

IMPRESSION: SUNRISE

Ralph Tropf

CONTACT:

Ralph Tropf
4545 Los Feliz Blvd. #308
Los Angeles, CA 90027

(323) 667-2584
rtropf@earthlink.net
www.ralptropf.com

IMPRESSION: SUNRISE

CAST:

TERRY GIANELLI	(22) a fashion design student
SIMON MASON	(30-35) a small town photographer
REBECCA REESE	(22) Terry's friend
MICHAEL NEWMAN	(24-28) a big city photographer

SCENE:

The action takes place in various locations in Winter Park, Florida and New York City. The time is contemporary.

Although the basic structure of the text is linear, the staging should be impressionistic in nature. Impressionist paintings evoke a mood or feeling rather than actual physical objects, and rarely have clearly defined boundaries. Form, color, light and shadow flow together, and it's difficult to say where one ends and then next begins. On the set itself, no attempt should be made to portray the various locations realistically. One area has an upright shape which suggests the bar and Simon's photography studio. Another area has other shapes which become a restaurant, the college campus and might also be part of Simon's studio. An elevated level is used as Terry's apartment and other locations if necessary. Each stage area flows into the next – as the action of each scene flows from one to the next.

If the theatre has the capability, scrim can be used to indicate scene changes. They can be lowered or created as rolling panels and moved into different positions by the actors. PowerPoint projections on the scrim will allow the lighting designer to literally paint with light as the play progresses, changing from one scene to the next or from one mood to the next within a scene. For example, in the scene where Simon and Terry take a long evening walk, a scrim can obscure them temporarily, after which the lighting evolves to reveal them behind the scrim, as if seen through the shadows of a streetlight shining through the trees. Projections can create the buildings of New York in the city scenes. The sun can slowly rise around Terry as she delivers her final monologue.

ACT ONE

The audience first experiences a performance of Claude DeBussy's *Claire de lune*. At the end of the piece, the house lights fade as lights rise on stage.

TERRY enters, dressed as a waitress and carrying a cocktail on a tray.

TERRY'S SPACE

TERRY

Sometimes people ask me, "Why don't you have a boyfriend?" It takes a lot of care and feeding to properly maintain a good boyfriend. I'm an independent woman with dreams and ambitions. I go to school, at night I work to put myself through school and I find the time to sketch and sew when I can. I just don't see how I can fit a boyfriend into the schedule.

LIGHTS rise in the bar. SIMON is discovered. Terry crosses to him and serves the drink.

THE BAR

Scotch and soda.

TERRY

Thank you.

SIMON

Can I get you anything else?

TERRY

I'd like to buy you a drink.

SIMON

I'm working.

TERRY

You don't have to drink it now. Save it for later if you want.

SIMON

I work in a bar. I get my drinks free.

TERRY

The drink isn't the point.

SIMON

TERRY

You don't say.

TERRY exits.

SIMON

I hope I haven't given you the wrong impression. I'm not a ladies' man. I don't really even date all that much. I just like talking to women. I like the way they think. I like the way they laugh. I love the way a woman's hair will fall over her face, and she has to brush it back with her hand.

Lights rise on TERRY as she enters in another area.

TERRY'S SPACE

TERRY

Don't ask me why him, why now, because I don't know. I've seen him here a couple of times. We've talked. I've seen him around campus, but not all that much. Why him, why now? I honestly couldn't tell you.

TERRY crosses to SIMON.

THE BAR

TERRY

Can I ask you to pay this? I'm off now, and I have to get home. I have a dog, and if I don't let him out he'll make a mess.

SIMON

Have him fixed. They're not so pesky once they've been neutered.

TERRY

I'll keep that in mind.

SIMON

There's a white wine here. Is that a mistake, or...

TERRY

You offered.

SIMON

Are you going to drink it with me?

TERRY

I don't suppose you would take "no" for an answer.

SIMON

I'd rather you say "yes."

TERRY

Would you be less pesky if I had you neutered?

SIMON

Keep the change.

TERRY exits.

SIMON

We can't live with them, we can't live without them. I'm talking about games, the politics of human existence. We can't just say what we're thinking, so we talk about, whatever.

TERRY enters, with a glass of wine.

TERRY

(to us)

After all, it's only a glass of wine.

TERRY crosses to SIMON.

TERRY

I decided that, since you paid for it...

SIMON

Next best thing to a warm fire.

TERRY

The next best thing to a warm fire would be Johnny Depp.

SIMON

He wasn't on the menu.

TERRY

I do have to hurry home. Last time he ruined the sofa.

SIMON

Those movie stars.

TERRY

Not Johnny Depp. My dog.

SIMON

I'm Simon.

TERRY

I know. We spoke last week, in this very bar.

SIMON

Yes. I remember.

TERRY

I really have to get right home.

SIMON

Well, then. Goodbye.

TERRY

I don't have to leave this second.

SIMON

Good.

TERRY

He can turn a pillow into confetti like that.

SIMON

What's his name?

TERRY

Fido.

SIMON

I've never actually known anyone with a dog named "Fido."

TERRY

It's short for fifty dollars. That's what he cost, with shots and everything. He's a mutt, mostly a retriever, I think. He's got the glossy black coat. But he's squat and kind of elongated, like he's part dachshund. Is that possible?

SIMON

You're doing a nice job on that napkin.

TERRY

Oh. Snowflake. Ta-da!

SIMON

That's very good.

TERRY

It's a napkin torn into little bits.

SIMON

But it has been done with a keen artistic eye.

TERRY

It's a napkin torn into little bits.

SIMON

Well, I like it.

TERRY

You're trying too hard, Sam. You already got me to sit down.

SIMON

My name's Simon.

TERRY

Simon. Right. I knew that.

SIMON

And by the way...

TERRY

I'm, really, I don't know...

SIMON

It's okay. I'm always forgetting names, too.

TERRY

The only person I've even known named Simon is the chipmunk in the cartoon.

SIMON

That's not a person, really.

(pause)

Did you ever read Moby Dick?

TERRY

No.

SIMON

When Ishmael, that's the main character, hears the captain's name is "Ahab" he has second thoughts about signing on for the voyage. Ahab, you see, is an evil King in The Bible. And the master says, "Ahab did not name himself."

TERRY

Is there someone named "Simon" in Moby Dick?

SIMON

No. My point is... I guess you'd have to read it for yourself. Moby Dick.

TERRY

I hope you're not a writer.

SIMON

No, I'm not.

TERRY

Because I dated a writer once and he wasn't worth the paper he was printed on.

SIMON

I just read a lot.

TERRY

He wrote me poems and they were very nice, but you can't live on poetry. A time comes when poetry isn't enough.

SIMON

I'm a photographer.

TERRY

Really.

SIMON

Yeah. I wanted to be a policeman, an astronaut, a pirate king and President of the United States, but somehow I became a photographer.

TERRY

Maybe you could help me out.

SIMON

You're an actress.

TERRY

Oh, no. I'm not, no, never an actress. My friend Rebecca is trying to be an actress, and she's always telling me about it. It's okay for some people, I suppose, but not me.

SIMON

You're pretty enough to be an actress.

TERRY

Thank you.

SIMON

You have beautiful eyes.

TERRY

I'm a fashion design student and I have to put together a portfolio.

SIMON

At the college?

TERRY

Yeah.

SIMON

I teach Art History, one class a semester.

TERRY

Yes, I've seen you. I want to do something different, something more than just drawings. Photographs would be perfect.

SIMON

That would take a lot of work.

TERRY

Yes, it would. Well, I'd better get going. By now he's probably torn the carpet to shreds.

SIMON

I didn't say I wouldn't do it.

TERRY

It would take days, even weeks to do it right.

SIMON

If you could cover the cost of film and processing...

TERRY

And I wouldn't want to do it half way.

SIMON

I'm game if you are.

TERRY

Because I don't do the ordinary thing. A design should make a distinct impression as well as flatter the women wearing it. Like Sonia Mack, who actually designs outfits with hats and veils. Or even Heather Jones... You have no idea who I'm talking about.

SIMON

Not really. But I admire your passion.

TERRY

I need to get going. Thanks for the drink.

TERRY rises.

SIMON

Wait. Let's talk about this shoot. It's totally do-able, and it would be good for me to do some fashion work again.

TERRY

So you've done it before.

SIMON

When I lived in New York.

TERRY sits.

TERRY

When did you live in New York?

SIMON

A couple of years back.

TERRY

I want to move there, after school. All the new lines come out in New York.

SIMON

If you're going to work in the fashion industry...

TERRY

It's the place to be.

SIMON

Would you like another drink?

TERRY

No. Thank you.

SIMON

I could follow you home.

TERRY

Follow me home?

SIMON

If you have another drink. I could follow you home, in my car, if you're not sure about driving.

TERRY

You'd have another drink, too, wouldn't you?

SIMON

I suppose.

TERRY

That's not so smart, for us each to have another drink and then you follow me home.

SIMON

Okay. Here's my card. If you want to do that shoot, drop by the studio.

TERRY

How much will it cost?

SIMON

I won't charge you for the studio or the time. You'll have to find your own model...

TERRY

My friend Rebecca can do it. She picks up things fast.

SIMON

Or you could model them yourself.

TERRY

You really want to get me in front of the camera, don't you?

SIMON

You'd be stunning. How many pictures would you need?

TERRY

Five or six dresses.

SIMON

I could do it all for a hundred dollars.

TERRY

That's a good deal.

SIMON

Happy to help.

TERRY

It's good for you, too. I mean, if you want to do more fashion work...

SIMON

Then we have an agreement.

TERRY

So. I'll stop by next week.

TERRY rises.

SIMON

Wait. This is embarrassing. I don't know your name.

TERRY

Terry.

SIMON

That's a lovely name.

TERRY

I hate it.

SIMON

Then use Teresa. It's musical, and filled with Italian elegance. Perfect for a fashion designer.

TERRY

My real name is "Latitia."

SIMON

I see.

TERRY

I hate that, too, and there isn't really a good nickname.

SIMON

"Letty."

TERRY

Like I said.

SIMON

"Titty."

TERRY

I have to get going.

Terry, I'm sorry. SIMON

Forget it. TERRY

It was a stupid thing to say. SIMON

It's all right. TERRY

Let me walk you to your car. SIMON

I don't have a car. TERRY

You said you couldn't have another drink. SIMON

I said I didn't want another drink. TERRY

Then I'll give you a lift home. SIMON

I only live a few blocks from here. TERRY

So I'll walk you home. SIMON

Do I have to swat you with a rolled up newspaper? TERRY

Okay. Stop by when you're ready to do the shoot. SIMON

Don't take this as an insult. TERRY

I won't. SIMON

Because I'd really like to do this shoot. TERRY

Whenever you're ready.

SIMON

Wait here. I'll get my things.

TERRY

TERRY exits. Simon addresses the audience in a conspiratorial whisper.

SIMON

I have no idea why she decided to let me walk her home. I'd like to think it was my persistence. Women resist and men persist. That's what makes the world go 'round.

SIMON turns away. LIGHTS fade.

LIGHTS rise on TERRY in another area, carrying a purse and sweater.

TERRY'S SPACE

TERRY

I have no idea why I let him walk me home. I'd hate to think it was his persistence. Women dislike that more than anything, a man who just won't let it go. But it was late... and I had walked home alone too many times.

LIGHTS CHANGE. The bar area melts into the gloom and becomes shapes and shadows in the background, no longer representing time or place.

The stage is filled with moonlight filtered through trees, and the glow of ambient light from street lamps.

SIMON emerges and joins TERRY.