

RESPONSIBLE

By Dennis Bush

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ISBN 1-60003-475-6

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Cast

Kyan 14, thoughtful, caring, honest, responsible

Setting

Outside a fast food restaurant across the parking lot from a motel.
Saturday, at noon.

Production history

Premiere performance
An Evening of New Works
Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts
Theatre 4301
June 5, 2009

The original production featured Benjamin Whitmire and was directed by the author.

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(Lights up on KYAN, sitting outside a fast food restaurant, eating a sandwich. HE's dressed in shorts and a t-shirt. HE is relaxed, at ease. HE speaks casually and completely without any sense of urgency. It's lunchtime and all is well.)

KYAN: I left her at the motel. *(Takes a bite of sandwich)* She wasn't hungry. *(Another bite of the sandwich)* It's not far. *(Quick pause)* The motel. *(Quick pause)* It's just on the other side of the parking lot. *(Another bite of food)* Our room's on the second floor. You don't hear people walking around over your head, that way. People who stay in motels can be very loud walkers. Sometimes, you can hear yelling through the walls. Screaming, too, sometimes. That could be anything. Yelling bothers me more than screaming. But I think when it gets really quiet, right after the screaming, that's worse than the screaming itself. So far, no screaming or yelling at this motel. We go to a different one every month. Just for a weekend. Friday night after dinner till Sunday at noon. My stepdad drops us off. My mom says that couples with kids need time away. *(Quick pause)* From the kids. I can understand that. For a while, when she first met my stepdad, she didn't even tell him she *had* kids. She didn't lie. She just didn't tell. Guys don't want to hook up with a woman who has kids. I can understand that, too. It's a lot of responsibility. And when you're first dating somebody, you don't wanna think about being responsible. So, Dave checks us into a motel for a weekend, once a month, and leaves us with money and a list of numbers for food places near the motel that deliver. He does research. He's very organized. I'm not supposed to be eating out here. We're not allowed to leave the room. Dave says that having food delivered to the room is a lot safer than me going out to get it and bring it back for me and Zoey. *(Quick pause)* That's my little sister. She's back at the motel. She wasn't hungry. I eat all the time. *(Quick pause)* Healthy stuff. Mostly. We're not allowed to have junk food. Dave says it rots your teeth and your brain and turns you into stupid fat kids who just lay around all day and play video games. *(Quick pause)* We're not allowed to play video games. Not at our house. Not anywhere. And he'd find out if we did. He knows things. Sometimes, it's like he's inside your head looking around for stuff you did that you weren't supposed to do. *(Quick pause, and a laugh)* I forgot about the Peeps. *(Quick pause)* The little marshmallow chickens. *(Quick pause)* They sell 'em around Easter. Dave has cases of 'em in the closet. He opens up like five packs at a time and lets 'em

sit out on the counter so they get stale. He likes 'em that way. Zoey does too. I think they're disgusting – fresh or stale. Dave says Peeps are the exception to the no-junk-food rule because they're fat free and because the chemical preservatives evaporate when you leave the package open for 'em to get stale. He also says that they remind him of his childhood and that everybody is allowed to have one thing that reminds them of their childhood, no matter how bad it is for you. *(Pause)* I can understand that. *(Pause)* Dave says that there's an exception to every rule but that he's the one who gets to decide what the exception is. He says it's a "man thing." Men get to make those kind of decisions. Men *have* to make those decisions. We have to be responsible. Dave says he's old-fashioned because he thinks men are the boss and women have other things they're supposed to do. My mom understands that. She doesn't mind. I think she's just glad to have somebody who pays the bills and gives her money to get her nails done and stuff. After my dad left, she had to do everything by herself. And she wasn't good at that. So, if sometimes Dave tells her to shut up and leave him alone, she does it. She understands. And it's better to shut up than have a fight. The one time they had a big fight, Dave just got in his truck and left. They were yelling and stuff and he just walked out. And my mom freaked. She called his phone like a hundred times. Two days later he came back. *(Quick pause)* Like nothing happened. He didn't say anything and neither did she. The fight and the two days just evaporated like the chemical preservatives in Peeps when you leave the package open for 'em to get stale. And they haven't had a big fight like that since.

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