

**SINCERELY, SCOTT**

A 10-Minute Play

By

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**CAST:**

MARGOT, a 19 year old girl, student at NYU, visiting home  
for Spring Break

JEN, her mother, who lives in Upstate, New York

SCOTT, Margot's estranged father, a construction manager  
who lives in Chicago

DR. STEVENS, Scott's therapist

**TIME:**

Now

**PLACE:**

Upstate New York. Chicago, IL.

ACT 1

SCENE 1

*Stage is split in half. Lights up on Stage ~~Left~~<sup>Right</sup> only. A cozy therapist's office is set up with one chair and a small couch. SCOTT sits on the couch with his head in his hands. DR. STEVENS sits in the chair with a small pad of paper on her lap. She is looking at SCOTT. SCOTT slowly brings his head up to look at DR. STEVENS.*

SCOTT

Ya think she knows?

DR. STEVENS

Knows about you?

SCOTT

Yeah *(pause)* I wouldn't be surprised if Jen never told her anything. Honestly, I wouldn't blame her. God, I really fucked up.

DR. STEVENS

I don't know if she knows about you, Scott. We have no way of knowing whether or not she knows. *(pause)* What I do know is that you have made an incredible amount of progress over the past 5 years. You are a completely different person now than you were when we first met, and a completely different person than you were 19 years ago. You have worked so hard to make yourself into the person that you want to be.

SCOTT

*(sighs)* I guess you're right. I just...I...I'm worried that she hates me. She could have these ideas about me. Who knows what Jen told her about me, if she told her anything. I'm scared, I really am.

DR. STEVENS

How else are you feeling?

SCOTT

I'm feeling...I'm angry. Angry at myself. I'm angry that I missed so many milestones in her life. And I want to apologize to her for everything I did, or didn't do that I should've done. I want her to feel that she can trust me, because I know that I'm doing better now. I want to meet her.

DR. STEVENS

Then tell her that.

SCOTT

What? How?

DR. STEVENS

I propose that you write her a letter, here during our session. Tell her how you feel. Tell her that you are back on your feet. Apologize to her. Letters are powerful things, Scott.

SCOTT

Do you think she would even respond?

DR. STEVENS

That I don't know. But I think it's worth a shot.

SCOTT

It's my only shot.

DR. STEVENS

*(hands her pad of paper to SCOTT)* Here, you can start writing now, if you want to do this.

SCOTT

You really think this is a good idea?

DR. STEVENS

I really do.

SCOTT

Okay. Here goes. *(He begins to write.)* Dear Margot...

Lights go down.

SCOTT moves to sit on the stairs  
while STAGE RIGHT gets  
rearranged. DR. STEVENS exits  
downstage to sit in a reserved seat  
in the audience.

SCENE 2

~~RIGHT~~ ~~Left~~ lights fade to black. Lights up on Stage ~~Right~~ ~~LEFT~~. Cozy home in Upstate New York. There is a home office set up with a middle-aged woman, JEN, working at a desk. A young woman, MARGOT, enters stage but pauses before entering office set up.

MARGOT enters through  
stage left double doors. Enter  
partway then pause before  
speaking

MARGOT  
Knock knock.

*(JEN is visibly distracted with her work, talking to MARGOT without paying much attention to her.)*

JEN  
Hey, sweetie, what's going on?

MARGOT  
I, um, well I just got a letter today. Like in the mail.

JEN  
*(Confused about why MARGOT is telling her this.)* That's nice.

MARGOT  
*(Sighs.)* Can I just read it to you? Do you have a minute?

JEN  
Hmm, I'm just finishing up some final designs, then I need to email Marcus about the presentation on the 15<sup>th</sup>—

MARGOT  
*(Interrupting and snapping at JEN.)* Mom, please. This is important.

JEN  
*(Surprised by MARGOT's tone.)* Oh, ok if it's that important then I'm here. Read it to me. margot moves closer to jen

MARGOT  
*(Even though she wanted to read the letter, she is still nervous.)* Ok. Well, it came yesterday, and I just got around to reading it today. Um...

*(JEN seems a bit annoyed at MARGOT's stalling.)*

Alright, here it goes. *(Clears her throat a few times. Obviously still nervous and stalling.)*

JEN  
Oh, honey I forgot to ask. Who is the letter from?

MARGOT

My dad.

*(JEN straightens in her seat and looks surprised. Her eyes widen. She appears to have heard the most shocking news of her life.)*

JEN

*(Almost whispers.)* Scott.

*(MARGOT and JEN freeze with JEN looking at the floor in shock, and MARGOT nervously holding the letter, staring at it intently. Lights dim slightly.)*

SCENE 3

STAGE RIGHT under  
the noir light. Will  
need to flick it on on  
his way to the spot.

*(Spotlight on SCOTT who is standing in the middle of stage left, which is empty. He is wearing the same outfit from scene one and holding a letter.)*

SCOTT

Margot. I bet you're surprised to hear from me. I was pretty surprised myself when I decided to write this letter. I hope that you're doing well. 19 years is a long time to go without a father, but I'm sure that you've managed to do quite well with just your mom by your side. Jen always was much stronger and smarter than I was. I'm not surprised that she raised such a great kid. I hear you go to NYU; that was my old stomping grounds back in the day. It's wild that you ended up there as well.

*(Beat.)*

I live in Chicago now. I've been working for a construction company here for about 4 years. It took some time, but I managed to work my way up to being a construction manager there. It pays well enough for me to live comfortably. I have a small apartment with parking and a washer-dryer in the building. As someone who now lives in the city,

I'm sure you realize how exciting that is. *(chuckles lightly)*

I live alone. But don't worry about me; I'm happy on my own.

*(Beat.)*

I'm not sure why I'm telling you all this. I guess I wanted to show you that I'm doing better. I'm healthy now, and I've been this way for a while.

*(Long beat.)*

I can only imagine how little you think of me. I'm sure that by this point in your life you've gotten curious enough to ask your mom about me and I'm sure she's told you everything. I'm ashamed to admit that it's all true.

*(Beat.)*

I have so many regrets in my life, Margot, but the biggest one is that I didn't make an effort to be in your life, when I should have. And for that I am so sorry.

I realize that there is no way to make up for the last 19 years. I hope that you will find some way to forgive me. I'd like to meet you, Margot, if you are willing to meet me. I would love to see the bright young woman that you have become.

*(Lights go back up on MARGOT and JEN, stage right.)*

MARGOT AND SCOTT

Sincerely,  
Scott

*(Lights go down on SCOTT, stage left)*

After lights go down, SCOTT's  
apartment is set up quickly and  
SCOTT goes to sit in a chair in his  
apartment

SCENE 4

*(MARGOT is standing where she was, and JEN is staring at the floor. MARGOT gradually pulls her face away from the letter, places it on a table, and looks at JEN, while JEN looks up at MARGOT. Moment of silence as neither one knows what to say.)*

MARGOT  
Why didn't you tell me?

JEN  
Margot, I—

MARGOT  
This whole time he knew. He knew I existed, and you never told me. Why?

JEN  
Look, Margot, I was so young when I had you. I didn't know what to do. You wouldn't understand.

MARGOT  
You're right. I don't understand. I don't understand why someone would knowingly lie to their daughter and say her father didn't know she existed. He wrote me a fucking letter, Mom, he definitely knows I exist. I don't know why someone would lie like that!

JEN  
You weren't there. I did what I thought was best in the moment. You don't know the full story.

MARGOT  
Yes, exactly. I don't know anything! I feel like everything is different now, I just, I don't know what to think. Why didn't you tell me he knew? Why did you lie to me?

JEN  
I had to, Margot! I couldn't tell you what really happened.

MARGOT  
Fine, then tell me now. I deserve to know. And what did he mean when he said he thought you had told me everything and that he was ashamed? What happened, Mom?!

JEN  
*(pause as she struggles to say what she is about to say)* He was an alcoholic, Margot!

MARGOT  
*(gasps)* Oh.



JEN

And I, I was scared! I was scared of my situation and— I was scared of him. On the surface he looked like such a good guy. But he would have these moments, when he was drunk. And I...I didn't recognize him anymore. He became someone completely different, and frightening. *(pause)* I never thought I would be a single mom. I never planned this. I just did what I had to do to protect you. I packed up you and everything we had into my car, drove up here to my parents' house and never looked back. It was my only choice.

*(pause as JEN looks at MARGOT and MARGOT looks at the floor.)*

MARGOT  
How old was I?

JEN  
Two months.

MARGOT  
Was he like that the whole time you were together?

JEN  
No. Not at first. He was great when we first met. Looking back, I think he was just really good at hiding it. His addiction.

MARGOT  
Mom, I, I'm so sorry. I didn't know.

JEN  
I know. *(pause)* When you got old enough to understand that he wasn't here, I couldn't bring myself to tell you why. It was easier to say that he never knew than tell you why I had to leave.

MARGOT  
I get it. I mean, I don't really, I can't imagine how hard it was. But I understand why you did it.

JEN  
Thank you. And I am sorry I didn't tell you sooner.

MARGOT  
Its ok, Mom. Its ok.

*(The two hug and share an emotional moment before snapping back to the problem at hand: the letter. Beat as they both stare at the letter on the table.)*

MARGOT  
So, what should I do?

JEN  
I don't know, sweetie. *(pause)* I always hoped he would get better, and I am happy for him that he seems to have his life together. But, *(sighs)* I'm nervous. I don't know if I can trust him.

MARGOT  
It has been 19 years. And I don't know why he would write to me if he didn't really want to meet me and if he wasn't really doing better.

JEN  
That's true.

*(Pause.)*

MARGOT  
I think I should go. *(pause)* What do you want me to do?

JEN  
I want you to do whatever you think is best for you.

MARGOT  
*(sarcastically)* Thanks, that was helpful.

JEN  
Margot. I know this is hard. But you're an adult. I can't make this decision for you. *(pause.)* If you feel that this is something you need to do, I'll support you.

MARGOT  
Okay. Then, I'm gonna do it. I'm gonna go. I feel like I have to, not for him but for myself, so I can get closure.

JEN  
Okay.

MARGOT  
Okay?

JEN  
Yes. Come on, let's go get you a train ticket.

MARGOT  
Thank you, Mom. I mean it. Thank you. For everything.

~~*(Margot and Jen exit up stage right. Lights go out on stage right.)*~~

SCENE 5

RIGHT

*(Dim lights up on stage ~~left~~, showing a simple, slightly messy living room, SCOTT's apartment. He sits in a comfy chair reading a newspaper. Then, spotlight up on center stage. There is a door separating stage right and left. On one side of the door is SCOTT's apartment, on the other side MARGOT nervously approaches her side of the door.)*

*(MARGOT starts a cycle of walking towards the door then walking away, sometimes raising a hand to knock, other times just staring at the door. She is clearly nervous and overthinking her decision. After a few rounds of this, MARGOT timidly knocks on the door. SCOTT raises his head to look at the door confused but doesn't leave his chair.*

*MARGOT waits a second, then knocks again, stronger this time. SCOTT is still confused but decides to get up. He puts down his newspaper, stands up and walks to the door, opening it. He and MARGOT stare at each other, not saying anything for a moment. SCOTT seems to know who she is without her needing to say anything.)*

SCOTT  
*(softly)* Margot?

MARGOT  
Hi, Scott.

SCOTT  
Hi, kid. God, it's nice to finally meet you.

MARGOT  
It's nice to meet you too, Dad.

*(They look at each other for another emotional moment and the lights go out.)*

**End of Play.**