

Love is a Blue Tick Hound

AND OTHER REMEDIES FOR THE COMMON ACHE



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by
**Audrey
Cefaly**

SAMUEL FRENCH

FOUR AWARD-WINNING ONE-ACTS

strong roles for women · flexible casting · simple set requirements
may be performed as a single evening of theater or individually

"Cefaly makes her characters rich and mixed-up enough for us to build some real affection for them."

– *Washington Post*

"Unflinchingly honest... Cefaly's writing is richly-layered, creating compelling characters that must balance love and heartache, the safe with the unfamiliar."

– *DC Metro Theatre Arts*

"Cefaly writes with sympathy and a finely-sharpened wit."

– *Broadway World*

There is a state of inertia — a kind of reckless apathy — that is worse than death itself. A place where souls go to die, even as we stand back and allow it: a thankless job, a bad marriage, a dysfunctional family. And although we are not truly "stuck," we often convince ourselves that we are, through some idea of wholeness, an idea of our own creation, an idea that may very well be full of holes. Getting out requires math (the hard kind): Why do we settle... and what is the full cost of leaving? These are the central questions in LOVE IS A BLUE TICK HOUND. Through four intimate duets — FIN & EUBA, CLEAN, THE GULF, STUCK — we witness all the many facets of love as the pairings form, flounder and fall apart:



FIN & EUBA – 2 f / Exterior Set / Run Time: 25 Min

Winner of over a dozen festivals, including the 2006 Strawberry One-Act Festival (New York premiere). *Fin and Euba inhabit a suffocating world. Big dreams, small town prospects. As is their ritual, they sit out on the porch this late Autumn night, watching the cars go by... drinking, bitching, and planning their escape. A great choice for high school and college productions!*



CLEAN – 1 f, 1m / Interior Set / Run Time: 25 Min

Winner of 3 one-act festivals. New York Premiere: Emerging Artists Theatre's EATFest (2011). *Lina, a worn out waitress, is having the 'worst day of her life.' She and Roberto, a quiet, unassuming dishwasher, and one who has admired her from afar, sit alone in the diner at midnight and share stories about their lonely lives.*



THE GULF – 2 f / Exterior Set / Run Time: 25 Min

Winner of the 2015 Samuel French Off Off Broadway Short Play Festival (New York premiere). *On a quiet summer evening, somewhere down in the Alabama Delta, Kendra and Betty troll the flats looking for red fish. After Betty begins diagnosing Kendra's dead-end life with career picks from What Color is Your Parachute, their routine fishing excursion takes a violent turn. Themes: LGBT*



STUCK – 1 f, 1m / Interior Set / Run Time: 25 Min

Winner of 3 festivals including the 2011 Eastern States One-Act Festival. *Bob and Betty are out on their second date when things go terrible wrong. Eager for acceptance, Bob pretends to be more than he is. Betty, new to the world of dating, struggles to calibrate as she lurches forward into the unknown.*

SAMUEL FRENCH

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A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION

**SAMUEL
FRENCH**
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LOVE IS A BLUE TICK HOUND first premiered in 2016 at Birmingham's Terrific New Theatre (Tam DeBolt, Artistic Director) in the author's home state of Alabama in 2016. It was produced by Sandra Taylor, Jim Gordy, and Carolyn Messina. The Production Stage Manager was Cari Oliver and the Technical Director was Kathleen Crawford Jensen. The cast and directors were as follows:

FIN & EUBA

Directed by John McGinnis

FIN Peggy Vanek-Titus
EUBA Donna Thornton

CLEAN

Directed by Beth Eusey

LINA Carolyn Messina
ROBERTO John McGinnis

STUCK

Directed by Alan Litsey

BOB Barry Austin
MAGGIE Jennifer Salvant

THE GULF

Directed by Tam DeBolt

KENDRA Carolyn Messina
BETTY Rebecca Yeager

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AUTHOR'S NOTES

ON STORIES OF HEALING

There exists a state of inertia—a kind of reckless apathy—that is worse than death itself. A place where souls go to die, even as we stand back and allow it: a thankless job, a bad marriage, a dysfunctional family. And although we are not truly “stuck,” we often convince ourselves that we are, through some idea of wholeness, an idea of our own creation, an idea that may very well be full of holes. Getting out requires math (the hard kind): Why do we settle...and what is the full cost of leaving? These are the central questions in *Love Is A Blue Tick Hound*. Through four intimate duets—*Fin & Euba*, *Clean*, *The Gulf*, and *Stuck*—we witness all the many facets of love as the pairings form, flounder and fall apart. These pieces are my founding documents, so to speak. They are connected thematically and represent a sort of literal rendering of how I came to know myself as an artist.

ON AGE RANGES

I have devoted my writing life to creating challenging roles for both women and men. Although the characters in these one-acts may be played by people of any age or ethnicity, there is a certain heartache known only to those who have been scarred and kicked around by life. I strongly urge casting directors to consider actors of all ages, shapes and sizes for the roles in my plays.

ON SILENCE

When a text is stripped to its essence, it returns the gift of tension. Much of the story that would otherwise be inaudible reveals itself in these quiet moments. I strive to create dialogue that is free from extraneous noise and filled with the richness of silence and shadow. Listen carefully as you read these plays and you will notice that the characters—and the elements of the worlds that surround them—assert themselves in the hushed and quiet moments: the call of a distant factory whistle or the sound of cars driving by on the lonely highway in *Fin & Euba*; the deafening calm that follows the big fight scene in *The Gulf*; the tender story of the Little Tree in *Stuck*; and the delicate moments in *Clean* just after the journal is discovered. These stories are not to be rushed. Directors of my material should make note of the quiet moments and the beats, not as throwaway stage directions, but as an indicator that the silence is yet another character in the narrative—and that it has something to say.

ON INCLUSION

As a playwright—and as a member of the human race—I believe I am the best reflection of myself when I am championing the under-represented. I value, and so encourage, diversity and inclusion, both

as a product and as a practice. By product, I mean my body of work. Thematically, the product often deals outright with elements of diversity. Additionally, in practice, casting, staging, and production decisions can and should reflect diversity whenever possible. I encourage flexibility in casting, especially with age-range and ethnicity. Herein, whenever explicit staging or production elements would preclude production or impede creativity, reasonable “work-arounds” and innovative approaches are encouraged.

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FIN & EUBA

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FIN & EUBA was first produced in Silver Spring, Maryland, where it won the 2003 Silver Spring Stage One-Act Festival. It subsequently won the Maryland One-Act Festival and the Eastern States One-Act Festival that same season. The production was directed by Michael Kharfen and the cast was as follows:

EUBA Erika Imhoof
FIN Audrey Cefaly

FIN & EUBA later debuted in New York where it won the 2006 Strawberry One-Act Festival. The play was directed by Joseph Holmgren and the cast was as follows:

EUBA Carolyn Messina
FIN Audrey Cefaly

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CHARACTERS

EUBA: A woman of any age and ethnicity; quiet; a follower.

FIN: A woman of any age and ethnicity; self-assured; dry and gritty.

SETTING

The yard of an old boarding house in the deep South.

TIME

Autumn, late evening.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Fin and Euba are poor and scrappy. They say and do things that may seem surreal or comical, but in all things there is a truth to their ways. They are not *caricatures*. That is to say, they are very real people with real problems. Every effort should be made to identify their core beliefs and to portray them honestly.

STAGING

The below elements are not a requirement for staging. Reasonable workarounds and text edits are encouraged to meet the needs of the individual production. Please submit any edit requests to Samuel French for prior approval.

Alcohol, Smoking, Open Flame

(SETTING: The yard of an old boarding house with an abundance of tacky yard art, gnomes and all things ridiculous. The house overlooks both a lonely highway and, in the distance, a paper mill. A porch light is visible near an area that represents the house.)

(AT RISE: EUBA exits the house onto the porch. She goes through her nightly ritual of retrieving an old coffee can from under the porch and situating herself in a lawn chair so she can light a cigarette. She sorts through a small stack of mail. A letter draws her attention. She hides it hastily as FIN enters the yard.)

FIN. Hey.

EUBA. Hey.

FIN. Can I bum one?

(EUBA passes her the pack.)

Where is she?

EUBA. Same as always. Back in the back watching Home Shoppin'.

FIN. God. Ain't she got enough of them creepy critters?

EUBA. They keep disappearing. She keeps buyin' more.

(FIN points to a gnome and looks to EUBA for an explanation.)

It's new. Buddy.

FIN. Buddy? They have names? Gross.

(They stare out at the highway. An occasional car speeds by.)

It's gettin' cold.

EUBA. Yeah.

FIN. Don't you think it's gettin' cold?

EUBA. Yeah, it's gettin' cold.

(silence)

FIN. Bernice told me you got a letter in mail-call today.

(beat)

From *Life Magazine*?

EUBA. Bernice talks too much.

FIN. Well, ain't you gonna tell me what it says? You been waitin' for that letter since June.

EUBA. No.

FIN. No?

EUBA. I ain't read it.

FIN. Why not?

EUBA. Personal reasons.

FIN. What?

EUBA. Private reasons.

FIN. Oooh. Oh, I see. Okay. Alright. That's fine...you don't want to tell me.

EUBA. Good.

FIN. Your best friend.

EUBA. Yup.

FIN. The only person you could trust in the whole wide world.

EUBA. Yup.

FIN. But you don't want to tell me –

EUBA. Nope.

(silence)

FIN. Shoulda worn my jacket.

EUBA. Mnnn hmn.

FIN. Two weeks till Thanksgiving, you believe that?

EUBA. Double shifts again next week.

FIN. You're kiddin'?!

EUBA. Fat Charlie told Thelma 'n' Thelma told me.

FIN. Good! I need the money.

EUBA. I need sleep more than I need the money.

FIN. That's the truth.

(beat)

I heard something, but you ain't gon' like it.

EUBA. What?

FIN. Miss Vera's fixin' to raise the rent next month.

EUBA. Where'd you hear that?!

FIN. Bernice. Said she overheard her talkin' about it on the phone to Brother Herbert.

EUBA. Shit.

FIN. Yup.

EUBA. How much?

FIN. *(through an exhale of cigarette smoke)* I don't know.

(pause)

EUBA. You know I'd move in a heartbeat.

FIN. Me too!

EUBA. Too many rules.

FIN. I know it!

EUBA. Better not let her see you smokin' out here. She'll kick us out for sure.

(FIN blows a defiant puff of smoke toward the house.)

FIN. Let's do it.

EUBA. What?

FIN. Move.

EUBA. You're crazy.

FIN. I'm serious!

EUBA. It's too far, Fin. The next rooming house is two miles down. That's way too far to walk to work.

FIN. Lou Anne lives down there at Scooter's. We could ride in with her. And he ain't have no rules, neither, except cash only.

EUBA. Cash only?

FIN. Cash only. And no pets.

EUBA. No pets?

FIN. No pets.

EUBA. What about a fish?

(beat)

Could I have a fish?

FIN. I bet you could have a fish.

EUBA. Maybe I'd like a fish.

FIN. What, like a goldfish?

EUBA. No, one of them pretty ones, with the pretty colors.

FIN. Oh yeah! I like them. Fish are good.

(beat)

What do you think?

EUBA. I don't know.

FIN. I'll call Scooter tomorrow.

EUBA. *I don't know.*

FIN. We could think on it.

EUBA. Yeah...

FIN. Let's just think on it.

EUBA. Okay.

FIN. We'll just think on it. That's what we'll do.

EUBA. *(trying to close the subject)* Okay. Let's think on it.

FIN. *(overlapping)* Okay.

(beat)

I'm thinkin'.

(silence)

EUBA. We got any beer?

FIN. Hangin' off the dock out back!

(FIN exits.)

EUBA. *(calling)* You better hope she don't find it.

FIN. I hope she does!

(EUBA pulls out the unopened letter and holds it, contemplating.)

EUBA. *(to herself)* Stupid.

(EUBA looks at Buddy, who is staring back at her.)

(to Buddy) Shut up.

(EUBA hides the note as FIN returns with the beer.)

FIN. Shiiiiittt, these are cold!

EUBA. Well what do you expect, pond's about froze over.

(FIN hands EUBA a beer.)

Damn!!

FIN. I told you.

FIN. Man...there's nothin' better!!

EUBA. Nope.

FIN. I love a good cold beer.

EUBA. *Really cold...*

FIN. You OK?

EUBA. Yup.

FIN. Ice headache?

EUBA. Yup.

FIN. Well drink some more, you'll be alright.

(A factory whistle is heard in the distance.)

BOTH. 10 o'clock.

FIN. They got a new foreman comin' in next week.

EUBA. Where's Lila?

FIN. Fat Charlie sent her home. She couldn't keep up.

EUBA. When's the baby due?

FIN. Any day.

EUBA. How's she look?

FIN. She looks good. She looks real good. *Big.*

EUBA. I miss havin' her on my shift.