THE RACE

A ten-minute play

by

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CHARACTERS

JOHN – a husband.

MARSH – a wife.

TIME

Present

SETTING

A Bedroom.

SPECIAL NOTES

The following action takes place entirely in a black-out, though it is fine to see the actors take their places, once the play starts, it is important that we do not see them, only HEAR them. To be absolutely clear, the whole play happens IN THE DARK.

NOTES

No part of this play may be published or performed in public without permission of the author, Joshua James, although actors may make free use of any of the pieces for auditions or classroom study.

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John and Marcia, a married couple, stumble home after a night on the town. They collapse in bed. Lights go down. The following action takes place entirely in total darkness.

John
Ohh.

Marcia
Me too.

John
I’m a little drunk.

Marcia
Me too.

John
Drunk and tired.

Marcia
Me too.

John
Maybe more tired than drunk.

Marcia
Me too.

Short pause.

John
Uh-oh.

Marcia
Uh-oh what?

John
I think I want to have sex.

Marcia
Uh-oh.

John
Uh-oh.

Marcia
You think you want to have sex?

John
I think I want to have sex.

**Very short pause.**

Marcia
Me too.

John
Uh-oh. She wants sex.

Marcia
Uh-oh. I want sex.

John
You really want to have sex?

Marcia
I could have sex. I could.

John
Well. All right then. Let’s have some sex.

Marcia
All right then.

**Short pause.**

Marcia (cont’d)
Aren’t we going to have sex?

John
Maybe.

Marcia
I thought you wanted to have sex.

John
I think I do want to have sex.

Marcia
Well get over here and sex me, baby. Sex me up!

John
Well . . .
Marcia  
Well what?

John  
Well, I’m pretty comfortable over here.

Marcia  
So?

John  
So why don’t you come over here?

Marcia  
Over there?

John  
Come on over here and sex me up.

Marcia  
Why don’t you come over here?

John  
I always go over there, why don’t you come over here.

Marcia  
You brought it up, you should come over here.

**Short pause.**

Marcia  
Well?

John  
Well, there’s seems to be a small problem.

Marcia  
What’s the problem?

John  
The problem is, I don’t think I can move.

**Short pause.**

Marcia  
Me too.

John  
You too?
Marcia
Me too. I’m pretty comfortable, lying here.

John
Me too. My brain wants sex, but my body doesn’t want to move.

Marcia
Me too. If we have sex with each other, that’s going to involve some exertion, some pushing, pulling, different kinds of positioning, all of which is good . . .

John
Very good.

Marcia
It is good. It’s just that I’m pretty comfortable.

John
Me too. So what do we do?

Marcia
What else can we do? Wait until we pass out.

Pause.

John
But I’m still thinking about sex!

Marcia
Me too.

John
I can’t stop thinking about sex.

Marcia
Me too.

John
But I still don’t want to move.

Marcia
Me too.

John
What if I were to suggest a way in which we can both achieve sexual ecstasy without upsetting the current balance of our present equilibrium?

Marcia
What was that? Can you say that again?

John
Not without throwing up.

Marcia
Wait a minute, wait a minute. You’re proposing that we have sex . . .

John
The two of us, sex . . .

Marcia
Without having to move at all.

John
Yes.

Marcia
You stay there and I stay here . . .

John
Yes.

Marcia
And we have hot sex.

John
That’s it, yes.

**Short pause.**

Marcia
I’m intrigued.

John
I’d hoped you would be.

Marcia
Please elaborate.

John
We have a “race.”
Marcia
A “Race?”

John
A “Race.”

**Short pause.**

Marcia
You’re not suggesting that we . . .

John
Absolutely. We let our fingers do the walking. You do your thing, I do mine . . .

Marcia
Oh my God.

John
And Bing! Sexual Satisfaction. And the great thing about it is, no matter who finishes first, we both win!

Marcia
You can’t be serious.

John
I am completely serious, come on, let’s go.

Marcia
I can’t!

John
Why not?

Marcia
Because!

John
Because why?

Marcia
Because I don’t . . . do that kind of thing.

John
What? What are you talking about, of course you do!

Marcia
No I do not!

John
I’ve SEEN you do it, just last Christmas, before all the Yuletide sex, you put on a little preliminary show for me.

Marcia
John . . .

John
You put me on the other side of the room, sat yourself right by the fire in lace and garters and went to work, tuning the engine and racing away all on your lonesome, don’t you remember?

Marcia
Of course I remember, but that was different!

John
How is it different?

Marcia
Because that was for YOUR benefit, NOT mine.

John
You mean to tell me, that you’ve never RACED your engine strictly for your own benefit?

Marcia
Oh no, no. No. Not since I was a teen-ager. Since puberty.

John
What! You haven’t raced since you were a kid?

Marcia
That’s right.

John
Why not?

Marcia
Well. It just seems so silly.

John
I don’t believe this.

Marcia
Why don’t you just go on ahead and . . . run your little race, and I’ll try to get some sleep.

John

Marcia
Why not, go ahead, I don’t mind.

John
I MIND. It’s not as much fun unless you do it with me.

Marcia
Oh COME ON John.

John
It’s true, you know that a woman’s pleasure is very important to me.

Marcia
John.

John
It’s true, I’ll feel bad if I get off and you don’t, I always do.

Marcia
But you have my permission. Go ahead, have sex without me, I’m giving you my blessing. Fire away.

Very short pause.

John
No, no, I don’t want to now.

Marcia
Oh, come on. Honey . . .

John
No, it’s okay.

Marcia
You’re upset, I can hear it, you’re mad.

John
I’m not mad . . .

Marcia
Sweetie, if you want to masturbate it’s perfectly all right with me, believe me.

John
No.

Marcia
John, I’m begging you, please masturbate, do it, you know you want to, pull on that pony, tease that weasel . . .

John
Marcia, no! Masturbation just won’t be as much fun if you’re not doing it with me.

Marcia
Sweetie, masturbation was originally intended as a solo exercise.

John
Yes I know that, but we’re married and we do everything together, right?

Marcia
Yes, but . . .

John
And we promised each other to always be open to new things, right?

Marcia
Yes, yes we did promise that.

John
And I just think . . . that you should give some consideration to a race.

Marcia
But don’t you think it’s a little silly?

John
What in the world of sex ISN’T silly? It’s all silly, penis, vagina, they’re all silly! Why stop now with this? Just give it a shot. Who knows, you just might like it.

Marcia
I might, I just might.

John
It could be really great, it could become our NEW thing.

Marcia
You’re right. It just might. All right, you talked me into it. Honey, I’m sorry I was such a pill.

John
You are not a pill, you’re never a pill. I love you.

Marcia
And I love you. Okay. Let’s masturbate.

John
All right! Ladies and gentlemen, start your engines!

**Rustling of clothing is heard.**

Marcia
Okay. Here we go. Here we go. We’re masturbating. A masturbating we go. Master . . . Bation. Masturbation.

John
Marcia . . .

Marcia
(sings)
Here we come . . . walking down the street . . . get the funniest looks . . . from everyone we meet. Hey Hey we’re masturbating!

John
Marcia!

Marcia
What!

John
What are you doing?

Marcia
I’m . . . I’m singing.

John
Do you have to do that?

Marcia
Yes I do. It’s what I do. Do you have a problem with that?
Short pause.

John
No, I do not.

Marcia
Very well. Shall we continue?

John
Yes please.

Pause. Some movement is heard on the bed. Marcia is still humming the Monkey’s song. John starts moaning. His moans get louder and louder.

Marcia
John . . .

John
Oh . . . Oh . . .

Marcia
John!

John
Ahh!

Marcia
John!

John
What! What is it, can you see I’m close?

Marcia
It’s that noise you’re making . . .

John
What about it, these are my sex sounds . . .

Marcia
Those aren’t your USUAL sex sounds . . .

John
What are you talking about, these are the sounds I always make.

Marcia
No they are not! Your usual noise is kind of a uh-uh-uh . . . THIS sex sound is more like a oh-oh-oh . . .

John
SO??

Marcia
So it’s subtlety different, almost . . . almost like you might be enjoying it . . . more.

John
Oh my God. You’re singing super songs of the sixties and you’re giving me a hard time about MY sex sounds?

Marcia
You like masturbation better than sex with me, don’t you!?

John
Can we stop this? Can we? I thought we were trying to do something NEW together here. Can we just focus and jack off together, can we?

Marcia
You’re right, I’m sorry. I’m sorry. Touching myself always makes me a little neurotic. I’m sorry. Please continue.

Movement is heard. Marcia goes back to the humming. John moans again. He moans louder. Marcia hums louder.

John
Oh. Oh.

Marcia
Oh honey. You close?

John
Yeah baby, oh yeah.

Marcia
Go sweetie. Go for it.

John
Oh baby. Oh. Oh oh oh OH! AHHH! Oh.

Marcia
Oh honey. Nice. Very nice. How was it?
John
Great. That was great.

Marcia
(after a moment)
Great?

John
Not really great. Good. It was just good. Good enough. It was . . . How are you doing?

Marcia
I’m doing all right.

John
Are you there yet?

Marcia
Not quite.

**Short pause.**

John
You there yet?

Marcia
Not yet.

**Pause.**

John
How about now?

Marcia
John!

John
I’m sorry, it’s just, I’m sleepy now. Is there any way to . . . pick the pace up a little?

Marcia
John, some of us in this race are sprinters, and some of us run marathons. But we all get there.

John
Yeah. Yeah. Sorry.

**Pause. Marcia hums along.**
John (cont’d)
Maybe if you sang a more up-tempo song . . .

Marcia
John!

John
I’m sorry, sorry.

Marcia
Why don’t you take a nap and I’ll wake you when we get there?

John
No, I can make it. I can make it.

Short pause.

Marcia
(sings)
There she was a just a walking down the street . . .
singing do-wha-ditty-ditty-dum-ditty do.
Holdin my hand and looking real purty . . . singing do-wha-
ditty-ditty-ditty-dum ditty do.
She looks good, she looks good, she looks fine, she looks
good she looks fine and I nearly lost my . . . my . . . MY
MIND! OH! Oh. Oh my. Oh my goodness. That was
wonderful, that was . . . John?

John snores loudly.

Marcia (cont’d)
I win.

End of Play