

# Kiss and Cry

a play in two acts

by Tom Rowan

[OPENING SCENE ONLY]

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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 naïve 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

Whoops. 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

I mean, I've done New York parties. I *am* New York parties. But L.A.... --What do you mean that's not surprising? I wanted you to be surprised.

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.

STACY

I understand.

FIONA

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

STACY

No.

FIONA

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

STACY

My name's Stacy.

FIONA

But I mean, where do I know you from?

STACY

No place. (Smiles) We've never met.

FIONA

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

STACY

Maybe.

FIONA

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

STACY

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

FIONA

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

STACY

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

FIONA

(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

Greenwich. In New York.

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.

FIONA

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)

FIONA

"Them," huh?

STACY

What?

FIONA

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

STACY

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.*

**END OF EXCERPT**