

I REMEMBER

By Dennis Bush

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CHARACTERS

(in order of appearance)

SKYLAR (F)	CARLA (F)	KRISTA (F)
PRESTON (M)	DON (M)	JUDY (F)
ASHLEY (F)	JANINE (F)	LAURIE (F)
EMILY (F)	SHELLY (F)	BRIDGET (F)
SASHA (F)	NURSE (E)	MEREDITH (F)
HANNA (F)	LINDA (F)	APRIL (F)
RYAN (M)	JOE (M)	JACOB (M)
SARAH (F)	JOANNE (F)	JANICE (F)
BEN (M)	JEREMY (M)	MARCY (F)
KARRIN (F)	NEIL (M)	TREVOR (M)
NADINE (F)	DANNY (M)	HOPE (F)

NOTE: Many roles may be double or triple cast. The play may be performed with as many as 33 actors, or as few as 11.

PRODUCTION NOTES

The script was written in and the production was staged in the theatrical mode known as “ensemble style.” All the actors remain on stage, during the entire play and each member of the ensemble plays several characters. Changes in time and place are indicated by shifts of focus and movement of the actors from one playing area to another on the set.

The original cast breakdown was 8 female and 3 male, though the script is extremely flexible and can be modified for larger casts (giving each actor less to do) or smaller (adding more characters for each performer to play) and the balance of male and female roles is also easily modified according to the needs of the production.

The set design can be extremely basic. The play’s flexibility of interpretation allows directors and performers to bring their own creativity to the production and encourages young actors to develop strong, distinctive characters.

I Remember was originally performed by North Canyon Theatre Ensemble, an elite group of young high school-age actors.

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AT RISE: Lights up. The actors, as characters, speak their lines and evoke the memories they reference. Their lines are directed toward the audience but are not done like traditional audience address but, rather, as snippets of conversations, bits of reflection and recall.

SKYLAR: I remember my mom's pearl necklace.

PRESTON: I remember the time I stayed up all night long just to watch the sun rise.

ASHLEY: I remember my first bike.

EMILY: I remember my Uncle Herman's bad breath.

SASHA: I remember finger painting.

HANNA: I remember watching my brother sneak out his bedroom window at 2 in the morning.

RYAN: I remember throwing up all over my 2nd grade teacher.

SARAH: I remember the first time I saw my boyfriend.

BEN: I remember the candy apple red paint job on my first motorcycle.

KERRIN: I remember writing Jim Jensen's name all over my sneakers.

NADINE: I remember laughing. Laughing for hours and hours.

TRANSITION

(CARLA stands and faces the audience for her first line. After DON's first line, SHE turns her focus to him.)

CARLA: I remember what you said. . .

RYAN: What did I say?

(In very fast succession.)

SARAH: What did I say?

PRESTON: What did I say?

DON: What did I say?

CARLA: You looked at me. . . more like looked through me. . . and told me you settled for me. . . Settled. . . Like I was some kind of second-best, runner-up. **(pause)** How do you think that made me feel?

DON: Well, uh... I'm not sure.

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CARLA: (**cutting him off**) I'll tell you how it made me feel: Like a consolation prize. Like you were playing the big game of love and you lost and the host said, "Thanks for playing, Don. Unfortunately, you didn't win but we do have a nice parting gift for you. . . and here she is."

DON: Game shows never give away people as parting gifts.

CARLA: I know that. I was making an analogy. Does that word have too many syllables for you? Do you need to look it up in the dictionary?

DON: Are you *trying* to piss me off?

CARLA: I'm not sure that's possible, where I'm concerned. You only get angry when it's something you care about and I've never felt like you cared about me very much.

DON: Oh, now you're going to do the "oh poor me" routine?

CARLA: It's not a routine. It's my life.

DON: If you don't like it, change it.

CARLA: You think it's that simple? We just go our separate ways and chalk it up to a lesson that took way too long to learn?

DON: You're the one who's been hanging on. . . hanging on to being unhappy. . . and taking your unhappiness out on me every day.

CARLA: (**quietly, reflective**) I can't remember ever being happy with you.

DON: Then, why did you stay?

CARLA: It was all I knew.

DON: I'll move out.

CARLA: Where will you go?

DON: Don't worry about it.

CARLA: Where?

DON: I have someplace to go.

CARLA: Jerry's? Steve's?

DON: No. . . Another place.

CARLA: (**it dawns on her**) Oh my gosh. . . (**almost whispered**) Another woman. . . (**more volume**) What's her name?

DON: "First prize." This time, I'm not settling.

TRANSITION

(**JANINE and SHELLY are in a doctor's office waiting room; each in her mid to late 20s. JANINE is occupied with a magazine. SHELLY is occupied with JANINE.**)

JANINE: What are you looking at?

SHELLY: (**who's been caught looking**) I'm sorry. (**looks away, then, back**)

JANINE: You're still looking!

SHELLY: I really am sorry. (*looks away, then, slowly, as if unable to stop herself, looks back*)

JANINE: What is your problem?!

SHELLY: I think I know you. I remember you – I remember your face – from somewhere.

JANINE: You don't know me.

SHELLY: Are you sure?

JANINE: I don't know *you*, so how could you know *me*?

SHELLY: Maybe I've just seen you somewhere and it *seems* like we've met.

JANINE: Maybe it just *seems* like you're a nut case.

SHELLY: Did you ever work at Panda Express?

JANINE: Do I look like someone who'd make a career out of slopping orange chicken onto paper plates?

SHELLY: It wouldn't have to be a career. It could have been a job while you went to college or something like that.

JANINE: I've never worked at Panda Express.

SHELLY: Did you ever *eat* at a Panda Express?

JANINE: Once or twice. I don't really like fast food.

SHELLY: It's not really fast food – it's not like McDonald's or Taco Bell.

JANINE: All the food is sitting in warming trays and they slop it on your plate as soon as you tell 'em which stuff you want. It doesn't get much faster than that.

SHELLY: Where do you get your hair done?

JANINE: Why do you want to know?

SHELLY: I think, maybe, I've seen you at the salon I go to.

JANINE: No.

SHELLY: Are you sure? Where do you get it done?

JANINE: In my bathroom. I cut my own hair. So, unless you've been spending time in my bathroom, I can safely say that you haven't seen me where I get my hair done.

SHELLY: Are you serious?

JANINE: Have you ever been in my bathroom?

SHELLY: I don't think so.

JANINE: Well, I'm sure you haven't. I can promise you that I would remember if you'd been in my bathroom or in any room of my house.

SHELLY: I meant are you serious that you cut your own hair?

JANINE: Yeah, so what.

SHELLY: Isn't that hard? I think I'd make a mess of mine.

JANINE: Then don't do it.

SHELLY: Have you always cut your own hair?

JANINE: Since I was in college.

SHELLY: Wow. I'm impressed.

JANINE: Don't be.

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SHELLY: Don't be what?

JANINE: Impressed.

SHELLY: Why not? It's impressive.

JANINE: You're easily impressed. You need to get out more.

SHELLY: Out where?

JANINE: Just out.

SHELLY: Like on dates?

JANINE: Sure, whatever gets you out in the world – whatever gives you a chance to experience more life.

SHELLY: Oh my gosh!

JANINE: Are you some kind of religious fanatic or just a generic lunatic?

SHELLY: I remembered where I know you from!

JANINE: Enlighten me.

SHELLY: The *More Life* Yoga studio. You were on the mat next to me and we were doing that position that always reminds me of a dog begging for a treat and you passed gas really loudly. It echoed all around the room.

JANINE: (**covering her embarrassment**) I think you're confusing me with someone else.

SHELLY: I could swear it was you.

JANINE: I would remember if that had happened to me.

SHELLY: I thought for sure that was it.

JANINE: No Panda Express. No hair salon. No yoga class. Three strikes.

NURSE: Janine Kelly.

JANINE: That's me.

(SHE stands up and grabs her large bag; on the side is printed "More Life Yoga.")

TRANSITION

VANESSA: I remember the sound of my dad whistling as he walked out the door. . . whistling even though he knew he wasn't coming back any more. . . (**quick pause to ponder it**) Maybe that's *why* he was whistling. He seemed happier when we were all out of the house. I remember, one time, my mom and me and all my brothers and sisters were out at a carnival. . . When we got back home, I was the first one in the house and he said, "Oh, you're all back." It wasn't like, "Oh, great, everybody's home" it was like he was disappointed that he wasn't alone anymore. . . like he'd forgotten he had a family and when we got home, he was reminded of it and it wasn't something he wanted to be reminded of. A couple times, when I was still in elementary school, he stayed away for whole weekends. It must

have been like practice for him for when he decided to go away for good. When he took the long weekends away, he hummed when he was leaving. I guess since he knew it was only a practice escape it didn't rate full-out whistling. I remember crying when my mom told me that he wasn't coming home. I guess I thought that's what I should do, even though I didn't feel very sad. It was almost like a sense of relief, knowing that I wouldn't have to open the door and hear his sigh of disappointment anymore.

TRANSITION

(LINDA and JOE are at home. JOE is watching TV. Both are in their mid-30s and blue collar.)

LINDA: For Pete's sake, Joe, could you forget the game is on for five minutes and come talk to me?!

JOE: Give it a rest, Linda. I can hear you. I don't need to sit right next to you to have a conversation.

LINDA: You can't really pay attention to me if you're staring at the TV.

JOE: I can multi-task. I'm talking to you, now, aren't I? *(smirks and chuckles)*

LINDA: Oh, you're funny.

JOE: When did you get so up tight?

LINDA: What?

JOE: I said, "when did you get so freakin' up tight?" I don't remember you being this way when we were younger.

LINDA: Things change. Some people grow up and start to act their age. . . And some people don't.

JOE: I act my age. I'm old enough to have a beer and I could sure use one now.

LINDA: Would you listen to yourself?! *(imitating his verbiage)* "I could sure use a beer." Use a beer. My Gosh, you sound like a drug addict.

JOE: A drug addict would have said, "I could sure use some drugs, now." *(quick pause)* I was talking about a beer.

LINDA: Beer is alcohol. Alcohol is a drug.

JOE: Thank you Miss Freakin' Surgeon General of the United States.

LINDA: Gosh, you've got a mouth on you.

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