

DIVERGENCE  
A Short Play

by  
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SCENE 1

The stage is broken into four areas that are to be lighted separately: UR is the bedroom, door is UL and leads to kitchen which has a door DL to living room with the outside door DL; DR is a neutral area where MARTIN delivers his monologues.

At lights up SHAWNA in bed doing a crossword puzzle.

SHAWNA

Sweetie! What's a five letter word for harpy?

There is no reply. She waits for a moment.

SHAWNA

Honey?

MARTIN bursts into the room with full breakfast tray.

MARTIN

Shrew. Happy weekaversary!

SHAWNA stares at him in mock indignation.

MARTIN

It has been a week, right? What'd I do?

SHAWNA

Shrew?

MARTIN

Yeah. Shrew. Five letter word for harpy.

SHAWNA

Mm hm...

He tries to win her over.

MARTIN

Breakfast?

She smiles at him as he puts the tray over her lap.

MARTIN

We have pancakes, sausage, toast, orange juice.

SHAWNA

Why, Mr. Delaney.

She butters her toast seductively.

MARTIN

(Bad British accent)

Oh, you're dirty. I like that. I really like that.

SHAWNA

Do you, now?

He dips his finger in the syrup, puts a drop on the end of her nose and kisses it off.

MARTIN

Any doubts?

He continues to kiss her: cheeks to earlobes to neck.

SHAWNA

Is this how all marriages start?

MARTIN

The ones worth talking about.

SHAWNA

How do so many end so badly?

MARTIN

In-laws... and the IRS.

SHAWNA

Marty...

MARTIN

Yes, ma'am? What's that you say? You're done with the flap... jacks

He takes the tray from her lap and sets it on the floor.

SHAWNA

But, I wanted more flap... jacks.

MARTIN

Oh, you'll get them.

He lays back on the bed and pulls her close. She kisses him. As the lights fade down, she slides out of bed, standing beside it with her back to him. He moves DR.

MARTIN

Pretty picture, eh? (PAUSE) Exactly what I wanted in a relationship. An image I had formulated years ago. When I was a kid I would watch old movies with my dad. Comedies... mostly comedies, but anything, really. Anyway, as I got older the romantic films started to finally make sense. Not the tearjerker types, no, more along the lines of the romantic-comedies of the thirties and forties. From these peppy little stories I formulated what a relationship was supposed to be, you know? Nothing immediate, but as little things happened – you know little mishaps, nothing that draws blood, but bumps and bruises, these two would realize they were in love all along. (PAUSE) When I met Shawna, that's how it was. We were living our own screwball romantic-comedy. Things started to change, though. We were about a year-and-a-half in when *she*... well...

SCENE 2

LIGHTS UP LOW on bedroom setting. MARTIN moves back to the bed as we see SHAWNA in the position we left her. MARTIN sits on bed, his back to her.

SHAWNA

I am spending all this time getting a degree. Why let it go to waste?

MARTIN speaks clearly, never looking at her.

MARTIN

What about our plans?

SHAWNA

You always say that plans never work out the way we want them to...

MARTIN

You needed to know where we here headed. That's what *you* wanted. *YOU* needed plans. I gave you plans. Besides, I've told you from the beginning that you can work. We can work it out. *You* agreed to go ahead with it. (PAUSE) Are you giving up?

SHAWNA

It's just not enough anymore. (BEAT) It's not what I want.

MARTIN turns, looks at her. She remains motionless.

MARTIN

What *you* want? (PAUSE) What about what I want?

SHAWNA

Do you really think I can give it to you?

MARTIN

What are you saying?

She turns toward him.

I can't do this anymore. SHAWNA

Do what anymore? MARTIN

Play this game. We don't want the same things. SHAWNA

Game... oh, my... (PAUSE) MARTIN

She continues to stare at him.

We thought we did. SHAWNA

No. We did. We do. You feel the need to ignore it. MARTIN

I'm not ignoring anything. Not anymore. SHAWNA

SHAWNA exits. MARTIN crosses DR to neutral area.

MARTIN  
We worked on it for another couple of years, tried to make her understand... remember... you know, remember what we had. What we had built. When she decided what she wanted, though, it couldn't happen soon enough. (PAUSE) See, I didn't want the divorce. I signed the papers thinking that when faced with the reality of it all she would regain her reason. We'd move on and have that happily ever after. Anyway, I signed and nothing else was said about it. We went on with our lives.

### SCENE 3

LIGHTS COME UP on living room scene.

MARTIN  
Then, last night I got home from work...

As he enters the living room he goes through the "just come home" motions - taking off coat, kicking off shoes, etc. He sits on the sofa and spots a paper on the coffee table propped up against a candle. He picks it up and reads.

MARTIN  
"... that the marriage of Martin Delaney and Shawna Hessel Delaney is hereby dissolved on this day, February..."

MARTIN sits, stunned, taking it all in. He tries to take his mind off of it by turning on the TV. After a moment he turns off the TV, staring at the screen after. The paper falls to the floor. He stares straight ahead. After a minute or two, SHAWNA comes home breaking him from his stupor. MARTIN watches as she rushes from the living room to the bedroom and back again. She is in various states of undress and redress as she does so. During this he tries to talk to her. She goes on, ignoring him, until he stops her. The lights never come up on the bedroom during this scene.

MARTIN

Shawna? (beat) Why the rush? (beat) Shawn? (beat) Can we talk for a minute? (beat) Can you please sit down for a minute? SHAWNA! STOP!

SHAWNA

Do you have to yell?

MARTIN

Apparently. What the hell is your problem?

SHAWNA

I'm running late.

MARTIN

For what?

SHAWNA

What do you need?

MARTIN

This.

MARTIN picks up the paper and holds it out to her.

SHAWNA

What about it?

MARTIN

Did you know that it came today?

SHAWNA

Of course. I came home at lunch. How do you think it got there?

And she is off again to the bedroom.

MARTIN

Dammit!

Toward the bedroom.

MARTIN

Sorry to be a bother you. Let me know when you have some free time.

SHAWNA comes back into the living room. She keeps busy, never looking at him.

SHAWNA

How was your day? Busy?

MARTIN

How was my day? How was my day?! What the...! Can we talk about this?

SHAWNA

What's there to talk about?

MARTIN

What is there to talk about?! How about how you feel about it?

SHAWNA

What does it matter?

MARTIN

What?!

SHAWNA

It's over. It's done. What does it matter now?

With this she is out of the room again.

MARTIN

Fucking incredible.

She's back in.

SHAWNA

Are we done?

MARTIN stares at her until she notices the silence and turns to look at him.

SHAWNA

Well? Anything else? I *am* in kind of a rush.

MARTIN

For what?! What the hell are you doing tonight that we can't have a few minutes?!

SOUND: Doorbell

She rushes for the bedroom.

SHAWNA

Get that, will you?

MARTIN

What?! Shawna! Get the fuck back here!

She doesn't answer or come back in.

SOUND: Doorbell

MARTIN shoots a look toward the darkened bedroom and heads toward the door. He opens it and stands frozen in his tracks.

IVAN

Is Shawna here?

MARTIN still stands frozen, staring at IVAN.

IVAN

Shawna. Is she here?

MARTIN

Y-yeah.

IVAN

Good. For a second there I thought I had the wrong place. So, you're the roommate?

MARTIN

Roo... Shawna! What the hell...?!

SHAWNA enters from bedroom.

SHAWNA

Thanks, sweetie.

Kisses MARTIN on the cheek.

SHAWNA

(To Ivan)

Have any trouble finding the place?

Crosses to IVAN, hugs him and kisses him on the cheek. MARTIN watches this in unflinching amazement.

SHAWNA

Come on in. Have a seat. I need one more thing from the bedroom. I'll be right back.



SHAWNA crosses to the bedroom. As IVAN sits on the sofa MARTIN snaps out of it and follows SHAWNA to the darkened bedroom. All we see are IVAN'S reactions to what is said in the other room.

MARTIN  
What the hell is that?!

SHAWNA  
What?

MARTIN  
That... that... thing in the living room.

SHAWNA  
Ivan. He is taking me out to dinner tonight.

MARTIN  
(Incredulous)  
He's taking... Good GOD!

SHAWNA  
What?

MARTIN  
The body's not even cold yet and you have a fucking date?

SHAWNA  
Don't cuss at me... and...?

MARTIN  
You don't see the problem?! The problem, Shawn, is...

SHAWNA  
Yours.

MARTIN  
Excuse me?!

SHAWNA  
The only way that there can be a problem is if you have one.

Realization suddenly washes over MARTIN.

MARTIN  
Oh, my God. When did you make this date?

SHAWNA  
What does that matter?

MARTIN

When did you make this date?! Should I go ask Igor ...

SHAWNA

Ivan.

MARTIN

Igor... Ivan... Mary fucking Jane! Who gives a shit! When did you make the date?!

SHAWNA

That's none of your business.

MARTIN

You made it before and were hovering until that damn paper came today, weren't you?

She doesn't answer.

MARTIN

You did! Holy shit! You heartless...

She pushes past him.

SHAWNA

I have a date.

SHAWNA leaves the room.

SHAWNA

Ready to go?

IVAN

That's your ex-husband?

SHAWNA

No worries. He's a big boy.

IVAN

Are you sure? I don't want to be...

SHAWNA

You're not.

IVAN

Maybe we should wait.

SHAWNA

No. Really. Let's go. It will be OK.

IVAN opens the door.

SOUND: Cell phone ringing.

SHAWNA

That's mine.

- Hello?

- I can't talk right now.

- I am hanging up now.

- No.

- No.

- No!

- I have to go.

- What?

- No, I don't.

- No.

- Not even a little bit.

- Nothing lasts forever, I guess.

- I have to go now.

- I do.

- Good-bye.

She hangs up and heads out the door as the LIGHTS go DOWN on the living room and UP LOW on the bedroom. MARTIN is sitting on the floor leaning against the bed. He slowly hangs up the phone. He looks out at the audience. He is crying. BLACK OUT.