

NOT AFRAID

by Nora Sørensen Casey

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NOT AFRAID

CHARACTERS

BETS: A twenty-something woman.

HUNTER: A twenty-something woman.

THE MAN: A twenty-something man.

POLICEMAN: Can be played by the same actor who plays the Man.

SETTING

A Chicago apartment, in the living room, right about now.

NOTES on the TEXT

/ means that the next person begins overlapping

— means that someone's been cut off. However, if the next line also begins with a long dash, then the speaker registers the interruption but drives through it, overlapping their dialogue as they continue their point.

Sometimes people interrupt themselves.

... are like a pause, but in my mind they have slightly more momentum.

??? is being used when someone's direct response to a statement is to nonverbally express confusion. It felt important enough to the give and take of the scenes to attribute this specifically to a character within the dialogue.

NOTES on the MUSIC

Song references are included in the stage directions because they felt helpful in evoking the world of the play in general and Bets' character in particular. (Also, because they're great songs—feel free to look them up, think of them, or just admire their awesome titles.)

These particular songs are not required for production.

NOT AFRAID**Scene**

BETS is typing on her computer and listening to something like Black Sabbath's PARANOID.

HUNTER comes home from class.

BETS

Hey

HUNTER

Hey

BETS

What's up?

HUNTER

Nothing

She goes to grab a beer.

BETS

Someone threatened to kill me.
This afternoon.

HUNTER

Online?

BETS

Of course online.

HUNTER

Oh

BETS turns off the music.

BETS

Threatened to KILL me.

HUNTER

Well didn't you do, like, about a million blog posts on death metal?

BETS

Not millions just highlights on Megadeath, / Napalm Death, Deadlock, Dead Horse, Deathbound—

HUNTER

I just remember there were a lot
 Right, yeah
 Yeah, I remember
 Okay
 Yeah

BETS

—Dying Fetus, Dead Men in Reno

HUNTER

You probably have some crazy readers, right?
 So if it's a death *metal* threat from some guy who like ritually slaughters sheep
 It's totally fake
 Probably.

...

Did he say why?

BETS

Because I'm a Communist.

HUNTER

Oh

BETS

Just because you don't have any ideological beliefs—

HUNTER

No, it's just, you're the ONLY Communist.
 And it doesn't work with one person.

BETS

I don't care. I'm not / doing it

HUNTER

And you do, you pay rent
 And eat
 And wireless

BETS

That's my Grandma's money.
 She was a capitalist, but now she's dead and her money is funding my Communism.

HUNTER

And your parents' money

BETS

No
 My mom was bugging me about
 Everything
 You know, me
 So we're not talking

HUNTER

That sucks

BETS

No it's okay

HUNTER

Well rent's due Friday
 So your *inheritance* better have it covered
 / Cause I'm not

BETS

Whatever
 Okay
 Hunter, I said okay

HUNTER

Good.
 How does he know you're a Communist?

BETS

I'm writing about Trotsky Icepick

HUNTER

???

BETS

For the blog.
 I mean, I'm really committed to writing about metal
 Death metal, and black metal, and doom, and Viking and maybe even some
 grindcore because I think it's important
 But it's a *metal* blog
 Except, I couldn't resist because *Trotsky Icepick*, you know?

...

They have this weird hybrid sound that sort of existed after the Talking Heads and
 until Nirvana but afterwards no one really sounds like that
 Like the Meat Puppets or The Stranglers or Romeo Void
 Anyway
 With a band named Trotsky Icepick the whole Communism thing came up

Because I said I was a Communist
And then someone threatened to kill me.

HUNTER

He posted that online?
Isn't that illegal?

BETS

Yes, it's a death threat.
But given the number of fucked up things on the Internet every day, I don't think

HUNTER

And the number of fucked up things in Chicago just generally
It's not like this guy is going to, you know...
Attack.
Right?

BETS

Of course.
Probably. You know, not.

HUNTER

Could you get protection? Like, from your online fan base.
Do you have an online fan base?

BETS

Yes.

HUNTER

So find a sexy heavy metal bodyguard.
You could get laid at the same time?

BETS

You have enough sex for both of us

HUNTER

That's not how sex works.
Besides, I'm in a committed relationship.

BETS

That's not how commitment works.

HUNTER

He's in Philly. If he were here I wouldn't be doing it.
So.

At least it's not one of those sad relationships where two people never do anything because they're so in love
And their lives just drip away.

Like

(What's her name?)

With the stupid hair?

BETS

Michelle

HUNTER

Right

Where it would be okay if you had children

'Cause you lose all your friends but you have children so it doesn't matter.

BETS

But there are no children.

HUNTER / BETS

Like Michelle.

HUNTER

Why are we talking / about this?

BETS

Because Robbie.

Because you have no idea what commitment is.

HUNTER

Because you need heavy metal protection. Right.

Oh. And

Depending on, uh, stuff, I might be out after class tomorrow, with some people.

You could come?

BETS

Law school people?

HUNTER

Depending on some stuff. / It'll be fun.

BETS

Yeah maybe.

You want French Toast?

I made bread.

HUNTER

Breakfast-For-Dinner?

Hell yeah.

Scene

HUNTER's been drinking and fucking.

Now she's home.

*BETS is on the computer, listening to something like Trotsky Icepick's
BURY MANILOW.*

HUNTER

Congratulate me!!!

(She grabs a drink.)

Why are you not congratulating me?

BETS

I'm having a crisis

HUNTER

Like actually?

Or can it wait?

I'm really excited

...

BETS

Ummm

HUNTER

I mean or

BETS

No no okay

(She turns off the music.)

Congrats! I am so proud!

What happened did you get laid?

HUNTER

I—

Also I got a job!

BETS

What?

HUNTER

Picture it: Three partners, five lawyers
Contract law
80 K
Cincinnati.

BETS

Cincinnati?

HUNTER

It's in Ohio
80 thousand dollars

BETS

That's uh

HUNTER

One thousand five hundred thirty eight dollars
And forty six cents
Per week.

BETS

In Cincinnati.

HUNTER

We're gonna have so much fun.

BETS

We?

HUNTER

Yeah, you should come.

BETS

???

HUNTER

We've got a good thing going here.

BETS

But "here" is Chicago.

HUNTER

Yeah but whatever

BETS

No no no, not “whatever”

You didn’t even tell me you were applying to jobs in Cincinnati—

HUNTER

Okay but

BETS

—and I mean,

Hunter we’ve lived here for like 3 years

Plus that summer we were on 51st street—

HUNTER

I hated that place

BETS

—and, you know, freshman year in the dorms, I mean I KNEW you from bio—

HUNTER

Right

BETS

—and the time we stole all those fraternity paddles

I mean I don’t just FIND roommates

HUNTER

Right so just come with me

BETS

I don’t just MOVE

HUNTER

I promise, you won’t have to leave the house in Cincinnati either.

BETS

That’s not fair

I buy like all our groceries—

HUNTER

But I pay more—

BETS

‘Cause you drink more and that’s not—

HUNTER

Bets, calm down. I just meant, like,
You don't have a world.

Or.

You're world is tiny and it's all in your brain so you can just pack it up.
No big deal.

BETS

That's not true
I have a life
I have THINGS

HUNTER

Okay sure but I'm not like leaving tomorrow
So you have plenty of time to plan and pack your computer
The three black sweatshirts you own and whatever.

BETS

Doesn't Robbie want you to move back to Philly?
I thought that was the plan.

HUNTER

I know but he wants me to be happy so I'm pretty sure he'll be happy.
And we're still together

BETS

But if you move to Ohio

HUNTER

Do you know what 80 K means?

BETS

Yeah I think I do

HUNTER

Right. Well, I know you suck at / being happy but

BETS

Remember, I told you that someone threatened to kill me?
They wrote to me again.
That's all.

HUNTER

Weird.

BETS

It was personal
That someone would come onto my blog and tell me how wrong I was.
And, like, that I should be dead for that.

HUNTER

So you're scared?

BETS

Are you?

HUNTER

Why?

BETS

It doesn't matter.

HUNTER

No. You are.

We can talk about it?

Or you could denounce Communism, which you should probably do / anyway
Because it's stupid

BETS

I just think that believing that the best we can do is
Fuck people over all the time is a waste of believing in anything.
Sorry it's just
Suddenly you want to leave the apartment
And my mom hates me
And someone wants to kill me.
It's just really hasn't been my day.

HUNTER

No one's gonna kill you from the Internet

BETS

I mean I bet you could find us if you / really wanted to

HUNTER

He won't.

BETS

No, of course not.
Because why would he care?

HUNTER

Right.

HUNTER leaves. BETS puts on something really angry, like Anthrax's A SKELETON IN THE CLOSET. HUNTER comes back.

HUNTER

I feel like you're mad at me.

Get over it, okay?

Or tell me and I'll do something else tonight

BETS

It's movie night.

HUNTER

I know.

Surly silence.

BETS

I'm not mad, okay?

I'll be mad if you miss movie night.

Scene

BETS on the computer, still listening to something like A SKELETON IN THE CLOSET.

HUNTER comes in.

Goes for a beer.

BETS turns off the music.

BETS

What's up?

HUNTER

Michael and Jerry and Elise and I all were studying and then we went to O'Briens for a while and Michael fucked me in his car and then we went to Buffalo Wild Wings
How's the blog?

BETS

Is Michael the redhead?

HUNTER

No. That guy stopped happening.
Michael's Korean.

BETS

Oh.

I was writing on Trotsky Icepick more
Which I stand by even though—

HUNTER

It might get you killed?

BETS

Things got a little out of control.

HUNTER

Did he—

BETS

No

No it was me,

So I was like, so listen:

“While Trotsky Icepick’s jaunty, angry guitar sound, punctured by ironic yet pristine lyrics may be good enough for the hills of Burbank circa 1987

And songs like *Bury Manilow* and *Dante’s Flame* are undeniably underappreciated

Leon Trotsky, former leader of the Bolshevik revolution

With his brains bashed out by a garden tool

In a back yard in Mexico

Remains one of the hallmark images of an era.

With that on the table, Trotsky Icepick has a lot to deliver on.

Because you wonder if the promise of the Russian Revolution—

Because Trotsky’s idealism may not have made the revolution but it comforts us
when we think of the death of women, and children, and farmers and ironworkers
and cobblers and and

Whatever people pretty much everywhere—

Because you wonder if the idealism that moved Trotsky to endure

To still believe

Which is almost a miracle

How can you move from that idealism,

From the Trotsky brain smash,

Into the hills of Burbank circa 1987?

Because don’t those hills feel meaningless?

Because shouldn’t they?”

...

HUNTER

I don’t know what I’m supposed to know.