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CHEESE

by Laurel Ollstein

3 males, 4 Females

Synopsis: Welcome to Tillamook, Oregon, "the land of cheese, trees and ocean breezes." Griffin, a cheese sculptor, struggles in his marriage to Cindy, who lives in denial over the loss of their young son. Enter, Billie, Cindy's best friend, a knocked-up, wanna-be Hollywood actress, running from her failures. The secrets they keep and lies they tell fester and spoil like the rotting cheese that surrounds them, in this twisted, modern, Kaufman and Hart-esque laughter. When the truth is revealed, the comedy is as sharp and the cheddar.

Keeping Faith

by Mark Scharf

2 Males, 2 Females

Synopsis: Ed and Jane are not about to let their 18 year old daughter Faith marry 45 year old Hartsell (Hart) Edward Thomas Williams IV – even if he does own “Hartsell’s Patio Furniture.” So, on the day before the wedding, they do what any parents would do: they kidnap Faith and drive into the wilds of Arkansas to hide out until things cool down or Faith changes her mind. With Hart and the police in pursuit and Faith refusing to play victim, Ed and Jane have their hands full in this dark comedy which is part extremely-dysfunctional-family-fun and part political commentary.

THE CHARM OF PREPAREDNESS

a play

by

Jorge Ignacio Cortiñas

THE CHARM OF PREPAREDNESS was originally written while the author was the Jonathan R. Reynolds Playwright-in-Residence at Denison University in Granville, Ohio. An early version of the play was produced as part of the Denison University Theatre season. It opened on 7 April 2006. Rob Gander directed that production.

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" a dream I dream alone is just a dream,
a dream we dream together is reality "

– Yoko Ono

Characters

NICK

a handsome & melancholy young man

TIM

an acting major, too over eager & too neurotic and not nearly handsome enough to ever be a leading man

TARIQ

a successful pre-med major, an exchange student, is never seen without his lab coat

GINGER

a member of a sorority

GRETA

a nursing student

SHACHIE

though it seems improbable when you look at her, she is in fact very committed to tennis

DREW

a business major, who, like most business majors, is given to wearing a superman t-shirt

THE CHARM OF PREPAREDNESS

Scene 1.

[*French cafe music.*

SHACHIE playing tennis, by herself. She hits the balls shot at her by a tennis ball machine.

Her concentration is total. She does not miss one ball.

She plays until she is out of breath. Then she pauses.

Tennis balls keep coming at her.

She indicates that she needs a minute.

The tennis balls keep coming.

Shachie takes a blast from her asthma inhaler. She catches her breath.

She cracks her knuckles and resumes playing tennis.

She continues to play. Her concentration does not waver.

French cafe music.]

Scene 2.

[*TARIQ and GINGER. At Ginger's place.]*

TARIQ: It's just a preparedness drill.

GINGER: Can you explain it to me again? Because me, personally, I don't get it. As a lay person, I do not get it.

TARIQ: The point of the drill is to test our preparedness.

GINGER: But why – what do – o.k. – look. I'm not saying this to hurt your feelings – but here's the reality. Everyone thinks you're an Arab.

TARIQ: I'm not an Arab.

GINGER: Everyone thinks you are. Sorry. If we took a poll, ok, you're always going on about statistics? Well if Gallop took a poll, most people on this campus would be – Dude is an Arab. And I just worry – let me finish please – that an Arab pre-med student organizing a preparedness drill, so we're ready in case of massive casualties – I just worry that it's A.) going to look suspicious – and B.) well, that it's going to look really suspicious, ok?

TARIQ: Can I just point out that I am not an Arab?

GINGER: Perceptions sweetie. Perceptions.

TARIQ: Who could possibly object to me helping the University be prepared in case the unthinkable happens?

GINGER: Let me ask you one question.

TARIQ: Go ahead.

GINGER: How does this fit into our five-year plan?

TARIQ: Well, as I see it –

GINGER: I just want us to be really clear about this because when we started dating, you signed a contract.

TARIQ: That's true, but –

GINGER: And that contract mentions a two-bedroom apartment, it mentions a timeline, and certain salary requirements. We're graduating soon, and I expect my income to match my age, with three zeros at the end. And when I hit thirty, we're going to add another zero. In other words, my income clock is ticking. I could check, but I'm pretty sure the contract you signed doesn't say anything about preparedness drills. My question to you is, how is organizing a preparedness drill for a possible terrorist attack going to bring us closer together? In this relationship. That I am trying to build here. With you.

TARIQ: I hadn't thought of it that way.

GINGER: Well pumpkin, maybe we should look at that. You don't always think of the other person. That's a problem, isn't it?

[*Beat. TARIQ takes stock of the situation.*]

TARIQ: You think you have the upper hand here, don't you?

GINGER: I'm just happy we could clear this up.

TARIQ: You know, that's the thing about this country. Americans always reduce everything to how it impacts them personally. What kind of pre-med student would I be if I thought like that? Maybe I feel a responsibility to contribute to the well being of the collective. Maybe that's genuine for me. But for Americans the bottom line is always how an event impacts them. Have you ever thought that maybe it's you Americans that are too individualistic?

GINGER: Did you just get racial on me?

TARIQ: Think about it.

GINGER: I am not that way.

TARIQ: Yes you are.

GINGER: Maybe it's you who feels guilty about something. For all I know your entire obsession with this preparedness drill is an elaborate ruse on your part to get out of having to spend time with me. How would I know? Maybe you have a crush on some random nursing student or something. Maybe it's unconscious and you don't even realize it. Are you in love with someone else Tariq?

TARIQ: Are you even listening to yourself?

[*Beat.*]

GINGER: (a little bit. yeah.)

TARIQ: Could you give me a chance, please. To work on what inspires me?

GINGER: (ok, fine.)

TARIQ: Thank you.

GINGER: But there's still one detail you forgot to consider.

TARIQ: What?

GINGER: So I understand about the collective, but aren't I also part of the collective? Don't my needs also count?

Scene 3.

[*NICK and TIM, in their dorm room. Tim is looking over his evaluations.*]

TIM: I'm looking over these evaluations from my professors in the theater department, and, it's hard. I don't understand this feedback. Are my acting professors trying to discourage me? Cause all these tiny negative comments, just the small increments of that, it really adds up. I appreciate them taking the time, I do, I mean I know how busy they are. But, thing is, I need to try and remain optimistic cause you know, that's something people used to say about me a lot, that I was a really optimistic person. You still think I'm optimistic right?

NICK: This is senior year, so you might as well not worry about it, because either way it's too late.

TIM: Could you lift that cloud of gloom that follows you around for just a minute? I need to figure some stuff out.

NICK: I'm a goth. We're suppose to be gloomy.

TIM: I figure later in life I can sink into depression, but this is college and we're suppose to be happy. I wanna try, ok?

NICK: What's the use? The ice caps are melting. The world is ending.

TIM: Well I went to see Career Services? Cause even if the world is ending, I'm still a senior and I'll need a job next year. Career Services put those flyers around campus saying, No job prospects? Come see us. We can help. So I went, and when they found out I was a theater major, they recommended I start waiting tables.

NICK: Didn't they mention anything about internships?

TIM: No.

NICK: People who want good jobs have to get internships. Everyone knows that.

TIM: Career Services didn't mention that.

NICK: I guess in your case they figured, what would be the point?

TIM: Do you have an internship?

NICK: My major is pretty demanding. It doesn't allow a lot of free time.

TIM: See? How is that even fair? You're so casual about everything, but it doesn't matter, you get away with it. Everyone thinks you're so interesting cause you dress like some rock star who oversleeps a lot. It's like the way you dress is some really cool accomplishment or something. Even my acting teacher was like, What's Nick majoring in? Cause Nick is interesting. Tell me tell me tell me, what's Nick majoring in?

NICK: Canadian Studies.

TIM: Ca – canadian studies?

NICK: It's a new department. It's cross-disciplinary, and it really fits my personality. It's like the more I learn about Canada, the more I figure maybe I was Canadian in a past life or something. In Canada, everyone is really depressed. It's cold, and there's nothing to do. But Canadians don't care. They're like, I'm still going to live in Toronto. I think that's cool.

TIM: The major you're describing, sounds kinda discouraging.

NICK: Totally. The most popular color in Canada is grey. Grey skies, grey buildings. I think I could really feel at home there.

TIM: Thing is I'm a senior with no job prospects. So I need hope.

NICK: Just give up. Join the Canadian Studies Program.

TIM: I'm not trying to criticize you, but: no.

NICK: Are you sure? In Canada, during the winter, the sun almost never comes out. Doesn't that sound – honest?

TIM: What if, instead of following you into the dark side, I got an internship.

NICK: They don't have those for theater majors.

TIM: Yeah, but don't you think my acting professors would be impressed if I created my own internship? That would show effort, right?

Scene 4.

[*DREW and TARIQ are looking over private patient files. Greta's private patient file. Drew wears his Superman t-shirt, Tariq wears his lab coat.*]

DREW: Let me see if I understand this: You're organizing this campus wide preparedness drill, because you have a crush on some random nursing student?

TARIQ: Correct.

DREW: And you thought planning a preparedness drill would give you an excuse to spend time with her?

TARIQ: With a woman this beautiful you can't go up to her and just ask her out on a date. That would be ... crass.

DREW: A-huh.

TARIQ: Right now her name is Greta. But one day, she'll be Nurse Greta.

DREW: And this is her private medical file?

TARIQ: Technically it's private, yes.

DREW: And you got this how?

TARIQ: My mother thought it would be a good idea if I had her take a routine physical. You know how mothers are. So I told Greta the physical exam was required if she wanted to be part of the team that was planning the preparedness drill.

DREW: But you're only pre-med. They don't let you do physicals yet do they?

TARIQ: This was after hours.

DREW: I always suspected this kind of thing went on.

TARIQ: She's just so beautiful. I couldn't help myself.

DREW: Kinda hard to tell what she looks like from her medical file.

TARIQ: Thing is, I examined her. So actually, I know. I mean, I'm only pre-med, but still, I could tell. Even the simple stuff, like her reflexes, a very limber response. And you should have seen her rotor cuff.

DREW: Her what?

TARIQ: A disc inside her shoulder. Smooth as a seashell.

DREW: How could you even see that?

TARIQ: I had her do an M.R.I.

DREW: During a routine physical?

TARIQ: That was her reaction. She was hesitant. But I leveled with her, I said, There's nothing routine about you Greta. And I want a look inside. She blushed when I said that.

DREW: Smooth.

[*They high five.*]

TARIQ: Look at the results of her blood tests. Perfect.

DREW: So she's not chubby or anything is she?

TARIQ: What are you talking about?

DREW: I dunno, sometimes really nice girls tend to have baby fat.

TARIQ: See for yourself. Body fat index: optimal.

DREW: Have you seen her in a bathing suit?

TARIQ: Please, I'm a scientist.

DREW: I mean, if it's the girl I'm thinking about? You're sure you don't think she's chubby?

TARIQ: You wouldn't be asking me this, if you had seen what I saw. Know that visual test we do, in the ear, with the otoscope? You should see the inside of her ears.

DREW: Dude, are you a freak?

TARIQ: So pink in there. It's clean and deep. And really pink.

DREW: Oh. That sounds kinda hot actually.

[*They high five again. Beat. Drew is unsure how to bring this next question up.*]

Can I ask you a question? It's a little sensitive.

TARIQ: Physicians know no shame. You can be very frank with me.

DREW: Does your girlfriend know?

TARIQ: Unfortunately, Ginger just doesn't understand me.

Scene 5.

[*French cafe music.*

GRETA at a cafe table.

NICK watching Greta from a distance, through binoculars.

SHACHIE enters with her tennis racket. Stops. Wonders what Nick is looking at. Shachie taps Nick on the shoulder and indicates that she wants to take a peek.

Nick hands her the binoculars. Shachie indicates Nick should hold her tennis racket. Shachie looks through the binoculars. Sees Greta. Nods her approval. Continues to look.

Nick is eventually like, hello, can I have my binoculars back? Shachie takes her tennis racket back. Shachie taps Nick on the ass with her tennis racket and walks off.

Nick wipes the ocular lenses of the binoculars. Then he continues to watch Greta.

French cafe music.]

Scene 6.

[*Tariq's "office". TARIQ interviews TIM.]*

TARIQ: So what makes you think you're qualified to be my intern?
In fifty words or less please. That's the first question in this interview. I'm ready when you are.

TIM: Do you mind if we refer to this as an audition?

TARIQ: How's that?

TIM: For the preparedness drill? I'm an actor.

TARIQ: We don't need actors. I'm looking for volunteers to lie on the Quad and pretend to be dead. Or dying. The victims aren't the stars here. The medics are.

TIM: But you said dying right?

TARIQ: Or actually dead.

TIM: Sounds like you're interested in a certain level of intensity? Not melodramatic – but almost somber? An actor could help you achieve that.

TARIQ: Why don't you take a seat. Let's try question number two. You're not allergic to sunlight are you? Because that's one of the qualifications.

TIM: I'm not. Also, I can sing. I'm not saying I've ever saved a life or anything, I'm just a theater artist.

TARIQ: If you're a theater major, why aren't you in any of the productions over there? In one of their plays?

TIM: Basically there's a lot of typecasting in the theater department. Yeah, big time. And I don't believe in that.

TARIQ: So you don't get cast in things?

TIM: Let's just say, I'm available.

TARIQ: A-huh.

TIM: In theater we try to be a little more diplomatic in the way we say things. I'm not sure how they do things in pre-med, but we're artists. Left brain.

[*Beat.*]

Do you guys typecast?

TARIQ: We need lots of volunteers. But we do have to be picky.

TIM: I've been in a few shows, so just know, you're not taking a chance on an unknown here. No one remembers, but I was definitely in a few shows. My mom has the programs with my name in them, in case you don't believe me. I'll work hard. I'll deliver. This could be fun. No not fun. I mean, serious. This is serious. My name is Tim by the way.

TARIQ: Maybe I should interview a few other people first, before making my decision.

TIM: There wasn't anyone else in the waiting room.

[*Beat.*]

Just saying.

[*Beat.*]

I was Gravedigger Number Two in Hamlet.

[*Beat.*]

But a lot of people didn't get a chance to see that.

TARIQ: Tim: you're hired.

TIM: This is – wow – great. It feels great to be acting again.

TARIQ: Now I don't want you to be nervous.

TIM: [*Tim is nervous.*] I'm not.

TARIQ: I know I hit you with a lot of questions during this interview...

TIM: Just doing your job. I understand.

TARIQ: If we're going to be working together, I want us to be friends.

TIM: Sure, yeah. Of course.

TARIQ: I'll hope you'll be someone I can trust. That I can confide in.

TIM: Totally.

[*Beat.*]

TARIQ: Between you and me: do you think I look Arabic?

Scene 7

[*French cafe music.*

NICK is spying on GRETA with his binoculars.

GINGER enters. Begins to cross between Nick and Greta.

Ginger stops. Notices Nick. Follows the gaze of his binoculars. Sees Greta.

Ginger looks back at Nick. Raises her eyebrows. Continues to cross.

French cafe music.]

Scene 8.

[*SHACHIE, TIM and DREW at the first night of rehearsals. Shachie holds her tennis racket. Drew wears his favorite superman t-shirt.]*

TIM: So – This is – Just – Thanks for coming. I know that volunteering um, for this drill is a different kind of acting? But it's still acting. So I want us to really explore our parts. But let's not set anything tonight. Let's keep it fresh for the drill. Because we're actors, not puppets. OK? So we're going to work on keeping it fresh.

DREW: How many credits are we getting for this?

TIM: We're still negotiating with the theater department on that issue, so.

DREW: Well my photography class is two credits, which is ridiculous given the work involved, so I really need at least one more full credit to graduate. Nothing against you and your project, but I'm a business major. I'm just filling electives here.

TIM: Let's try and remember why we're doing this? It's like I tell my parents, it's not about the credits, it's about the acting experience.

DREW: "right"

TIM: So there's a symptom card here for an anthrax - no, a chemical burn victim that I think would be good for Shachie.

[*Tim hands Shachie a symptom card.]*

DREW: That's a good part.

TIM: OK, here's a symptom card for an unconscious frat boy, with indeterminate symptoms. For you.

[*Tim hands Drew his symptom card.*]

Now usually they hand out these symptom cards the day of the drill, but I explained that as actors, we needed to rehearse. Yeah. You should have been at that meeting.

DREW: Excuse me. I requested a speaking role.

TIM: (Well) I think unconscious means you (can't) (speak), so, sorry.

DREW: Can I moan?

[*Awkward beat.*]

TIM: Just look over your symptom cards. On the day of the drill the pre-med people are going to ask us about our allergies, things like that and –

DREW: But I thought speaking roles were worth double the credits or something?

TIM: Probably, yeah.

DREW: Harsh.

TIM: OK, the sooner we connect, you know, in our guts, with who our characters are, the better shape we're going to be in. Question: what kind of childhood did this chemical burn victim have? Let's think about that.

DREW: Help me out, I need the credits.

TIM: OK Drew it's going to be a little difficult for the other actors in the room to find their emotional center and do their prep work if you keep interrupting, ok?

[*Beat.*]

DREW: I feel really shut down.

[*Drew leaves.*

Beat. Tim looks at Shachie.]

TIM: You're my witness. You saw that right? He started it.

[*Beat.*]

I'm mean, I'm trying here. There's a lot of people depending on me and I'm trying.

[*Beat.*]

TIM (Cont'd): That pre-med guy, Tariq, he's depending on me.
That's one person right there, who's depending on me.

[*Beat.*]

Don't worry. I'm not going to let this discourage me.

[*Drew enters.*]

DREW: Did you like that? The emotional intensity I brought to that moment. The honesty. I was all, "I feel really shut down." I was in it. Focused, but not overwrought. Realism. Dude: high five.

[*A suspicious Tim high fives Drew.*]

TIM: OK, but (as an unconscious frat boy), you can't talk.

DREW: Admit it: I psyched you out. Therefore, I proved I can act. I think it's time we gave this unconscious frat boy some really juicy lines.

TIM: We're going to have to focus here.

DREW: Wait. Total brain storm. What about that roommate of yours. The goth kid. With the binoculars. Can he act? Maybe he can be the unconscious frat boy and I could play someone else.

TIM: Nick's never taken any courses in the theater department.

DREW: I think he can handle playing an unconscious person.

TIM: No he can't.

DREW: Can you ask him?

TIM: He has a medical condition Drew. He's not available.

DREW: Oh. My bad. Sorry man. Didn't mean to touch on a sensitive issue. What's he got?

TIM: I'm taking him to the clinic tomorrow. Let's just keep our fingers crossed.

DREW: Shit. Sounds serious.

[*Beat.*]

Wait a minute. Did you just psych me out?

Scene 9.

[*French cafe music.*

NICK is using his binoculars to spy on GRETA.

TIM comes up behind Nick. Taps him on the shoulder.

Nick is like, Just a sec please.

Tim grabs Nick's arm and drags him to his medical appointment.

Greta turns around, doesn't see anyone. Was someone there or did she imagine that?

Greta goes back to reading her textbook.

French cafe music.]

Scene 10.

[Tariq's "office". TIM and NICK are here to see TARIQ. They are each sitting in office chairs, with wheels. They wait.

Tim is judgmental about the fact that Nick is not taking this seriously enough.

Nick is like, Can we try and see the poetry in this?

Tim is like, No, we can't.

Nick moves his head slightly to ballet music only he can hear.

Tim is like, What are you doing?

Nick rolls his office chair across the floor – this is the first fluid movement of the ballet. We can hear the music now too.

Tim is like, What if my boss comes in?

Nick reaches out to Tim, and rolls back towards him.

Tim joins the Ballet of Office Chairs. Turns out Tim is good at this, and he tops the sweep and drama of Nick's move.

Nick and Tim continue the Ballet of Office Chairs, each taking turns topping the other, until Tariq walks in just as Tim is laying stomach down on the seat of his chair, arms and legs splayed, performing an elegant twirl.

Screech of a needle being yanked off a record.

Tim attempts to re-establish his professionalism.

Beat.]

NICK: Thank you for seeing us Doc.

TIM: [*To Tariq.*] I told him how smart you were.

NICK: He said you could help me.

TIM: With his problem.

NICK: He's making it sound more serious than it is.

TARIQ: Is this a medical situation?

[*Nick and Tim exchange glances. Beat.*]

NICK: My roommate here thinks I have an obsessive compulsive disorder. But I don't. I'm only in love, that's all.

TARIQ: Clinically speaking, there's not actually a difference.

TIM: [*To Nick.*] Told you.

TARIQ: But this is not necessarily bad. The species does have to procreate.

NICK: [*To Tim.*] See.

TIM: Doctor, he's stalking her. He stole her underwear from the laundry room. Now he carries it around in his pocket.

[*To Nick.*]

Go on. Show him.

[*Nick removes a pair of woman's underwear from his pocket.*]

TARIQ: In many cultures that would be seen as a sign of his devotion. Keep in mind, mental health is not my area of specialty, but I don't see a problem here.

NICK: Anyway, I didn't steal it. She left it behind. I just rescued it. I figured I could use these panties as an excuse to strike up a conversation with her. Maybe introduce myself.

TIM: He's memorized her class schedule. He follows her around campus with binoculars. He waits for her outside the hospital during her rotations.

TARIQ: [*Suspicious.*] She's in the medical profession?

TIM: She's a nursing student.

NICK: You should see her ears Doc. Perfectly sized. And really pink. Sometimes I dream about taking a look inside those ears.

TIM: Her name is Greta.

NICK: She was in here the other day Doc. I followed her here and waited outside. (Hey, do you think I could take a peek at her medical file?)

TARIQ: Are you aware that there are serious legal penalties for stalking?

NICK: But you said that in other cultures –

TARIQ: Wake up. This is America. We all have to assimilate. Or don't you think that applies to white people?

NICK: I, I didn't mean it like that ...

TARIQ: Technically I should report you to the police.

TIM: Easy Doctor. Have a heart.

TARIQ: In your case, I'm willing to suggest medication.

NICK: There's a pill for this?

TARIQ: There is something that will stabilize your mood. Also kill your sex drive. It's called Prozac.

NICK: I thought Prozac was for depressed people?

TARIQ: Or people with obsessive compulsive disorder.

NICK: In other words, love.

TARIQ: Exactly.

TIM: Can you write him a prescription?

TARIQ: I'm only pre-med. Fortunately for us, prescriptions are obsolete. These days you can buy your drugs on the internet. I recommend pharmacies in the Cayman Islands. Less oversight, less questions. Make sure you choose overnight delivery. I want you taking these pills within twenty-four hours.

NICK: Is this legal?

TARIQ: About as legal as stalking is.

TIM: He's trying to help you Nick. Why don't you try and cooperate.

TARIQ: And hand over those panties. You're like a pyromaniac clutching a box of matches. Not very healthy.

[*Nick hands Tariq the panties.*]

NICK: Sorry Doc.

TARIQ: And don't tell anyone I sent you to those websites. If the AMA found out, it could affect my chances of getting into medical school.

NICK: I won't tell anyone.

TARIQ: If you do, I'll just accuse you of launching a racially motivated smear campaign. Got it?

[*Tariq stands up.*]

OK, good luck.

[*Nick begins to leave, then...*]

NICK: So if I take these pills, it means I won't be in love with her anymore?

TARIQ: There's no way a woman that beautiful could ever fall for a guy like you. So why torture yourself.

TIM: We appreciate your honesty Doctor.

TARIQ: That's what I'm here for.

[*Nick and Tim exit.*]

Tariq is alone. He sniffs the panties.

Puts them in his pocket.]

Scene 11.

[*GINGER and SHACHIE watching the French Open. Shachie clutches her tennis racket.*]

GINGER: This is not a good Tennis match, in my opinion. Cause there's no suspense. Everyone knows Serena is going to win. It's like, we get it Serena. You're the best. Yippee.

[*They watch.*]

Serena is like a bulldozer.

[*They watch.*]

I feel sorry for that French girl. You can tell she's nice.

[*They watch.*]

If Tariq could see me right now, he might think I was sitting here waiting for his phone call, but actually, that is not what I'm doing. At all.

[*Shachie looks at Ginger, looks back at TV.*]

GINGER (Cont'd): I'm also not doing my homework, but those two things are unrelated.

[*They watch.*]

I'm on the side of the French girl, cause I speak a little French so I guess I just feel like I have something in common with her.

[*Beat.*]

Oh my god, we should buy some of that soy-based ice cream, it's called Tofutti-Delight, and then we can just pig out while we watch the tennis match.

[*They watch.*]

We should totally do that.

[*Shachie does not respond.*]

You know what? No: No we shouldn't. Cause if someone came in here and saw us, they'd be like, oh those two are eating comfort food cause they don't have dates. And that is so not what we're about.

[*They watch.*]

You know how in boxing they have different divisions based on your weight? They should start doing that in tennis.

[*Beat.*]

Cause then, that poor French girl would definitely not be playing Serena if you know what I mean. They would be in completely different divisions.

[*They watch.*]

Just for the record, my cell phone is off. See? Off.

[*Beat.*]

OK, what's up with her hair? I feel like there's a message in Serena's hair that Serena is trying to communicate to us. In code. In hieroglyphics. And you know what? I can't read it.

[*They watch.*]

Are you as heart broken as I am that this poor little French girl is losing this tennis match?

[*Long beat.*]

You know what would be my worst nightmare right now? If you turned to me, and were all, Actually I'm enjoying watching Serena kick her ass. I find it inspiring the way Serena crushes her opponents. That would freak me out.

[*Beat.*]

But that's not what you think, is it?

[*Shachie meets Ginger's gaze. That is exactly what Shachie thinks. Shachie's eyes narrow. Shachie turns back to the television.*]