

THE EDUCATION OF TED HARRIS

A Play in Two Acts
by
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Cast of Characters
(in order of appearance)

Mom
Ness
Pedge
Amber
Ted
Dad
Doctor

Scene

A small town in the mountains

Time

Act One

Scene 1: No-Regrets. Flashback
Scene 2: Newly-Old Memories. Present
Scene 3: Experimental Treatment. Present
Scene 4: Untouchable. Flashback
Scene 5: College Bound. Flashback
Scene 6: How I Met Your Other. Present
Scene 7: Dissection. Flashback
Scene 8: Things Said. Present

Act Two

Scene 1: Things Un-Said. Present
Scene 2: Drinking Games. Flashback
Scene 3: Screw, Kill, Marry. Flashback
Scene 4: Honorable Mention. Present
Scene 5: Games Are Fine. Present
Scene 6: Game Over. Present

Act OneScene 1

No-Regrets

Flashback

Lights up on MOM & NESS

Faster
MOM

That was all he said?
NESS

I'll get to you faster
MOM

Then he died
NESS

Well not immediately
MOM

But that night
NESS

Yes
MOM

In a car crash
NESS

Yes
MOM

And he was the love of your life?
NESS

The love of my life
MOM

More than Dad?
NESS

Yes.
MOM

Well, what the fuck, Mom?! What am I supposed to do with that?
NESS

I'm just saying
MOM

Are you leaving Dad?
NESS

NO!
MOM

Well, then, what the fuck?
NESS

I'm just saying you only live once. Sometimes, half
MOM

No, that's not a thing
NESS

Well I just wish I'd had, you know..
MOM

Well, so?
NESS

MOM
 To have that experience, you know?

NESS
 Yeah, I get it.

MOM
 What if he would have been better than your father?

NESS
 Okay! First of all, gross. Second of all, I get it. I get the picture.

MOM
 I just don't want you to have any regrets, that's all

NESS
 Like you and 'what's-his-penis'?

MOM
 Gary

NESS
 Gary? Ugh, that's even worse

MOM
 Why is it worse? What's wrong with Gary?

NESS
 It's just a lame name, Mom. Like how do you name a baby Gary? "Aw...he's such a handsome little fella. What's his name?" "Gary"

MOM
 Well, how are things with Luke?

NESS
 They're fine, Mom. Do we really have to talk about this? I get it. You want me to bang Luke.

MOM
 Well, not like that

NESS
 Do you want me to do it here?

MOM
 Of course not

NESS
 You want me to have as much sex as I can just in case I marry someone and they're lame in the sack?

MOM
 No, dear. I just don't want you to have regrets. You're almost 17. Soon you'll be a senior in high school.

NESS
 Get the sex swing, swinging!

MOM
 Okay, this was a mistake

NESS
 No, I'm sorry. Hey, heeeyyy. I'm sorry, Mom. I'm just giving you a hard time.

MOM
 Thanks

NESS
 I just only wish Gary would have given you one

Okay I'm going
 MOM
 No, Awe. Mom...because if he had...we wouldn't be having this conversation. Shit, I wouldn't even have been alive. What the fuck, Mom?!
 NESS
 I don't know. I may never get to talk to you like this again
 MOM
 Why not?
 NESS
 I mean, you'll be busy at school and then probably go away to college
 MOM
 Meh
 NESS
 And then you'll probably be coming home in spurts and
 MOM
 Come home? I'll coooommee home?
 NESS
 Okay, forget it. You're so immature
 MOM
 Ha ha. Mom, relax. I'm just yanking...
 NESS
 Cut it out
 MOM
 Messing with you. Because you're all serious about your only daughter getting plowed and that's weird.
 NESS
 Well
 MOM
 Mom, I don't want to have any regrets either, but I'm also just not a very sexual person
 NESS
 Okay. Really? Okay.
 MOM
 Okay?
 NESS
 Okay
 MOM
 Okay. I love you. Good night.
 NESS
 Good night, dear. Sweet dreams. (*goes to the door*). By the way, I'm leaving your father
 MOM
 What?!
 (*another girl pops up from under the bed in panties and a cami*)
 NESS
 What?!
 PEDGE
 Pedge, what are you doing?!
 NESS

MOM
Pedge? What kind of name is *Pedge*?

PEDGE
I'm sorry Ness, I couldn't help myself

NESS
Fuck

MOM
I mean, there's Peg. There Midge. But, Pedge?

NESS
Mother, this is my... Fuck!

MOM
Accurate it seems

PEDGE
I'm sleeping with your daughter

MOM
Yeah, I get that. Not very sexually active, huh? And, so much for Luke, huh? Well, I'll be seeing ya (*opens the door*)

NESS
Mom, you can't do this.

MOM
What's that? Hmm?

NESS
Mom, you can't just drop a bomb on me like this and then leave

MOM
I think we've both dropped a few bombs tonight. Kim Jong-un would be impressed
(*awkward laugh from PEDGE*)

NESS
No, don't do that. Don't be topical

PEDGE
Hi, Mrs. Harris, I'm Pedge Martin

MOM
Hi. Again, *Pedge*?

NESS
Mom, close the door (*MOM closes the door*)

MOM
Vanessa, I don't know what to say. My own daughter, engaging in lesbianic...

NESS
That's not a thing

MOM
...activities under my roof

PEDGE
I mean, you did just have a heart-to-heart specifically about her vagina getting more play

NESS
Not helping, Pedge

MOM

Was it *Pledge*? Were your parents just super patriotic? Is that what they were going for?

PEDGE

No, I don't think so

MOM

Just Pedge then?

NESS

Short for Pedgia

MOM

Not really much better, is it?

NESS

Mother!

MOM

Vanessa, I'm tired. I'm bored. I'm making choices for *me* beginning right now. Well, beginning the moment I decided to leave your father

NESS

Well, fan-fucking-tastic!

PEDGE

I've always wanted to say that. I've never gotten to say that

MOM & NESS

Not now, Pedge!

PEDGE

Maybe I should go. Good to meet you Mrs. Harris. Bye Vanessa (awkward kiss attempt and fail. PEDGE leaves)

MOM

Pleasure's all yours

(beat)

NESS

Mother, what's going on? Are you really leaving Dad?

MOM

No. I have cancer. Don't tell your brother.

Lights down.

Scene 2

Newly Old Memories

Present

Lights up on AMBER and TED

AMBER

It's a funeral home

TED

It's the house I grew up in

AMBER

Your house used to be a funeral home?

TED

What? No, what? No it *is currently* a funeral home

AMBER

Did you see ghosts and shit growing up?

TED

Like, when we got here, you noted that this was a funeral home. Like as in, it *is* one now.

AMBER

So?

TED

So, it *used* to be my house. Like, when it was my house, it *wasn't* a funeral home.

AMBER

Oooh, right. Right.

TED

And I just wanted you to see it. And I wanted to see it. It was abandoned for a few years after we moved out and I used to come here a lot.

AMBER

But like, there are no dead people in there, right?

TED

Um...there might be?

AMBER

Oh, that's creepy

TED

Well, I mean, it's a funeral home

AMBER

Your parents must be so weird

TED

Because...we lived in a funeral home.

AMBER

Yes.

TED

Wanna get ice cream?

AMBER

On the street where I grew up, a boy died because the garbage truck backed over his bike.

TED

Oh, man, that's terrible

AMBER

Another boy stabbed his mother to death in the bathtub while his father wrestled with his gay lover in the living room. They all died. Except the boy.

TED

Shit.

AMBER

They found his journals. This was before Columbine.

TED

What does that have to do with...?

AMBER

You know, journals.

TED

Oh

AMBER

Are you nervous?

TED

No. Well, kind of. I haven't seen her sick yet.

AMBER

Is your dad going to be there?

TED

Yes. They're married.

AMBER

My parents are married too.

TED

Oh, really? That's neat.

AMBER

(clearly impressed)

You just don't meet many guys these days whose parents are still married. *(Flirty)* I'm glad I tagged along.

TED

(clearly uncomfortable)

Me too. You're nice company.

AMBER

So what's so great about this place?

TED

My old house? It's just. You know. A lot of old memories.

AMBER

Yeah? Good ones I hope

TED

(A little "lost in it")

Yeah.

AMBER

Tell me one of your memories

TED

(sizing her up)

I just might! But we should probably get going though.

AMBER

We're not going inside?

TED

Not today.

AMBER

Good. Dead people freak me out.

TED

Right. You do know we're here because my mom has cancer?

AMBER

Oh my God I know. I didn't mean your mom. I meant *other* dead people.

TED

I mean she's not dead

AMBER

I know!

TED

But that's... never mind

AMBER

I'm sorry Ted. That was so thoughtless. How long has she been sick?

TED

I don't really know. I thought she was in remission. I guess it's back now and worse this time.

AMBER

I'm sorry about the "dead" comment. And now I keep making it worse 'cause I keep bringing it up and saying the word "dead". See? I did it again.

TED

It's okay. Sickness brings out weird things in people I think.

AMBER

Yeah I just got weirded out by the funeral home thing.

TED

Totally understandable.

AMBER

Like, I can't believe you used to go there alone. So creepy.

TED

You do realize when I would go there...

AMBER

(flirtatious, trying to put a bow on the awkwardness)

But I do hope you trust me enough to tell me one of your memories

TED

Oh?

AMBER

I just hope it's not a ghost one.

TED

Let's head out. *They start to exit*

AMBER

I'm excited to meet your sister too

TED

Oh, she's interesting. In high school she won "Most Likely to Hold a Bat." Like the animal

AMBER

Oh, wow. Does she have pet bats?

TED

I don't think that's a thing.

AMBER

Oh.

TED

I think it was just something people said.

AMBER

Oh. I'd hold a bat.

They exit. Lights down.

Scene 3

Experimental Treatment

Present

Lights up outside hospital room. DAD and NESS are sitting in chairs.

Enter TED and AMBER

DAD

(Stands to greet TED & AMBER)

Ted.

TED

Hi Dad

DAD

(Embraces TED)

Welcome home, Son

TED

Thanks, Dad. This is Amber

DAD

Hello Amber.

AMBER

Hi

TED

This is my sister, Ness

AMBER

Hi there.

TED

to Ness

Hi, Stupid

NESS

to Ted

Hi, Tampon

DAD

Your mother's been missing you really badly, Ted. How long can you stay for?

AMBER

Stay

DAD

What's that?

AMBER

You don't need to add "for" to the end of the sentence. It can be just "how long can you stay?" It's a preposition and it doesn't belong at the end of a sentence. For instance, "Who are you giving that purse to?" should really be: "to whom are you giving that purse?"

DAD

Oh.

NESS

Where'd ya meet my brother at?

AMBER

(awkwardly laughs) You're funny

NESS

Thanks

AMBER

Wait. You knew you didn't need to add "at" right? You were just doing it to be funny?

TED

I don't know how long I can stay, Pop

NESS

In and out in true Ted fashion

TED

No, I just have to figure out work.

DAD

It's amazing. For someone who lives four hours away, he rarely comes home. Maybe you can convince him to move back here? Or is it just back?

AMBER

Either way!

TED

How 'bout we go see Mom?

NESS

Is that why you're here? I was wondering.

DAD

We'll go in in a minute, but the doctor asked us to wait here.

TED

Why?

DAD

I'm not sure but I'm worried it can't be good.

TED

Well, where the fuck is he?

AMBER

How do you know it's a *he*?

TED

What? I don't know it's a *he*.

NESS

You're acting like you do...

DAD

Girls! *to TED* He said he wouldn't be long. *to AMBER & NESS.* It's a *he*.

