

The Lights
(a 10-minute play)

by
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CHARACTERS

JENNY - 30's, female, any ethnicity. Goes from happy, playful, and adventurous to spiky, bitter, in need of comfort.

DAVID - 30's, male, any ethnicity. Easily riled up, but ultimately warm to his core.

MICHELLE - 20's, female, any ethnicity. Jenny's sister. A free-spirit in the deserts of Arizona.

JENNY

On our honeymoon, we went to Iceland in a cold, biting December. I wanted to go to Hawaii, but David said

DAVID

Everyone goes to Hawaii.

JENNY

I thought that was a shit point. Everyone goes to Hawaii because Hawaii is extremely fucking lovely.

DAVID

Plus it'll be so crowded with all the tourists.

JENNY

We're tourists.

DAVID

But not like them.

JENNY

So to avoid a couple potential showers, we instead packed thick down coats and hopped a plane to Reykjavik. David was constantly enraged.

DAVID

\$200 credit card hold for GAS?

JENNY

Constantly enraged.

DAVID

\$20 for a beer, okay.

JENNY

Constantly

DAVID

I'm sick of eating stew.

JENNY

Enraged.

DAVID

Where the fuck is the sun?

JENNY

December is the month daylight is shortest, so we were getting about 4 hours of daylight each day.

DAVID

This is no way to live!

JENNY

I found his rage funny, kind of cute.

DAVID

Don't laugh at me.

JENNY

I'm not laughing!
And he'd surprise me with dumb little gifts.

DAVID

It's a little sheep figurine made out of real sheep wool.

JENNY

Cool. We drove our rental past the waterfall, past the lagoon, past the geyser, past the fluffy goats, past the fields and into a town with so many letters

DAVID

Kirk-ju-bae...

JENNY

I felt like I was having a stroke.

DAVID

...jar-klaus-tar.

JENNY

And it was cloudy every night.

DAVID

Fuck!

JENNY

See, David always wanted to see the Northern Lights --

DAVID

Aurora Borealis.

JENNY

-- ever since he was a kid.

DAVID

Not to be confused with the American television actor David Boreanaz of Bones and Buffy the Vampire fame.

JENNY

Hey. It's okay.

DAVID

I know, I just... I wanted to share it with you.

JENNY

We have one night left.

DAVID

I know.

JENNY

We might not see it, okay? I want to be realistic.

DAVID

I know that.

JENNY

But we might.

DAVID

Yeah.

JENNY

And that's kind of nice, right? Living in this moment where we might?

DAVID

Yeah.

They hold hands.

JENNY

And what do you know...

DAVID/JENNY

Whoaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa

Green and blue lights shine on their faces.

DAVID
It's beautiful

JENNY
And also

DAVID
It's just the sky

JENNY
It made you wonder

DAVID
How could the sky do something so magical?

JENNY
It felt like a gift
Just for us
For just the two of us.
That we would never forget.
And we didn't.
But then
About a year later
There was
a small injury
A small injury that turned into a hospitalization
A hospitalization that turned into an infection
An infection that turned into

DAVID disappears.

JENNY
Years pass, you know. Life goes on. New jobs. New homes. New lovers. You
meet shitty people and wonder how shitty people just get to keep going on and
on when great people are taken from you.
That hardly seems fair.
I mean, don't you think?
Still have friends and co-workers and pets and people that rely on you but also
there's just this
Something missing
"Lonely" is too small a word.
So then my sister calls one night about, what do you know, about

MICHELLE appears, on the phone.

MICHELLE
The Northern Lights!

JENNY
It's not the Northern Lights, Michelle.
I live in Atlanta at this point, you know, it's late, but I'm up. We have a kind of sticky relationship, me and Michelle. She's always had it kind of easy, if you ask me, but she's my sister, it's all good.

MICHELLE
It is! It's --

JENNY
Don't say it.

MICHELLE
Aurora Borealis.

JENNY
In Arizona?

MICHELLE
In Arizona! I'm telling you!

JENNY
Bullshit.

MICHELLE
I'm sending you a picture!

JENNY
But it's not bullshit.
The picture Michelle sends me isn't green and blue, it's

MICHELLE
Pink and purple, like Lisa Frank!

JENNY
But there it is. New branding, but there it is. I look it up, there's some

MICHELLE
Shift in the sun's magnetic fields

JENNY
It peaks every 11 years

MICHELLE

It's called the solar maximum!

JENNY

Like she knows what this means.

MICHELLE

It has to do with the magnetic field or whatever, I told you.

JENNY

This thing that was so special, this little gift of a tiny moment shared is now

MICHELLE

In England and Ireland, New York, North Carolina, California, and now even

JENNY

Arizona.

MICHELLE

Exactly. Isn't that so cool?

JENNY

I want to tell her it's not cool. It's not fucking *cool*, Michelle.

It was hard, it was a journey, we traveled through darkness, we wrapped ourselves in coats and each other to keep warm, hoping that we would get a glimpse, and when it did, it was electric and huge and special -- something between me and and...

And now everyone in fucking *Arizona* is just gonna see it, takes pictures of it, compare it to fucking Lisa Frank -- there was a power to gatekeeping, a power to holding it as my own. The exclusivity, the the

MICHELLE

Maybe you could come visit.

JENNY

I haven't seen her in a while.

MICHELLE

Maybe you could come visit, maybe take some time off. Maybe spend some time here. We could stay up late, drink Coors Light and stare up at the sky.

JENNY

Oh.

MICHELLE

Like if you want.

JENNY

Oh. Maybe.

I think no fucking way, Michelle.

I think I can't do this, Michelle.

I think what if we don't see it.

I think what if we do, and I don't see him in it.

I think what if we do, and I *do* see him in it, and then it's just over.

I think I can't put myself through this again, better to forget forget forget.

But instead

I go.

*MICHELLE hands JENNY a can of Coors Light.
They sit on folding chairs.*

MICHELLE

Hey, sis.

JENNY

And as the sun goes down, we talk about

MICHELLE

Did you hear about Cousin Jack's mistress?

JENNY

She asks me questions from our childhoods like

MICHELLE

Why did you tell Mom I let the cat out when it was you?

JENNY

And she asks questions from adulthood like

MICHELLE

How are people able to pay a downpayment for a house when jobs pay too little and rent is too much?

JENNY

And

MICHELLE

What do you miss most about him?

JENNY

Oh.

MICHELLE

Sorry, you don't have to -- sorry.

JENNY

No, it's okay. Umm I miss stupid stuff. Little songs we would sing as we brushed our teeth. Chasing each other around the house. His smell. His skin smelled like milk.

MICHELLE

Gross.

JENNY

No, it was nice.

Honestly, I can't say what I miss the most because he always surprised me. I miss not knowing all the surprises that would come.

And also

I've missed talking about him. No one ever wants to talk about him.

MICHELLE

Oh.

Well that's fucking stupid.

To David.

JENNY

To David.

They laugh and clink their cans together.

And suddenly, the lights shift pink and purple, lighting up their faces.

The two women look around in wonder.

Jenny smiles -- it's bittersweet -- but somehow she knows, this is another gift from David.

The North Lights in fucking Arizona.

END OF PLAY