

PITHY

**By
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PITHY**CHARACTERS:***BOB*

CAROL

SETTING:*A bus stop.**(Bob stands holding a large umbrella unopened. He looks up and raises his hand as though testing for rain, then puts the umbrella up. Carol enters and stands near him. She pulls her collar higher against the elements. He looks her way, they exchange a shy smile. They are silent for a moment.)*

BOB: Unpredictable.

CAROL: Excuse me?

BOB: The rain. Not predicted.

CAROL: No.

BOB: Unprepared.

CAROL: Hmm?

BOB: You. Not prepared.

CAROL: No...I'm afraid I wasn't.

BOB: Most people unprepared.

CAROL: I suppose so.

BOB: *(Shrugging)* Unpredictable. Unprepared.*(Pause)*

Getting heavier.

(Carol nods.)

Bus here soon.

CAROL: Hope so.

(Pause)

BOB: Fairly roomy.

CAROL: Sorry?

BOB: Umbrella. Fairly roomy. Rather large.

CAROL: Oh...good.

BOB: Sufficient for two, really. Could cover you...as well as me.

(He smiles at her, she smiles hesitantly.)

Drier here than there. I think.

CAROL: I'm fine. Thanks.

(Pause)

BOB: Shrinkage.

CAROL: Pardon?

BOB: Rain. Water. Shrinkage. People smaller in the rain. Hunched. Shrunk.

(Carol nods, as though humouring him.)

Could be normal size. Under here.

CAROL: I'm okay...really.

BOB: Lucky you. I'm not. Not really.

CAROL: But you're dry.

BOB: Dry but...shrunken. Smaller than before. Wife gone. Alone. Smaller.

CAROL: Oh...sorry to hear that.

BOB: Not really. Strangers. Own problems. That's okay.

CAROL: No really. I'm sorry.

BOB: Not your fault.

CAROL: I know...but still.

BOB: Grateful.

(Pause)

You?

CAROL: Me?

BOB: Alone? Smaller?

CAROL: No smaller...just alone.

BOB: Lucky.

CAROL: No...not really.

BOB: No?

CAROL: I would have liked the chance to be...bigger.

BOB: Maybe big enough.

CAROL: Two is always bigger than one, no matter how big you are to begin with.

BOB: True.

(Pause)

Wet?

CAROL: A little.

BOB: Drier here. Could be two. Temporarily.

CAROL: *(Doubtful)* I don't know...

BOB: Bigger with two. Stronger. Drier.

CAROL: Temporarily?

BOB: Temporarily.

(Carol moves to stand under the umbrella.)

CAROL: Thank you.

BOB: Pleasure.

CAROL: You don't waste words, do you?

BOB: Words, time, space, life...valuable.

CAROL: I suppose they are.

BOB: Precious.

(Pause. Carol peers down the street.)

CAROL: It should be here soon. The bus.

BOB: Unpredictable.

CAROL: Do you work nearby? Only...I've never seen you before.

BOB: Always here, never noticed.

CAROL: Have you seen me?

BOB: Always here, always noticed.

CAROL: I guess it's never rained before.

BOB: Always dry.

CAROL: Until today.

BOB: *(Nodding)* Wet today.

(Carol looks shyly at him.)

CAROL: I didn't mean to ignore you. The other times, I mean.

BOB: Not expected. Not a problem.

CAROL: But I feel bad...that I never saw you and you saw me.

BOB: Flowers never notice.

CAROL: Flowers?

BOB: Beautiful. Noticed. Never notice us.

CAROL: I suppose not.

(Pause)

But I've noticed you now.

BOB: Flower picked.

CAROL: And now I always will.

BOB: Promising.

CAROL: And you're here every day?

BOB: Clockwork.

(Carol looks down the street)

CAROL: Here's my bus.

BOB: Unfortunate.

CAROL: Isn't it yours?

BOB: Different directions.

CAROL: Oh. Well...thanks for the shelter.

BOB: Pleasure mine.

CAROL: I guess I'll see you tomorrow. Is there any rain predicted?

BOB: Unpredictable.

CAROL: I might not remember my umbrella. I'm very forgetful at times.

BOB: Not me.

CAROL: Good. So I'll...see you next time?

BOB: *(Nodding)* Every time. Predictable.

(They smile at each other. She exits. He looks after her, then up at the rain happily.)

Bigger now.

(Lights down.)