

TEA  
by Megumi Mandish

CHARACTERS:

- JAMIE (early twenties)
- ROWAN (mid-twenties)

*(LIGHTS UP)*

*(JAMIE is seated at the table. ROWAN is in the kitchen, facing away from JAMIE.)*

ROWAN: Your leg is bouncing again.

JAMIE: Sorry.

ROWAN: You want some tea?

JAMIE: Uh, sure.

ROWAN: Cool. It'll take a minute.

*(ROWAN puts a kettle on the stove and starts searching through the cupboards, leaving red handprints everywhere.)*

ROWAN: What kind of tea do you want?

JAMIE: What? Oh, anything's fine, I guess.

ROWAN: I'll get out the chamomile. *(PAUSE)* Do you like sugar?

JAMIE: One, I guess.

ROWAN: Milk? I have soy milk, too. And almond milk. And oat milk, but I think the texture kind of messes with the drink. Are you lactose intolerant?

JAMIE: I don't really care.

*(JAMIE's leg starts bouncing again as he stares at his red-stained hands. The kettle starts whistling (sound effect), almost too quiet to hear, slowly getting louder.)*

JAMIE, *(cont'd)*: Can I have a change of clothes? Use your shower?

ROWAN: But the tea's almost done. Do you want anything to go with it? Cookies, crackers—

JAMIE: Rowan—

ROWAN: There's muffins here too—

JAMIE: Rowan, would you look at me?!

*(The kettle's whistling is uncomfortably loud now. ROWAN takes the kettle off the stove and pours their tea, still facing away.)*

JAMIE: Stop pretending everything's normal. Like we didn't just— we need a plan.

ROWAN: ...

JAMIE: ...

ROWAN *(turns around)*: Go wash off the shovel and the gloves. We can't have dirty gardening tools in the garage.

JAMIE: What— Oh. And my clothes?

ROWAN: Cold water for the stains.

JAMIE: ...Okay. So we're— we're really...?

ROWAN: It's too late to back out. *(PAUSE)* Shower's down the hall to the left. I'll get the goods in the car, and we'll head out when you're done.

JAMIE: Right. Okay. Do you... really think he'll be there? That he's okay?

ROWAN: They won't hurt him. Do you want me to heat up your tea again later?

JAMIE: Sure. Thanks.

*(JAMIE EXITS STAGE LEFT, grabbing a dirty shovel and gloves on the way. ROWAN sets two cups of tea on the table, takes a long sip, then EXITS STAGE LEFT.)*

*(BLACKOUT.)*