

...last and always

by

Allan Baker

4711 Spicewood Springs Rd., #159
Austin, Texas 78759
(512) 345-4437
email: arbaustx@aol.com

Copyright © 2005

...last and always

CAST OF CHARACTERS

MATT	Male, mid-twenties.
KEVIN	Male, late-twenties.

...last and always

SETTING *A wrecked office in a high-rise building and an apartment in the city, though the stage will be bare.*

SOUND *With the stage still in darkness, there is a loud crashing sound, the sound of glass shattering and debris scattering, then the whoosh of a firestorm, followed by a low, constant rumbling that will continue through the scene.*

AT RISE *Two men in their mid-twenties stand, centerstage, facing the audience. They will be separately lighted. The one stage left will be standing on carpet...an area rug or oriental rug to indicate the different location. Both have cell-phones to their ears. One will be barefoot, dressed in jeans and t-shirt and facing the audience. The other, stage right, will be in business dress, without a coat and will be facing to his right, away from the audience. They will be wearing matching wedding bands.*

MATT

I knew I should have stayed home with you today.

KEVIN

I'd have fixed waffles for us.

MATT

(Slight smile) Then Central Park... *(Stunned)* Oh, shit!
The ladies from the restaurant!

KEVIN

Matt...

MATT

They jumped!

KEVIN

Matt!

MATT

They...

KEVIN

Baby!

MATT

On the edge and...(choking)...they just stood there, then...they hugged...and...and they jumped!

KEVIN

I'm here, Matt...

MATT

(Choking) Their... (choking)...their purses! They took their fuckin' purses! Oh, god!

KEVIN

I'm here, baby...

MATT

They...they...

KEVIN

What? I'm here. I'm here for you, Matt...

MATT

Their purses! Like they were going shopping! Why would they do that? (Pauses...waiting as KEVIN is silent... then in panic) Are you still there? Kevin?! Oh, please be there!

KEVIN

(Having grimaced in anguish at the first question, regains control.) I am. I'm here...I'll always be. Now listen. Listen, Matt. What about the other guys? Where are they? The guys from the stairway?

MATT

She was pouring my coffee! In the restaurant...in Windows...I was looking at her nametag and she was pouring my coffee when...and...(in agony) I can't fuckin' remember her name! What was it?! I saw it! What the fuck was it?! Her name?!

KEVIN

Matt...Matt. Just hold...hold, baby...just...hold. (Long pause, KEVIN is in agony, tries to calm himself a bit.) The other

(CONT'D)

two guys...where are they? The guys in the stairway. You were coming down from the restaurant with them. Where are they, baby?

MATT

They... (pause) They're here. There's this rubble...and they're over it...a bit...

KEVIN

The hallway...you came down...through the other offices...

MATT

Those are gone. All the offices...all the people! They're...(pause) There's just us, now...and the fire...Kevin!

KEVIN

Matt...Matt...just listen to me, baby. The other way...on TV it looks like...

MATT

...gone, too. (Pause) All gone. Just us. Here in this corner. At the edge. (Doubles over in agony) Oh, Kevin!

KEVIN

Can you get to them? The two guys?

MATT

No...there's... Damn! The wall! It's getting hotter! Oh, shit!

KEVIN

Try to...Matt...try...

There is a loud crashing noise, debris scattering, the rumble increases dramatically, then subsides to its previous level.

MATT

(Crouching at the sound of the crash) Kevin! It's down! The wall's down! My god! Oh my god!

KEVIN

Baby, baby, I'm here! Talk to me...oh, please, Matt!

There is a long silence...MATT, slowly standing, staring...Kevin agitated...waiting...

MATT

(*Emotionless.*) They've gone. Now it's just me.

KEVIN

(*Almost to himself.*) Oh, shit!

MATT

They were...(struggles for control, then calmer) They were...(almost in awe) holding hands...

KEVIN

(Choking) What? (*Distraught, then regains control somewhat*) Do you...were they...were they friends?

MATT

(*Calmly*) No. (*Pause*) Yes. (*Long pause*) Now.

KEVIN

(*Fighting for control*) Matt, baby...

MATT

(*Interrupting, in panic again*) Shit, it's coming! The fire! There's not much time! Kevin!

KEVIN

I'm here. Matt, I'm here.

MATT

I love you.

KEVIN

I know, baby I know. I love you so much.

MATT

(*Coughing, then...*) I can't be here when the fire.. I can't!

KEVIN

You won't be, baby, you won't..

KEVIN doubles over in grief, cell-phone still to his ear, but his tone does not reflect the physical anguish the audience sees. This will be the case through the rest of the scene.

Matt, Matt...

MATT

I want to be with you! Oh, god! I'm losing it, Kevin...it's...it's...horrible! I'm so fuckin' scared!

KEVIN

You won't be there...you...

MATT

This can't be happening! Kevin! This is all there is?! My life?! Oh, shit!

KEVIN

I'm here, baby...

MATT

Talk to me, Kev. I need to hear you...now!

KEVIN

Matt...Matt...Please, please listen. (*Long pause as KEVIN struggles for control*) There's something you have to do now...Just...just do this. For me. Listen to me baby. Carefully. (*Pause*) Do you remember when we met?

MATT

What?

KEVIN

Yosemite. Remember that. Think of it.

MATT

The wall's down! The fire is...

KEVIN

For me...now...think of Yosemite. When we met.

MATT

I don't want to be here! I want to be with you! Kev!

KEVIN

I am with you, Matt. Everything else is gone.

MATT

It's...

KEVIN

There's just you and me, now. (*Pause*) Matt...baby...listen to me. Just to me. Now...think of Yosemite. Think of when we met.

MATT

OK. Let me just...hold on. *(Pause)* I can't...*(Calming a bit)*
OK. *(Long pause)* Yeah. *(Long pause as he struggles to calm more, then with a faint smile)* Yeah.

KEVIN

Remember?

MATT

Yeah. *(Calmer, a bigger, dreamier smile, then a bit surprised and delighted)* Sentinel Dome!

KEVIN

You were cruising me.

MATT

I was not!

KEVIN

Circling the rock with your camera, taking pictures, getting closer. Then all that stuff with your trail map. I thought you were lost. That's why I came up to you.

MATT

(Timid smile) Well, it was my first trip to Yosemite.

KEVIN

Right. After hiking every national park from Maine to Alaska. You could read a trail map better than the guy who drew it. You cruised me.

MATT

It worked, didn't it? Got me out of my tent and into your comfy room at the lodge.

KEVIN

Yes! And that's what I want you to remember. Now.

MATT

Kev, I could never forget that night...it was incredible!

KEVIN

It was *(choking with emotion)*...but now I want you to remember something else. Remember I woke you up at 4 AM...do you remember the meadow? We went out on the balcony...

MATT

The meadow! Yes! The full moon! It was a harvest moon!

KEVIN

We pulled on some clothes, went downstairs and ran out through the trees and into Yosemite meadow...under that full moon.

MATT

Oh, god! That was so fucking beautiful! The most beautiful night in the most beautiful place on the face of the earth!

KEVIN

Cringing again, distraught...but his voice is still calm, soothing.

OK, baby, I want you to do something. Will you? Now close your eyes...

MATT

Yes. Yes. They're closed.

KEVIN

Now, concentrate. Don't think of anything but the meadow under that full moon.

MATT

Yes.

KEVIN

Remember how the meadow looked. The moonlight was so bright and white...

MATT

...that there were shadows under the trees!

KEVIN

...and the meadow was flooded with this bright silver light...

MATT

...and the granite walls of the valley gleamed in silver!

KEVIN

...like huge silver gods on every side!

MATT

(Opening his eyes) They were blessing us!

KEVIN

...with a cascade of moonlight down bright air and over everything and us!

MATT

Yes! It was magic!

KEVIN

...the air was cold...

MATT

...your breath was warm when I kissed you...(smiling) your nose was cold.

KEVIN

Remember the sounds?

MATT

Yes. The river. An owl? The quiet...then another bird somewhere. This breeze making the leaves rustle...and the meadow grass. My god it was beautiful!

KEVIN

OK, Matt. You've got it! Just hold that memory in your mind. Hold it tight, *tight*! Baby, now bend your knees just a little bit...and *fly there*! Go to that place. Not just a memory, now...*be there*. Move every bit of you to that place. Surround yourself with that place. You're in the meadow...*now*.

MATT

I...(hesitant, losing some of the calm)

KEVIN

I'm hugging you and the air is cold and the moon is so bright! The shadows under the trees. It's magic! You're there...Matt...you are there.

MATT

(Struggling) I'm... (Long pause as the calm returns, then in wonder...) I am! I'm there...it's quiet. Oh, wow! Incredible! The air is...it's glittering!

KEVIN

That's my love! It's all around you and you'll always be there and I'll always be there with you and never leave and

(CONT'D)

we'll never stop loving. Oh, Matt! Stay there, baby.
Stay there, now...

MATT

I will...how could I ever leave this?!

KEVIN

We won't. We'll stay here, together. Always.

MATT

Kev...

KEVIN

Baby...

MATT

Take my hand?

MATT reaches out into the open space between the two onstage. KEVIN again cringes in anguish, then reaches out. Their hands do not touch.

KEVIN

I will. (Pause) There, I'm touching your fingertips.
(Pause) The back of your hand. (Pause) Now I'm holding
your hand, baby.

MATT

Yes.! (Pause, then smiling) I can feel you. (Pause) Your
hand. (Pause) You're holding mine. Like you always do.
Just like you always do. (Pause) Soft and tender and so
strong.

KEVIN

Yes, baby...like always.

MATT

Kev, now I'm not alone. (Pause) I'll never be alone.
(Pause) Ever. (Pause) Here.

KEVIN

I love you.

MATT

I love you.

The SOUND stops abruptly as the spot on MATT goes out, leaving KEVIN in light. KEVIN drops the cell-phone and goes to his knees, sobbing.

BLACKOUT

END OF PLAY