

You Are Here

By
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Characters

Roger. . . 38

Guy. . . 18

Clarice. . . 63

Emily. . . 18

Derrick. . . 27

The play takes place, mostly, in a mid-sized city in central Kansas.

The action happens February through August.

Author's note: On page 82, Guys line, "I thought why I was cute was because of my dimples." should be amended to reflect the performer's specific physicality. ". . . because of my red hair." for example.

ONE

Late February. Wednesday. Early morning.

Roger and Guy's apartment.

In the living room a worn sofa and arm chair. In front of the sofa, a coffee table covered with three-ring binders, training manuals, organizational flow charts. An end table with a lamp and alarm clock.

Taped to the wall over the sofa are glossy posters detailing standards for glazing donuts and steaming milk. Also, a hand-crafted poster for registering the completion of daily chores.

To one side of the living room is a dining table covered with school texts, pencils, loose-leaf paper, a calculator, a well-worn backpack.

A kitchen off the dining area.

A hallway leads from the living room to the apartment's one bedroom and bathroom.

Mounds of clothes scattered across the sofa and chair. An empty clothes basket near the coffee table.

Quiet.

The alarm rings.

Roger, who has been sleeping on the sofa amidst the clothes, bolts upright.

ROGER

[Loud.] Alarm! Time to get up!

Roger turns off the alarm.

He disentangles himself from the clothes; sits.

He turns to the wall; uses a marker to make a big **X** in a box on his chore chart.

He sits. Then,

GUY

[Off.] I'm awake.

ROGER

[Calling off.] Time flies.

Roger crosses back to the sofa. He and Clarice continue speaking to each other from opposite sides of the wall.

ROGER (cont'd)

I'm back.

CLARICE

Wednesday morning.

ROGER

Easy to know that. Everywhere you look the clothes are clean. How'd you sleep?

CLARICE

Like a baby.

ROGER

I was tossy-turny. I got nerves.

CLARICE

You'll do fine.

ROGER

That's what they say.

CLARICE

You boys need anything?

ROGER

Nope.

Guy enters from the hallway.

CLARICE

Eat breakfast.

ROGER

I'll boil eggs.

GUY

[On his way to the kitchen.] Make sure you turn it off.

ROGER

Turn off what?

GUY

The stove. You always forget.

ROGER
When have I not turned off--

GUY
Last Monday. I came home from work; you're sound asleep--

ROGER
Last Monday's the past.

GUY
The stove's going full-blast.

ROGER
Ancient history!

GUY
There's paper towels. . .

ROGER
It wasn't my fault.

GUY
You could have burned down the entire house.

ROGER
[The obvious explanation.] They changed my prescription.

CLARICE
Roger--

GUY
Including yourself.

CLARICE
[Tension growing in her voice.] What's wrong?

GUY
Where would I be then? You burned up in a fire.

CLARICE
Is something burning?

Strong pounding ("Shave and a haircut") from
the other side of the wall.

CLARICE (cont'd)
I heard, "burning." Is there a fire?

Guy directs Roger's attention back to the wall.

CLARICE (cont'd)
Did you say "fire?"

ROGER
[Into the wall.] Everything's okay.

CLARICE
What were you saying?

ROGER
[Into the wall.] It's Guy.

GUY
[Speaking into the wall.] I'm right here.

ROGER
[Into the wall.] I'm talking to Guy.

GUY
[Into the wall.] Hey, Grandma.

CLARICE
What's burning?

GUY
Nothing's burning. Everything's okay.

CLARICE
[Uncertain.] Everything's okay? Guy?

GUY
Everything's okay.

CLARICE
You sure?

GUY
Positive.

CLARICE
There's no fire?

GUY
No fire.

CLARICE
[Calm.] 'Morning, Guy.

GUY
'Morning, Grandma.

CLARICE
Everything's okay?

GUY
"Best day ever."

CLARICE
You boys need me to fix breakfast?

GUY
We're good.

CLARICE
I'm more than happy--

ROGER
Over and out, Clarice.

CLARICE
Over and out.

Guy steps away from the wall; exits into the kitchen; returns carrying bananas.

Roger steps in front of Guy. Certain he has Guy's full attention, Roger begins.

ROGER
"Once upon a time, there was a father and his son--"

GUY
". . . and when they woke-up, they knew it was the best day ever."

ROGER
[Finishing with Guy.] ". . . the best day ever." Morning, Guy.

GUY
Morning, Roger.

Satisfied he's completed his part of their morning ritual, Guy stuffs a banana into his mouth; heads towards the hallway.

ROGER
I started five times.

GUY
[Eating.] Uh-huh.

ROGER
Plus, I called "Alarm." And, "Time to get up." And, your name. Twice. With the five "Once upon a times," [Figuring.] plus one "Alarm," plus one "Time to get up," and your name twice is nine times. Which is too many.

GUY
I was asleep.

ROGER

Used to, I started "Once upon a time" you'd be right here. Immediate. Out in the park, even. I'd start "Once upon a time," you'd run from the ball diamond all the way to me. Fast.

GUY

I was up all night cramming.

ROGER

Which is no excuse. We live the way we live. Tests are the exception.

GUY

You want me to not study?

ROGER

You're establishing a pattern of not paying attention. I called your name. I called "Alarm." Said, "Time to get up!" Plus, you're becoming a nag.

GUY

Whoa!

ROGER

The stove was only once.

GUY

It's important.

ROGER

Treating me like I don't know what to do. Like you're the boss.

GUY

Everybody needs help.

ROGER

Not everyday. Not all the time.

Small silence.

ROGER (cont'd)

Plus, you're not the only one with tests. Today, you think about it, today "Once upon a time" is especially important.

GUY

I know.

ROGER

Because of our mutual tests.

A small silence.

ROGER (cont'd)

I'm all tossy-turny.

GUY

You'll do great.

ROGER

[Referencing the clothes scattered around the apartment.]
Clean clothes. Sure sign it's Wednesday.

GUY

Want a banana?

Roger shakes his head "No."

ROGER

You shouldn't cram. I spread my studying out. That way, day
of my test I wake up fresh.

GUY

Everybody has their own style.

ROGER

Spreading studying out makes remembering easier.

GUY

Really?

ROGER

I learned that when they taught us how to learn. Learning
once; most people forget. Learn twice; you forget less.
Three times; forgetting is practically eliminated.

GUY

[Playful.] Because I heard the opposite.

ROGER

What?

GUY

The more times you study the more easily you get confused.

Roger evaluates what Guy has just said.

ROGER

Five "Once upon a times," is too many. We lived someplace
big, five would make sense. Five wouldn't even be enough.
We might need six. Maybe, seven. Here, we're practically on
top of each other.

Roger notices, finally, that Guy has been
sticking a banana in his ear. Or, up his nose.

ROGER (cont'd)
I know what you're doing.

GUY
[Funny voice.] Roger says he eats fruits, but does he speak truth?

ROGER
[Fighting laughter.] Stop.

GUY
Too few fruits makes big constipation.

ROGER
[Giving in. Laughing.] I am not laughing.

GUY
Poo-poo comes out of ears.

ROGER
No.

GUY
Yes.

ROGER
There's no way for poo--

Guy makes monkey sounds.

Roger dissolves into laughter.

They lose themselves in several moments of unself-conscious horsing around. Then,

ROGER (cont'd)
Stop. That's enough. Stop. Stop. [Gaining control. No longer laughing.] Not in the morning.

Guy tries to keep the laughter going.

ROGER (cont'd)
No. [Sharp.] Stop!

Guy stops clowning around.

ROGER (cont'd)
That's enough. You have school. I have to go to work.

GUY
You need the bathroom?

ROGER
Wednesday morning; who gets the bathroom first?

Guy signals he is the one.

He heads to the hallway; points to the duty chart hanging over the sofa.

GUY

Don't forget yesterday's chores. Under Tuesday.

ROGER

Already done.

GUY

They're not checked.

ROGER

[The laundry.] They're accomplished.

GUY

Not if they're not checked.

Guy is gone.

Roger turns; contemplates the missing check mark.

He notices the other posters on the wall; reviews their information. Then,

he pulls a binder from the pile on the coffee table; sits on the sofa; opens the binder. He quizzed himself by placing his hands over his eyes and reciting what he has just read.

The front door bell rings.

ROGER

[Loud.] Door bell! I'll get it.

Roger goes to the front door; opens it.

ROGER (cont'd)

'Morning, Emily.

Emily enters. She wears a school uniform; carries a full backpack.

EMILY

'Morning, Mr. Phillips.

ROGER

[Closing the front door.] How'd you sleep?

EMILY

Okay.

ROGER

[Returning to the binder.] I was tossy-turny.

EMILY

Guy ready?

GUY

[Off.] Coming.

EMILY

Oh. Before I forget. Mom wants to know can you and Guy come over for dinner next Friday. It's Dad's birthday.

ROGER

Your Dad's birthday?

EMILY

It's supposed to be a surprise.

ROGER

Clarice can come, too?

EMILY

Sure.

ROGER

We're there.

EMILY

[Calling off to Guy.] You finish the calc.?

GUY

[Off.] What?

EMILY

[To Guy.] I need to look at your calc., okay? [She crosses to the dining room table. To Roger.] You did your laundry.

Emily finds Guy's homework; checks his answers against hers.

ROGER

Every Tuesday. You know that. Monday; clean. Tuesday; laundry. Wednesday, after work; put laundry away. Thursday, day off; everything done. Like God in his heaven. "Once upon a time there was a man, on Thursday his work was done. It was the best day ever."

EMILY

You put it away right away it'll stay nice longer. I can show you how to fold--

ROGER

Look. [Referencing his wall chart.] Tuesday I do laundry, Wednesday I put it away. Hey, ask me a question.

Emily is unsure what he means.

ROGER (cont'd)

For being Assistant Manager. Ask me from my test. To warm me up.

EMILY

Oh. [Thinking.] Uh. . .

ROGER

Ask me the company greeting.

EMILY

What's the company greeting?

ROGER

"Welcome to Donut World." Ask me the company motto.

EMILY

What's the company--

ROGER

"Donut World; where the sun never sets on quality." The first Donut World opened August 23, 1998 at 812 West Adams in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The second Donut World--

GUY

[Entering.] Ta-dah!

Guy wears a male version of the uniform Emily wears; carries his shoes and socks.

He goes to Emily; gives her a quick kiss.

EMILY

For number four; how'd you get four-thirds units squared?

ROGER

Got your lucky socks?

Guy displays his socks.

ROGER (cont'd)

"Once upon a time, there was a father and his son--

Guy joins Roger for the following.

ROGER AND GUY

-- and they had really lucky socks.

EMILY
What I got's not even close.

Guy sits; puts on his socks.

ROGER
[Alone.] "And every time they wore the socks--"

GUY
What integral do you have?

EMILY
Same as yours. [Changing her answer to match Guy's.] I got something totally different.

ROGER
"Every time they wore the socks--"

GUY
You should get a tutor.

ROGER
"Every time they wore--"

EMILY
Dad would kill me.

ROGER
[Trying to continue.] "Every time they wore the socks. . ."

GUY
For getting a tutor?

EMILY
He says all the tuition he pays they should guaranteed I'm a genius.

GUY
Go to math lab. I go to math lab all the time.

Roger, realizing he has lost Guy's attention, watches from the other side of the room.

EMILY
It's only 'til May. [Putting Guy's homework back in its place.] Oh! You talk to Pubes? Meighan says he heard from Boulder.

GUY
And?

Emily makes "thumbs down."

GUY (cont'd)

Dang.

EMILY

She thinks he's getting depressed.

GUY

Yeah. Everyplace telling him "No."

ROGER

That's a college, right? Boulder's a college?

GUY

He's got more to hear from, right?

EMILY

I think she said the only ones he has left to hear from are Emporia and Friends'.

ROGER

Pubes should look on the bright side.

EMILY

Which would be?

ROGER

Accepted means he goes away. Everything gets up-side down. Rejected means he stays here. Life keeps perfect. Like it already is. Right, Guy?

EMILY

[Sincere. Non-combative.] What if what he wants is to go someplace else?

ROGER

Which is my point. Why go someplace else?

EMILY

New experiences. Exciting teachers.

ROGER

Somewhere else doesn't guarantee exciting.

EMILY

What if a person wants to expand their horizons--

GUY

[To Emily. Interrupting; forestalling a confrontation.] Hey! You remember the CD?

EMILY

What--

GUY

The new KatFight. I want Roger to hear what they sound like.
[To Roger.] Now that they moved Mekong from bass to lead,
their sound's totally exploded.

EMILY

We don't have time--

Guy sets down his second shoe, making it clear
he won't finish dressing until she hands him
the CD.

Emily takes the CD from her backpack; hands it
to Guy.

GUY

[To Roger.] This is what I was telling you about. Sammy,
Emily's cousin, sent it from Antwerp. This side is music,
[Flipping the disc over.] this side is a video of their
concert in Berlin.

EMILY

Which Sammy actually saw.

GUY

She saw them in Berlin?

EMILY

I told you she did. Do you even listen--

ROGER

[Holding the disc.] Katfight is the number one band of all
time.

GUY

Sammy's in Belgium.

EMILY

Antwerp to Berlin is like here to Chicago.

ROGER

It used to be Black Flag was historical number one, but Gregg
Ginn made them break-up.

GUY

What about Screw Radio?

ROGER

Screw Radio was very good. But Screw Radio is no Katfight.

GUY

Not even close.

ROGER

That's for sure.

Roger and Guy share a moment of silent satisfaction.

Guy points to the CD's song list.

ROGER (cont'd)

Yes! You hear Blitzkrieg all the time. Even on Top 40.

GUY

You should hear it now that Mekong's playing lead.

Emily points to Guy's second shoe.

He picks it up; starts to put it on.

GUY (cont'd)

Sammy just went from Antwerp to Berlin?

EMILY

That's the genius behind the E. U. No borders. Once you're there you can go everywhere you want.

GUY

She is so lucky.

EMILY

She's thinking about staying on another year. If that's the case, probably, after graduation, I'll go visit.

GUY

A person gets to Europe, they could spend their whole life traveling. First, you go one place, then another place. Then you go somewhere else.

EMILY

You should come with. We could go anywhere you want.

ROGER

[Overly loud.] Hey! Guy! I'm not taking my test.

GUY

What?

ROGER

I'm not ready.

GUY

That's ridiculous. Flynn gave you his books. You've been studying--

ROGER

Some time else.

GUY

No. You take the test today.

ROGER

I don't think so.

Guy kneels in front of Roger; making sure he has his father's attention.

GUY

What is the profit-to-cost ratio for a chocolate cake donut? Profit-to-cost for a chocolate cake?

ROGER

Sprinkles? Peanuts?

GUY

Coconut.

ROGER

[Warming to the challenge.] This is very specific.

EMILY

[Under her breath.] I can't be tardy.

Guy signals this will not take long.

GUY

You memorized it from the binder.

ROGER

The profit-to-cost for a choco-coco-cake is fourteen-to-one.

GUY

Yes! Specific and you nailed it. You need to start getting ready. Get your uniform. [To Emily. Crossing to the kitchen.] Want something for lunch?

Emily shakes her head, "No."

GUY (cont'd)

[Disappearing into the kitchen.] You are one-hundred-thirty per-cent going to ace that test.

ROGER

[Thinking. Falling into his own thoughts.] Actually, fourteen-to-one is not correct. The binder factors ingredients and labor. What about rent? How much space does a choco-coco-cake use? Plus utilities! How much heat? How much to cool?

GUY

[Catching on to Roger's digression.] Whoa!

ROGER

Plus, time. How long does it sit? Is it thrown away? Rent, plus utilities --

GUY

[Calm. Trying to capture Roger's attention.] Look at me.

ROGER

Plus time. Plus advertising!

GUY

Look at me.

ROGER

Rent, utilities, time, advertising.

GUY

Roger.

ROGER

You get factors on factors--

GUY

Look at me.

ROGER

Factors on top of factors--

GUY

Roger!

This last gets Roger's attention.

GUY (cont'd)

At me. [Capturing Roger's gaze.] Look at me.

Roger looks in Guy's eyes.

Guy smiles.

Roger smiles back.

GUY (cont'd)

Okay?

Roger, calm, nods his head "Yes."

GUY (cont'd)

You okay?

ROGER

Yes.

GUY

Good. [Patient.] You go off like. . . You get started on a tangent you know what happens.

ROGER

I get confused.

GUY

And what else? You get confused and. . ?

ROGER

Stuff.

GUY

Exactly. You don't want stuff happening. Not at work. Plus, that happens during your test you'll get all the wrong answers.

ROGER

Their answer's not right. Luke says someone says something you know is not right you have to stay with what you know is right.

Guy directs Roger's focus to the training material on the coffee table.

GUY

You got those from Flynn, right? Flynn's the boss. The boss gives you books with answers, those are the answers they want. Those are the answers you give. [To Emily.] Right?

EMILY

Exactly.

ROGER

Even if it's not right?

GUY

[An end to the conversation.] Even if it's not, exactly, what you think is right. [Focused on leaving.] You got your lucky socks?

Roger is silent.

Guy goes to the pile; pulls out the lucky socks; hands them to Roger.

GUY

What time's your test?

Roger remains silent.

Guy searches through the clothing piles for Roger's uniform.

GUY

"Once upon a time, there was a father and his son had tests on the same day. [Looking Roger in the eyes.] They took their tests and they did great. They had the best day ever."

Guy notices Emily's growing impatience.

GUY (cont'd)

[To Emily.] I can't find his uniform.

Emily points to a pile.

GUY (cont'd)

[Seeing Roger's shirt.] Ah! [He grabs the shirt; hands it to Roger.] Here's your shirt. [He resumes the search for Roger's pants. To Emily.] I don't see his pants. Can you help me find--

ROGER

For crying out loud, Guy. I can find my own pants.

Guy stops searching; considers; decides not to press this point.

GUY

[Gathering his things for school.] Don't forget to check you did the laundry. Eat breakfast. It'll help your concentration. After the test, call Luke. He'll be happy to hear you passed. You're taking the test.

Rogers offers a small nod of his head.

Guy moves towards the front door.

EMILY

[At the open door.] Good luck Mr. Phillips.

GUY

Relax. Find your pants.

Guy and Emily are gone.

GUY

[Poking his head back in the door.] Turn off the stove.

Guy leaves.

Roger goes to the window; watches until Guy is out of view.

He climbs back onto the sofa; knocks "Shave and a haircut." A moment later,

Clarice, from the other side of the wall, knocks back "Two bits."

They speak to each other, as before, from opposite sides of the wall.

Hey, Clarice.
ROGER

Hey, Roger.
CLARICE

Guy left.
ROGER

I see that.
CLARICE

ROGER
Today's my test. Three years I've been working there. It's for being Assistant Manager.

I know.
CLARICE

I slept tossy-turny.
ROGER

CLARICE
You'll do fine. You want me to make breakfast?

ROGER
No. I have to go iron my uniform.

CLARICE
Unplug when you're done.

ROGER
Over and out, Clarice.

Roger sits for a moment. Then,

he pulls his uniform pants from a pile of clothing. He scrunches his uniform into a ball, which he carries under his arm as he walks into the hallway.