

BAGGAGE

A ten-minute play

By Jeanette D. Farr

CHARACTERS:

ROBYN

JO

SAM – Jo's previous relationship

MIRIUM – female, overbearing, ROBYN's mother. 50's or over depending on the casting of ROBYN, JO, and SAM

SETTING: In an intimate space

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NOTES on CASTING and the like:

The characters of JO, SAM, and ROBYN can be played by any gender and/or ethnicity. Any and all combinations are welcomed in the exploration of this play. The point being, love and loss are universal.

MIRIUM is the only absolute, being female.

In the spirit of collaboration, the design of where the characters “emerge” and, depending on the casting and characterization, the location of SAM and JO’s “intimate moment” is up to the director and creative team.

A / in the middle of dialogue indicates when the beginning of the next character’s line.

AT RISE: we see two people engaged in an intimate moment.

They break.

They look at each other, then-

JO looks away.

ROBYN

Wow.

JO

Yeah.

ROBYN

I mean-

JO

Wow. *(a beat)* It’s just - our luggage.

ROBYN

The same?

JO

Exactly the same. Same color, same... everything. I can’t get over it. Nobody would believe it. People meet online, in bars, through friends, but-

ROBYN

Not at the airport...?

JO

Not reaching for the exact same piece of luggage.

ROBYN

Maybe it's "Kismet"

JO

You're a musical theatre person?

ROBYN

"Kismet" is common –

JO

You, are anything but common. (*a moment, then...*) I just think we oughta get to know one another -

ROBYN

Ah, I get it. You want the story of how we met. Not the luggage story because that's way too crazy, but the one we tell our friends instead, because who picks up people at the airport. Let's say, we were... taking our luggage out for a walk and we just happened to run into each other in front of a coffee house and ordered the exact same coffee drink – and that it was there where we went out for two and a half weeks before we even touched each other because we wanted to wait. Oh, and if you don't want to meet my friends first, we can meet your friends first –

JO

I think you need to.

ROBYN

I'd be happy to meet them. (*beat*) Wait, I *need* to? (*chuckling*) What? Are you a part of a cult or something?

JO

I need to tell you something – about me – I'm -

ROBYN

What? Wait. You- (*a sudden realization*) You. Are you married?

JO

Not exactly. Sam is...

ROBYN

Sam? Okay (*pulling away*) Names now. Okay, great. Maybe we should/go.

(*JO pulls out a picture of SAM. At the same moment, SAM appears*)

JO

This is Sam.

ROBYN

It's wonderful you have a picture, but I'm really not/interested-

JO

You don't understand. I can explain - I like you - I -

ROBYN

And stalk ordinary strangers in airports, just praying on them/ Waiting to pounce and take advantage of -

JO

With the exact same kind of luggage? Yeah. Take advantage?! Of course not! You make me sound like som animal - and by the way, I didn't hear you complaining a minute ago. Are you crazy?

ROBYN

You get that moniker, dear heart.

JO

Who - who says that?

ROBYN

"moniker?"

JO

"dearheart"

ROBYN

I get verbally defensive when I'm angry.

JO

Good to know.

ROBYN

And you become “evasive”.

JO

Good to know. *(Pause)* Well, at least we had our first fight. Get that outta the way.

ROBYN

I'm sorry.

JO

So am I.

ROBYN

Then all of this - between us? Ah, of course. Of course this couldn't be true. Some sick idea. I should have known with Mercury in retrograde –

JO

You're into astrology?

ROBYN

I read it this week on some click bait thing. If you're not available, then what are you doing here? With me? This – this is an affair then/ You can't just string someone along...

JO

Sam's died 10 years ago. *(ROBYN stops)* We were together for only a few months. Then it all happened so fast. Just like that – gone.

SAM

Cancer's a bitch.

JO

We were young when we met. We thought we were so mature at the time.

SAM

We were in love. We had something. You know that. There just wasn't enough time –

ROBYN

I'm sorry.

JO

Everyone tells me I should "be over it". But there are still times when I feel. Like... Sam made an impact. It was fast – like...

ROBYN

I shouldn't have been so spontaneous – This doesn't just happen – to me, anyway.

JO

Things always seem to happen fast in my life

SAM

We were really hot and heavy right away as I recall. (*Approaching Jo*) It was the way you moved. I saw you dance. You were incredible, you went home with me that night, but it was...

JO

(*dreamily*) Hot and heavy –

ROBYN

What?

JO

It was. (*back to reality*) Like now. Like with you. With us! But who's to say you won't get some disease that eats away at you.

ROBYN

Okay, great. Thanks. As if being with a complete stranger wasn't enough to worry about.

JO

Maybe I should just take my luggage and go -

(*JO takes one piece of the luggage and begins to go. SAM accompanies JO*)

SAM

That's right – There's a Heineken and some Hägen Däs with our names on them.

ROBYN

(blurting out) My favorite color is orange.

JO

(stopping to listen) Orange?

ROBYN

My favorite food is sushi. My favorite season is fall – because of the leaves – also orange. I have a collection of old hippie posters that are now worth quite a bit of money if they were to ever go to auction.

SAM

Sushi? You really don't like sushi, do you, Jo?

JO

I like sushi.

ROBYN

Well there you go. See? Stuff in common. What do you want, another sign?

JO

(quickly) No.

SAM

You said I would be with you forever.

ROBYN

And... I know about loss. I lost my father.

JO

It's not the same. Not really.

ROBYN

But I do know about loss. I know what that's like. And, I'm not going to stop my life because someone else's stopped – *(recovering)* But, there's something to be said for moving on - and taking a chance - *(connecting with his luggage)* Today was that day I finally took a chance.

JO

Okay. What finally did it? What was the thing that made you finally take that chance?

(ROBYN's mother, MIRIUM appears)

MIRIUM

You never go anywhere. How do you think you'd ever expect to find anyone looking like that?

ROBYN

Let's just say I had to get away.

SAM

I'm not going anywhere.

JO

There are times when I wish I could just go away.

MIRIUM

It's only a matter of time until you get hurt.

ROBYN

(To MIRIUM) I know! (To JO) I know. About moving on. I'm moving on. (a beat) For as long as I can remember we had always planned a vacation as a family. One year, my mom and dad - they went on separate vacations. It was mom decided not to go. I really believe that although adventurous as he was what he really wanted was to get away from her. (matter of fact) He had a heart attack on the flight. By the time the plane landed he was gone. (a discovery) Maybe his heart broke because she decided not to go. I don't know. In any event, a few months later I found a journal. It was my dad's. It had in it all the places he planned to visit but never got to. I thought I would venture on some pilgrimage and take all the adventures - maybe even risking heartache along the way - So, I took the trip. (pause, light) I got a great tan. Hoping it doesn't give me skin cancer.

MIRIUM

It's only matter of time.

ROBYN

I never took a bigger risk than when I decided to ask you here. And...I never really wanted to, until now.

JO

There's something inside me saying that I shouldn't – I shouldn't get involved with anyone.

SAM

That's right!

JO

But, I mean, Christ! It's been ten years. I should take a risk, too, right?

SAM

Wait –

JO

Maybe what I really needed was to find – find *you*. That maybe the matching luggage was Sam maybe saying, "move on" or something - -
I mean, we all have some sort of baggage we can't let go, right?

MIRIUM

(To Robyn) I don't mean to embarrass you, but why don't you retire that shirt? If you need something, we can order it.

ROBYN

(Referencing the shirt) I didn't see it until now. *(to JO)* I didn't quite see it until now.

JO

If that's your only baggage, then-

ROBYN

My mom.

JO

Your... mom?

MIRIUM

I'm your mother, Robyn. I know what's best -

ROBYN

She always told me I didn't have the guts to do what my dad did – to travel on a moment's notice. It took some time. But I finally did it.

JO

When did she die?

ROBYN

My mom? She's alive and well and living in Scranton. And, I haven't told you the kicker. You see, I was afraid I couldn't leave my mother because she might die too.

MIRIUM

That's messed up. Not that you're asking me, although you should.

ROBYN

I pray to god I don't become like my mother. Sometimes I say things like her – her little clichés that aren't even right? Nevermind, it's hard to explain-

MIRIUM

What you need is a good snap in the face!

ROBYN

...“snap in the face” who SAYS that? If only I could see her bickering as a nudge from the universe to move on and re-engage into the world of the living.

JO

You hear her sometimes?

ROBYN

Yep. *(pause)* You hear Sam sometimes?

SAM

For a second, I thought you forgot about me. *(SAM embraces JO and begins dancing)*
Remember our song? We danced for hours that night you...

JO

Sometimes I feel Sam. And... there's no one to tell about it. *(moving away from Sam)*
Until now.

(An idea – simultaneously ROBYN and JOE go for the rolling luggage. They push and push. It doesn't budge. After some time, they are exhausted.)

JO

This. Isn't. Easy.

ROBYN

It's not supposed to be.

(MIRIUM and SAM exit, each pulling their respective suitcases away.)

JO

Okay. Your baggage. My baggage. Although not quite the same, why don't we... just deal with it.

ROBYN

It's not like Sam is never coming back.

JO

Occasionally, Mirium from Scranton may visit.

ROBYN

I can't wait for you to meet her.

JO

Let's not rush things.

(PAUSE. A moment. They kiss)

JO

So. Where's your next trip going to be?

ROBYN

(Connecting) I'm not going anywhere.

(A moment. LIGHTS FADE).

END OF PLAY