Kiss and Cry

a play in two acts

by Tom Rowan

[OPENING SCENE ONLY]
KISS AND CRY was first presented by Jorelle Aronovitch at the New York International Fringe Festival, a production of The Present Company, from August 15-26, 2004, in The Black Box at 440 Studios. It was directed by Kevin Newbury, with set design by Robert Monaco, costume design by Joanne Haas, lighting design by Greg Emetaz, and sound design by Robert Gould. Taylor Hansen was the stage manager. The cast was as follows:

FIONA        Julie Leedes
STACY        David Lavine
LAUREN       Nell Gwynn
TRENT        Gregory Marcel
ETHAN        Paul Siemens
BRITTANY     Elizabeth Cooke

The production was subsequently presented by Theater Ten Ten, Judith Jarosz, Producing Artistic Director, in New York City, from February 10 to March 12, 2006. It was directed by Kevin Newbury, with set design by Robert Monaco, costume design by Joanne Haas, lighting design by Diana Kesselschmidt, and sound design by Robert Gould. Taylor Hansen was the stage manager. The cast was as follows:

FIONA        Julie Leedes
STACY        David Lavine
LAUREN       Nell Gwynn
TRENT        Timothy Dunn
ETHAN        Reed Prescott
BRITTANY     Elizabeth Cooke
Characters

Fiona, 25, an actress. Gorgeous and charismatic, with an irresistible energy and zest for life.

Stacy, 22, a champion figure skater. A beautiful young man with a gentle, boyish charm; moves like a dancer. Not as naive as he sometimes seems.

Lauren, 35, a playwright/director. Fiercely intelligent, driven, and committed to her art and her politics.

Trent, 21, a college student. Cute and sexy, with a hip style and a wicked sense of humor.

Ethan, 27, a figure skater. Bigger and sturdier than Stacy, with a big heart and a great smile. Could use a boost in self-esteem.

Brittany, 16, Stacy’s pairs partner. Adorable and talented. Her upbringing has been rigidly conservative, but she is developing a mind of her own.

Time

The late 1990’s

Setting

The play moves swiftly back and forth between Los Angeles, New York, Denver, Las Vegas, and Seattle. Numerous locations are suggested, each by one or two furniture pieces. Scene changes are accomplished during the music cues and “voiceovers” (prerecorded excerpts from TV and radio broadcasts, etc.) that are played during the blackouts.
ACT ONE

One.

(3 AM in Los Angeles: the terrace of a huge house in the Hollywood Hills. An ornate balustrade hung with vines. FIONA is by herself, taking in the view, when STACY enters from inside the house, carrying a mug.)

FIONA

Oh!

STACY

What?!

FIONA

You scared me.

STACY

I’m sorry.

FIONA

Not your fault. I’m jumpy.

STACY

I’m Stacy.

FIONA

(Laughs) Fiona, actually.

STACY

I know.

FIONA

Can I help you with something?

STACY

No thank you. I mean... sorry, I just wasn’t expecting to see you out here. Everyone left at the party is wondering where you are.

FIONA

Woops. I’m being bad. I just had to get away from all the... you know. All of it.

STACY

I think I can relate to that. (Pause) Jeepers.
FIONA
Excuse me?

STACY
I’ve never... Well, never mind.

FIONA
No, what?

STACY
Well I was going to say I’ve never met a movie star before. But then I remembered I met two earlier tonight. Anyway, it’s an honor to meet you. Sorry to disturb you. The movie was great! I’ll leave you to...

FIONA
No, stay. It’s nice out here. If you look over that way, you can see the Hollywood sign.

STACY
(Looking) Cool.

FIONA
Yeah. (Pause) Forgive me. I believe I’m suffering from slight inebriation.

STACY
I’m sorry. (Beat) Would you like some of my coffee?

FIONA
You have coffee in there?!

STACY
You were expecting?

FIONA
I don’t know what I was expecting. Yes! I will have some. What time is it anyway? (Takes the mug and drinks.)

STACY
Almost three AM.

FIONA
I should--should I not?--go back in. I don’t want to get a reputation for... anti-social... ism? (Beat) How is it in there?
STACY
It’s fine. I mean... it’s different. From what I’m used to at least.

FIONA
(Whispers) To tell the truth, me too. (Beat) I have to admit I’m not really in my element here.

STACY
Well, I guess that’s not surprising.

FIONA

STACY
Well this is your first big studio movie, right?

FIONA
Correct. Three years out of acting school. I’ve been waitressing in Manhattan. Waitressing and doing no-budget plays in basement theatres off-off-off-off. Then my agent sent me in for... well, you saw it.

STACY
(Overlapping) The rest is history.

FIONA
Maybe. Or maybe I’ll be a sauce in the pan.

STACY
Do you mean a flash--

FIONA
Fifteen minutes of Warhol! Here today, gone by Labor Day!

STACY
I don’t think so. Tonight’s premiere was, as they say, really well received. I think they all loved you.

FIONA
Potentially. There’s a potentiality of love. But this was friends. Family. Industry people, studio yes-men. Paid escorts. Not critics. Critics could trash me unmercilessly. (Beat) Of course, there were like twenty guys at the party that like wanted my ass. That’s one reason I’m out here now.
I understand.

Do you? You didn’t come out here to hit on me, did you?

No.

I didn’t think so. Who are you, anyway?

My name’s Stacy.

But I mean, where do I know you from?

No place. (Smiles) We’ve never met.

But I mean, your face—or, well, actually your butt—looks familiar. Haven’t I seen you on TV or something?

Maybe.

One of the soaps? Orrr... a sitcom?

No. I’m not an actor. I’m just a fan. Of yours. Especially after seeing the movie tonight.

Oh please! Don’t be nice to me! Vampire Campus is like the dumbest movie of the year!

(Trying not to laugh) Shhh! The producer and director are still here.

(Exaggerated whisper) Soorry. But. It is dumb.
STACY
But entertaining. And you are terrific in it. A lot of the people at the party were saying your career is going to really go places.

FIONA
Yeah, right. Now that they know I can scream and grow fangs.

STACY
No, you can act. You made me... believe that you believed in those vampires.

FIONA
You’re cute. (He looks away) I’m sorry! I bet you’ve been hearing that all night, right? From women, men... . But I mean it. And not cute in a superficial way, like a Beanie Baby or something. In a good way! And I’m not saying that because I want anything from you. I’m just... responding to your truly genuine, inner cuteness.

STACY
I don’t know what to say.

FIONA
Oh! That is so cute.

STACY
I think I’d better be...

FIONA
No! Wait don’t. I mean... really. I want to tell you something. C’mere. (Pause. STACY slowly moves over to her.) I’m a lesbian. Truly.

STACY
Oh.

FIONA
Are you shocked?

STACY
No. Surprised, a little.

FIONA
That’s okay. People tend to be. I don’t fit whatever their, you know, narrow little stereotype of a dyke is. I’ve got long hair, I like makeup and clothes, blah blah blah.
STACY
Sure.

FIONA
Did I make you uncomfortable? I just wanted to... clear the air of any, how shall we say, misunderstanding. About my motives in befriending you.

STACY
No, that’s cool. (Pause. He is interested.) Do you have a ... girlfriend?

FIONA
A life partner, we call it. Yes, I do. Her name’s Lauren and we live together in a one-bedroom basement apartment in the Village.

STACY
What village?

FIONA

STACY
I’ve never been.

FIONA
Sweetheart, you should go there. Believe me.

STACY
What’s she like?

FIONA
Lauren? She’s brilliant. She’s... on her own path, let’s put it that way. We met at U-Mass Amherst. I was a drama major and she was in the grad directing program, but now she writes, too. After school we moved to New York together to start our own theatre company.

STACY
Wow. What’s it called?

FIONA
It’s called “Women for the New Millennium.” Isn’t that unprepossessing?
STACY

Totally.

FIONA

You’re a sweetie. So what about you?

STACY

What about me?

FIONA

Do you have a... girlfriend?

STACY

No. (Smiles) Actually, I have a “partner” too.

FIONA

Aha.

STACY

A skating partner. Her name’s Brittany, and she’s sixteen.

FIONA

Ice skating! On TV! That’s where I recognize you from.

STACY

Guilty as charged.

FIONA

I’m a fan. I mean, not enough to remember the names or anything. But I remember you were great. And that’s why I recognized your butt!

STACY

I thought you said you were a--

FIONA

Oh please. That doesn’t mean I can’t appreciate the male bun on like a purely artistic basis. You and that girl are like... ballet dancers.

STACY

Thanks.

FIONA

I’ve seen you skate in Nationals. And like, Internationals.
STACY

Worlds.

FIONA

Them too! And the Olympics.

STACY

I wish. That’s the dream. But we’ve got another year and a half.

FIONA

You’ll make it! You’re the best. What I love is when you do that triple lutz/triple bypass combination.

STACY

You mean triple lutz/triple loop? A triple bypass is like... heart surgery.

FIONA

Come on, I’m sure it’s not that hard for you; you’re the champ. Oh look!

STACY

(Alarmed) What?

FIONA

Over there!

STACY

The Hollywood sign? You showed me.

FIONA

No no no. Higher! You can actually see two stars.

STACY

(Looking) Who?

FIONA

Not movie stars, dummy. There’s a hole in the smog! Two actual heavenly bodies.

STACY

Oh yeah. I see them.

FIONA

Let’s make wishes!
STACY
(Smiling) What?

FIONA
Pick one of the stars and make a wish on it. I’ll do the other!

STACY
That’s silly.

FIONA
Oh no no. I totally believe in this. Which star do you want?

STACY
Couldn’t we share?

FIONA
I don’t know, I wouldn’t recommend it. I make big wishes.

STACY
Okay. You choose.

FIONA
The one on the left. Are you ready?

STACY
Yes.

(They close their eyes and wish.)

FIONA
Are you done?

STACY
Uh-huh.

FIONA
Okay. What’d you wish?

STACY
Well if I tell you it won’t come true, right?

FIONA
(Exasperated) Now don’t tell me you’re superstitious! I can’t stand that.

STACY
(Laughs) What’d you wish?
FIONA
That I one day win an Academy Award. Is that tacky? I mean, be honest.

STACY
You wished for an Oscar? (She nods.) For Vampire Campus?

FIONA
(Hitting him) No no no! For some... great movie I do. A great American film I make at the height of my career. For which I will be... remembered.

STACY
That’s cool.

FIONA
Thank you. I think if I told Lauren that she’d leave me. Or at least laugh at me.

STACY
Well I think you should wish for what you want.

FIONA
Thank you. I like that. So what’d you wish?

STACY
Nothing.

FIONA
Oh yes you did. I could feel you wishing for something hard. (Beat) Come on, Stacy, no fair. I told. What’d you wish for?

STACY
Guess.

FIONA
An Olympic gold medal!

STACY
No.

FIONA
(Gently) What, then?

STACY
Okay. (Quietly) I wished for... that special person.
FIONA
Who?

STACY
You know. What I always wish. For a special somebody. The person I could trust with anything and they’d always be there.

Go on.

STACY
Well, that’s it. You know, don’t you? I want to be... the most important person in somebody’s life. Forever. And have them be that for me. (Shrugs)

“Them,” huh?

STACY
What?

FIONA
Nothin’. (Smiles) That’s very lovely. I hope your wish comes true.

I hope yours does.

FIONA
Let’s make a deal.

STACY
Okay.

FIONA
Careful! You have to find out what it is first. Don’t ever agree to anything in advance--or you’re never gonna make it in this town.

STACY
I live in Denver.

FIONA
True. Well sports is just as bad.

STACY
Sometimes. So what’s the deal?
FIONA
Whoever’s wish comes true first, promises to call the other one and tell!

STACY
Deal.

FIONA
Although I guess if yours comes true you might not know at first. I mean about the “forever” part.

STACY
I think I’ll know. (Beat) But you won’t have to call me to tell me about your Oscar. I’ll be watching on TV!

FIONA
I’ll call anyway.

STACY
All right. Do. (Pause. They smile.)

FIONA
Do you think you could do me one little favor?

STACY
Absolutely.

FIONA
(Hitting him) You did it again! We’re going to have to work on this.

STACY
Sorry! (Fake deep voice) Depends on what it is.

FIONA
Get me outta here.

STACY
What do you mean?

FIONA
Just... hold my hand and walk me downstairs past whatever... drunks and hangers-on and wannabes and piranhas are still in there.

STACY
No problem. So how’re you getting home?
FIONA
There’s a limo waiting for me in the driveway, actually. Don’t laugh! It’s a perk. (Beat) I’ll have the chauffeur drop you off first.

STACY
Deal. After you?

FIONA
Wait! (She finishes the coffee.) I said holding hands, remember?

STACY
Holding hands.

(They do. Blackout.)

VOICEOVER
(Music.)
WOMAN ANNOUNCER: Welcome back to Entertainment Tonight. Last night we checked out the premiere of the summer horror flick Vampire Campus--and the all-night party afterwards, which was a bona fide who’s who of who’s hot in today’s young Hollywood. Our cameraman caught this footage of the movie’s glamorous co-star, Fiona Blake, leaving the party hand in hand with--can you tell who that is?--Stacy Clifford, the figure skating champ who’s considered one of the US’s best hopes for a medal at the next Winter Olympics. We can’t say for sure they’re a couple, but don’t they kind of look like a winning pair? Count on us to keep you posted on the latest developments. For Entertainment Tonight, I’m Julie Patterson.

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