

LET ME COUNT THE WAYS

A Play in One Act

by

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Cast of Characters

She: A woman.
He: A man.
Father: A father.

Scene

The setting is here.

Time

Now.

ACT ISETTING:

Bare stage.

AT RISE:

The scene opens with SHE and HE about to embrace and kiss... if they're lucky.

I love you.

SHE

I love you.

HE

Kiss me.

SHE

(HE immediately leans in and SHE just as immediately--)

Wait!

What?!

HE

My father. He will hear.

SHE

I'll be quiet.

HE

I love you.

SHE

And I love you.

HE

Kiss me.

SHE

(HE leans in.)

Wait!

HE

I'll be very quiet.
(leans in)

SHE

Do you say you love me because you love me, or do you say you love me so that you may kiss me.

HE

Yes.

SHE

'Yes' to what?

HE

'Yes' to whatever it is that will allow me to kiss you.

SHE (turns)

So you admit you do not love me.

HE

I admit nothing of the sort!

SHE (turns back)

But you do not deny it!

HE

I deny nothing of the sort!

SHE

You don't.

HE

And I shan't!

SHE

So you love me?!

HE

I suppose I do.

SHE

And I suppose—

HE
--I love you! Kiss me!
 (leans in)

SHE
Wait!

HE
Should I have said it the other way around?

SHE
Why do you love me?

HE
I don't know.

SHE
You don't know?!

HE
I mean, I know, but... but my love is far too great for mere words.

SHE
It is?

HE
I just said so didn't I?

SHE
Kiss me!
 (HE leans in)
Wait!

HE
You will not be-lieve how quiet I can be!

SHE
Are you saying you are not attracted to me?

HE
Of course I'm attract--... is this a trick question?

SHE
Would you still want to kiss me were you not in love with me?

HE
Of course!

SHE
So love has nothing to do with it.

HE
Of course not.

SHE
So you would nigh be happy going about kissing whomsoever you fancied with nary a thought of love.

HE (beat)
No.

SHE
No!?

HE (confused)
I don't think so.

SHE
Well I wouldn't think so either.

HE
Love truly hurts.

SHE
Aye, it does. But wait! You hurt?

HE
Sorely.

SHE
So you love me!

HE
If this is heading where I hope it is, then 'yes'.

Kiss me my love! SHE

Then yes! HE

(leans in)
Wait.

What? She

HE
Would you be so shallow as to not to allow me the pleasure
of your lips were you to not find me to your liking?

SHE (beat)
Huh?

HE
Do you want to kiss me of love, or rather of taking pity on
one who otherwise you may find repulsive?

SHE
I don't find you repulsive.

HE
You don't.

SHE
I never have.

HE
Would you find me fair of face?

SHE
Probably. Kiss me.

HE
And the rest?

SHE
The rest of what?

HE (indicating himself)

Rest! Rest!

SHE

I am not yet tired. Kiss me.

HE

The rest of me. Do you find all of me to be fair?

SHE

Fair would do it.

HE

But no better than fair.

SHE

But no worse.

HE

How can you say you love one whom you yourself can only describe as being, at best, average?

SHE

You have a good heart. You have a good soul. Above average.

HE

A good heart and soul does not reflect well in a mirror.
(reflective)
In song perhaps—

SHE

--But it dost reflect well in mine eyes.

HE (impressed)

You're good. I love you.

SHE

I thought you might. Kiss me.
(leans in)

Wait!

HE

If your father hasn't heard us by now he's as deaf as a post!

SHE

What of my heart and soul.

HE

What of them?

SHE

How do things reflect in thine eyes?

HE

They reflect as they might looking down at a pond in the coolness of a bright, still summer morn. When all of nature is in tune with its harmonic tendencies which inevitably leads us back to the heart and soul song alluded to briefly prior.

SHE (unimpressed)

So you see me reflected in a murky, scummy, biologically suspect colloidal suspension.

HE

Home schooling has done you well in the sciences.

SHE

Is it me that you see reflected in your experiment in soil and water conservation--

HE

My analogy seems to have eroded into something heretofore unthought of.

SHE

--or are the eyes you gaze into belonging to some aquatic menagerie of frog, perch and bullhead.

HE (aside)

My thoughts tend to lean towards the latter.

SHE

Why do you toy with me thusly?

HE

If I were toying with you, then most assuredly I would be having fun right about now.

SHE
You would?

HE
Most assuredly.

SHE
Then you do love me!

HE
Do you come with Cliff Notes?

SHE
We both see beyond the physical. Don't we. We see not with our eyes, for they are blind. We instead see with our hearts. Our hands. Our fingertips.

HE
Our lips?

SHE (lovingly)
Aye. Our lips.

HE
I was hoping you'd say that.
(leans in)

SHE
Wait!

HE
(rubbing his neck)
I'll have to check to see if chiropractic treatment is covered by my health insurance.

SHE
Let us not waste this moment.

HE
As we have so many others.

SHE
Let us make a pledge.

HE
As we wax poetic and polish our verse.

SHE
Never to quarrel again.

HE
We were quarreling?

SHE
Aye.

HE
Where was I?

SHE
Do you so promise?

HE
If that's what it'll take to get your tongue in my mouth.

SHE
Shh! My father! He will hear!

FATHER (off)
Your father doesn't care!

SHE (calling off)
Good night Pa-pa!
(to HE)
I love you.

HE
And I you.

SHE
You me what.

HE
I blew it again, didn't I.

SHE
You cannot say the word?

HE

I have said the word. Anon and often.

SHE

But you say it not now.

HE

It sounded romantic the way I said it.

(poetically)

"And I... you".

SHE

I don't know. It sounds as though you lack conviction. That you are not committed.

HE

Let us both be committed in the profound, undying and unwavering love that courses through our very veins with every beating of our hearts.

SHE

My Darling!

HE

My beloved!

SHE

Kiss me!

HE

Here goes!

(They kiss, long and passionate. Then stare into each other's eyes.)

HE

Anything?

SHE

Not a thing.

HE

Me neither.

Shit. SHE

You'd have thought with that kind of build up— HE

--anticipation— SHE

--that we would have felt something. HE

Timing. SHE

We missed our moment. HE

That we did. SHE

Now what? HE

'Law and Order' is on the television. SHE

New or a rerun? HE

Who can tell? SHE
(as they exit off)

Do you have anything to eat? HE

Do you like cold pizza? SHE

Love it. HE

CURTAIN