

## ***Color Separation***

*a short comedy about what our choices say about us  
and how our true colors are revealed*

by Jennie Webb

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## ***Color Separation***

**Characters:**

**A WOMAN DAUNTED BY OPTIONS**

**A MAN EXCITED BY OWNERSHIP**

**Setting:**

**A kitchen dining living and adjacent laundry room**

**Time:**

**Sometime after breakfast on a Saturday**

*NOTE: Characters are both well into their 20s or even 30s, even if they're not ready to be. And there's a lot of license here for technical & design elements to be stylized.*

### **SPECIAL THANKS**

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**Synopsis:**

At the heart of *Color Separation* is a couple contemplating an important decision... at a time when the world is connected in very revealing ways and the meaning of "choice" takes on heavier and heavier implications. The comedy is a somewhat surreal look at what happens when we let people into our lives, time runs out, and we take what's been given to us for granted. What do our choices say about us and what sort of virtual lines do they draw? In the bigger picture, where exactly do our responsibilities end when we disconnect from each other?

## Color Separation

*We see small living area of a modern dwelling connected to a dining space, and a high counter behind which appears to be a kitchen. Apparently there's a small washer and dryer somewhere. It's all very efficient. If not quite cozy. A large, uncomfortable looking chair takes up a lot of space in the room. It's the kind a guy would pick out because it looks manly. Indeed, a man sits at the head of a dining table—he's on a laptop that he seems very pleased to own. He's drinking coffee and enjoying what's onscreen.*

MAN:

Hah! Hey! Honey! Here!

WOMAN:

*(offstage)* What?

MAN:

Here! Come here!

WOMAN:

*(offstage)* Why?

MAN:

Your sister's crazy!

WOMAN:

*(offstage)* That's no surprise.

*We hear the faint sound of clothes dryer as a woman enters, carrying a large, loose pile of freshly washed clothes; she's not quite sure what to do with it.*

What's going on?

MAN:

She and Josh are having this huge fight.

WOMAN:

Her husband Josh? They're fighting now; how'd you find that out?

*She plops the clothes on the chair.*

MAN:

On Facebook. They're fighting on Facebook.

WOMAN:

I thought she was still in jail.

MAN:

No, she got out days ago. He decided not to press charges. And he moved back in.

WOMAN:

You found this all out on Facebook?

MAN:

Yeah, here's a picture of his head. (*showing her his screen*) Only a few stitches, he was lucky. They both were!

WOMAN:

Oh, yeah.

*She starts to fold laundry.*

You need a table or something in by your washer and dryer.

MAN:

We can get one. But look: she posted this shot yesterday. "Daddy's home!" He's got the kids on his lap with a big bottle of tequila.

WOMAN:

Nice. That's one happy family.

MAN:

You're just jealous 'cause she asked me to be her friend.

WOMAN:

Yes, that's it. I envy you her Facebook friendship. Hello! And what's *this*?

*She holds up a bright red shirt or blouse, distinct from the other pale clothes.*

MAN:

Yours, right?

WOMAN:

Yes, it's mine. (*indicating the pile of clothes*) But why was it in here? You have to keep things separate; colors all can't be in the same—

MAN:

(*interrupting*) I set it on cold. I always wash everything in cold.

WOMAN:

But you still can't put them in together; they could ruin each other!

MAN:

Look! It's fine! They're all fine, right? Nothing's ruined, nothing... blurred.

WOMAN:

Bled.

MAN:  
Bled. Nothing bled. Did it?

WOMAN:  
Not that I can tell.

MAN:  
See?

WOMAN:  
Yet.

MAN:  
Is there any more coffee?

WOMAN:  
Should be.

*She leaves the laundry and goes back behind the counter; he returns to his screen.*

MAN:  
Okay. Great. I am loving this. This is so great.

WOMAN:  
*(coming back out with a coffee pot)* Me serving you coffee?

MAN:  
Well, of course that. Thank you. Good coffee.

WOMAN:  
I like your coffee maker.

MAN:  
I hardly ever use it. You don't want any? Coffee?

WOMAN:  
Nah. Can't stand the smell.

MAN:  
You feeling okay? You want me to get you something?

WOMAN:  
No. *(indicating the computer screen)* I want to know what's so great.

MAN:  
Right. So the babysitter posts on Josh's wall, "I miss you soooooo much"—there are...seven o's—"but if you ensist"—spelled with an e—"to be with your wife I understand but I still love you and want to see you if you want to see me too, xxxxx"—five x's.

WOMAN:

This is the 17-year-old babysitter he had an affair with which is what started this whole thing? And if you can read that my sister can read it, too?

MAN:

Oh, she already *read* it. "I'd like to see you try to get your pathetic self into my house, hoe"—like the garden tool—"I'm serious take me up on it \*wink\* \*wink\*"

WOMAN:

Man. Now you see why I'm so ambivalent about all of this? I mean, moving in and marriage, much less...

*She comes from behind the counter with her hand on her stomach, which somehow seems more pronounced than it did earlier.*

There's a lot you don't know about me. I apparently have these recessive trailer trash genes. I can't be held responsible for whatever happens.

MAN:

Ha ha. We're doing the right thing. Anyway, so now she and Josh are in this big fight—

WOMAN:

*(interrupting)* On Facebook.

MAN:

On Facebook. And I hope you don't mind that I'm sharing it with all 958 of *my* friends!

WOMAN:

You are not!

MAN:

No. I'm not. But I am putting the pix on Instagram. Hashtag My New Family

WOMAN:

Ha ha ha, right. Jesus, I just hope she doesn't hit him again. My mom can't be flying out there and taking care of those kids; she's getting too old for that shit.

MAN:

I'll bet your mom's a fantastic grandma. I can't wait to meet her. Although I already feel close to her. *(indicating the computer screen)* She's my friend.

WOMAN:

Yes. Hint: just don't use the "G" word around her. She's reinvented herself as "Nana."

MAN:

Nana?

WOMAN:

Like the dog from Peter Pan but I don't think she's actually made that connection.

MAN:

Ha ha. That's fantastic. I love it; I'll find a video clip and edit her into it! Hah!

WOMAN:

Ha ha yeah. You do that. I dare you.

*She goes back to the pile of laundry.*

MAN:

Oh! And you wanna know about the poll?

*Short pause.*

WOMAN:

Okay. About the poll...

MAN:

You're not going to believe the traffic the site's gotten. Thanks to Polldaddy, we got so many hits the other night my buddy said the server crashed and he and his team were up for like 24 hours trying to put the all pieces back together.

WOMAN:

All the kings horses and all the king's men.

MAN:

What?

WOMAN:

Humpty Dumpty. Couldn't put Humpty together again.

MAN:

Oh, yeah. Okay. Anyway, it's been amazing. So much support, you know. I had no idea our little seed of an idea would have grown so huge. Would have affected so many people. Now, I know you haven't been reading the comments lately...

WOMAN:

Noooo I have not.

MAN:

But after those hackers got in and tried to take it over, then the numbers tilted way to the "have an abortion" side—but I told you we found out they were fake from the same IP address, right? Well, since then it's been like an outpouring of good, positive energy and really interesting perspectives from people who totally get what we're doing. Who respect what we're sharing, that we're sharing in a public way. Our decision. "Should we have this baby?"

WOMAN:

Right.

MAN:

Right. I mean, sure, there are people who think the whole thing is a joke. Or a put on, you know. Like we're not real: "Kurt" and "Amy" But most people? They get that it's all too real. That we're doing the poll, getting votes and opinions and, yes, controversy, because whether to keep this baby is not a decision we're taking lightly. Or fooling ourselves into thinking we can responsibly make alone. We asked for help from the American public and they stepped up to the plate.

WOMAN:

Keep the baby.

MAN:

What?

WOMAN:

You just said "keep the baby," not "have the baby."

MAN:

I did?

WOMAN:

Yeah. So is all that from your blog entry? Or, sorry, "Kurt's" blog entry?

MAN:

Ha ha. Yeah, you caught me. It's good, huh? Should get a lot of action. People following the twitter account are really clamoring for "Amy" to start blogging as well, so whenever you're ready, babe. And you know what? It's all going to get even more interesting as we get closer to the deadline. We've got 'til the third trimester, but 27 weeks goes by quicker than you think, huh? Then just, what? 10 more, and—

WOMAN:

*(interrupting)* I think we should take the site down.

*Pause.*

MAN:

What?

WOMAN:

I think it was a mistake. I think we should take it down.

MAN:

But it was your idea in the first place.

WOMAN:

It was not my idea.

MAN:

Well, it was our idea. You gave me the idea.

WOMAN:

Yeah. I don't really know how that happened.

MAN:

We made it happen! Together. It was brilliant. We were totally confused by everything we were facing at this point in our lives, and you said "We still live in a free country! Let's put it to a vote!"

WOMAN:

I'd had two glasses of wine.

MAN:

Two small glasses. That shouldn't be a problem. I mean, it's not like it's a habit, right? And in a couple of months we'll crack open that bottle of champagne. I mean, one way or another?

WOMAN:

I'm serious. I think it should come down.

MAN:

Like I said, it'll be time sooner than we can imagine, so—

WOMAN:

*(interrupting)* I don't want to wait. I can't wait. I want it down now!

MAN:

Heeey, honey.

*He moves to her and holds her.*

WOMAN:

I'm sorry.

MAN:

I know. It's not you. It's your hormones talking.

WOMAN:

Fuck you.

*She moves back into the laundry room.*

MAN:

Whoa! Okay, then! But just because you're mad at me isn't a reason to abandon this whole thing. We've really got something going here. Something important!

*The sound of the dryer has stopped.*

WOMAN:

*(offstage)* And what is that? Just what important thing are you talking about?

*We hear the dryer start up again and she comes back in carrying more clothes.*

MAN:

The poll! The vote! The fact that we're making people think, making people responsible for their views. Anyone can talk; we're forcing them to walk the walk on this one.

WOMAN:

An internet walk.

MAN:

You know what I mean.

WOMAN:

Not really, because I thought the important thing here was this—

*Pregnant pause, then she drops the clothes to add to the previous pile on the chair. It's now clear she's with child.*

MAN:

What?

WOMAN:

I was going to say "this babv." You're rubbing off on me.

MAN:

Now what are you talking about?

WOMAN:

That you've already decided. You want to get married. You want to have a baby.

MAN:

Well, yes! I've never said otherwise! I knew the minute I met you, that's what I wanted. But I totally get that there's more that goes into a decision like this.

WOMAN:

Like Polldaddy?

MAN:

Hey. What's really going on here, sweetie?

WOMAN:

What's going on is I want that site down! It is a joke. The poll, the blog, the tweets... This whole thing's a joke. Me. You. (*looking at her stomach*) This. The whole reason this happened is I couldn't decide whether I liked you or if we were even dating, and I'm suddenly the posterchild for choice? I think that's hilarious!

MAN:

Okay.

WOMAN:

Because, truly, it's not like I even have any sort of say in what's happening right now. It's my body, my completely unrecognizable body, that's in charge, not me!

MAN:

Then we'll take it down! That's fine! I actually feel like, even in this short time, it's done a lot of good. Sent a message. And if we're ready to make the choice for ourselves...

WOMAN:

But I'm not ready. I may never be ready.

MAN:

Which was the entire reason we put the site up in the first place.

WOMAN:

I should not have let that happen. I mean, the more I think about it that was exactly the wrong thing to do. The wrong message to send. "America, you tell me what I can and can't do with my own body." What was I thinking? Or not thinking. Because here's the cruelest joke of all: If don't decide, if I don't make a choice... that's what decides the rest of my whole goddamn life and that's not okay!

*In frustration, she moves behind the chair and leans forward to fold clothes.*

MAN:

Honey! We have time. That's the beauty of this whole deal. We have time!

WOMAN:

Do we? What's going on now... I may have already waited too long. One minute it's like "You're fine, you're you, you've worked so hard and now your life's your own" and then, \*wham\* everything you took for granted is about to be snatched away by people who have no idea what— They talk about your responsibility but look at the kind of world they're creating, that you'll be leaving to your— Ahhhhhh!

*Her outburst is tears or anger or pain or probably all three.*

MAN:

Okay. Now that *is* your body getting the best of you. I'm going to get you a glass of water.

*He goes into the kitchen and she steps from behind the chair. She is now very pregnant.*

WOMAN:

I don't want— I don't— I— Argh.

MAN:

Here. Sit down.

*He gives her a drink and sets her in the chair, roughly sweeping aside the folded clothes.*

WOMAN:

Oh, god. I'm don't know about anything anymore. I feel like Alice in fucking Wonderland.

MAN:

Drink that.

*She does. He goes back to his computer.*

Here's what'll happen. We'll take the weekend off. Decide about the site on Monday. Besides, my buddy did this search engine optimization thing so I wanna check out what the bots do. Oh! And I put up these new graphics. I found this fantastic program where I morphed photos of you and me and got this cool baby picture. I'm using it in the sidebar. You wouldn't believe how cute it would be. My kid.

WOMAN:

Right.

MAN:

Hey! Look. Here's a post from your mom. Wow. Now the babysitter is in jail. She tried to break into the house. And Josh took the kids. Crazy, huh? And get this: Your mom says "I don't know anymore." Hah! She sounds just like you. Isn't that what you just said? "I don't know anymore?"

WOMAN:

Right.

*She looks at the stack of folded clothes, now partially toppled onto the floor.*

MAN:

Oh. No. It's two words. "I don't know any *more*." Hah! Sorry. So I guess we'll just have to wait and see, huh?

*The woman lifts up piece of white clothing. It has large red splotch. A laundry accident?*

WOMAN:

Right.

***End of Play***