

Please Have a Seat and Someone Will Be With You Shortly

A waiting room. SUE and DAVID sit in chairs next to each other reading magazines. At rise: A long beat; David considers Sue, who's lost in her magazine. Then finally.

David: Sue?

Sue: Excuse me?

D: your name is Sue right?

Sue: (uneasy) It is...

David: (A little overcome) Wow...

Sue: What?

D: So we're finally talking...

Sue: (Even more uneasy) We are...

D And it was just as easy as saying that one word: Sue. Who knew it would be that easy?

S You know my name. Okay, that's a little weird

D Of course I know your name, Sue. Do you mind if I call you Sue?

S Look, okay, I'll have you know I have Mace in my purse.

D Hey, easy there! I know your name because your therapist has come through that door, smiled at you and said "Sue"? every Monday night for the last eighteen months. Hello?

S (A little flattered at this) I didn't realize...that you'd paid attention to that.

D Of course I paid attention to that!

S Huh.

D (Gently playful, not pissed) But I wouldn't want to upset you anymore. And I wouldn't want you to mace me. So...the end.

(Another long beat)

S (Almost embarrassed to admit this) I...I'm afraid I don't know your name. I feel bad.

D Well, that...that's because my therapist comes through the door, glowers, and says "It's time." He's this super-strict, super-scary Freudian.

S Oh my God, he does seem scary.

D I'm not entirely sure he knows my name.

S I bet it's Albert.

D Ouch. Okay, that hurts.

S You don't want to look like an Albert?

D Uh, no. No self-respecting man wants to look like an Albert. My name is David.
Nothing exciting. But that's my name.

S That's a nice name. Please, my name is Sue. So, I'm not one to judge in the naming department.

D It's nice to meet you Sue.

S Likewise, David.

(A beat, They finally smile at each other.)

D So...so hold on. You've really never noticed me during all these months we've been waiting out here?

S I never said I didn't notice you...

D Because I sure noticed you.

S you did?

D Absolutely. Lots. In fact, I spent the first couple of months trying to catch your eye over the magazines we were reading. I made a huge effort trying to do this.

S That's what you were doing?

D I was.

S Because Honestly...I swear I thought you either had an astigmatism or a tic.

D Are you serious?

S You'd do this thing where you'd read your magazine, then lower it...read it, then lower it. It was almost hypnotic to watch it out of the corner of my eye.

D Okay, I'll be up-front here: I have obsessive-compulsive issues the I am dealing with during my sessions here.

S Well, that explains so much.

D Dr. Reifenschneider has me on a very mild antidepressant, a wonderful side effect of which is that it's wiped out that OCD stuff altogether.

S Not entirely. you still do this thing where you run your forefinger back and forth across your upper lip while you read.

D (Pleasantly surprised to hear this) So you really have noticed me?

S I don't know. (Pulling back a little) Maybe. Now and then.

(A beat)

D Okay, I don't mean to cross another line here, but since we only have who knows how many more minutes before one of our doctors walks through the door...I've also thought about you outside of this room. I'm talking now, I feel I should come clean about this.

S You've thought about me?

D I have.

S (Turning away a bit) But why...why would you do that?

D Am I scaring you?

S A little.

D I'm sorry, it's just I've thought about what your life is like. (Then.) I've imagined you're a first-grade teacher.

S (Taken aback by that.) You have?

D Yeah. I don't know... there was just something about you. I could just see you reading Where the Wild things Are to a class of screaming six-year-olds and keeping your calm while children all around you pulled one another's hair and vomited.

S That's...wow. Okay, I'll be up-front with you: In my sessions here, I've been dealing with the ways I put up walls and push people away. And while part of me wants to run screaming now that you've told me all this - or promptly change my sessions to Tuesdays, I won't...and I'll just... Say thank you.

D You're welcome. And just so you know, there's no need to worry about changing your therapy night. Because this is my final session with Dr. Reifenschneider, He's closing this little SO up his practice and moving to Vermont to spend his twilight years running candle shop. And I only wish I was making that up because that is JUST FREUDIAN. I mean, CANDLES?

S Oh my God.

D So starting next Monday, I'll be seeing Dr. McBee down in the Village. Dr. Reifenschneider says he's around my age and wears shorts in the summer. I'm looking forward to a change of pace.

S I'm sure.

D But I saw you sitting here tonight, and I don't know, I just decided I had to say hello to you before I could say goodbye.

(A little beat)

S I imagined you were a carpenter.

D Oh my God, you did?

S On several occasions.

D A carpenter. Holy shit.

S This is very hard for me to say out loud. I'm also dealing with issues of trust and abandonment in my sessions. So you're really pushing all my buttons here tonight.

D A carpenter, I'm sorry. That's the kind of thing guys dream about being mistaken for.

S You have very strong forearms. And I could just tell you knew a clean line when you saw one. I imagined you designed and made your own furniture. These very rough-hewn chairs and benches that you'd rub with linseed oil while NPR played in the background.

D I love NPR!

S Oh my God, so do I!

D (Boldly plowing ahead) I imagined you lived in Chelsea.

S I imagined you lived up by Columbia.

D And that you have a cat.

S And that you have this enormous moosehead thing left over from your college years.

D And that I'd ask you out for coffee first, but things would move quite fast from there. We'd have dinner at Gramercy Tavern.

S See now, I pictured Balthazar.

D And we'd take buggy rides in Central Park.

S And rollerblade there on the weekends—and I've never rollerbladed in my life!

D And we'd move in together after about a year.

S This very shabby loft out in Williamsburg...

D ...with a wheezy radiator, but we'd love everything about it. And we'd adopt a dog!

S And go to the local food commune!

D And have a kid or maybe two. You and me...and the dog and the kids...out in Williamsburg...forever.

(Along beat. The mood shifts.)

I'm an accountant. I really...God, I wish I were a carpenter. But I'm sorry, I'm so not.

S I'm a marketing person at Publishers Clearing House. It's basically the devil's work.

D And my name is Albert. I'm not kidding. I never tell anyone that my name is Albert when I meet them because it makes the worst first impression ever.

S (Apologetic) And I have a boyfriend. A fiance, actually. We have issues of intimacy and respect... which is essentially why I'm here in couples therapy by myself. I'm terrified at the thought of marrying him. But this...this was so great David. Albert.

D Yeah, it was Sue. It was.

(Just then there's a faint light from offstage to indicate a door opening.)

Therapist's Voice: Sue?

(She stands and moves toward the door.)

D So wait, before you go...I just wanted to say...

(She stops and turns to him)

Good-bye.

S (Then, with a small smile,) Hello.

(She stands there for a beat, not moving toward the door...just standing there...as the lights fade.)

END OF PLAY