

Fiasco

A (short) Play

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It's dark. Can't see dark.

A

I need to get out of here.

B

What?

A

I need to --

B

I heard you. Now?

A

I don't feel comfortable in here.

B

Before they turned the lights out would've been better.

A

That moment has passed, hasn't it?

B

They're gonna turn them on again.

A

When it starts. Then I'll never get you to leave.

B

Fine. How?

A

Uh, maybe the way we came in?

B

That's going to be difficult. The place is packed.

A

How many people do you think are in here?

B

Four, maybe five hundred.

A

That many, in this small a space? ... Wait, how is it we're the only ones talking?

B

They're all rapt with anticipation.

A

And we're not?

B

I am, but you keep interrupting.

A

Interrupting your raptness?

B

And you know how little time I get to be rapt.

A

Why did I let you talk me into to this?

B

I soooooo did not. I told you about it, and you said -- "I'm in, let's go."

A

Because I was starving.

B

Now you're not?

A

No.

B

You ate all that concession stand junk, didn't you?

A

I'm nervous.

B

Why in hell are you ... I'm sorry. What's making you nervous?

A

Come on. This is really weird. Who sells fish like this?

B

They do.

A

Who buys fish like this?

B

At the moment, four to five hundred people.

A

Four to five hundred rapt people.

B

Exactly.

A

Rapt with fish?

B

Yes.

A

Isn't it s'pose to be the fish that's rapt?

B

It might be. I know it's really freakin' fresh. Like off-the-dock fresh. Only even fresher.

A

Fresher than off the dock?

B

Yes.

A

Like it's still swimmin' 'round in schools fresh?

B

Exactly.

A

I don't believe it. Not one bit.

B

That's why I wanted you to come. Experience it. It's literally the freshest fish in the world. There's not even a close second.

A

How do you know?

B

Didn't you read ... It's all in the brochure.

A

Can't argue with that. Can we go now?

B

Fine. Do you have everything?

A

Yes.

B

OK. Let's go ... Excuse me ... I'm sorry. We just need to ... Thank you --

A

Excuse me.

B

What happened?

A

Nevermind.

B

What?

A

Fish ain't the only thing in here that's fresh.

Lights come up as A and B crawl through a window onto upstage center. As they dust off --

B

You OK?

A

Yes. Thank you.

A MASSIVE ROAR of a CROWD (way out of proportion, maybe 50,000 people) emanates from the window.

B

Guess they got started.

A

Guess so.

B

(disappointed)

...

A

We'll go next time. Stay next time. I promise.

B

They only do it once every ten years.

A

Oh ... Well. That is a shame.

B

Isn't it. What are we gonna do for dinner now?

A

You know ... I have to say, I'm really in the mood for seafood.

B

...

A

I am. Clam plate at Mickey's?

B

I love Mickey's. They literally have the freshest clam plate in the world.

A

I love you.

LIGHTS GO OUT --

B

Jesus. What now?

A

That's really weird.

B

STOP IT. STOP SHAKING THE PLANET!

Lights up. A and B are in bed under the covers.
A is awake and is shaking B --

A

Wake up.

B wakes.

A

There's something behind the wall.

B

Had the weirdest dream. We were in this theater. To buy fish.

A

Oh, Theatre of Fish. Happens in Aberdeen, Scotland once every ten years. S'pose to be amazing -- Listen! There it is again.

B

What?

A

Behind the wall. That sound.

B

Think we've got mice again?

A

Uh, only if they came back with heavy machinery.

B

... What?

BANG. CLANG. BOOM. The place SHAKES.

B jumps up out of bed.

B

What the?!

A

Told you. Don't listen to me. Listening now aren't you?

B

What the hell was that?

BANG. CLANG. BOOM.

A

Totally unacceptable. Even in a big city like Franklin.

B

Who the heck are they? Why are they trying to get in here?

A

I don't know. But they have no business. I'm gonna call our landlord tomorrow.

B

And maybe our senator.

BANG. CLANG. BOOM.

B

Let's get out of here. Go for one of our long walks. Clear our heads.

B and A exit stage and circle right back on --

Very LOUD BOOMS off in the distance. Could be bombs. Throughout, they get LOUDER.

As they walk --

A

So I said to him. If you won't do your job, I won't either.

B

You didn't?

A

The gauntlet had been thrown down.

B

No, it hadn't been thrown down -- YOU threw it down. I'm so proud of you.

A

I did. I threw it down.

BOOM. They both register it, but shake it off.

B

What did he do?

A

He laughed. I laughed. It was insane. When I walked into his office, I was ready to throttle the guy. But in that moment. In that very moment. We had a moment. It was beautiful. I felt like we really connected.

B

Wow. So it's all good?

A

Sort of. He fired me.

B

Woo Hoo. Let's celebrate.

A

Let's.

B

Where are we? We've been walking and walking and talking and I haven't even been paying attention ...

A

Covered a lot of ground, haven't we?

B and A look around to get their bearings --

B

Oh, there's The Duomo. Whoa. We ended up in Florence.

A

Never realized we were so close to Florence. Could explain Franklin's housing prices.

B

What should we do for dinner?

A

I don't know why, but ... I really have a hankering for the world's freshest ... pasta.

B

I know the perfect place. There's a trattoria near here called Mickey's.

A

Mickey's? I've heard they literally have the freshest pasta in the world.

B

I love you.

They arrive at Mickey's and sit at a table.

BOMBS continue.

Lights FLICKER and go out.

B

They're really getting close, aren't they?

A

Mm ... Oh my, where'd the time go?

B

Chianti and good company will do that. Look, the sun's rising. Really fast --

LIGHTS UPS.

Bombs have stopped. They sit there. Thinking.

A

It's gut wrenching, isn't it?

B

I'm afraid of what's going to happen.

A

Me too. Feels like things have escalated to a whole new level.

B

I don't understand how they can contemplate these things. Let alone do them. Do they even have the slightest inkling of the harm they're doing?

A

Or what's important in life? I mean, when you sweep away all the daily garbage, what's really important? Do they have any notion at all?

B

I don't know. But we're gonna show 'em.

A
You think?

B
I know.

A
Did you read it in a brochure?

B
A brochure? ... How did you know about the brochure?

A
What are you talking about?

B
Nevermind. No, no brochure. I just know that --

A
We are.

B
We are. We've got each other. Our friends. And we're strong. Stronger than we know.

A
Stronger than they know.

B
We are, aren't we?

A
Yup.

B
Should we get another bottle of Chianti or switch to coffee?

A
What a beautiful day. Not a cloud in the sky.

END SCENE