

You don't miss much, do you?

BOY

So...you're not mad at me?

GIRL

No.

BOY

Yay.

GIRL

I'm a little sad. After all, I lost my boyfriend. But...

BOY

But...

GIRL

I've gained my new gay bestie, and that'll last forever.

PROFESSOR

You really are quite sweet.

(GIRL takes the handkerchief from BOY and hands it to PROFESSOR. It gets immediate use.)

PROFESSOR

Thank you.

GIRL

One other thing...

(GIRL opens gift bag.)

...I only bought two, so we'll share. You deserve your own.

(GIRL removes 2 rainbow feather boas, places one around
PROFESSOR'S neck.)

BOY

My favorite color, "rainbow."

PROFESSOR

A song from the show says it best, "The best of times is now."

(The Orchestra tunes-up, and there is a hush as the House Lights go to
half.)

GIRL

It's starting!

BOY

Yay!

GIRL

But I still wish we were seeing *Wicked*.

(The Overture begins and just like that, our ten
minutes are up.)

A Beginning