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Family Plays

I REMEMBER YOU

Drama by
ALVIN BORETZ

I REMEMBER YOU

“The use of alter egos is a clever technique. We are asked to suspend disbelief: a stretch, yes, but one that works.”

(Reviewer for the *Hollywood Reporter*)

“[The play] is clever and poignant [providing] wonderful opportunities for the four players, right up to the surprise ending.”

(*Stage Directions*)

Drama. By Alvin Boretz. *Cast:* 2m., 2w. The cast is made up of Carrie, a successful sculptor; Paul, a banker; and Carrie Younger and Paul Younger, their alter egos—memories of their younger lives when they loved each other. (They had even talked of marriage.) But that early love went awry. Carrie and Paul each married someone else. Carrie’s marriage ended in divorce. When she read of Paul’s wife’s death, Carrie sent him a sympathy note, and now—years since they last saw each other—he shows up unannounced at her door ... accompanied by the memory of when he was Paul Younger. Paul Older tells Paul Younger not to interfere. “I won’t if you promise not to make a fool of yourself,” the younger retorts. When Carrie Older hesitates while opening the door, Carrie Younger urges her on. Don’t all of us at one time or another think of our early loves? What would happen if one of those early loves knocked at your door? The play poses the question: Do people change as they mature? Can they change? *Approximate running time:* 60 minutes. *Code:* IC2.

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I Remember You

I REMEMBER YOU

A TWO-ACT PLAY BY
ALVIN BORETZ

Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098

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ALVIN BORETZ

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(I REMEMBER YOU)

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ABOUT THE PLAY

I REMEMBER YOU starred Jane Seymour and Daniel J. Travanti in the critically acclaimed General Motors Playwrights Theatre presentation produced by Gladys Nederlander on Arts and Entertainment Network television.

The cast is made up of Carrie, a successful sculptor; Paul, a banker; and “Carrie Younger” and “Paul Younger,” their alter-egos—memories of their younger lives when they loved each other. (They had even talked of marriage.)

But that early love went awry. Carrie and Paul each married someone else. Carrie’s marriage ended in divorce. When she read of Paul’s wife’s death, Carrie sent him a sympathy note, and now—20 years since they last saw each other—he shows up unannounced at her door . . . accompanied by the memory of when he was younger, Paul Younger. Paul Older tells Paul Younger not to interfere. “I won’t if you promise not to make a fool of yourself,” the younger retorts. When Carrie Older hesitates opening the door, Carrie Younger urges her on.

“The use of alter-egos is a clever technique,” the reviewer for the *Hollywood Reporter* wrote. “We are asked to suspend disbelief: a stretch, yes, but one that works.”

Variety reviewer Tony Scott called the show “involving and dramatically sound,” noting that “Travanti does yeoman’s work as the careful, reluctant Paul . . . Jane Seymour creates a lonely, vulnerable creature out of Carrie.”

Lauren Bacall in hosting the A&E presentation called it a “tender story of romance and memories.” She named “compassionate characterizations” and “sensitive treatment of controversial subjects” as strong points in Boretz’s plays. “Relationships are at the heart of my works,” he told her, referring to several friends who are widowed or divorced. “They talked of early loves and wondered what had happened to them.” Don’t all of us, at one time or another, think of “early loves”? What would happen if one of those early loves knocked at your door? The play poses the question: Do people change as they mature? *Can* they change?

“The ending is a surprise,” the *Hollywood Reporter* noted, adding that the 60-minute one-set play “is a real tour-de-force, proving that you don’t need a big budget to deliver the dramatic goods.” Playing time is about 60 minutes.

I REMEMBER YOU

Cast of Characters

CARRIE OLDER, successful artist, age 50

CARRIE YOUNGER, as Carrie was at age 20

PAUL OLDER, successful banker, age 54

PAUL YOUNGER, as Paul was at age 24

First presented on the Arts & Entertainment Network, produced by Nederlander TV & Film Productions, Gladys Nederlander, executive producer; Stuart Goodman, producer, and Kenneth Frankel, director, with the following cast:

CARRIE BENNETT	Jane Seymour
PAUL GIBSON	Daniel J. Travanti
YOUNG CARRIE	Becky Mode
YOUNG PAUL	Clark Gregg

Time: today

Place: a sculptor's studio

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Alvin Boretz, who lives in Woodmere, N.Y., is the author of stage plays and scripts for radio, television, and film, including the dramatization for the mini-series of Sidney Sheldon's *Masters of the Game*. Lauren Bacall labeled him as "one of the most prolific writers in television." *Variety* describes him as a "heavyweight."

I REMEMBER YOU was written as a play, and the script was chosen for the General Motors Playwrights Theatre from more than 300 submissions by well-known playwrights.

Boretz's scripts, which emphasize character development, have won numerous awards and have drawn widespread critical acclaim for their careful crafting and compassionate handling of sensitive subject matter.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Properties

Act I

Coffee pot and cups—on counter

Acetylene torch—CARRIE OLDER (the torch was not used in the A&E production; instead Carrie was using a noisy rasp to smooth the edges of a sculpture)

Goggles and gloves—CARRIE OLDER (See note above; if the torch is not used, the goggles and gloves are not needed)

Attache case—PAUL OLDER

Envelope—in PAUL OLDER's jacket pocket

Soda drink bottle—in refrigerator (or on counter)

Art exhibit catalog and other papers, books, etc.—on desk or counter

Wrist watch—PAUL OLDER

Handbag, containing car keys and make-up, including vanity case with mirror—on desk or counter

Clean rags—in a box

Dirty rags—brought on by PAUL OLDER

Button—CARRIE OLDER

Art Materials—CARRIE OLDER

Act II

Sketching pad and pencil or chalks—CARRIE OLDER

Bottle of champagne (Dom Perignon) and wine glasses on tray —
CARRIE OLDER

Long-play phonograph records—near stereo

Evening bag, containing cablegram—CARRIE YOUNGER

Corsage and note card in box—at door

Sculptured bust (or sketch) of Paul Older—on workbench at end of play

Costumes

Carrie wears plaster-spattered work jeans and shirt, a leather apron and welding (or rubber, if torch is not used) gloves; her hair is covered with a bandanna. **Carrie Younger** wears an attractive casual costume of 30 years ago; later, an evening gown. **Paul**, the banker, wears an expensive

suit. Later he appears in a soiled shirt. Paul Younger wears college clothes—perhaps including a Princeton jacket—of 30 years ago; later, a tuxedo or white dinner jacket.

Sound

The script calls for “The Great Gate of Kiev” chimes from Moussorgsky’s *Pictures at an Exhibition* when Paul presses the doorbell.

“Under Paris Skies” (or other romantic music, from phonograph; record has a scratch [broken-record-repeat effect]).

The Set

The play takes place in the loft of a New York warehouse used by Carrie as a studio as well as her home. The room is cluttered with work benches and tables holding her sculptures, tools, and material. On the floor are bags and boxes of plaster, scraps, rags, etc. Bits of clothing are thrown over the couch and chair. Obviously, Carrie is not expecting a visitor.

The amount of furniture and trappings is up to each producer. Essential set pieces are these:

- A workbench with the sculpture currently being completed

- 2 stools near the workbench

- A chair

- A couch

- A counter containing the coffee maker

- A desk, table, or part of the above counter cluttered with papers, sketches, etc.

- A wall or large table mirror

- A phonograph

- An entrance to other rooms in the apartment

- The main entrance, a door which can be seen from both sides

I REMEMBER YOU

ACT I

[It is morning in a loft in New York's Soho District. A section of the corridor is seen at Stage Left. The loft is filled with sculpture and art of contemporary and mixed media. Our continuing examination of additional sculptured pieces and drawings reveals a variety of work done in stone, clay and metal. There is an acetylene torch and large upright cylinder near an iron figure in progress. Its parts seem to have been collected from a junkyard. This is no bohemian retreat; it is both the studio and home of Carrie Bennett, whose success is in direct proportion to her abundant talent. At 50, she remains an attractive woman of considerable energy and presence. She wears plaster-splattered work jeans; her hair is covered with a bandanna.

We find CARRIE OLDER (Carrie as she is today) pouring a cup of coffee. Replacing the bowl on the machine, she comes to the iron figure and studies her work. A moment later, CARRIE YOUNGER (as she was at 20) enters and repeats the identical movements of filling a cup and then walking slowly around the construction. She is quite pretty and her casual outfit is that of a young woman of 30 years ago. After a few moments, CARRIE OLDER stops and steps back with a critical eye]

CARRIE OLDER. Well?

CARRIE YOUNGER. It's very interesting.

CARRIE OLDER. You can do better than that, can't you?

CARRIE YOUNGER. I think you settled for the idea but didn't really carry it out.

CARRIE OLDER. Thanks but the New York Times already has a critic.

CARRIE YOUNGER. Why bother to talk to me if you don't listen.

CARRIE OLDER. It's better than getting depressed.

CARRIE YOUNGER. Sometimes I wonder why you keep me around.

CARRIE OLDER. You remind me of my youth.

CARRIE YOUNGER. I am your youth.

CARRIE OLDER. Don't remind me. *[She places the cup down, dons her goggles and gloves, then turns on the torch. CARRIE YOUNGER watches her at work]*

[PAUL GIBSON appears in the corridor searching for her door. He is in his early fifties and wears what a well-dressed banker should. He is breathing heavily from the exertion of the stairs. As he locates the entrance, he hesitates then approaches the bell. He is wrought with indecision. A moment later PAUL YOUNGER appears. He wears a Princeton athletic jacket of 30 years ago. Unaware of his presence, PAUL OLDER removes an envelope from his jacket and studies the return address. He continues to ponder whether to ring the bell]

PAUL YOUNGER. *[Amused]* No guts, eh?

PAUL OLDER. *[Startled by his presence]* What are you doing here?

PAUL YOUNGER. I thought you might need me.

PAUL OLDER. I can handle it. Go away.

PAUL YOUNGER. You think I'd miss this? Not a chance.

PAUL OLDER. Please. I'd rather not have you around.

PAUL YOUNGER. Sorry. You don't have much choice in that.

PAUL OLDER. Promise you won't interfere.

PAUL YOUNGER. That depends.

PAUL OLDER. On what?

PAUL YOUNGER. On whether you start making a fool of yourself.

PAUL OLDER. I appreciate your confidence.

PAUL YOUNGER. Sorry. I've been fooled too many times.

PAUL OLDER. New York's a great city. Why don't you go out and see the sights. I hear they've got a great zoo.

PAUL YOUNGER. Stop wasting time. Ring the bell.

PAUL OLDER. *[Challenging]* Whose idea was it to see her anyway?

PAUL YOUNGER. Don't be ridiculous. I'm the one who knows her. Not you.

PAUL OLDER. Which one of us did she write to?

PAUL YOUNGER. Who's the one she remembers? You or me?

PAUL OLDER. That's unfair. Of course it's you . . . but it's really me.

[Nuttled] Look, I'm having enough trouble with this. Be quiet.

PAUL YOUNGER. You're stalling.

PAUL OLDER. I am not.

PAUL YOUNGER. Can we get down to business here?

PAUL OLDER. I'm not sure this is the right place. I could hardly read the number downstairs.

PAUL YOUNGER. It's her all right. Only an artist could live in a dump like this. I thought we'd get mugged in the hallway. *[Admiringly]* You showed me something though. Way you handled those stairs. *[Watches while PAUL OLDER again hesitates when he reaches for the bell]*

PAUL OLDER. She doesn't expect me.

PAUL YOUNGER. Don't be dumb. Her letter was a come on.

PAUL OLDER. But she didn't say anything about me coming here.

PAUL YOUNGER. I thought you knew something about women. Let's go, Ace.

PAUL OLDER. You're a real big shot, aren't you?

PAUL YOUNGER. I try.

PAUL OLDER. I'm the one who has to go in there. Not you.

PAUL YOUNGER. Look, let's compromise. It's not easy for either of us. *[Leans past Paul Older and punches the doorbell. Immediately, a loud series of "The Great Gate of Kiev" chimes from Moussorgsky's "Pictures At An Exhibition" is heard (or the climax from "The War of 1812" overture may be used). The roar of the acetylene torch and CARRIE OLDER's absorption combine to prevent both her and CARRIE YOUNGER from hearing the bells. The two PAULS wait; then . . .]*

PAUL OLDER. *[Relieved]* She's not home. *[Turns to go but PAUL YOUNGER stops him]*

PAUL YOUNGER. I hear someone. *[Presses the button again and the bells roll through the loft.]*

CARRIE YOUNGER. *[Hears them and taps CARRIE OLDER on the shoulder and calls in her ear]* The door.

CARRIE OLDER. *[Turns off the torch in time to hear the last of the bells. She turns off the gas and crosses to the door]* Who is it?

PAUL OLDER. Paul Gibson.

CARRIE OLDER. Who?

PAUL OLDER. *[Louder]* Paul. Paul Gibson.

CARRIE OLDER. No! *[In a near panic, she flees from the door throwing wild glances at herself and the mess of the loft. The chimes blast once more as CARRIE OLDER removes her goggles and tries to become presentable. She now crosses to the door and CARRIE YOUNGER accompanies her. Reaching it, CARRIE OLDER opens the several locks but then pauses]*

PAUL OLDER. *[In the corridor as PAUL YOUNGER is backing away]* Where you going?

PAUL YOUNGER. I'll wait downstairs.

PAUL OLDER. No! Don't leave me here alone.

PAUL YOUNGER. Sorry. I don't think I can handle it. *[Flees]*

PAUL OLDER. Come back! *[But PAUL YOUNGER is gone]*

CARRIE YOUNGER. Open it.

CARRIE OLDER. He won't recognize me.

CARRIE YOUNGER. Of course he will. Carrie, he's not here by accident. *[Accusingly]* You want him to leave, don't you.

[A moment of uncertainty and then with a sudden, decisive move, PAUL OLDER presses the bell and the sound of the chords galvanize CARRIE OLDER into suddenly reaching forward and opening the door. As the sound reverberates and slowly fades, PAUL OLDER looks into the room and finds CARRIE YOUNGER. He stares at her, for this is the girl of his memory]

PAUL OLDER. *[An expectant smile]* Carrie! *[As CARRIE YOUNGER moves aside and the present-day woman takes her place, there is a bare trace of a rueful expression on his face. After all, he knows it was a silly little fantasy. But he is very pleased to see the older but still attractive woman standing before him]*

CARRIE OLDER. Mr. Gibson, I presume. *[Neither moves, just taking in the other. Still unsure PAUL OLDER offers his hand and she accepts it]*

PAUL OLDER. Hard to believe I'm here.

CARRIE OLDER. *[A slight smile as she has read his initial reaction]*
Are you enchanted or disappointed?

PAUL OLDER. *[Also a smile]* I have to catch my breath first.

CARRIE OLDER. Time's up.

CARRIE YOUNGER. Don't be dumb. You're embarrassing the man.

PAUL OLDER. I didn't know people lived in warehouses.

CARRIE YOUNGER. What are you waiting for? His I. D. card? Ask him in.

CARRIE OLDER. *[CARRIE YOUNGER retreats to the fridge to take a soda and then curls up in a chair. CARRIE OLDER steps aside to allow him to enter]* If you're not an impostor, please come in.

[Unless otherwise indicated, both YOUNG PEOPLE speak only to their older selves since they exist solely in the minds and memories of the older people]

PAUL OLDER. *[Enters and glances about with interest to Carrie Older as he reacts to her work]* You've been busy. *[Reaches out to touch a sculpture but then hesitates]*

CARRIE OLDER. *[Lightly]* It won't break. Please. Look around.

PAUL OLDER. I was in my dentist's office and I saw a piece about you in *Newsweek*. You've done very well.

CARRIE OLDER. That's one way of looking at it.

CARRIE YOUNGER. *[A quick lookback at Carrie Older]* The poor man just got here. Don't cry on his shoulder.

CARRIE OLDER. *[More brightly]* I've got a show next month.

PAUL OLDER. Congratulations.

CARRIE OLDER. *[Crosses to a paper-filled desk and searches through it]* It's in Soho. A very good gallery. I've got the catalog on it here somewhere. You've got to come.

PAUL OLDER. If I'm in town, I'd be happy to.

CARRIE OLDER. *[Finds the catalog and hands it to him]* Here we are.

PAUL OLDER. Thanks . . . it's very impressive.

CARRIE OLDER. It cost enough. *[Makes a vain effort to straighten up the place]* I read you were going to run for Mayor.

PAUL OLDER. I was until I had a poll taken that said people don't trust bankers.

CARRIE OLDER. Who'd say a dumb thing like that?

PAUL OLDER. *[Amused]* How about you?

CARRIE OLDER. *[Protesting]* Never.

PAUL OLDER. No? Remember the autopsy they did on a banker but they couldn't find his heart?

CARRIE OLDER. Paul . . . that was only a joke.

PAUL OLDER. My father never forgave you for that one.

CARRIE YOUNGER. *[To Carrie Older]* Watch it, sweetie. He's got a memory like an elephant.

CARRIE OLDER. *[To Carrie Younger]* I've got some serious talking to do. Why don't you get lost?

[The older selves wait for each other to continue but they seem discomfited as PAUL OLDER continues to move about the loft]

PAUL OLDER. I'd like to thank you for the letter. It was very thoughtful. *[Curious]* How'd you hear about my wife?

CARRIE OLDER. I still subscribe to the local paper.

PAUL OLDER. *[Surprised]* I thought you'd burned all the bridges.

CARRIE OLDER. A few grew back. *[Hesitates]* I'm sorry I never met her.

CARRIE YOUNGER. *[To Carrie Older]* Hypocrite.

CARRIE OLDER. *[An involuntary reply]* Let's call it mixed emotions.

PAUL OLDER. *[Turns, unsure he has heard correctly]* Sorry?

CARRIE OLDER. I was thinking how hard it must be for you now. Being alone.

PAUL OLDER. It takes getting used to. *[Slight pause]* I guess you know all about that.

CARRIE OLDER. Do I?

PAUL OLDER. *[Hesitating]* Well, you've been divorced for some time now and as you just said, it's not easy being alone.

CARRIE OLDER. *[An edge]* I was only married for six years.

PAUL OLDER. I'm sorry. I didn't realize.

CARRIE OLDER. I've had a life since then. A damn good life.

PAUL OLDER. *[Slightly taken back]* I'm sure you have.

CARRIE OLDER. Maybe you've forgotten. I'm an artist, remember? "Wild parties and all those crazy people I ran around with"?

PAUL OLDER. That was all a long time ago.

CARRIE OLDER. Well, I haven't retired. I use my time damn well and if there's an empty space, there are a hundred ways to fill it.

CARRIE YOUNGER. *[Rises quickly. A warning]* Better call time out.

CARRIE OLDER. Excuse me, this apron is wearing me down. *[CARRIE YOUNGER follows her as she crosses to a closet where she hangs up the leather apron she's been wearing. She will also go to the coffee machine]*

CARRIE YOUNGER. Poor man. He doesn't know what hit him.

[The door opens and PAUL YOUNGER peeks in]