



## Sample Pages

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*Tommie Broadwater was once a great big TV star. When he was seven years old, he landed the title role on the iconic 1990's family sitcom "It's Always Rory!" But times have been tough for Tommie since he grew into manhood. Now struggling with depression and other personal issues, he decides to reveal everything about himself to his still-adoring public — in a shocking and consequential way.*

**Dramatis Personae:**

**TOMMIE BROADWATER**, 32 to 37 years old, light features, tall, handsome. white male. Former child star on two tv series, gay but not obviously so, now older and going through depression and deciding whether or not to come out.

**NATE FINGERHUT**, 35 to 40 years old, white male. Jewish, gay, Tommie's partner, darker features, a bit out of shape, average or better looks, college educated, the voice of reason.

**MARCY KOZLOWSKI**, 32 to 37 years old, white female. blonde, pretty, sweet, smart, practical, morning TV co-host, her on-air persona more naïve than she is in real life, tougher than she looks.

**D'ARCY COLLINS**, 50s, white male. British, edgy morning TV co-host who thinks he's doing hard-hitting journalism, the yang to Marcy's yin. Prototype: Piers Morgan.

**RAY BREITWASSER** is TOMMIE's father, 60s, gruff, compactly built. Self-taught and proud of it. Old school but smart enough to change with the times. A bit of an eccentric.

**PAULA LOPRESTI BREITWASSER**, TOMMIE's mother, 60s, white Italian-American female. Tough, slightly out-of-shape, possibly bleached blonde, formidable. She says whatever she thinks in decidedly uncouched terms.

**OFFSTAGE VOICE**, male or female, pre-recorded.

**ANNOUNCER (DANA BUMILLER)**, male, pre-recorded. Great voice, with a bit of a smile in it, friendly sounding.

*Dedicated to the memory of Anthony Lee Dow.*

*THE PLACE:* Los Angeles  
*THE TIME:* Three years ago, and today

**SCENE BREAKDOWN**

**ACT I**

**Scene One**

Tommie and Nate's master bedroom/bathroom  
in the Hollywood Hills, Studio City, California, very early morning.

**Scene Two**

A local L.A. television studio,  
the set of "L.A. Sunrise with Marcy & D'Arcy," later that morning.

**Scene Three**

Tommie and Nate's living room, about an hour later.

**Scene Four**

Ray Breitwasser's bungalow in Venice, California, two days later.

**Scene Five**

Tommie and Nate's living room, a week later.

**ACT II**

**Scene One**

Tommie and Nate's living room, three years later.

**Scene Two**

The set of "L.A. Sunrise with Marcy & D'Arcy," a few days later.

**Scene Three**

Tommie and Nate's living room, about three months later.

Sample pages begin on page 36 of full script.

Scene Four

RAY BREITWASSER's bungalow in Venice, California. It's Sunday, the day after Sitcom Con. The room is crowded with old, worn furniture, faded framed photos hang on the walls, lots of little tchotchkes scattered all over the room. RAY BREITWASSER is TOMMIE's father, 60s, gruff, compactly built. Self-taught and proud of it. Old school but smart enough to change with the times. A bit of an eccentric. HE is sitting on the sofa, doing a puzzle in the newspaper. With a pen. He's wearing an old, beat-up Phillies cap.

SFX: Doorbell chimes. A pause.

RAY continues to work on his puzzle. It chimes again. RAY looks quizzical, then goes back to his puzzle. Now an impatient ring of the doorbell.

RAY. *[Loudly.]* Is that the doorbell or my phone?

TOMMIE. *[Offstage.]* Does this *[HE rings doorbell again]* sound like "Polovtsian Dance Number Two" by Borodin?

RAY. Not really. Is that you, Tommie Bear?

TOMMIE. *[Offstage.]* No, my name's Thaddeus G. Periwinkle. I'm working my way through auto repair school selling The Great Books collection.

RAY. We already have two sets. Thank you.

TOMMIE. *[Offstage.]* Answer the door, Dad.

RAY. Who is it?

TOMMIE. *[Offstage.]* Answer the door, Dad.

RAY. O.K., Thad. I'm coming.

RAY gets up and opens the door.

TOMMIE. You're funny.

RAY. Yeah, I know! Always have been. Where do you think *you* got it from, your mother's side? Please! I watched an old Marx Brothers movie with those people once — not even the hint of a smile. So, what are you waiting for, Tommie Bear? Come on in, make yourself to home.

TOMMIE. What's the big emergency?

RAY. Who said there was a big emergency?

TOMMIE. You did. On the phone, remember?

RAY. Oh. Right, right, right. Yeah, I need you to get that jar down off the top shelf for me.

TOMMIE. That's why you made me *schlep* all the way out to the west side? Don't you have any tall neighbors?

RAY. Not that I'm currently speaking to.

TOMMIE. Ever heard of a stepladder?

RAY. I've *heard* of one, I just won't get *on* one. Not at my age. You want me to fall off and crack my head open like your friend Roger?

TOMMIE. Walter was the one who fell off the ladder, Dad. Roger O.D.'d.

RAY. Oh, right. Walter. He was a good man.

TOMMIE. If you say so.

RAY. Well, he was a good actor. He did a good job playing your father.

TOMMIE. I guess.

RAY. What?

TOMMIE. I don't want to get into it with you, Dad. He's dead and gone. Let's leave it at that.

RAY. Whatever you say.

TOMMIE. I say.

RAY. I'll tell ya, though, that Roger? He was a little turd.

TOMMIE. Roger was not a little turd. Well, he was little, but he wasn't a turd. He was ... complex.

RAY. Fine. Could we continue this conversation after you, uh ...? *[HE indicates the jar.]*

TOMMIE. Right. Sorry.

RAY. Thank you.

TOMMIE. *[HE reaches up and easily takes down a jar.]* Well, *that* was difficult.

RAY. No, not if you're seven feet tall.

TOMMIE. Anything else while I'm here? Get someone's cat out of a tree? Paint the ceiling?

RAY. If I ever want anything like that ... and I won't ...

TOMMIE. ... you'll hire a professional.

RAY. You want something done right, you hire a pro. You hear me?

TOMMIE. I hear you. I hear you. I've heard you since I was three.

RAY. Good. Now, sit down and tell me what's going on with you. You want some tea?

TOMMIE. Fuck yeah. I could use a nice cup of tea right now.

RAY. Don't say that word.

TOMMIE. What? Cup?

RAY. Your generation. Every other word is F this or F that. It doesn't bother *me*, but it makes you sound so ignorant.

TOMMIE. I *am* ignorant. I never graduated college, remember?

RAY. Me either. Who cares? Some of the stupidest people I know have a wallful of degrees. Jesus wept! There's nothing worse than a dumb intellectual.

TOMMIE. O.K., Dad.

RAY. And even if you *are* ignorant, you don't have to *sound* like it. So I went straight from high school into the Marines. Big whoop. I happen to be self-taught. The job I had at the plant — remember that? — it afforded me plenty of time to read. And boy, did I! Everything I could get my hands on: fiction, non-fiction, history, science, biography, romance. You should always try to fill up your brain with facts and ideas.

TOMMIE. Yes, Dad.

RAY. You know, I took one of those "word power" tests they have on the computer — did I ever tell you this? — turns out I have the exact same size vocabulary as Wolf Blitzer.

TOMMIE. That's great, dad. So, what kind do you have?

RAY. What kind of what? Vocabulary?

TOMMIE. Tea, dad. We were talking about tea.

RAY. I have what I have. This isn't the Beverly Hills Hotel, you know.

*RAY prepares tea for TOMMIE.*

TOMMIE. [*Weary.*] Constant Comment will be fine, thank you. [*A beat.*] So, Dad, did you see the show?

RAY. What show? [*Excited.*] Is "Rory" back on again? I hope it's on Hulu this time. That's the only one I get now, you know.

TOMMIE. No, not "Rory." Marcy's show. Her morning show? On channel nine?

RAY. Oh, shoot. I forgot all about it.

TOMMIE. Of course you did.

RAY. And I was gonna write myself a note. Damn it!

TOMMIE. It's O.K. We only remember the things that are really important to us.

RAY. Don't start with me, Tommie. Please. I happen to be very concerned about my memory lately.

TOMMIE. Oh come on, Dad. You're as sharp as a tack. You finish the *L.A. Times* crossword every day.

RAY. Not Friday's or Saturday's. Nope, your old dad ain't what he used to be. F'rinstance: people's names. I used to be able to come up with the names of old character actors just like that. Now it takes five, 10 minutes, sometimes half a day. Right before you got here, I was trying to think of that guy from *Casablanca*.

TOMMIE. Which guy from *Casablanca*? John Barrymore?

RAY. Barrymore wasn't in *Casablanca*.

TOMMIE. I meant Humphrey Bogart.

RAY. No, no, no, this guy was one of the waiters.

TOMMIE. Claude Rains.

RAY. Claude Rains played a policeman. What are you, illiterate?

TOMMIE. Sidney Greenstreet.

RAY. No, but this guy was fat, too.

TOMMIE. I'm sorry. I can't help you, Dad. I bet Nate would know. Want me to call him?

RAY. He talked with a funny accent.

TOMMIE. I've only seen it once, and I was a kid at the time. You showed it to me, remember?



RAY. You've only seen *Casablanca* once? And you call yourself an actor?

TOMMIE. Dad, it'll come to you eventually. Just don't think so hard.

RAY. I hope I'm not getting you-know-what.

TOMMIE. You're not getting you-know-what. You'll probably *never* get you-know-what.

RAY. You don't know that.

TOMMIE. Nobody in our family has ever had you-know-what.

RAY. Yeah? Watch. I'll be the first.

TOMMIE. Look at Grampa Joe. He was sharp as a tack until the day he died. What was he, 94, 95?

RAY. Yeah, but Dad had my mother to take care of him. Married men live longer than divorcés. Married men and people with pets. They've done studies, you know.

TOMMIE. So, get a dog.

RAY. And do what with him?

TOMMIE. I don't know. Hang out, smoke Marlboros?

RAY. [*A beat.*] So ... what can I do for ya?

TOMMIE. Excuse me?

RAY. What can I do for you? Why. Are. You. Here?

TOMMIE. You asked me to. The jar?

RAY. Right. See what I mean? So, how's Marcy?

TOMMIE. That was quite a change of topic.

RAY. So, how is she?

TOMMIE. She's Marcy. She's a pain in the ass.

RAY. Ahh, but a very fetching pain in the ass, if I may say so. You should have married her, Tommie Bear. I told ya but you wouldn't listen.

TOMMIE. Not exactly my demographic, Dad.

RAY. That woman *walks* like she loves sex.

TOMMIE. God you're getting crude in your old age.

RAY. No, I've always been this way. You just never noticed. Come on, you gotta admit, she is one tasty morsel.

TOMMIE. Would you stop that please?

RAY. Oh, relax. I'm just trying to get your goat.

TOMMIE. Well, congratulations. Goat gotten.

RAY. I'm tellin' ya, though — if I were 10 years younger ...

TOMMIE. Try 50.

RAY. You still could have married her, you know. Even though you're ...

TOMMIE. I'm what?

RAY. You know.

TOMMIE. Look at this: he can't even say it. I was never attracted to her in that way, Dad. Obviously.

RAY. Did that stop Rock Hudson? Or Cary Grant ... five times?

TOMMIE. And I'm sure they lived happy, satisfying lives.

RAY. Who cares? They were famous and they were loaded and they had a nice warm ... bed to come home to at night.

TOMMIE. You're such a romantic.

RAY. Sometimes I wonder: who's to blame for turning you that way, me or your mother?

TOMMIE. Seriously?

RAY. I bet it was your mother.

TOMMIE. Oh, yes. That would make everything O.K., wouldn't it? You know those little links I keep sending you? Do you ever click on them?

RAY. Sometimes. But most of them turn out to be psychobabble claptrap.

TOMMIE. Interesting turn of phrase. Dad, I've told you a million times: a person doesn't "turn" gay. They're born that way. It's in their DNA. Or RNA. I forget which. Mom didn't do anything, and you didn't do anything.

RAY. Nobody knows that for sure.

TOMMIE. Yes, they do. It's called "science."

RAY. Oh. "Science."

TOMMIE. Remember that year I went to Camp Carlisle? My first and only summer at overnight camp. You guys drug me there kicking and screaming.

RAY. Dragged.

TOMMIE. I just couldn't bear the thought of being away from home for a whole month.

RAY. But you wound up loving it, didn't you?

TOMMIE. You remember.

RAY. I remember things that are important to me.

TOMMIE. You know *why* I wound up loving it?

RAY. No idea.

TOMMIE. There was this handsome boy who lived in my cabin. Short with black hair and green eyes, long eyelashes, sweet suntanned face. Just my type, as I later found out. My first crush. At age *seven*! But it wasn't just his looks that got to me. It was his smell.

RAY. The kid stunk?

TOMMIE. He smelled like Off.

RAY. Off?

TOMMIE. Off insect repellent. His parents must have told him to use it every 15 minutes or something. You could smell that boy an hour after he left the room. To me, it was as delicious as Versace. Even today, one whiff and I'm instantly transported to the best summer of my life, and that gorgeous young kid with the skinny legs. I was only seven, but I already knew who I was and what I wanted.

RAY. Maybe, maybe not.

TOMMIE. Before camp ended, Off Boy had to go home. He got sick or he had allergies or maybe he just missed his mommy. Anyways, I was heartbroke for 24 hours.

RAY. Heartbroken. Why only 24 hours?

TOMMIE. The day after he left, one of the counsellors asked me to be in the camp musical: *Cheaper by the Dozen*. I played one of the sons. I even got to sing a solo in my cute little soprano voice: [*sings warmly, a pleasant memory*] *Just a song at twilight, when the lights are low*. I soon forgot about Off Boy and found my new love: acting. It was like nothing I'd ever experienced in my life. It felt like ... it felt like flying. When I got back home, I didn't want it to be over. I didn't want that feeling to go away. I begged Mom to find me an agent. I knew this was what I wanted to do with my life. A few months after I signed with Gloria, I booked that Count Chocula commercial. Remember?

RAY. Of course I do.

TOMMIE. And a few months after that, I got "Rory." But that meant I couldn't go back to camp because now I was this great big TV star. The kids would have put me on a pedestal or pestered me or made fun of me and Mom didn't want any of that. I couldn't even go to a regular school anymore. I had to be tutored on the set. Margaret Salisbury. Remember her?

RAY. She looked like Miss Hathaway from "The Beverly Hillbillies."

TOMMIE. That was the start of my acting career and the end of my life as a normal child.

RAY. Maybe *that's* why you're the way you are. No exposure to regular kids.

TOMMIE. You don't listen, do you?

RAY. I listen. I just don't buy it.

RAY. I listen. I just don't buy it.

TOMMIE. It doesn't matter what you buy. It's about science, not your ill-informed opinions.

RAY. Not everything can be explained by science, you know.

TOMMIE. Yeah? Like what?

RAY. I don't want to discuss it with you.

TOMMIE. Good. I don't want to discuss it with you either.

RAY. Good. Oh, Tommie. I love you. You know that don't you? You're a strange bird, but I love you. I don't know. Maybe if you hadn't become an actor ...

TOMMIE. Dad, I'd be what I am whether I became an actor or an Uber driver or an OBGYN. It's just the cut of my jib. There's another phrase I picked up from you.

RAY. See? Don't say I never gave you nuthin'

*End of sample pages.*