

MCMURPHY: Well . . . yeah.  
 CHIEF BROMDEN: It don't make sense.  
 MCMURPHY: I didn't say it didn't make sense.  
 CHIEF BROMDEN: Sh-h! *Raises his head, moves toward the windows, listening: Hear 'em? McMurphy comes to him, listens. From the sky the wild, gabbling cry again.*  
 MCMURPHY: Canada honkers flyin' south. Gonna be an early winter, Chief. Look, there they go. Right across the moon!  
 CHIEF BROMDEN, *gazing skyward, chanting softly:* Wire, brier, limber lock . . .  
 MCMURPHY: Huh?  
 CHIEF BROMDEN: It's a old children's rhyme. My grand-momma taught it to me . . .  
 MCMURPHY: Oh, lord, yes, I remember! You play it with your fingers. Hold out your hand, Chief. *Ticking off fingers, chanting:* Wire, brier, limber lock—  
 CHIEF BROMDEN: Three geese in a flock.  
 MCMURPHY: One flew east—  
 CHIEF BROMDEN: One flew west—  
 MCMURPHY: An' one flew over the cuckoo's nest!  
 CHIEF BROMDEN: O-U-T spells out—  
 MCMURPHY: Goose swoops down and plucks you out! *They embrace, laugh happily; then the Chief sobers.*  
 CHIEF BROMDEN: McMurphy?  
 MCMURPHY: Yeah?  
 CHIEF BROMDEN: You gonna crawfish? *McMurphy doesn't answer.* I mean, you gonna back down?  
 MCMURPHY, *turning away:* Aw . . . what's the difference?  
 CHIEF BROMDEN: Are you?  
 MCMURPHY, *his eyes light on the panel. Brightly:* Hey, remember when I tried to lift that thing? I bet you could do it.  
 CHIEF BROMDEN, *shrinking back:* I'm too little.  
 MCMURPHY: Whyn't you give it a try?  
 CHIEF BROMDEN: I'm not big enough!  
 MCMURPHY: How do ya know? That'd be one sure way to find out. *Giving up, cheerfully:* Well, when you're ready, lemme make book on it. Hoo boy, would *that* be a killin'!  
 CHIEF BROMDEN: McMurphy. *McMurphy pauses.* Make me big again.  
 MCMURPHY: Why, hell, Chief . . . looks to me like you growed half a foot already!

CHIEF BROMDEN, *shaking his head:* How can I be big if you ain't? How can anybody? *He exits into the dorm. McMurphy is motionless a moment, then follows.*

## SHORT EYES

by Miguel Piñero

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### ACT II

The setting is the dayroom in the House of Detention. The characters are the inmates (mostly Puerto Rican and black) and guards of one section. The play depicts racial encounters, personal encounters, and the self-encounters of men facing their own yearnings, frustrations, rages, and fears. The tenuous stability of the section is disrupted with the arrival of Clark Davis. Clark is white and middle-class. He was arrested for raping a young girl, a crime that, even among these violent and hardened men, is looked on with particular revulsion. He is badly abused and threatened by both inmates and guards. Juan, a Puerto Rican inmate, is the one person who shows him any compassion, and Clark confides to Juan his own self-hatred and all the details of his sordid sexual proclivities.

In the following scene Clark has just returned from the lineup. He believes that he has a chance of being released and asks Juan not to divulge anything from their personal conversation. Juan is faced with the dilemma of breaking the confidence of this pathetic man or allowing him to go back outside "to scar up some more little girls' minds."

JUAN: What you want to see me about, Clark?

CLARK: Look, what I told you earlier . . . er . . . that between me and you . . . like, I don't know why I even said that, just . . . just that . . . man, like everything was just coming down on me . . . My wife . . . she was at the hospital . . . She . . . she didn't

even look at me . . . once, not once . . . Please . . . don't let it out . . . please . . . I'll really go for help this time . . . I promise.

**JUAN:** What happened at the P.I. stand?

**CLARK:** Nothing . . . nothing . . . happened . . .

**JUAN:** Did she identify you? Did she?

**CLARK:** I don't know. I didn't see anybody. They put me next to a bunch of the other men about my size, weight . . . You—the whole lineup routine. I didn't see anybody or anything but the people there and this voice that kept asking me to turn around to say, "Hello, little girl." That's all.

**JUAN:** Nothing else?

**CLARK:** No.

**JUAN:** You mean they didn't make you sign some papers?

**CLARK:** No.

**JUAN:** Was there a lawyer for you there? Somebody from the courts?

**CLARK:** Juan, I really don't know . . . I didn't see anybody . . . and they didn't let me speak to anyone at all . . . They hustled me in and hustled me right out . . .

**JUAN:** That means you have a chance to beat this case . . . Did they tell you what they are holding you for?

**CLARK:** No . . . no one told me anything.

**JUAN:** If they are rushing it—the P.I.—that could mean they only are waiting on the limitation to run out.

**CLARK:** What does that all mean?

**JUAN:** What it means is that you will get a chance to scar up some more little girls' minds.

**CLARK:** Don't say that, Juan. Please don't think like that. Believe me, if I thought I couldn't seek help after this ordeal, I would have never—I mean, I couldn't do that again.

**JUAN:** How many times you've said that in the street and wind up molesting some kid in the park.

**CLARK:** Believe me, Juan . . . please believe me. I wouldn't say more.

**JUAN:** Why should I?

**CLARK:** Cause I told you the truth before. I told you what I haven't told God.

**JUAN:** That's because God isn't in the House of Detention.

**CLARK:** Please, Juan, why are you being this way? What have I done to you?

**JUAN:** What have you done to me? What you've done to me?

It's what you've done, period. It's the stand that you are forcing me to take.

**CLARK:** You hate me.

**JUAN:** I don't hate you. I hate what you've done. What you are capable of doing. What you might do again.

**CLARK:** You sound like a judge.

**JUAN:** In this time and place I am your judge.

**CLARK:** No . . . no. You are not . . . And I'm sick and tired of people judging me.

**JUAN:** Man, I don't give a fuck what you're sick and tired about. What you told about yourself was done because of the pressure. People say and do weird things under pressure.

**CLARK:** I'm not used to this.

**JUAN:** I don't care what you're used to. I got to make some kind of thing about you.

**CLARK:** No, you don't have to do anything. Just let me live.

**JUAN:** Let you live?

**CLARK:** I can't make this . . . this kind of life. I'll die.

**JUAN:** Motherfucker, don't cry on me.

**CLARK:** Cry . . . why shouldn't I cry . . . why shouldn't I feel sorry for myself . . . I have a right to . . . I have some rights . . . and when these guys get back from the sick call . . . I'm gonna tell them what the captain said to me, that if anybody bothers me to tell him . . .

**JUAN:** Then you will die.

**CLARK:** I don't care one way or the other. Juan, when I came here I already had been abused by the police . . . threatened by a mob the newspaper created . . . Then the judge, for my benefit and the benefit of society, had me committed to observation. Placed in an isolated section of some nut ward . . . viewed by interns and visitors like some abstract object, treated like a goddamn animal monster by a bunch of inhuman, incompetent, third-rate, unqualified, unfit psychopaths calling themselves doctors.

**JUAN:** I know the scene.

**CLARK:** No, you don't know . . . electros—sedatives—hypnosis—therapy . . . humiliated by some crank nurses who strapped me to my bed and played with my penis to see if it would get hard for "big girls like us."

**JUAN:** Did it?

**CLARK:** Yeah . . . yes, it did.

**JUAN:** My father used to say he would fuck 'em from eight to eighty, blind, cripple, and/or crazy.

**CLARK:** Juan, you are the only human being I've met.

**JUAN:** Don't try to leap me up . . . cause I don't know how much of a human being I would be if I let you make the sidewalk. But there's no way I could stop you short of taking you off the count.

## LUV

by Murray Schisgal

### ACT I

Harry Berlin is miserable. He is a beaten man, disillusioned with life, despairing over its senselessness. Harry is so miserable that he has decided to end it all this very night by jumping off a bridge. Along comes Milt Manville, Harry's old school chum of fifteen years ago. Milt is successful, wealthy, well tailored, confident—but also miserable. He is madly in love, but not with his wife. So he has arranged to meet his wife on the bridge intending to kill her. While waiting for her, Milt notices Harry's coat on a trash basket; then he spots Harry by the railing and recognizes him. Out of this chance meeting Milt hatches a scheme to pair Harry with his wife; thus, in one bold stroke releasing both men from their unhappiness.

The following is the opening scene of the play. Harry writes a brief note, puts it on the railing, and climbs up.

**MILT, with a sense of recognition, moving up to him:** Is it . . . *Harry turns, stares down at him.* No. Harry Berlin! I thought I just caught a glimpse of you and I said to myself, "I bet that's Harry Berlin. I just bet that's Harry Berlin." And sure enough, it's old Harry Berlin himself. *Taking Harry's hand, shaking it.* How have you been doing, Harry? What's been happening?

*Harry squats and slowly comes down from railing.* It must be . . . why, at least fifteen years since I saw you last. We had that party after graduation, I said, "Keep in touch," you said, "I'll call you in a few days," and that's the last I heard of you. Fifteen years.

**HARRY, feigning recognition:** Is it fifteen years?

**MILT:** Fifteen years.

**HARRY:** Hard to believe.

**MILT:** Fifteen years next month as a matter of fact.

**HARRY:** Time sure flies.

**MILT:** It sure does.

**HARRY:** Fifteen years next month.

**MILT:** Fifteen years.

**HARRY, slight pause:** Who are you?

**MILT:** Milt! Milt Manville! Your old classmate at Polyarts U.

**HARRY, grabbing his hand:** That's right! Milt! Milt Manville! *They embrace, laugh joyfully. Harry puts on jacket, then crumples note, throws it over railing as Milt speaks.*

**MILT:** Say, Harry, I've been doing wonderful for myself; terrific. Got into the brokerage business during the day: stocks, bonds, securities, you know. The money's just pouring in; doing fabulous. Got into second-hand bric-a-brac and personal accessories at night: on my own, great racket, easy buck. And, say, I got myself married. Oh, yeah, I went and did it, finally did it. Ellen. A wonderful, wonderful girl. Do anything for her. A home in the suburbs, no kidding, thirty-five thousand, and that's not counting the trees, big tremendous trees; you should see them. Hey. Look at this watch: Solid gold. Twenty-two carats. *Opening his jacket to reveal garish yellow lining:* Notice the label? *Unbuttons shirt.* Silk underwear. Imported. Isn't that something? *Lifts arm.* Hey, smell this, go ahead, smell it. *Harry is reluctant to come too close, Milt presses his head to his armpit, laughing:* Not bad, huh? *Solemnly:* Well, how's it been going, Harry? Let's hear.

**HARRY, mournfully:** Awful, Milt; awful. It couldn't be worse. I'm at the end of the line. Everything's falling apart.

**MILT, perplexed:** I don't get it.

**HARRY:** The world, Milt. People. Life. Death. The old questions. I'm choked with them.

**MILT, still perplexed:** Oh.

**HARRY, arm around him, leads him forward right:** I must