

THE FLEA MARKET

a one-act play

by Graham Lier

CHARACTERS

BIG SIS	early 30's, loving, playful, strong-willed when she has to be
LITTLE SIS	mid 20's, uptight, cynical, anxious
BROTHER	late 20's, emotionally distant
INTRUDER	40's-50's, male (non-speaking)

SETTINGTIME

A post-apocalyptic future.

PLACE

An abandoned flea market
somewhere in America.

NOTE ON DIALOGUE: "/" indicates where next line of dialogue begins.

NOTE ON SCENE CHANGES: Scene changes should happen as quickly as possible, with blackouts lasting, ideally, no longer than 5 seconds. Any light, set, costume, and prop changes between scenes should be as simple as possible in order to easily achieve this.

SCENE [1]

(A cluttered corner of an abandoned flea market. Tall bookcases and an antique secretary line the walls, all filled with an assortment of old books, CDs, vintage knick-knacks, etcetera. A couch with a pillow and a knitted blanket. To the left of the couch is a floor lamp. In front of the couch is a low table, with a boom box on top. A rocking chair. A writing desk is visible upstage between some furniture. A short display case downstage. Everything has a price tag attached to it. The area is very disheveled. An overflowing trash can. Trash is scattered over the floors as well.)

(Lights up on LITTLE SIS lying on the couch under the blanket. It is daytime. She reads an obscure children's novel with disinterest. The boom box plays a quiet, slow tune from an old Broadway cast recording. A beat as LITTLE SIS reads. BIG SIS enters sneakily, careful not to make any noise. She holds something behind her back. She creeps behind the couch and ducks. LITTLE SIS does not notice. From behind the couch, BIG SIS holds up a Tickle Me Elmo and presses his belly. Elmo speaks. LITTLE SIS starts and violently whacks Elmo away. BIG SIS rises from behind the couch, laughing loudly. LITTLE SIS grimaces, not amused, and turns off the boom box.)

LITTLE SIS

So you found Elmo.

BIG SIS
(can't contain her amusement)

I did.

LITTLE SIS
(closes her book)

Well congrats.

BIG SIS

Another round?

LITTLE SIS
(a wicked, playful smile)

Fine. Maybe you could hide that hunting rifle in the display case upfront, then when I find it, I'll just wait for the next time you're sitting on the toilet and give you / the fright of your life.

BIG SIS
(placating)

Alright, alright, alright, alright.

(Short beat. BIG SIS picks up Elmo.)

LITTLE SIS
(returns to her book)

I'm honestly surprised you found him.

BIG SIS

Why?

LITTLE SIS
(bluntly)

I didn't think you'd want to sift through Dad's old dresser.

(Uncomfortable silence. BIG SIS looks away slowly, unconsciously hugging Elmo.)

(Blackout.)

SCENE [2]

(Morning. LITTLE SIS stands at one of the bookcases and flips through different books. BIG SIS sits on the floor near the low table and fiddles with a small wooden jewelry box.)

BIG SIS

I dreamed about Luca last night.

LITTLE SIS

(with disinterest)

Who?

BIG SIS

Luca. My boyfriend junior year.

LITTLE SIS

Oh.

BIG SIS

I think it's cause I found this.

(She holds up the box for LITTLE SIS to see.)

He gave this to me Valentine's Day that year.

LITTLE SIS

Where'd you find that?

BIG SIS

In the corner of the store with all the wicker baskets.

(She looks at the box's price tag.)

Ten dollars and fifty cents.

(Short beat.)

You know I sometimes wish Mom and Dad just gave away all our old stuff instead of trying to sell it here.

LITTLE SIS

(shrugs, still looking at books)

Meh...

(Short beat.)

BIG SIS

Luca actually broke up with me like a week after that Valentine's Day.

LITTLE SIS

(half paying attention)

Uh-huh.

(Short beat.)

BIG SIS

We were walking back home from school down our street / when we-

LITTLE SIS

(incredulous)

He broke up with you while he walked you back home from school?

BIG SIS

No this was from my dream last night.

LITTLE SIS

Mm.

BIG SIS

Anyways, we were walking home, but we found a pretty path leading to a forest. Luca held my hand tight as we followed it, both of us kicking little rocks off the path and into the grass as we went. We eventually found a cute little hammock tied between two thick trees and next thing I knew, he laid me down on it and got on top of me and fucked me so hard that we tore a hole right through the hammock's netting and fell right onto the ground beneath us.

(Awkward beat. BIG SIS glances over at LITTLE SIS, who is looking very intently into a book and sneering.)

BIG SIS (cont.)

I should have kept that to my/self.

LITTLE SIS

(stern)

Yeah you should have.

(Blackout.)

SCENE [3]

(Afternoon. BIG SIS and LITTLE SIS sit on the floor on opposite sides of the low table and play "Sorry!" BIG SIS draws a card, looks at it, moves a piece, lands on the same space as one of LITTLE SIS's pieces, and knocks it over.)

BIG SIS
Sorry!

LITTLE SIS
Stop that.

BIG SIS
What?

LITTLE SIS
Saying "Sorry!" every time you knock me over.

BIG SIS
That's how we've always done it.

LITTLE SIS
We haven't even played this since we were kids.

BIG SIS
Duh.

(Short beat.)

I just, I dunno, I thought it would be fun saying things from our childhood again. You know, for nostalgic purposes.

LITTLE SIS
I think we get enough of that already around the flea market.

BIG SIS
Yeah, I guess.

(Beat. LITTLE SIS draws a card, looks at it, and moves one of her pieces backwards four spaces.)

BIG SIS (cont.)

Shouldn't he be back soon?

LITTLE SIS

Probably.

BIG SIS

Hope so.

(They continue drawing cards and move
in turn during the following.)

And I hope he brings back bread this time. It's been a
month since he brought any.

LITTLE SIS

You know the deal with bread right now though, right? Do
you really expect him to risk his life to get you some?

BIG SIS

Well no, I was just saying it would be nice if he could
finally get some.

LITTLE SIS

(coldly)

Better not let him hear you say that.

BIG SIS

Hey / I'm not-

LITTLE SIS

Honestly, the less you complain, the more likely he'll be
to stay with us, so if I were you, I'd shut your mouth and
accept whatever he brings back like an adult.

(BIG SIS shrinks. Beat.)

...Sorry.

BIG SIS

No...

(BIG SIS smiles suddenly and reveals
the "SORRY" card she's holding.)

I'm sorry.

LITTLE SIS

God dammit!

(Short beat. They both fall into a fit of laughter. This rarely happens between the two of them; you can tell by BIG SIS's beaming smile.)

(Blackout.)

SCENE [4]

(Night. The floor lamp is on. LITTLE SIS sleeps on the couch. BIG SIS sits in the rocking chair, thinking. Short beat. A knock on a door is heard offstage. BIG SIS starts. Another knock, followed by a turning of the doorknob seven times, five knocks, and one kick at the door. BIG SIS counts each of these in her head, and becomes more relieved as they continue. She gives a small nod when they finish and settles back into the rocking chair. The door is heard opening offstage, and a moment later, BROTHER enters, wearing a ski mask, dark clothing, and holding reusable bags filled with food, toilet paper, etcetera. BROTHER stands there for a brief moment before pulling off his mask.)

BIG SIS

(happy to see him)

Hey.

BROTHER

(neutral)

Hey.

(BROTHER drops the bags on the floor.)

BIG SIS

Thanks.

BROTHER

I mean, you know.

BIG SIS

Any bread?

BROTHER
(almost immediately)

No.

(Short beat. BROTHER looks towards
LITTLE SIS.)

She asleep?

BIG SIS

Yeah.

BROTHER

K.

(BROTHER starts to walk off.)

BIG SIS
(rather suddenly)

I'll probably be up for a bit longer if you... wanna do
something.

BROTHER
Eh. I'm tired. Maybe next time.

(Beat. They both know they've had this
exact conversation verbatim before.
BROTHER finally walks off.)

BIG SIS
(calls as BROTHER walks away,
sincerely)

Thanks again, I appreciate it.

(No response. A very empty silence.)

(Blackout.)

END OF EXCERPT