

DRAFT #12
SEPTEMBER 12, 2007

MUSHROOM
A Short Play about Annihilation and Australia
By Ken Urban

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CHARACTERS

ANDREW, late 20s.
 LAURA, 30s.
 THE MAN IN THE SUIT, 30s.

Disaffected urban people, all in mourning.

SETTING

Two chairs in a white white space, littered with cultural detritus: cassettes, VHS tapes, letters, shoeboxes, shopping bags, paperbacks, bits of one's life. A door with light (sometimes) spilling from its cracks. A wall that can go translucent.

TEXT NOTES:

All punctuation and spacing is intentional and gives a sense of the line's delivery.

An asterisk [*] indicates that the following line or speech begins to overlap at that point.

AUTHOR'S NOTES:

Sound is very important to the play. There should be a steady diet of sound to establish location and mood. Snippets of songs should also be used, but they must sound ghosted-out, coming from a far off place and time. Suggestions for ghosted-out songs: The Jesus and Mary Chain, "Mushroom" • The Editors, "Distance" • Philip Jeck, "Wholesome" • Galaxie 500, "When Will You Come Home" • Jan Jelinek, "Lithiummelodie 1." For the Depeche Mode megamix, the author recommends a mashup of "Master and Servant," "New Let Me Down," "Everything Counts," and "Stripped." The song for the SADNESS DANCE is Tim Hecker, "Sundown6093" from the compilation *Idol Tryouts Two: Ghostly International Vol. Two*.

THE MAN IN THE SUIT is omnipotently impotent. He is there, but he is not there. Except for the SCENE V: THE SADNESS DANCE. Then ghost becomes flesh.

LAURA and THE MAN are the same age. ANDREW is younger.

The actress playing LAURA plays KOKO YOKO in the final moments of the play.

Thanks to Paula Vogel, Judson Kniffen and Mark Armstrong.
 For Matthew. As always.

“When I saw the sky was red, I was born and I was dead
When I saw the mushroom head, I was born and I was dead
When I saw the mushroom head, I was born and
I was dead.”

– “Mushroom,” The Jesus and Mary Chain (cover of a Can song)

I. PROLOGUE

(Two chairs. Cassettes, VHS tapes, letters, shoeboxes, and other cultural detritus litter the floor. Whatever.)

(One dim fluorescent light flickers on. Flick. Flick. Glow.)

(Two men. Andrew sits. He looks like he's been through the proverbial ringer. His clothes appear chosen more out of necessity than design, not warm enough for the intensely A/C'ed environment. The man in the suit stands apart. He looks impeccable.)

(The low buzz of fluorescents. Elevators, medical equipment, and the chatter of nurses join the buzz. By the end of the man's speech, these sounds grow loud and cacophonous.)

THE MAN

There's a hum. Barely perceptible. Harsh fluorescents. Above his head. They make skin, almost translucent. Fluorescents. They make what's underneath, almost visible. Almost. The way people look, in that light. Reminds me of my Grow-A-Frog. Third grade. Just tadpoles, really. Developed in a lab somewhere, I guess. Their innards, visible, their skin, see-through. They were supposed to teach us something about life and biology and how things work. Mine died. Impaled itself on a plastic nub meant for a plastic plant. I cried. We are in a hospital waiting room. The waiting room is empty save for the chairs. And for him. And here he waits. Andrew. Andrew. Here he waits. Here because of Mark. Mark who is not here. Here, in the waiting room. Empty save for the chairs. And the door.

(The door makes its presence known.)

THE MAN

The door. 84 inches by 36 inches maybe, maybe six and a half feet by three and three-quarters, or maybe larger, or smaller maybe. Its measurements don't give you a full picture. For it's not about the size of the door. Or the incessant light the door emits, a glow that makes it appear like some

radioactive element, hitherto undiscovered by any physicist, German or otherwise.
No. That is not what makes this door a memorable door.

This door, it begs to be opened

This door begs to be opened

This door begs to be opened

This door begs to be opened

This door

This door

This door

This—

(A woman enters. Laura.)

(Illuminate. Full fluorescent glow.)

LAURA

Andrew?

ANDREW

Laura

LAURA

Andrew? Is there any news?

What did the doctors—?

ANDREW

Laura

LAURA

No, Andrew—

Mark? What's happened to Mark?

ANDREW

Laura

LAURA

Andrew, talk to me—

ANDREW

There's no news. Nothing. The doctors, they won't tell me anything.

LAURA

OK, OK. It's gonna be OK.

We just need to wait. We'll find someone who can tell us, what's going on.

ANDREW
I love him.

LAURA
I know you do.

ANDREW
My life is over.

LAURA
Andrew—

ANDREW
Tell me, tell me the dream again. The one he used to tell.
Will you?
Please.

LAURA
OK.

(The pair now sits. Andrew lays his head in Laura's lap. At first, Laura is uncomfortable. But she relaxes. She begins to stroke his head.)

LAURA
You are driving in a car.
Compact.
American.
The headlights coming at you light the freeway. The cars in front, red demon eyes moving backwards into dark.
The heat is on and the force of the blower is blowing your hair out of your face. Because it's not me driving the car. It's not me driving.
It's you.
I'm sitting beside you.
I love your hair when it's like that. You look like a boy. Hair tossed asunder.
And we're driving. And it happens. White blast. Turns the whole sky to day. That familiar mushroom cloud.
But it doesn't look like that, y'know? It doesn't look like what you'd expect. More of a light and a wash of clouds smeared across the sky. But I know.
It's the end.
Mass annihilation.
The end of life as we know it.
Except it's not.
Though the earth's burnt and scarred, we keep driving down the remains of the freeway. You take me home, like you've done hundreds of times, and in the

remains of my apartment, I find some bread, a tub of margarine, something resembling cheese.

Bits of our skin, our face, fall off as we eat sandwiches, and—

(A loud car horn from a speeding car. Andrew sits up with a bolt.)

II. DRIVING

(Streetlamps and passing cars replace fluorescents.)

(The sound of cars passing in the night.)

(The interior of a small compact American car. Andrew drives. Laura fidgets in the passenger seat. The man in the suit watches.)

ANDREW

You hot?

LAURA

Just need some air.

ANDREW

That window. Fff. Uh. Doesn't work. Roll the one in the back—

LAURA

No, it's fine.
Thanks for driving me home.

ANDREW

Laura?

LAURA

Yea?

ANDREW

Can I stay at your place tonight?

LAURA

Yes. Course.

ANDREW

Don't wanna be alone.

LAURA

Andrew, it's. It's going to be OK, Andrew.

ANDREW

We fought tonight.

THE MAN

The line between a disagreement and a fight

ANDREW

He went to bed early.

THE MAN

Is nebulous at best.

ANDREW

Stupid stupid fight. I don't know why I—
When I came to bed, I could tell something was wrong. And I said, Mark? Mark?
And he wouldn't wake up, he wouldn't—

LAURA

Andrew, he'll be all right.

ANDREW

All right? Laura? All right? What are, what are you saying?

LAURA

He'll be all right.

ANDREW

Laura. He's not going to be all right.

LAURA

We'll go back tomorrow. We both just need some sleep.

(Silence. Then. Watching the road, Andrew grabs a
cassette off the car floor.)

ANDREW

Here. He wanted you, to have, this. He always said, I got to give this to Laura.

LAURA

What is it?

THE MAN

A purposeful mis-remembrance.

A cassette.

ANDREW

People have cassettes?

LAURA

He saved all his. In shoeboxes, in the closet. He wanted you to have it.

ANDREW

The Jesus and Mary Chain.

LAURA

Yea.

ANDREW

THE MAN
(singing)
 When I saw the sky was red/ I was born and I was dead

LAURA

He really say that?

THE MAN

A purposeful mis-remembering on Andrew's part.

ANDREW

What?

LAURA

He wanted me to have this? Mark. He said that?

ANDREW

*Yea.

THE MAN

No. Mark never said that.

LAURA

I remember this. He'd play it.

ANDREW

Yea?

LAURA

Always go on about this one song. Was a cover of some German band. And.

(Pause.)

ANDREW

Go on. I like hearing this.

LAURA

Mark didn't tell you to give this to me. I mean it's not like. It's not like. Not like you sat around talking about who gets what when. But Mark said, this cassette goes to. He wanted me. Me. This cassette. He wanted me to have. This. No. Did he? Did he say that? Did. Did. *Did. Did he

(Laura begins to hyperventilate.)

ANDREW

Shit. We missed the exit. Always miss the exit. Why? Cause the exit's not properly marked. Hey, Laura? Laura? You OK?

LAURA

Fuck me fuck me *fuck me fuck me fuck me fuck me fuck...

ANDREW

Laura, Laura, calm down

LAURA

Pull over I need to get out, I need some air, I said pull over...

(Andrew and the man both see something in the sky.)

ANDREW

Wait. Laura. Laura. What is that?

LAURA

What?

ANDREW

In the sky.
What's
in the sky, Laura?
What's that, in the sky?
What?

THE MAN

Uh-oh.

(The sound of an atomic blast. Andrew and Laura are knocked from the car as it is vaporized.)

(An enormous white blast destroys everything and everybody everywhere forever.)

(Black.)

III. DEAD SPACE AUSTRALIA

(A dead light that glows grey and dusty.)

(The sound of radioactive wind.)

(Andrew and Laura stand amid the rubble. Dead earth. Laura stares at her hand. Andrew paces. The man in the suit watches.)

ANDREW

There's nothing. My skin, it's burning. We've walked miles. What do we do? We must be somewhere else. Got transported somewhere. Teleported. To somewhere horrible. Like, I don't know, Australia. A place where everything is grey and dead and washed out and everyone is horrible. And drunk. And horrible. And drunk. But where are they? There's no people, anywhere. There's just grey dust and burnt garbage. And nobody. Dead space. Worse than Texas, worse than Texas and Alabama combined, worse than Texas, Alabama and the Epcot Center all pureed into one fucked-up country. That's where we are. Dead space Australia and we just need to get home.

(Underneath the radioactive wind, the sound of a ghosted-out song has gotten louder.)

ANDREW

Do you hear something? Music? You hear that? Wait. Do you see that? Over there, over that pile of dust? What is it? A bear? Some kind of a bear or something. It's running away. Some kind of mutant koala or something. A big atomic koala, running through the dust. Do you see? I think it's coming toward us. Do you see it, Laura?

Laura

Laura, wait

Laura, you hand—

LAURA

Yes.

ANDREW

The cassette—

LAURA

Yes, I know, the cassette, the cassette, it's been seared into my hand. No, don't touch, don't touch—

ANDREW

Ow, fuck, ow, ow

LAURA

You shouldn't have touched, our hands

ANDREW

It can't

LAURA

Look. Our hands, now seared together.

(Andrew and Laura's hands have been seared together by the molten cassette.)

ANDREW

I hate this, I hate this, I hate you

LAURA

You don't mean that

ANDREW

I do, I mean it. I hate you.

LAURA

You can't hate me. I mean, we have to stick together.

ANDREW

Is that some kind of sick joke? Stick together. Is that supposed to make me laugh? Our hands are fuckin welded together by a miasma of melted plastic and skin. And you, you're making jokes.

LAURA

That appears to be true.
But it is. Um. Kinda funny. Kinda.
Y'know, stick together.

ANDREW

No, it's not, it's not funny, Laura, it's not.

LAURA

Shit. What happens when one of us has to piss?

(Pause.)

(Andrew and Laura laugh.)

ANDREW

Fuck me. Has the world ended?

LAURA

It's not looking good, is it?

ANDREW

Need some water, something to stop the burning.

LAURA

Why did you say that?

ANDREW

What?

LAURA

That you hated me.

ANDREW

Sorry, didn't mean it.

LAURA

Yes, you did.

ANDREW

I didn't.

LAURA

Andrew, the world's imploded, our skin's burning off, our hands are stuck together with a melted Jesus and Mary Chain cassette. No reason to lie now.

ANDREW

He always liked you better. Told you things. Things he never told me. I can't compete with you. You had decades, we got years, and years aren't decades, and—

LAURA

Mark cared about me, but you, he loves you. You know that. Besides it's not me you hate.

ANDREW

What's that supposed to mean? You think I hate him?

LAURA

No.

ANDREW

Oh, you think I hate myself? That's what you think?

LAURA

Whatever.

(Silence.)

LAURA

(under her breath)

Shit.

ANDREW

What?

LAURA

Nothing.

ANDREW

No, what?

LAURA

I have to pee. Damn it. I should've never said that before. I fuckin jinxed myself.

ANDREW

We could go over there, there's a-

LAURA

No. No way.

(Pause.)

LAURA

OK.

Shit. You're gonna have to help me.

ANDREW

I've never seen a girl pee before.

LAURA

This isn't National Geographic, you're not going to watch.

ANDREW

We're friends.

LAURA

Friends don't watch each other pee.

ANDREW

In certain circumstances, they do.

LAURA

And this is one of them?

ANDREW

Sure.

LAURA

Fine.
Can you help me? I can't unbutton—

(Andrew helps her unbutton her pants.)

LAURA

And my.

(Andrew helps her pull down her underwear.)

(The pair crouches down by a mound of detritus and dust.)

LAURA

Say something. I don't want you to hear me.

ANDREW

Don't abandon me, Laura.
Don't abandon me too.

LAURA

Andrew, I'm not going to abandon you.

(The wind grows in speed and sound.)

That mushroom cloud **LAURA**

White blast **ANDREW**

The sky was red **LAURA**

Atomic blast **ANDREW**

We were born and now we're dead. **LAURA**

(With a wave of the man's hand, freeze-frame.)

THE MAN
 Eight things about Andrew.
 One, he still secretly believes in heaven, but can't admit it.
 Two, he discovered he was gay by listening to Depeche Mode.

(Quick cut: A Depeche Mode mega-mix plays to which Andrew mimes to: Quick cut.)

THE MAN
 Three, he still needs to sing the alphabet in his head when he needs to alphabetize something.

(Quick cut: Andrew sings the alphabet song, which the man provides the sound for:

THE MAN
(singing)
 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y and-

Quick cut.)

THE MAN
 Four, he flaps his arms like a bird when he gets excited, kids used to tease him about it, he tried to stop but still does this when no one's looking.
 Five, he is happiest when his eyes roll up in his head because this means he's cumming and he pictures his body's been broken into a million tiny pieces.

(Quick cut: Andrew has an orgasm: Quick cut.)

THE MAN

Six, he once gave his sister a “brownie,” which was actually a piece of dog shit, but that is the kind of thing brothers sometimes do to sisters, or so we tell ourselves.

Seven, he is frightened of being abandoned, of being alone, because when he was a kid his mother left him, his dad and his sister, left them for the neighbor Mr. Allen, and Andrew still remembers clinging to her leg as she left the house that day.

Eight, he saw Mark at a bar for the first time and thought–

(Laura breaks the freeze-frame. The man is somewhat surprised she was able to do this, for he presumed himself omnipotent. He is unnerved. Laura and Andrew’s hands are no longer seared together. She pulls up her pants and looks into the distance. A strange sound, growing close and loud.)

LAURA

Andrew, what happened to Mark? And Andrew?

ANDREW

Yes.

LAURA

What’s behind that door?

(The door makes its presence known.)

LAURA

What’s behind that door, Andrew?

ANDREW

Door

THE MAN

The door that *begs

LAURA

The doors that begs to be opened

ANDREW

The door

LAURA

Open the door Andrew

The boor degs	THE MAN
I can't	ANDREW
to be	THE MAN
door must be	LAURA
dopen dit dandrew	THE MAN
open door door open	LAURA
can I? can't can't	ANDREW
Cl'mon Clandrew clopen clit	THE MAN
yes yes yes	LAURA
open yes open	ANDREW
OPEN	LAURA and ANDREW
What. Is. That?	THE MAN
	(The man sees something in the sky, heading towards them.)
Uh-oh.	THE MAN
	(A tornado blows the pair apart. The dust flies.)
	(Black.)

IV. A PARTIAL VIEW

(Fluorescent lights flicker on. Flick. Flick. Glow.)

(Everything as it was, at the start. The sounds of fluorescents, elevators and nurses. Two chairs. Andrew sits. The man in the suit stands apart.)

THE MAN

The hospital waiting room. Empty save for the chairs. And the door. And him. Andrew.

The doctor comes. The doctor gets Andrew, and takes him to the door. Andrew opens the door. No, the door opens, opens by itself, and there is a glimpse, a glimpse of a brightly lit room.

(The door opens. Bright light. Andrew enters.)

THE MAN

Partial view. Just a partial view. Cause if you think about it that's what life is made of. Partial views. The unseen bits outnumber the seen ones, just like the dead outnumber you.

Glimpse of room.

Snap.

(The wall goes translucent. From behind the wall we see Andrew, back to the audience, standing over a gurney.)

THE MAN

Andrew, back turned, standing over a body.

Snap.

(Andrew peels back the sheet to look at the body under the sheet.)

THE MAN

Mark's body. Wait. Wait. The body my body my body my

How could I not recognize my own self, my own life before me?

As usual, I'm the last to know.

Seems I mistook impotence for omnipotence. A silly thing to do.

Not some all-powerful, all-seeing force outside events, no, just flesh.

A vessel in the brain bursts, a few hours later the heart stops, and Mark, no, I am, I am gone.

(Pause.)

THE MAN

But just before more details can be seen
Snap.

(The wall goes solid. The door slams shut.)

THE MAN

Door shuts.
The tadpole bubbles up. Insides no longer move.
Boy weeps
Fading image
Little more than
A partial view.

(The man sits down.)

THE MAN

Perhaps death isn't the end, no, maybe death's just the state of watching the world continue.
Can't change anything, can't influence events. Everything just happening around you, occurring in front of you, and nothing, nothing you do has any impact.
Perhaps that is what awaits me. Though if that's the case, it won't be that different from life, I guess. Funny. Well, then.

(During this speech, Andrew has entered unbeknownst to the man.)

THE MAN

No. No. I won't. I can't. I am not finished. Andrew. I must—

(The man stands up with a bolt.)

V. THE SADNESS DANCE

(The music begins. The room goes all weird, all glimmering, all black and blueish.)

(The SADNESS DANCE.)

(Andrew and the man – Mark – see each other. And they dance. Slow. Reaching. More.)

(The DANCE is over. The music ends.)

VI. “UH-OH”; OR, WHEN AN AUSTRALIAN IS NOT AN AUSTRALIAN

(Fluorescent lights flicker on. Flick. Flick. Glow.)

(The waiting room. Laura enters. Andrew looks at Laura. Laura looks at Andrew. Mark looks at them both, everyone becoming hysterical and useless.)

MARK

Nothing to forgive.

LAURA

Andrew?

MARK

Worry about.

LAURA

Andrew?

MARK

You feel. Shouldn't.

LAURA

What did the doctors—?

MARK

Something I did? Something I could? But—

LAURA

No, Andrew—

MARK

Not abandoning you. But I can't, I—

LAURA

Mark? What's happened to Mark?

MARK

Laura, I—

LAURA

No, please, Andrew, not Mark, no—

ANDREW

He's gone. He's gone.

People don't just die like that. People don't just lie down to sleep and never wake up. People don't do that. People like us. People who do not drink inordinate amounts or take narcotic substances on any regular, or even irregular basis, people who work hard and proverbially play hard, people who have wide vast open futures beckoning them. People like this, people like us, we do not simply die in our sleep. We do not.

I loved him. For years and years and years. Even while we fell out of love, we loved – no – he loved me.

Even when there were the phone calls of accusation, or the periods when we couldn't speak truthfully.

The discovered internet conversations where my presence was not mentioned, or even acknowledged, or where sexual expressions were exchanged, expressions like "I'm not really hunting, though maybe I'm hoping to be hunted," or "I'm exploring my inner top," fuck me if I know what that means, and these expressions, expressions, expressions which filled me with such rage that I imagined unspeakable things.

Even though I knew, I was a hypocrite, a fact which he'd remind me of, mentioning the Australian boy through a slew of Down Under innuendos–
Stop Down Under after work? –

A dingo eat your baby? –

A dingo suck your cock and lick your balls, baby? –

Baby, he your koala, your kangaroo, your wombat, your wallaby, your platypus, your mutherfuckin emu? –

He wasn't even Australian, truth be told. And truth be told, there were many many more men than one non-Australian Australian. Because truth be told, there might've been enough men to fill that entire small continent of former and current criminals, though truth continuing to be told, I have no idea how many people inhabit that fucking continent, nor really how many men I've been intimate with, or had sex with no less, since defining "sex" I mean is pretty fuzzy fuzzy fuzzy
And let me point out – NO WAIT LAURA LET ME FINISH LET – all those men, none of whom were, in fact, Australian, or at least none of whom were memorably Australian, ever filled that void. That need to have Mark touch me, fuck me, when all he did was hug me and hold me and tell me he loved me even while he could never undo what had been done, no, there was not enough men to fix – PLEASE DON'T TOUCH ME

Please don't touch. Me. No one will

Ever. Touch me. So

Don't. Please.

He can't be, he can't be, he can't. Love. Loved him.

But now. Now,

What is there?

Who will fuck me like Mark never fucked me now, huh? Huh, who will?

Fuck me.

(Andrew is crying, goopy big tears and snot.)

LAURA

Andrew?

(Andrew looks at Laura. Laura slaps Andrew across the face. Mark supplies the sound with his hand.)

ANDREW

Ow.

MARK

That wasn't perhaps the most appropriate response.

LAURA

Sorry.

ANDREW

That hurt—

LAURA

I shouldn't have—

ANDREW

You hit me—

LAURA

I didn't mean to—

Listen. That shit, OK? That shit, OK, that shit doesn't matter. Don't take something like what you had and make it about that, don't piss on it, OK?

ANDREW

I'm, I'm sorry, Laura.

LAURA

Fuck, Andrew. It's hard to hate you when you're always fucking apologizing.

(Silence.)

LAURA

He's gone?

ANDREW

Yes.

LAURA

I don't know, what, what to do.

ANDREW

Laura, why do you hate me?

LAURA

I don't hate you, Andrew.

ANDREW

I know we never talk about. That. But.

LAURA

That? You mean—

You mean Mark was my boyfriend for six years, eight if you include high school.

ANDREW

Yes.

LAURA

I never hated you, Andrew. I was hurt. It wasn't you, it was anyone who was going to be after me. Understand?

I mean, it's stupid. In school, I knew. I wasn't dumb. But.

What you two had. What we couldn't.

Doesn't matter.

ANDREW

Is that why you—?

LAURA

Why I, what? It's too late to beat around the bush, Andrew.

ANDREW

Why you aren't with someone. Is Mark the reason why?

LAURA

Maybe. That and men are shit.

Present company excluded.

ANDREW

I love him.

LAURA

I know you do.

I love him too.

ANDREW
My life is over

LAURA
Andrew

(Silence.)

ANDREW
Tell me, tell me the dream again. The one he used to tell.

LAURA
Andrew, it can't be true, it can't—

(Andrew takes a cassette out of his pocket. He gives it to Laura.)

ANDREW
Here. For you.

LAURA
What's this?

ANDREW
He wanted you to have this. He always said. I gotta give this to her.

MARK
Maybe it is me who has mis-remembered.

LAURA
People have cassettes?

ANDREW
He saved all his. Shoeboxes full.

LAURA
He used to play this.
In my car.

MARK
Drives back home. From school. Through Pennsylvania. Yes.

LAURA
All the way home.

MARK

The smudged white ink of the track listing

LAURA

The track listing smudged from his thumb

ANDREW

Now tell me the dream. You're driving in a car

MARK

Yes

ANDREW and MARK

Compact, American

(Andrew lays his head on Laura's lap.)

LAURA

You're driving in a car. Compact. American. And the heat's on, and the force of the blower—

MARK

Blowing the hair out of your face

ANDREW

Yes

MARK

And I'm sitting beside you

LAURA

And you're driving

ANDREW

Yes

MARK

Then it happens

LAURA

Yes

ANDREW

It happens

MARK

Yes

LAURA

It happens.

(Pause.)

ANDREW and LAURA and MARK

Uh-oh.

(The trio brace for something to happen.)

(Nothing does.)

(With a wave of Mark's hand, freeze-frame.)

MARK

There's something pleasurable in imagining what happens after you go. How they respond. Their grief, confirmation of your value. But now. All's left is that final moment before you go.

(He surveys the scene a final time.)

MARK

(singing)

When I saw the sky was red/ I was born and I was dead

(The man claps his hands together.)

(Something happens.)

VIII. YOU ARE NEVER ALONE

(Flick. Flick. Fluorescents dim. Clock ticking. Tick Tick Tick. Time in reverse.)

(The door. The wall. The detritus. The chairs. All gone. All gone. An empty white space.)

(Warm natural light. Different light from before.)

(Mark and Andrew in the empty space.)

(Tense pause.)

ANDREW

I just don't understand.

MARK

Don't go through my fucking e-mail, Andrew. That's not cool, OK? It's not cool to do that.

ANDREW

You lied to me.

MARK

I didn't lie. I just. We don't need to go through this.

ANDREW

Yes, we do.

MARK

And what would I find if I went through your email, your cell phone.

ANDREW

That's not the point.

MARK

Then what is the point?

ANDREW

You lied to me.

MARK

Jesus, Andrew, we're adults. Not everything has to be said, not everything has to be known. Can't I have a life outside of you? Y'know. Let's, let's just stop. This isn't doing anyone any good. OK? Sorry. I should have told you about him.

There. Over. Now you know.

Work was miserable today. Felt sick all day.

Look. Are you going to look at me?

This isn't helping either of us. Fuck. I don't even remember his name—

ANDREW

Joe.

MARK

With you, you're always working something out with sex. Sex is about, I don't know what it's about, but it's about something. Something you need to fix. It's not that way with me.

ANDREW

What? So I can fuck around when I achieve your level of enlightenment?

MARK

It's not like you've been waiting. But Andrew, listen, I don't want to know.

ANDREW

Don't ask, don't tell?

MARK

That's part of being an adult, Andrew. No one needs to know everything.

ANDREW

That's bullshit.

MARK

Hey, you see me bringing up that Australian guy?

ANDREW

You just did.

MARK

But I didn't. At first.

ANDREW

He has a name.

MARK

I don't remember his name. What is it? Peter?

ANDREW

Who the fuck is Peter?

MARK

Fuck. I don't care what his fucking name is. I don't care what any of their fucking names are. I don't need to. Because I know when I go to bed at night the person sleeping next to me is the person who loves me.

(Silence.)

ANDREW

I shouldn't have, I shouldn't have read your email.

MARK

There. Apology accepted. It's done. No more.
I'm exhausted. I'm going to bed. Come to bed with me.

Not tired. **ANDREW**

Fine. No sex for you then. **MARK**

I don't want sex. **ANDREW**

That's not what the Australian told me. Couldn't keep your dick in your pants. **MARK**

(Silence.)

That was a joke. Andrew? **MARK**
Shit.
Are you going to look at me?

(Pause.)

Andrew, I don't know what you want from me. **MARK**
Are you angry at me because I'm not angry? I don't get it.
Look at me, OK?

Do you love him? **ANDREW**

No, Andrew, I don't love him. **MARK**
You love him?

No. **ANDREW**

Then, it's done. **MARK**
Bed. Let's go to bed.

No, I'm gonna stay up and **ANDREW**
I'll be up later.

(Silence.)

MARK

OK. Come to bed soon.

(Mark leaves.)

(Andrew is alone in the white empty space.)

(The sound of an enormous white blast somewhere off in the distance, sounding ghosted-out.)

(The sound of the radioactive wind begins to blow. Silence, save for the sound of the wind blowing. Andrew starts to shiver. A huge koala appears. Her name is Koko Yoko. She is atomic. Andrew doesn't look at her, but he knows she is there.)

ANDREW

I miss him.

(The koala nods yes.)

ANDREW

I used to be worried I'd forget. The pain.

(The koala nods no.)

ANDREW

But it comes back, that feeling, in ways. I'll just be doing something. I don't know. Buying groceries or. And I remember.

(The koala nods yes.)

ANDREW

Will I ever see him again? In. Heaven?

(The koala makes a series of incomprehensible gestures.)

ANDREW

After, I fucked a lot of guys. Musta been. I don't know. These sex parties. I had no idea what you could find. Anonymous. Kinda gross, kinda hot.

(The koala makes dirty hand gestures.)

ANDREW

Yea. I found guys, who he'd been with. Some before we met. Some while we were together. Thought I could feel close to him, by. But. No.

(The koala does a few dance steps.)

ANDREW

There was one guy. That was dumb. We knew why he was there. But then I was like. Stay the night. God, think I might have even said, love. Never seen someone leave so quickly. As he opened the door, I screamed out, I've got herpes, gonorrhea and HPV, you shitfuck.

(The koala signs the statement, "Cat Is Gray," in American Sign Language.)

ANDREW

Exactly. And Laura. Funny, she finally met someone. Maybe Mark being gone, I don't know. He's kind of fucked up, her guy. Apparently he hasn't paid taxes for a few years, had a meth habit. But he's cleaned up, mostly. She is happy, I can tell. Don't see her much. Now I know how she felt. Being around a couple's not-

(The koala slices the air with her paw in a swift movement three times.)

ANDREW

He loved me. He did.

(The koala shuffles away.)

ANDREW

You are never alone
You are never alone.

On some nights, like tonight, I feel transported.

To some place. Someplace
horrible.

Like what I imagine you saw in your dream. But it is nice here. I like it. I look over the mounds of dust in this deadspace and I see you and I know, that you are running toward me, I'm gonna call you Koko Yoko, and we'll-

(Andrew turns to look at the koala, but Koko Yoko is gone. He is alone.)

ANDREW

You are never alone
You are never alone.

(The radioactive wind howls loud.)

(Andrew hugs himself for warmth.)

ANDREW

You are never alone
You are never alone
You are never.

(Blackout.)

(End of play.)