

LOVE IN A FISH BOWL

By Deanna Ableser

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LOVE IN A FISH BOWL

A Ten Minute Comedy Duet

By Deanna Ableser

SYNOPSIS: A young man and a young woman who have known each other since kindergarten are on a ‘planned’ first date. Over ‘the best fries’ ever, they discuss life in a small town, a graduating class of 12, and their plans for college and their future. In a sweet ending, they agree to decide that not deciding in some manner may in fact be the most helpful answer when it really comes down to it.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 female, 1 male)

YOUNG MAN (m)..... 18; Just about to graduate high school. Very nice looking and well dressed. Sweet and kind demeanor, nervous temperament in general. *(72 lines)*

YOUNG WOMAN (f)..... 18; Just about to graduate high school. Very nice looking and well dressed. Also very sweet and kind but a bit more adventurous. *(69 lines)*

SETTING: A local burger joint.

SET: A table, two chairs, and an ordering counter.

PROPS

- Menu
- Cell Phone
- Food/Trays
- Ring in Ring Box

AUTHOR NOTES

Simple and clear staging is essential for this piece, but what is most essential is the connection between the two actors. I would suggest having your two actors connect in some acting exercises and team building experiences to help facilitate this connection. The two actors need to be very at ease with each other and have a strong sense of connection and caring. If need be, certain words can be substituted to fit your production needs.

Do Not Copy

AT RISE: *YOUNG MAN and YOUNG WOMAN are sitting across from each other at a table.*

YOUNG MAN: We've been in the same class since kindergarten.

YOUNG WOMAN: Yep.

YOUNG MAN: It seems kinda silly, doesn't it?

YOUNG WOMAN: A bit. But I guess people think we don't have any other options.

YOUNG MAN: *(Passing menu over to YOUNG WOMAN.)* The menu's been about the same since we were in 6th grade, I think. I remember that we swore they had the best fries we had ever had in our entire life.

YOUNG WOMAN: They're still pretty good fries. I mean, for a local burger joint.

YOUNG MAN: I don't want to feel like you have to stay here just because.

YOUNG WOMAN: I'm not staying here just because. Seriously. Stop it. Let's have a good time. It's not like anyone's forcing us to get married after this date.

YOUNG MAN: *(Slightly under his breath.)* At least not yet.

YOUNG WOMAN: I heard that.

YOUNG MAN: I know.

YOUNG WOMAN: Our graduating class maxed out at 12 people. Really, it was simply a matter of time.

YOUNG MAN: I know.

YOUNG WOMAN: You know I have to order the fries. It's a given.

YOUNG MAN: And a cheeseburger. Hold the onions and tomato. Extra special sauce. But not overly drippy.

YOUNG WOMAN: See, it's not a bad thing to know each other so well.

YOUNG MAN: That's true.

YOUNG WOMAN: They're gonna want us to fall in love. That's how things go.

YOUNG MAN: That wouldn't be the worst thing in the world, would it?

YOUNG WOMAN: *(Pausing very slightly.)* Of course it wouldn't.

YOUNG MAN: You're not just saying that, are you?

YOUNG WOMAN: Seriously, you have got to chill out. We're just having burgers. With fries. And extra sauce. Not overly drippy.

YOUNG MAN: I'll go place our order.

YOUNG WOMAN: And I'll be sitting here waiting. Not leaving. Staying.

YOUNG MAN: I'm sorry. I'm a bit nervous. I don't know why.

YOUNG WOMAN: It's okay. Go order the food. I promise I'll be here.
Sitting down.

YOUNG MAN: Thanks.

YOUNG MAN goes to counter and orders food. YOUNG WOMAN pulls out cell phone and starts texting. YOUNG MAN orders and comes back.

YOUNG MAN: (*Slightly panicked.*) You're not texting to leave, are you?

YOUNG WOMAN: I live right down the street. Take a breath.

YOUNG MAN: Sorry.

YOUNG WOMAN: Look, let's just pretend that there's nothing invested in this. We're two long term friends having a couple of burgers and fries.

YOUNG MAN: (*Trying to calm himself down.*) Right. I can do that.
Totally.

There is a short pause.

YOUNG MAN: You're not going out of town for college, are you?

YOUNG WOMAN: I applied a lot of places. I'm not sure. I mean, I'd like to go out of state, but I didn't get any scholarships and well...our local university is highly rated...and not far. I could live at home.

YOUNG MAN: Saves a lot of money.

YOUNG WOMAN: You really don't need to be nervous. I mean, as much.

YOUNG MAN: I know.

There is a short pause.

YOUNG WOMAN: I'm not sure I'm ready to leave here. It's been a good run, so to speak.

YOUNG MAN: Not like it's over. You just said you might very well stay here.

YOUNG WOMAN: I might. It's a possibility. Still, it's been a long time. Stuck here. Sorta.

YOUNG MAN: I've always been comfortable here. I've always enjoyed walking down the street and having people know who I am, what I do. It's a nice feeling.

YOUNG WOMAN: So, you're staying here? Going to college? The whole thing.

YOUNG MAN: I don't see much wrong with that.

YOUNG WOMAN: Other than staying here.

YOUNG MAN: There's nothing wrong with spending your whole life in a small place.

YOUNG WOMAN: Except for being set up with your classmate from Kindergarten.

YOUNG MAN: I thought you said it wasn't a bad thing.

YOUNG WOMAN: It's not a bad thing. I didn't mean it that way.

YOUNG MAN: Do you remember Mrs. Smith? From first grade?

YOUNG WOMAN: That's going way back.

YOUNG MAN: But you remember her, right? I mean, she did some pretty wacky things. I think her hiding the Christmas elves in the teacher's lounge vending machines might have been a bit much.

YOUNG WOMAN: *(Chuckling.)* She was a pretty awesome teacher.

YOUNG MAN: And she lived here her entire life. Raised her kids here. All that.

YOUNG WOMAN: And that's what you want to do?

YOUNG MAN: I don't really know. But it's not like I'm opposed to it. I could carve out a pretty decent life here. Get married. Have a family. Nice job.

YOUNG WOMAN: If things work out the way they're supposed to.

YOUNG MAN: Living in a big city doesn't guarantee that things are going to work out the way they're supposed to.

YOUNG WOMAN: Point taken.

YOUNG MAN: *(Looking up at counter.)* Looks like our food is ready.

YOUNG WOMAN: They've always been very speedy here. Good food, good service.

YOUNG MAN: Those are important things. *(Pause.)* I'll be right back.

YOUNG WOMAN: I told you I wasn't going anywhere. You don't have to worry.

YOUNG MAN: Thanks for understanding.

YOUNG MAN goes up to get food and comes back with it. He hands her, her food.

YOUNG WOMAN: Thanks.

YOUNG MAN: It's the least I can do. I mean, since people are expecting us to get married.

YOUNG WOMAN: I know.

YOUNG MAN: I guess when you're the king and queen of homecoming.

YOUNG WOMAN: In our graduating class of 12, remember?

YOUNG MAN: Still, it was a nice honor.

YOUNG WOMAN: It was.

YOUNG MAN: *(Slightly pausing.)* I don't suppose you'd consider a second date with me.

YOUNG WOMAN: We're still on our first date.

YOUNG MAN: But maybe...and go with me on this one...maybe people know something. Maybe they know something we don't.

YOUNG WOMAN: You can't be thinking people are psychic, are you?

YOUNG MAN: It's not that. But seriously, you never know. Other people see things. Things we may not. *(Pause.)* Maybe that's why I'm so nervous.

YOUNG WOMAN: You've always been nervous. I remember way back...

YOUNG MAN: *(Interrupting.)* It's okay. I know there have been enough times.

YOUNG WOMAN: I wasn't trying to make fun or be mean.

YOUNG MAN: I know. *(Pause.)* So, how's the food?

YOUNG WOMAN: Same as always. Good. Consistent. Probably markedly unhealthy.

There is a short pause.

YOUNG WOMAN: It's going to be okay. Whatever we choose, right?

YOUNG MAN: You're a very smart and beautiful young woman.

Everything's going to be good for you. Whatever you choose.

YOUNG WOMAN: You've always known how to say the right things.

YOUNG MAN: *(Very under his breath.)* It's what happens when you've had a crush on someone since kindergarten.

YOUNG WOMAN: Excuse me?

YOUNG MAN: What part did you hear?

YOUNG WOMAN: I heard the whole thing.

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