

Excerpt from "The Sixth Man"
Written by Bruce J. Robinson

SCENE THREE

(It's that night. In a barely illuminated corner of a bedroom is CAMILLE "CAMMY" CAPOZZI GORDON. This attractive woman is in her late 40's – though she looks younger.)

(She's quietly telling a story to her son, Ian. His eyes are closed as he's about to drop off. This clearly childish room of an 18 year-old is a metaphor for its owner. Cammy is tired. Very tired. Still, she's telling Ian the same story as always and in the same way.)

CAMILLE

(checking on him, lulling him to peaceful sleep)

...and so on that happy day in summer, Prince Ian happily walked back to his home – Gordon Castle – and he smiled. And that night, he thought back on the cow that gave milk, the chicken that gave eggs. He thought of the nice teacher and the calm students, and he smiled. He smiled because he knew that even though he would always be a special person, he was a person – just like them and...

(He's asleep.)

(gingerly backing out and closing door behind her)

And the Lonely...Prince...from that day on...was never lonely...again.

(There's a moment of silence in the near-dark.)

IAN

(slowly rising from bed)

The real Ian Gordon's never lonely. I am. Always. For awhile, Mom and Dad used to invite me into their sleeping hours. For Pop, I would pick stocks (mostly stinkers which, fortunately, he didn't buy); and for Mom, I spoke French (freaky in a 3 month-old): but when the reality of Ian Gordon became all consuming, Mom stopped inviting me in. Dad hung on a few years more. But then... It's as if loyalty to that...that lump with an IQ the same as my basketball scoring average would make seeing me traitorous! I hate Ian Gordon. Before he was born, they used to dream of me all the time. Dreaming and awake, they'd celebrate all I could be. And that moment of birth! Of ultimate possibilities! The world's as wide as it can be; unless, like Ian, possibilities are assassinated – cut down by biological subterfuge. Hey, don't worry about Ian Gordon. He has no understanding of what anyone has. He's happy. What he aches for are simple things: a green building block, a cool breeze, a piece of cheddar cheese. What he aches for, he can get. Most of the time, he doesn't even really know what he wants – not if naming the object of desire's the necessary first step in owning that object. He has few names for things; but most of the time, his parents know what he needs. They pick it up from him – a look, a touch, a smell. An animal thing. But they love him fiercely. And maybe that's the main reason I hate Ian Gordon.

(BLACKOUT on Ian.)

(LIGHTS UP on Brian and Cammy's bedroom. It's tasteful though not a lot of time, effort, or money has gone into decoration.)

(Cammy's brushing her hair at her vanity. Brian's in bed, absorbed in a book.)

CAMILLE

You know, I think I've told Ian that Lonely Prince story nearly every night for the last I guess fifteen years; and no matter how many times I tell it, each new time is
(joking, sort-of)
far more fucking-boring than the time before.

BRIAN

(not hearing, jerking up from book)

I'm sorry. What?

CAMILLE

`t's nothing.

BRIAN

No. I'm sorry. What did you say?

CAMILLE

Oh, nothing. Just babbling.

BRIAN

So, he was good in group today?

CAMILLE

Yeah. Yeah. That coloring he did...

BRIAN

Terrific.

(Brian starts to do one of his pre-sleep chores. Cammy follows with one of hers. Through the rest of scene, they do the many jobs necessary before they sleep.)

CAMILLE

And that Kauffman kid..?

BRIAN

Yeah. The one who "accidentally" smacked him last week.

CAMILLE

(nodding that he's right)

He and Ian played with some blocks together.

BRIAN

That's great.

CAMILLE

Hell, I went out for coffee for twenty minutes.

BRIAN

That's confidence.

CAMILLE

Damn straight. It's luxury. I don't want to
 (with Yiddish expression meaning jeopardize by
 premature celebration)
 "cunna-hurra..." but it's been a heckuva long time since he's had an episode at the
 Center.

BRIAN

Even at home.

CAMILLE

Even at home.

(Beat.)

(as usual, subtly arguing her cause)

It's gotten so much easier.

BRIAN

(getting her subtext)

Cammy.

CAMILLE

(innocent but caught)

What!?

BRIAN

C'mon. We agreed. Not before bed.

CAMILLE

What? What?

BRIAN

I know what you mean.

CAMILLE

Well, maybe you should just pay a little more attention to what I say.

BRIAN

Okay. Okay. Then say it. Tell me.

CAMILLE

Never mind.

BRIAN

Cammy!

CAMILLE
Never mind!

(Beat.)

BRIAN
Do you think it's easy? Saying that Ian should...?

CAMILLE
No.

BRIAN
Do you think I love him less?

CAMILLE
No.

BRIAN
It's because I love him that we've gotta do what's best for him. We owe our son what any parent owes: we owe him the best decision.

CAMILLE
Best for you or him?

(Beat – as Brian can't believe she's saying this to him.)

BRIAN
Goodnight.

CAMILLE
I'm sorry.

(Beat.)

No. I'm really, really sorry, hon. That's way outa line. Please.

BRIAN
Okay. But that is way outa line. And what particularly pisses me off is even the suggestion that I'd send our boy anywhere but the best place on the planet for him, which, by the way, we're lucky we can afford.

CAMILLE
We are lucky.

BRIAN
And without a single doubt, Crystal Farms is the best facility of its kind.

CAMILLE
Facility.

BRIAN

It's a place - okay!? - a wonderful place - I can't tap dance around you! Facility. Yes. A place to make things easy.

(French word for easy - PRON. fah-SEEL)

Facile. My God. Why can't things ever be easy? You saw Crystal Farms, Cam. It's magnificent.

CAMILLE

It is.

BRIAN

It's a place where kids like - no! adults! - young adults like Ian can live as rich a life as possible; somewhere that can take care of him when we're gone - and let's face it, baby, life is crazy; look what's going on; and time is passing; and I'm sorry that it can't be the way we want it - but we faced that a long time ago, didn't we, Cammy?

CAMILLE

Almost too long ago to remember, Brian. You're right. Let's not talk about this now.

BRIAN

Camille, we are gonna have to talk about this soon. You know it. If we don't give Crystal Farms an answer soon...

CAMILLE

Okay! Here's the answer! The answer is no! He stays here. At home. At home.

BRIAN

That's the easy answer - not the right one.

CAMILLE

And which one is that?

BRIAN

What's right for Ian. Not for me. Not for you. Now...goodnight.

CAMILLE

Goodnight.

(He clicks-off LIGHTS. In the slight light, the couple are on opposite sides of the bed - eyes open and staring out. Long beat.)

Bri?

BRIAN

Yeah?

CAMILLE

I love you.

(They kiss - a few times.)

BRIAN

I love you, too, baby. I'm sorry.

CAMILLE

Me, too, hon. Me, too. Why do I make you the enemy?

BRIAN

Convenience?

(She's amused. Beat.)

CAMILLE

Remember that time he got lost at that Gimbels?

BRIAN

Yeah.

CAMILLE

I've never been that scared. And finding him..!

BRIAN

Happy - in hangers -

CAMILLE

- in a box in an alcove in Ladies Shoes.

BRIAN

Kiss me, please.

(She does. Beat - as she lays on his chest.)

Time is so weird. I mean, I understand distance. I understand volume. But time..?
I know this: it passes as fast as...

CAMILLE

As fast as a joke. G'night, love of my life.

BRIAN

G'night, love of my life.

(Beat.)

CAMILLE

Oh, that new guy? How'd it go?

BRIAN

(deciding not to tell guy's gender)

Fine. Great.

CAMILLE

So, you think it'll work out?

BRIAN

Hard to tell. It might. It might. You know. G'night.

(BLACKOUT on them.)