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Reunion

By

GREGORY S. MOSS

Dramatic Publishing Company

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

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“*Reunion* was originally produced by South Coast Repertory.

Originally workshopped and further developed in the
2013 Pacific Playwrights Festival at South Coast Repertory.

Reunion was developed at the Brown/Trinity Playwrights Repertory Theatre 2012 season under the artistic direction of Lowry Marshall and Kenneth Prestininzi.”

Reunion was first produced by the South Coast Repertory Theatre in Costa Mesa, Calif., on March 9, 2014.

Cast:

PETER Kevin Berntson
MITCH..... Tim Cummings
MAX Michael Gladis

Production Team:

DirectorAdrienne Campbell-Holt
Scenic DesignerSibyl Wickersheimer
Costume DesignerStephanie Kerley Schwartz
Lighting Designer Elizabeth Harper
Sound DesignerM.L. Dogg
Fight Choreographer Edgar Landa
DramaturgKelly Miller
Stage Manager Kathryn Davies

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CHARACTERS

PETER: 40s. Pink-cheeked, enthusiastic, his optimism and energy undimmed by the passage of time. Gym-toned muscle fighting off the encroachment of middle-aged spread. His wife bought him subscriptions to *Esquire*, *Men's Health* and *Maxim*, and he tries to make the cut in style, fitness and grooming, but can't quite pull it off. Deeply invested in the friendships of his past. Idolizes his boyhood friends. Makes a very respectable living in the upper-middle management of a Midwestern ice cream and frozen novelty supplier (Blue Bunny). Of the three, the most content with his lot in life.

MAX: 40s. Weathered, worn, burdened. Some spark of his early days underneath there. Graying at the temples, but not yet fully spent. Wearing the nicest suit he could afford at the Salvation Army Thrift Store. Having hit bottom, he's now trying to climb back up.

MITCHELL: 40s. Lean, feral, full of magnetic swagger and sexual menace. Suit and style lost to time—a powder blue tuxedo two sizes too small (the one his father got married in), dried, caked mud on his black shoes, and still he looks good. A juvenile delinquent grown up. Deeply mistrustful of anything that occurred after 1986. A loner, living off the grid, absolute confidence. Nick Cave, Jerry Lee Lewis, Johnny Cash at his most medicated. New England hillbilly, pomade and cheap cologne.

NOTATION AND TEMPO

A beat is a momentary silence.

Pauses are withheld speech. Silences are dead air. Both should be held long.

“//” means the following line should begin to overlap, or interrupt, here.

Line breaks indicate change in thought or searching for the right word and don't necessarily indicate a break in speech.

Play fast generally and accentuate the dynamics between speech and silence.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The games of Act II should, despite their chaotic and violent nature, be executed with great rigor, specificity and formality. They are dances, rituals, discrete modular performances. The more precision applied to them, the more the abandon and chaos of the event will show through.

They are little spells replaying, reinvoking the past the three men shared. Look at *Jackass*, at Chris Burden's performances of endurance, at the comedy of physical pain in *The Three Stooges*. Transitions between games are miniature dances. They must be lit and choreographed precisely. The transitions reveals the rise and fall in and out of consciousness, in and out of intoxication, the continuous movement away from the adult selves the Max, Mitch and Peter entered the room with, and closer to the dangerous, angry kids they used to be. Transitions must take time. They are continuous with the games, slowing or speeding tempo up as seems appropriate.

The destruction should continue through these transitions. Let the lights and sound get wasted too, to reflect and communicate the intoxication. The design might reflect fantasies of the past—a rock show for instance—mixed with distorted or heightened ambient sound from the actual hotel room (buzz of lights, someone walking down the hall outside, the heat coming on, the ice machine, etc.) It's a night's worth of binging compressed into twenty-five minutes or so of stage time.

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ACT I

AT RISE: *A modest motel room in a suburb of Boston. MAX and PETER, two men in their early 40s, sit facing each other.*

PETER wears a well-made suit in a contemporary style. He holds a beer and may be a little drunk.

MAX wears a worn business suit, several years out of style.

Heavy metal plays as lights go down, cuts out abruptly as lights come up. Dialogue is immediately on top of the cut in the music.

PETER. So!

(Pause.)

PETER *(cont'd)*. you see Joan

MAX. Joan?

PETER. Joan Miller

MAX. oh

Oh God

PETER. She looked good I thought

MAX. She looked good, she looked her age

but Tara

PETER. Tara?

MAX. McKenna?

PETER. she's

which one's she?

MAX. she's the one

she and Joan used to hang around together all the time

PETER. no

MAX. they used to have this, like, secret language

at their lockers

talking backwards or in code or something

PETER. the short one?

MAX. made little clicking sounds and

yeah she was

PETER. she was Joan's friend

MAX. right

blonde

wore these

Lamb's Wool Sweaters all the time

PETER. she was there tonight?

MAX. with huge brown eyes and

Goddamn she was cute

with her—

braces

PETER. she was there?

MAX. huh?

yeah

next to Joan

(Beat.)

PETER. her?

MAX. yes

PETER. Her?

MAX. yes yes why?

PETER (*chuckling*). just
she got so Big!

MAX. she's middle-aged Petie

PETER. I know I know but I mean
I look at you, I look at Mitchie

MAX. we don't all age the same rate

PETER. none of us look like that!
We didn't just—give up

MAX. She didn't “give up” Petie
I'm sure she just got
other priorities

PETER. looks like she's been through the ringer

MAX. her eyes were the same

PETER. she's the one who got pregnant in tenth grade

MAX. what
no

PETER. yes she was she was

MAX. pregnant or did she move

PETER. Pregnant.

Definitely.

Happened on that

Biology Camping Trip they sent us on
that

ECO CAMP or whatever it was

MAX. who did it

PETER. who

MAX. who was the father do you think

PETER. uhm

MAX. probably some fucking SOCCER player

PETER. probably

Colin maybe

MAX. Colin Geary or Charlie

Charlie Whasisname

PETER (*looking for it*). Charlie—tall skinny kid lived on the Island—

MAX. Yeah.

Him.

One of those guys.

PETER. prob'ly Colin

MAX. Yeah.

Maybe.

(*Pause.*)

PETER. she got BIG though!

MAX. she did get big

PETER. REAL big! heh heh

MAX. her hands were the same

PETER. you remember a girl's hands—

MAX. they were pretty //

I sat behind her and

PETER. from high school? Jeez, I don't remember you being such a

Romantic Maxie!

MAX. it's not Romantic, I

PETER. we're all searching for bra straps and hard nipples in science class // you're back there looking at some girl's FINGERS

MAX. I just have a broader appreciation of female beauty than you and fucking Mitch.

(Pause.)

MAX *(cont'd, conciliatory)*. is he coming

PETER. who?

Mitch?

Of course!

this was his idea!

MAX. what

PETER. to meet here

I mean here, specifically

you don't recognize it?

MAX. what

PETER. the room

this is the room

the room the room

remember?

MAX. I

PETER. My mom gave me that money? She packed us that, she packed us a little, like picnic basket? With champagne, and snacks and stuff? So we'd be safe. She didn't want us driving. And so we came here. Afterwards. For our party. Remember?

MAX. right

PETER. Mitch insisted

"Get The Room," he says

So I did!

MAX. that's great

PETER. you don't remember

MAX. it's been a long time, Petie

PETER. it was this one

MAX. I don't know

PETER. I made sure

MAX. well

ok ok so maybe they changed the wallpaper then

PETER. the curtains are still the same!

(Pause.)

MAX. Was Judy there?

PETER. Judy?

MAX. did she stay the night?

PETER. What?

Judy was never there!

Judy and I—

we weren't even dating yet!

MAX. but she was at graduation

PETER. sure, of course but

MAX. but not with you

PETER. no, no, not yet

MAX. who was she there with

PETER. who?

with nobody

Judy was alone

Judy was single before me.

MAX. Right.

(Pause.)

PETER. you want a beer

MAX. no I'm all right

PETER. you sure?

I got TONS of beer

MAX. No I'm good, Petie

PETER. Mitch told me to stock up

“Gonna Be A LONG NIGHT,” he says!

MAX. I'm fine

really

PETER. OK OK

but seriously

when Mitch gets here?

we better start drinking

we'll have a TOAST 'cause—oh—

(PETER is overcome with feeling. He leaps up, very animated, and launches himself at MAX, pulling him in for a bear hug.)

PETER *(cont'd)*. AHHHHHHHHH GOD I'm just effin glad to SEE you, Maxie!

I know I'm sorry I know it's just—ah! I been trying to hold in all night and I just—

Aw, Maxie!

(PETER bear hugs MAX again.)

MAX *(dryly but warm, allowing but not reciprocating)*. I'm glad to see you too, Petie.

PETER. Ahhh! I missed you! you know? I missed you guys so much!

MAX. I know.

PETER. I kept trying to get us together and get us together
but you guys are hard to reach!

MAX. It's been crazy.

PETER. I guess so! For *years* it's been crazy!

MAX. I know.

PETER. I sent cards, at Christmastime, I forwarded all of
those emails—

MAX. I should have kept in better touch.

PETER. you should have kept in touch AT ALL!

MAX. I know

I know

I'm sorry.

(Pause.

*PETER regards MAX with a big smile, beaming harder and
harder until he can't hold back another bear hug.)*

PETER. Ahhhh! All is Forgiven!

Maxie!

MAX. thanks

PETER *(stepping back, appraising MAX)*. and you look
GOOD!

(Squeezing MAX's bicep.) you been workin' out?

MAX. ah

I run a little

PETER. it shows!

MAX. I'm not as

disciplined as I should be

PETER *(of MAX's face, sympathetic)*. a little tired maybe?

MAX. a little

PETER. long flight?

MAX. yeah

PETER. yeah

and Logan

sheesh

LOGAN

still a mess that place

MAX. yeah, well

PETER. but not too bad Maxie!

You look good!

You look the same!

MAX. you too Petie

you look great actually

PETER. me? ha

naw

I'm a little—

(Pats his gut.)

but you know Judy keeps me in shape.

I put on a few pounds a few years back?—

MAX. to be expected

PETER. but Judy, she was like, “uh UH! Not YET, Mister!

You're not turning into a Fat Old Man Yet!

You're Not Turning Into Your FATHER Yet!” she says!

She has me doing these Pilates classes? They're Amazing!

Feel my stomach:

ooh, not there, up here, this part:

Feel it!

MAX. “firm”

PETER. Yeah!

See?

THAT'S the PILATES!

Judy, she took me to the gym and signed me up!

And at first I felt—

you know—

it's mostly women in there, so—

but then when I saw the results?

Oh Man!

She's got me on a whole program:

Pilates, Spinning, Step Aerobics—

MAX. she's doing all right?

PETER. Judy? oh yeah

she's great

MAX. I'm sorry she couldn't be here

PETER. she wanted to

I should call her

but you know

someone has to stay home with the baby

MAX. right!

of course

when was it?

PETER. two weeks ago

MAX. Amazing.

PETER. You didn't get the card?

MAX. I'm sure I did

PETER. we sent out cards

MAX. it's been crazy