

SQUID AND FISHY

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SQUID AND FISHY

CAST:

SQUID male, 20's

FISHY female, 20's

THE MAN male, 30's

SCENE:

The main playing area represented "Screamin' Rags," a used clothing shop on New York's Lower East Side. There's a counter with a cash register and a telephone. Several tables have piles of clothes on them, and a tailcoat is displayed on a dress dummy or mannequin.

A small area to one side features a single row of seats representing a car on the Metro North train. A scene outside the shop can take place apron or in the aisle of the theatre.

TIME:

Changes of time and location should be indicated with crossfades rather than scene changes so that the flow of action is never interrupted.

Scene One

LIGHTS UP on the Metro North, the last train from Stamford to New York at one a.m. SQUID and FISHY are discovered alone, sitting side by side. They wear leather and excessive jewelry, have piercings, tattoos and punk haircuts. Fishy is reading a magazine.

FISHY
Ya couldn't just lay off, could ya?

SQUID
I hate it.

FISHY
You know that. I know that. But your Ma's into it.

SQUID
She's been bangin' my head with church since I was five.

FISHY
You got nothin' to prove.

SQUID
Maybe I do.

FISHY
Sometimes you treat me like that.

SQUID
I do not. I know the difference between my girlfriend and my Ma.

THE MAN enters. He is dressed in an expensive suit that is rumpled and dirty. He sits near them.

SQUID (cont)
You think when I'm strokin' on you, I'm really strokin' my Ma?

FISHY
 Just lay off, will ya?

SQUID
 You ain't her. You ain't nothin' like her. I rag on my Mom sometimes, she rags on me. I don't rag on you.

FISHY
 Ha!

The Man lights a cigarette.

SQUID
 Bite me.

FISHY
 Squid, there's somebody here.

SQUID
 So what?

FISHY
 So lay off (*pause*) Tell that guy to scrag his butt.

SQUID
 It's late. He ain't hurtin' nobody.

FISHY
 It's hurtin' me.

SQUID
 So you tell 'im.

FISHY
 Squid.

Squid crosses to The Man.

SQUID
 Pal, you mind puttin' that out?

MAN
 My smoke, light as air, hardly more than air itself, has invaded your environment.

SQUID

Look, there's no smokin' on the train. Okay?

MAN

The television is like a little electronic room. You can get inside that room and never come out.

SQUID

Hey, just put out the butt.

MAN

Tele-vision. Tele-phone. The Greek word for distance. We're pushing each other farther and farther away.

Squid takes the cigarette out of The Man's mouth and steps on it. He returns to his seat.

FISHY

What happened?

SQUID

Guy's havin' some kind of crisis.

The Man lights another cigarette.

FISHY

He lit another one.

SQUID

Just let it alone.

FISHY

Second-hand smoke is not good right now.

SQUID

C'mon then. We'll go to another car.

FISHY

He's the one out of line.

Squid addresses The Man.

SQUID

Look, you can't smoke on the train. My girl don't like it. Do the right thing, okay?

MAN

Do you ever think about the telephone? I used to communicate with my wife by leaving messages on her voice mail. She'd leave messages on mine. We wouldn't see each other for days. Some people have sex over the phone...

SQUID

Here's five bucks. Either go to another car or shut up and stop smokin'.

MAN

Is that the price for keeping my breath out of your world?

The Man stomps out his cigarette.

SQUID

Now, we got a deal, right?

MAN

I used to be a stockbroker. I know how quickly a deal can crumble.

The Man lights the bill.

SQUID

Hey, what'er ya doin'?

Squid tries to grab the bill back, but The Man avoids him.

MAN

I know how useless this is.

SQUID

That's my money.

FISHY

Squid, what's goin' on?

SQUID

The guy's burnin' my five dollars.

FISHY

You gave him five dollars?

SQUID

I thought he'd go to the bar car, buy a drink.

MAN

I'm not an alcoholic.

FISHY

Get over here. Get! Sit!

Squid sits beside Fishy.

FISHY (cont)

I don't want to hear about we don't have the money for a baby. You got cash for CD's, and you give it away to bums on trains...

MAN

I'm not a bum.

FISHY

Hey, this is a private talk, okay? *(to Squid)* You got money to throw around and I'm having this baby.

Squid crosses to The Man.

SQUID

Gimme one of those butts.

MAN

I thought your girlfriend didn't like it.

SQUID

She's pregnant. Her hormones are all screwed up.

MAN

She's going to have a baby. How marvelous.

SQUID

Yeah.

MAN

Do you want a boy or a girl?

SQUID

I don't want nothin' right now.

The Man gives Squid a cigarette and lights it.

MAN

I wanted a son. My wife didn't want children. She was a securities analyst, and very busy. We divorced two years ago.

SQUID

Bummer city.

MAN

It was, my friend, it was. She married again. Last month I heard she gave birth to a boy. I've been on this train ever since.

SQUID

Wild.

MAN

I buy a month-long pass. I buy sandwiches and cigarettes in the bar car.

SQUID

So you don't work or nothin'?

MAN

I take the train from Stamford, where I used to live, to Grand Central, where I used to get the subway to work. I turn around and come back again. It seemed to me that home and work were keeping me from my true calling.

SQUID

I know, I know. I make a few bucks, I pay the rent, I do it all over again. It's like, what's the point?

MAN

The point is right there.

SQUID

Fishy? She ain't no help. She wanted to start a store, ya know, old clothes, jewelry and junk.

MAN

Making useless things useful again.

SQUID

It's called "Screamin' Rags." She thinks all we gotta do is fill it with stuff and people will buy it.

MAN

That's what I would do, dress up in a tie and go shopping.

SQUID

Sometime I look at that stupid little store and I wanna scream. Shit. I may chuck it all and come along with you.

MAN

Now listen to me. That woman is going to have your child. There is nothing, *nothing* more important than that.

SQUID

Hey, take it easy.

MAN

Women don't need men any more. They can buy it, squirt it in with a syringe, have the baby on their own. The world applauds them for being a brave, single mother. Where does that leave us? Where does that leave us?

The Man takes the cigarette out of
Squid's mouth.

MAN (cont)

There's no smoking on the train. It would be best if we all followed the rules.

The Man steps on the cigarette and exits.
Squid sits down beside Fishy.

SQUID

Did you hear that guy?

FISHY

Every word.

SQUID

Weird, huh?

FISHY

Yeah, real weird.

They sit for a moment. Fishy pretends to
read her magazine.

SQUID

When we get back to the city, let's get a bite at the Wah-Wah Hut.

Okay. FISHY

I'll pay for it. SQUID

Sure. FISHY

Wahtcha readin'? SQUID

Modern Bride. FISHY

When you're done, let me have a look. SQUID

LIGHTS fade. In the darkness, we hear a woman's voice speaking with a British accent.

Scene Two

WOMAN'S VOICE

St. Paul's Cathedral is best known as the site of the wedding of Prince Charles and Princess Diana, and for the Princess's funeral as well. Only its spectacular edifice could compliment such auspicious and solemn occasions. St. Paul's was first consecrated...

The Woman's Voice continues under until Fishy turns off the TV. [SEE APPENDIX FOR NARRATIVE]

LIGHTS rise in the main playing area: Screamin' Rags. SQUID is discovered eating a sandwich and watching a portable television.

FISHY enters outside, carrying a large box.

Squid. Squid! Get the door, Squid. FISHY

Without taking his eyes off the TV,
Squid opens the door.

C'mon, Fishy, you gotta see this. SQUID

Gimme a hand, will ya? FISHY

It's all about England. SQUID

Squid, you were supposed to have all these tagged and sorted. FISHY

They useta chop off people's heads in the Tower of London. This king had two nephews, and he killed them and stuffed them in this big keg of wine. SQUID

Fishy turns off the TV.

I'm watchin' that. SQUID (cont)

We got work to do. FISHY

There's this place called Stonehenge that's been there for thousands of years. They dragged these big rocks, I don't know, maybe a hundred miles to build it. SQUID

Squid turns the TV back on. Fishy turns it off again.

Anybody come in while I was out? FISHY

Nobody comes in here. SQUID

We gotta get another two hundred. FISHY

Talk to old man Moss. SQUID