

OCEAN FRONT

A Short Play / 10 min Run Time

By Tom Cavanaugh

TIME: The Present

PLACE: On the Boardwalk in New Jersey

CAST OF CHARACTERS

MARK - A Gay Male over 30, Any Race

GIO - A Gay Male over 30, Any Race

SYNOPSIS: It's been 11 years since they were married and a couple goes to the beach to find the bench with commemorative plaque to celebrate the event when secrets and truths are told on their anniversary.

SCENE 1: A BENCH ON A BOARDWALK

The bench faces the audience and has a small plaque on it. The sound of the waves is heard, along with seagulls, a voice is heard yelling from off Stage Left.

MARK

(Offstage yell)

I think it's over here.

Another voice yells from off Stage Right.

GIO

WHAT?

MARK

Over here!

Mark enters. He is a male in his early fifties. Mark carries flowers and looks for Gio.

MARK

I think it's over here!

Mark yells and then bends over to read the plaque on the bench. He messes with his glasses to see closer.

Gio enters flustered.

GIO

I couldn't hear you!

MARK

(Very loud)

I said!!! I think it's over here!

GIO

What are you yelling for?

Mark stands up and looks at Gio.

MARK

I think it's this one.

GIO

They said "North of Brighton Ave.

Silence

GIO

This isn't north of Brighton.

MARK

Yes, it is.

GIO

No, this is right in front of Brighton Ave. This isn't north of the street. It is directly in front of the street.

MARK

(While reading the plaque.)

This is it.

GIO

Really?

MARK

(Stands and gives a look)

I have no reason to lie.

GIO

But, this isn't north of Brighton. Took two years to put it up, they should have the right location!

Mark takes out a tissue and cleans off the plaque.

MARK

For fifteen hundred dollars, someone should keep it clean.

GIO

Is it spelled correctly?

MARK

And for fifteen hundred dollars, they should give us the exact location it happened at, as requested.

GIO

But, did they get the names right?

MARK

I asked for it to be exactly where it all happened and they promised at first, but,,,

GIO

(To himself)

Adios mio...

(Then LOUD!)

IS EVERYTHING SPELLED RIGHT?

MARK

You don't have to yell.

GIO

You're going on about the money again. Always about the money!

MARK

No, that's not what I said and I was not going on about the money. I was going on about the location.

GIO

They said "First Available" and this is it! "First Available!"

MARK

That's not what they said originally.

GIO

Well, what did they say then?

MARK

I told you! They said we could have the exact location that I requested. Then they changed it. All they want is the money.

GIO

What's the difference? We asked for a bench on the boardwalk, I mean does it really matter if it's here or on the corner of Ocean and Ludlow.

MARK

Ocean and Brighton.

GIO

But, it happened at Ocean and Ludlow.

MARK

No, it happened in the North Pavilion at the corner of Ocean and Ludlow.

GIO

That's what I said.

MARK

Well, you said it wrong. It happened IN the Pavilion not ON the corner.

GIO

Does it really matter.

MARK

Oh my God! It doesn't matter to you?

GIO

That's not what I said!

MARK

It's not what you said, it's how you said it and you said it doesn't matter to you.

GIO

It doesn't matter as in regard to this bench.

MARK

We got married in the Pavilion. It doesn't matter where we got married?

GIO

It's been eleven years...a long eleven years. Everything matters!

MARK

A long eleven years? What's that supposed to mean?

GIO

Lately, the eleven years has feels long!

MARK

You are soooo trying to piss me off today and are sooo wearing on my last nerve.

GIO

I'm not trying to.

MARK

Yes you are. In fact, the last few months, you've been so different, I don't know who I'm married to anymore.

GIO

Lucky for you, cause I know exactly who I'm married to.

MARK

See like that! Two years now you've been making these snide little comments. You never made snippy, shitty little comments like that to me before! What are you trying to say?

GIO

You know what I'm saying. Don't play games. It's perfectly clear.

MARK

Not it itsn't. You never say what you mean anymore. What does it all mean? Stop giving mixed signals and just say what you mean!

GIO

(Very serious)

What it means is... I want a divorce.

MARK

Yeah, well people in hell want ice wa.... Wait a minute... you want a divorce?

GIO

I was gonna wait, but... yeah... I've been thinking about it for a long time and....

MARK

Long time means the last two years.

GIO

We're not really getting along anymore and... I don't think this is working out and...

MARK

This isn't happening. This can't be happening.

GIO

People get divorced all the time.

MARK

Not today they don't. Not on the day they finally finish your commemorative bench they don't!

GIO

Everything changes, buddy.

MARK

Don't call me, buddy,

GIO

You used to like when I called you, buddy.

MARK

Not like this.

GIO

Why not?

MARK

Cause "THIS" is not supposed to be happening!

GIO

Why not?

MARK

Because we worked so hard to get here!

GIO

Fourteen percent of all male-male marriages end in divorce.

MARK

"Male - male"? You make it sound like new route at the post office.

GIO

They say it that way as to not get it confused with....

MARK

I really don't give "Male-male" damn, why they say it!

GIO

It's higher in lesbian marriages.

MARK

I didn't marry a lesbian. I married you!

Mark sits on the bench and very quietly asks.

MARK

What about the condo?

GIO

David says....

MARK
David?

GIO
Yeah, David.

MARK
The BLOOD SUCKING LAWYER knew about my divorce before I knew about my divorce?

GIO
He's not a blood sucker.

MARK
BLOOD wasn't really the first word that came to mind... I was being nice.

GIO
That's not right.

MARK
Are you fucking him?

GIO
What?

MARK
You've always had a thing for him.

GIO
For David Weener?

MARK
Once a dick always a dick.

GIO
He's my lawyer.

MARK
Was OUR lawyer... now he's YOUR lawyer.... Who am I supposed to get?

GIO
I don't know. I never thought about that.

MARK
Cause you never think about anyone but you! It's all about you! Mister Me, Me, MEEEEEE!

Mark starts to cry.

GIO

Stop that. Please... stop that.

Mark cries louder and looks away.

GIO

Stop that right now! DO NOT DO THIS TO ME!

MARK

See... "Don't do this to me" Even my pain is all about you.

GIO

No, it's not.

MARK

This whole thing is all about you and only has ever been about you. Even you telling me now, it's all your way. No consideration for my feelings, my pain.

GIO

It's not like that. It just came out.

MARK

"Just came out"... that's a term irresponsible men used to use when they revealed their true sexuality!

GIO

Huh?

MARK

Forget it. It's over your head. Everything seems to be over your head including how to properly ask for a divorce, NOT THAT YOU'RE ASKING!

GIO

You always make me feel stupid!

MARK

I do not.

GIO

Yes, you do! You have this nasty, condescending way of talking down to me, like I'm stupid or something.

MARK

You feel stupid? Good! Cause I feel, humiliated!

Silence.

I'm sor...

GIO

Don't even try apologizing.

MARK

But, I am sorry.

GIO

There's a pause and then Gio starts to walk away.

What do we do about this?

MARK

What?

GIO

The bench.

MARK

Gio thinks about it and smirks.

I don't know. Is everything spelled correctly? Cause if it's wrong we can get a refund.

GIO

Mark stands up and reads the plaque out loud.

"Mark and Gio were..."

MARK

God, don't read it out loud.

GIO

Why? You afraid to hear the words? "Mark and Gio were married on this boardwalk with the sun, sand, ocean and love on August seventh, two-thousand-seven... Now and Forever."

MARK

Is my name spelled right?

GIO

GIO! Really?

MARK

GIO

If it's spelled wrong we can get the money back!

MARK

That's all you're worried about?

GIO

No... but...

Mark sits on the bench and stares straight away.

MARK

Just go.

GIO

What?

MARK

Leave. Just leave.

GIO

I'm sorry.

Gio walks away slowly.

GIO

I just...

Gio turns back to Mark and goes to say something, but stops himself and walks away.

MARK

Now and forever... now... now? Now what?

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END