

SKID MARKS

A short play by

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SKID MARKS

CHARACTERS:

Kelly

Mid-20s. Attractive, in a panic.

Jim

Early-20s. Kelly's brother. Groggy.

COSTUMES:

Kelly wears jeans, a white t-shirt, and a men's flannel shirt. At the start of the play, Jim wears pajama bottoms.

SETTING:

Jim's apartment, littered with the remains of a bachelor party. Beer cans, poker chips, and several pizza boxes are present.

TIME:

About 4:00 AM.

In the darkness there is a frantic knock. It is joined by KELLY's voice.

KELLY

(off) Jim? Jim, open up. It's me.

There is the sound of someone walking, followed by a loud thump. We hear footsteps crossing the stage.

JIM

Ah, shit! Shit shit shit!

KELLY

(off) Jim? Jim, are you okay?

The lights come up. JIM, disheveled and freshly awoken, is leaning on the wall next to the front door, massaging his foot.

JIM

No. Who is this?

KELLY

(off) It's Kelly.

JIM

No, it's not.

KELLY

(off) Yes, it is! Let me in!

JIM

No, it isn't, because Kelly's getting married in...

He checks his wrist... no watch. He looks around for a clock... there isn't one.

In VERY SOON, and she wouldn't be at my door an hour after the bachelor party ended. My sister's smarter than that. You don't fool me, imposter!

KELLY

(off) Jim!

JIM opens the door. KELLY bursts in. She doesn't seem at all tired.

Hi.

JIM

Forgive the mess. Is it bad luck to see the remains of the bachelor party, like the groom seeing the dress?

KELLY

I don't give a shit.

JIM

Keep your voice down. There's... a guy passed out in the spare room. Everyone just left a few... minutes... hours ago... What time is it?

KELLY

I don't know. About fourish.

JIM

Jesus.

KELLY

Maybe earlier. I don't know. Don't you have a clock in here?

JIM

Just my watch, which is...uh...somewhere. I used to have a real clock... It broke, or ran out of batteries, or someone stole it... I don't remember right now.

KELLY

Is that a guy thing?

JIM

I don't remember right now because you haven't let me reach a hang-over yet, I'm still drunk.

KELLY

No, the total lack of preparedness. Missing essential home items like a clock. Or an iron.

JIM

That's why you're here, you need to borrow my iron?

KELLY
Got anything to eat?

JIM
Look around. You can eat whatever you find.

KELLY
Salsa... no chips... half-eaten Ho-Ho... Okay, salsa it is. Am I to eat this salsa with a spoon? All by itself?

JIM
Just drink your salsa and go. Do you want to look like shit in your pictures?

KELLY
That's just it. I don't know if I want to get married anymore.

JIM
(pause) What?

KELLY
I don't know—

JIM
Okay, I guess I heard you... Are you fucking kidding?

KELLY
No.

JIM
Jesus. So when'd you arrive at this decision?

KELLY
I haven't arrived at anything.

JIM
Cold feet?

KELLY
Don't trivialize it.

JIM
Well, fuck it, fun conversation, but you don't get to back out at this point. So forget it. Go home and sleep.

KELLY

Even if I don't want to marry him?

JIM

Even then. Get out of here. Go away. I've got to get back to bed, and I'm going to pretend that this was a dream.

KELLY

This isn't about you, Jim.

JIM

The hell it isn't. I'll be in those pictures, too. I don't wanna look like Frankenstein.

KELLY

Frankenstein's monster.

JIM

Needing to be right all the time is a sickness.

KELLY retrieves her cell phone from her purse.

JIM

Who are you calling?

KELLY

Everybody. The wedding's off.

JIM wrestles the phone away from KELLY and ends the call. He opens a pizza box and tosses the phone inside. Shuts the box.

JIM

Are you out of your mind? It's four a.m.

KELLY

Exactly. I have to call this off now, before everyone wakes up and starts putting on tuxedos. It's the only honest thing to do.

JIM

It's the insane thing to do.

KELLY

How can I go through with this if I know it's wrong?

JIM

Look, princess, the hall's been rented, two hundred people are coming, there's no backing out. No way. Plus Mom'd kill you.

KELLY

But—

JIM

Dead. Dead! Do you want to be dead?

KELLY

But, Jim—

JIM

What part of dead confuses you?

KELLY

So what am I supposed to do?! Marry Sam and just act like everything is okay?

JIM

Voice down. Yes. You put on your pretty dress, you go to your wedding, and when it's all over, you realize how crazy you've behaved and we both have a great, big laugh about it.

KELLY

I'm not being crazy.

JIM

Look, it's not all about you, okay?

KELLY

It's MY wedding.

JIM

Not really. It's also Sam's wedding, also Mom's wedding, also everybody's wedding. Don't you get it? You've created this monster and it no longer belongs to you.

KELLY

Shit.

JIM
Yeah, sucks to be you.

KELLY
This is all your fault, you realize.

JIM
Uh, exactly what's my fault and how?

KELLY
You set us up together.

JIM
I did not.

KELLY
You introduced us.

JIM
And at any point in this introduction did I say, "Kelly, this is my friend Sam. You must now date and eventually marry him?" Did I say that? 'Cause I don't remember saying that.

JIM picks up a t-shirt from the floor.

KELLY
Jim...

JIM pulls on the shirt. KELLY moves to JIM's couch and flops down. JIM sits next to her.

JIM
So what happened?

KELLY
Nothing.

JIM
Nothing happened?

KELLY
I just have some concerns, that's all. Some things I don't think I can live with. They've been bothering me for a long time but...

Such as... JIM

Well, there's this one thing... KELLY

What? JIM

KELLY
Okay. I have to ask you something and I want you to think about your answer before you just blurt it out.

All right. JIM

I'm serious. I need your help here. KELLY

I'm listening. What's the question? JIM

KELLY
The question is this. (*with gravity*) Can men really not avoid getting skid marks?

You're kidding, right? JIM

I told you I was serious. KELLY

JIM
You're considering backing out of your wedding over skid marks?

KELLY
It's not just... Maybe.

Okay. Wow. JIM

KELLY
So? Can they avoid them?

JIM

Uh, yeah... I don't know.

KELLY

What do you mean you don't know? You're a guy.

JIM

So's Sam. You asked him?

KELLY

I have, actually. See I kept noticing them every time I'd do his laundry and I started to wonder what the problem was. So I asked him if he was just too lazy to wipe thoroughly and he gave me a ration of shit.

JIM

Is the pun intentional?

KELLY

No.

JIM

What'd you expect him to do?

KELLY

I expected him to enlighten me.

JIM

And did he?

KELLY

He told me that every guy gets skid marks. That it has something to do with sweating. That when men sweat they sort of...leak ass juice or something. Is that true?

JIM

I don't know. It's not something I've ever sat around discussing with my male friends.

KELLY

Oh, please. It must have come up.

JIM

Truly, it didn't. Besides, most of my close friends are women.

Which is peculiar. KELLY

Why? Most of your close friends are men. JIM

That's different. What about you? KELLY

What about me, what? JIM

Do you get them? KELLY

Skid marks? JIM

Yeah. KELLY

No. JIM

Are you lying? Your voice always goes up like that when you lie. KELLY

No, I'm not. I do not get skid marks. Period. JIM

Show me. KELLY

What? JIM

KELLY
(reaching for his boxers) Come on, show me. Prove it.

JIM gets up and KELLY chases him.

JIM
Stop it! We're blood relations, get away.

KELLY

Come on. Just let me look down the back.

JIM

No, forget it.

They stand still for a moment, then KELLY gets up from the couch and runs into Jim's bedroom.

(following her quickly) Stay out of my laundry!

JIM reenters carrying KELLY. He dumps her back onto the couch.

Brat.

KELLY appears to have given up, but suddenly she pulls out the back of JIM's shorts and looks.

Hey!

KELLY

Pretty clean.

JIM

You're insane.

KELLY

So you're saying that you've never gotten them? Ever?

JIM

Look, whatever's going on here, I think it goes a whole lot deeper than skid marks.

KELLY

Yeah, I think you're right. *(pause)* It could be a bowel control issue.

JIM

Look, Kelly, I gotta get some rest. Not all men get skid marks. Some of us are extra careful.

KELLY

Okay. Okay, I'll let you go. But I'm taking my phone with me.

JIM

No. Consider it confiscated until further notice.

KELLY

Jim, I need it. What if someone calls for...one of my bridesmaids or something?

JIM

Fine.

He retrieves the phone from the pizza box.

Skid marks or no skid marks, Sam's a great guy. You blow this, you'll regret it.

She moves to the door, as JIM crosses toward his bedroom.

JIM

I'll see you tomorrow.

KELLY

He also hits me.

JIM

What?

KELLY

Sometimes. When he's drinking. Or not. Open hand.

JIM

Open hand... What?

KELLY

Usually. I'll see you there. *(exits)*

For a moment, JIM is too stunned to react.

JIM

(calling out the door) Wait a second, Kelly, come back. *(pause)* Kelly? Kelly!

JIM turns back into the apartment. As if waking up, he looks around. He moves to the door to his spare room.

(off) Wake up, Sam.

JIM

End of play.