

MARI

a ten minute play by Shannon Sawyer

Mari: female, age 20-30

Mark: male, age 20-30

The stage is set with little but a bed, center stage or slightly stage right, an armour, stage left and a nightstand on either side of the bed. There is a pile of clothes on the bed and a dog bed on the floor. (dog bed not necessary but adds a bit of hominess to the scene.)

Mari is laying in bed stage right curled up, mark is standing beside the bed stage left folding clothes that are on the bed next to mari, Mari is facing away from him. As soon as the lights come up Mark starts in, they are obviously in the middle of an argument.

Mark

I'm done, so FUCKING done, Mari.

Mari

What the hell would you know, Mark?

Mark

Here it is, always the martyr, huh?

Mari sits up in bed

Mari

Martyr my ass!

Mark

No, no you're are right. Poor Mari.

Mari

...

Mark

The neverhome, "housewife".

Mari

Ma-

Mark

Poor Mari, with the “overprotective”, “possessive”, “controlling” bastard of a husband.

Mari

Mar-

Mark

Right, Mari? Isn't that what you are telling the town?

Mari

Mark, I-

Mark

(holding back tears) No.

Mari

Mark-

Mark

(crying) Mari, I'm done. I won't be the bad guy you want me to be. Why do I work this hard for someone that... No, it's not worth it... I loved you-

Mari

Loved?

Mark

(choking up) Yes, “loved”, you, with my whole fucking heart. All that's left of it anyway.

Mari

Mark, I don't know-

Mark

That's it, you don't know, you never bother thinking about what your words, the shit that comes out of your mouth, how that affects me. Do you know how much it hurts to go down the street and get the looks I do? Even the guys at work give me “the eye”.

Mari

Dr. Crasp says that-

Mark

Dr. Crasp can say whatever the fuck he wants. Compulsive whatever, bipolar shit. I. Don't. Care. I won't let your mental shit cost me my life.

Mari

I'm diagnosed you ass.

Mark

I know, I know! But ever since you've been "diagnosed" you've gotten worse.

After a brief pause mari inche over to the edge of the bed and places her feet down on the floor, she is taken aback from the cold floor on her feet and draws them back momentarily then proceeds to place them fully down. She keeps her back to Mark.

Mari

It's a process.

Mark

I know Mari I know, I've heard that a thousand times and for a while I tried to work with it, with YOU, but I just can't anymore. I'm not willing to risk myself for your mental shit, not now.

Mari

What am I supposed to do, huh?

Mark

I don't know.

Mari

Mark, what about us, what about me?

Mark

There! Right there! That's the issue, it's always about you Mari, always.

Mari

...

Mark

I (breath) I just don't know, I can't be your crutch anymore.

Mari

You were never a crutch.

Mark

Bullshit.

Mari turn to Mark, still sitting on the edge of the bed.

Mari

Mark-

Mark

I call bullshit, everyday I get those looks because YOU can't own up to yourself, and I won't take the fall anymore. Not until you can admit to yourself who you are and what you live with.

Mari

Mark, it's not that easy.

Mark

I know, well, actually I don't know, I can only imagine, but I have tried to understand but you won't let me. It's almost as if you don't want to let me in. I don't know what to do anymore. Do you even want me to understand?

Mari looks away

Mari

I did, do, I do want you to.

Mark

See you say that, but I just don't know.

Mari

What don't you know?

Mark

...If, if you even want to get better.

Mari lashes around

Mari

Wait, WHAT?!?!

Mark

Yes, you seem so , so... complacent. You're not the woman I married, not the woman I said "I do" to.

Mari

I'm who I have been, mental instability and all! The same crazy bitch you proposed to, the same one that said yes to YOU!

Mark

You know that that is not what I meant-

Mark tries to cross over to her but Mari stands and he stops.

Mari

No, no I don't! What the hell DO you mean?

Mark

(calm) I mean you are no longer the woman I married because you aren't fighting anymore, you have stopped trying to get better.

Mari

Fuck, you.

Mark

What?

Mari

I said, fuck you.

Mark

Mari-

Mari

No, no, it's my turn, you don't have any idea what it is like to go to a doctor and every time have to re-convince them you aren't well, just because you smile , just because you TRY! I am done trying just to be looked at with eyes that don't believe. I am done having doctors say "you?" as if I am exempt because of the way I look, where I live or who I live with! You CAN'T understand. It's like having your heart ripped out everytime, like all of a sudden what took you so long to admit to yourself, that you can't do it alone, all of a sudden you have to. And it doesn't matter how much you hurt because all that matters is everyone else's comfort, so you continue to smile, to try and push away the anguish, the feeling of betrayal and pain, the feeling of utter loneliness that just won't leave and the more you try to include others the lonelier you feel until you wonder if you'll always be alone, if you will ever get better and if you won't get better what is the point? Why keep on trying? Why fight? But I can't just end it either, so I am stuck in a state of limbo. With nothinng but lonliness and pain, so yeah, there is no FUCKING WAY you could understand.

Mari sinks onto the bed as if everything that she had escaped her. Mark crosses to her and sits on the bed next to her, but a little ways away.

Mark

Maybe I can't understand, but I want to try, for years I have been trying. I want your everything, Mari. Even the hard parts, even the imperfect parts, I just want you.

Mari

You have me, all of me, always.

Mark

Really.

Mari

It's not as easy as you think.

Mark

What isn't?

Mari

Opening up.

Mark
Why?

Mari stands, obviously uncomfortable, walks to the other side of the bed.

Mari
Why are you asking so many questions?

Mark
(raises eyebrow, waiting)

Mari
Okay! It's hard because... it's mine, mine to bear, mine to hold, mine... it's been mine since I was a kid... I know this sounds ridiculous...

Mark
I'm here for whatever you have to say.

Mari
It's ridiculous but... it's almost like an old friend.

Mark
Old friend?

Mari
Yeah, like an old comfort, it's what is what I am used to, it is what I'm comfortable with. It's safe to be sad, and hurting.

Mark
Really?

Mari
I told you it was ridiculous.

Mark stands and walks toward Mari

Mark
It is but... it makes sense.

Mari
Really?

Mark
Yeah

They both pause, Mark hugs her from behind

Mari
How did I get so lucky?

Mark
What?

Mari
How did I get so lucky, with you?

Mark
How so?

Mari
With all the shit I put you through, you still ask to understand.

Mark
Of course I would.

Mari
No, but I don't think you understand, you are an exception to the rule, not everyone would.

Mark
But I love you.

Mari
I thought you "loved" me. (hurt again by what was said earlier in the play)

Mari pulls away and they look at each other. Mark then hugs Mari

Mark

I love, loved and will love you, forever.

Mari

Really, even though I'm crazy.

Mark

You aren't crazy, you just... keep me on my toes. (smiles)

Mari

(smiling into his chest) Yeah?

Mark

Yeah.