

A play in Two Acts

EXCERPT



——
Tara Meddaugh's

THE LAST TWO

The Last Two

EXCERPT

a full-length play in two acts

by Tara Meddaugh

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THE LAST TWO

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Character Breakdown

LILY	A middle aged mother.
SCRUFFY	A boy of 17 and 18.
MARCUS	A middle aged father.
DAISY	A girl of 18.
VOICE	A voice. May be doubled by the actor who plays Marcus.

Setting

The play takes place in a sitting room of a large old house on an isolated island. This set may be literal with actual furniture etc., or not. The second act takes place in a more surreal world. It is dark, open, with minimal props and set pieces. Much may be conveyed through lights.

ACT I
Scene 1

At Rise: A sitting room in a house on an island. The feeling of isolation and the surrounding water is imminent. The house is sparse, large, and would be drafty if not for the radiators on high. LILY is a middle-aged woman dressed for a party. SCRUFFY is nearing adulthood, 17 years old or so, dressed in something simple and probably brown. He sometimes wears a dog collar. He walks on his hands and knees primarily at this point.

LILY

Away from the pie! Away from the pie, Scruffy!

(shoes him away)

Oh, for goodness sake! Your slobber is all over the graham cracker crust! What am I going to serve for dessert now, Scruffy?

(The door bell rings)

Oh! That must be them! Thirty minutes late. Are my wrinkles showing?

(to door)

Coming!

(to Scruffy)

You sit there. By the love seat. Put your head back, you know, how I like it. You look so handsome like that.

(holds his face in her hands and kisses him on the top of his head)

My joie de vivre! Stay. Good boy.

(She opens the door)

(MARCUS, a middle-aged man, dressed in a suit, enters. Following him is DAISY, a beautiful girl of about 18. She is wearing a wedding dress.)

MARCUS

Ah, Lily! Look at you!

LILY

You're thirty minutes late.

MARCUS

Am I?

LILY

It's half past seven, Mr. Danube.

MARCUS

Marcus. Please. But—the invitation said seven thirty. I arrived on the dot. I'm very punctual. It's always been my trait.

LILY

Let me see the invitation.

MARCUS

Oh, I—

(searches through pocket)

I had it right here. Or—Daisy—have you seen the invitation?

(DAISY pulls out a small card from her dress pocket)

Ah, here it is. “An evening with Lily and Scruffy. Marcus Danube and Daisy are cordially invited to ring in the new year with—”

LILY

Oh, skip that—we know all that. What time does it say?

MARCUS

Right here—seven thirty, you see?

LILY

Where?

MARCUS

Here—by the drawing of the fireworks. Are we really going to have fireworks tonight?

LILY

That was what you were supposed to bring.

MARCUS

We were? I—I didn’t know. I apologize.

LILY

You might better apologize to Daisy and Scruffy. When they expect fireworks, it’s hard to get their mind on anything else. It’ll be such a disappointment.

MARCUS

Oh, well, I’m sure I could find some somewhere.

LILY

I doubt it. They’re illegal here.

MARCUS

I could cross the state line.

LILY

Through the waters? Besides, dinner is already cold.

MARCUS

Well, at least you now see, we were on time.

(LILY grabs the invitation)

LILY

It must have been a misprint.

MARCUS

It's your handwriting.

LILY

The hand isn't the mind, Mr. Danube.

MARCUS

Marcus, Lily. Call me Marcus.

LILY

Very well. I suppose you're here in any case, so you really ought to come in further and take your coat off.

MARCUS

The snow is piling up out there.

LILY

Did you get in a car accident on your way over?

MARCUS

No!

LILY

I thought that might be why you were so late.

MARCUS

The invitation said—

LILY

Oh, yes, I know. I forgot. My mind is on other things. The hors d'oeuvres, for example. Pigs in a blanket. I do hope Scruffy hasn't gotten to them by now. What with the wait and all.

MARCUS

Where should I put my coat?

LILY

Scruffy, please take Mr. Danube's coat and put it in the mud room. Oh, I see you have a coat for Daisy, as well. How darling. Scruffy, take both of them, please. Go on now.

(SCRUFFY exits with the coats)

Now, why don't you let Daisy here have a seat.

(DAISY hops on the couch)

Oh, no, dear. Not on the good furniture. Here. You can sit on this old pillow on the floor. Scruffy sits there sometimes, but he won't mind sharing. I've raised him well.

(DAISY sits)

Now, then. Mr. Danube, would you like a glass of wine?

MARCUS

I would. Thank you. But Lily, please, you're being ridiculous. Despite what I've done, we're here now and calling me Mr. Danube seems silly, now doesn't it?

LILY

Well, I don't think so. Should we ask Daisy?

MARCUS

No, no, Daisy doesn't—it's not important. Call me whatever you like. But it would mean a great deal to me if you'd call me Marcus again.

LILY

I'll try, Marcus.

MARCUS

Thank you, Lily.

LILY

Is white wine alright? It's all I have actually. I don't care for red wine. It tastes like metal to me. Or rust. Blood really, don't you think? Perhaps it's high in iron...

MARCUS

I haven't given it much thought, I suppose.

LILY

Well, next time, you're forced to drink it, give it a thought or two. You'll see what I mean.

MARCUS

There's often a fair amount of sugar in white wine.

LILY

Are you on a diet, Marcus? I had no idea!

MARCUS

No, I'm—

LILY

Then what, in God's green earth, is the deliberation?

MARCUS

There's no deliberation. I'm only saying. Making conversation.

LILY

Yes, well, a very forced sort of conversation. Sugar in white wine!

MARCUS

I suppose.

(LILY hands him some wine and takes a glass for herself.)

LILY

Oh! My manners! Would you like some white wine, little Daisy?

MARCUS

Daisy doesn't drink.

LILY

Oh, but she looks disappointed. She looks like she'd enjoy a glass of her own.

MARCUS

She's too young.

LILY

Young is when you can stomach it. Glass upon glass upon glass. Why, I'm not even in assisted living and I can only hold one glass at a time now. Or perhaps two tonight, being as we're going into the new year and all.

MARCUS

Well, I don't think it'd be good for her. She's so innocent—I'd like to keep her that way.

LILY

Oh, I'd really like to pour her a glass. She's pouting now. I've had enough of pouting in one day. I'm going to give her some wine!

MARCUS

I'd rather you didn't. I would hate her to get sick or, God forbid, addicted. You know she's all I have.

LILY

You worry like an old man! Look at her, Marcus. Can you turn down a face like that? See how she's panting?

MARCUS

She's not panting at all.

LILY

Well, you're not as perceptive as I. I can see her panting.

MARCUS

If you really think she needs it...

LILY

Oh, she doesn't need it at all! On the contrary! It's the thing that one doesn't need that one can truly enjoy. Who loves having a roof over one's head unless it's a splendid roof with glass tiling and gold molding?

MARCUS

I'm content with a safe and sound tin roof.

LILY

Well, you set the bar low, Marcus.

(she pours Daisy a glass and hands it to her.)

(DAISY takes the glass and sips it.)

Ah, she loves it!

MARCUS

Her face is all scrunched up.

LILY

That's how they look when they drink.

MARCUS

I don't like it.

LILY

If you withhold too much when they're young, they'll surely race into the world to try it when they're older—and most likely overdose then. Have you not read anything about training them?

MARCUS

I don't believe in newspapers anymore.

LILY

Quel dommage... What a shame.

(SCRUFFY enters)

Thank you, Scruffy, for taking care of the coats. Now why don't you have a seat next to Daisy. She's having a drink. Would you like one, as well?

(SCRUFFY nods. LILY gets up and pours him a glass)

Here now. I gave you the glass with the white etching on it. You like that, don't you?

MARCUS

What does it say?

LILY

I can't read without my glasses.

MARCUS

Well, neither can I.

LILY

Look at us—we're getting old, Marcus.

MARCUS

I'm barely in my fifties.

LILY

Oh, I highly doubt that.

MARCUS

I didn't expect to be reading fine print today or I would have brought them.

LILY

No need. Scruffy has young eyes. Why don't you read it for us?

(SCRUFFY examines the cup)

MARCUS

He can't read it either. It's written in a strange sort of script.

LILY

It's only cursive.

MARCUS

You can't expect him to decipher that.

LILY

He's got the eyes of a hawk, Marcus. And the voice of, oh, I don't know, a president maybe. Not the current one, of course. Just let him read it.

SCRUFFY

(clear his throat)

"Jessica and Todd...December 24, nineteen"...the exact date is scratched out.

(pause)

MARCUS

He can read it! Well, most of it. I stand corrected.

LILY

It's a wedding glass, of course! A souvenir or...what do they call it?

MARCUS

A parting gift?

LILY

No...no...oh, I wish there were another girl around. A girl would know.

MARCUS

Ask Daisy.

LILY

Oh, yes, I suppose she might know. Daisy, darling, what is that word? A parting bribe...or...

DAISY

A wedding favor?

LILY

Yes! That's it!

MARCUS

She's a smart one.

LILY

She is, Marcus. Despite your limitations and the whole newspaper issue. You're lucky with her. Now, let's see...Jessica and Todd...do you remember them?

MARCUS

Vaguely...

LILY

She had one of those haircuts that looked like a bowl of fruit. Of grapes mostly, like a bunch of grapes, you know. Her wedding was on Christmas Eve. Very selfish.

MARCUS

We all got snowed in, didn't we?

LILY

At that cottage or barn or whatever make-shift sort of reception hall they had concocted.

MARCUS

You wanted to start eating each other.

LILY

I didn't!

MARCUS

You did. You said we'd most likely be holed up for twenty days. I remember you said 20 days specifically because it was 1 day less than 3 weeks, and you said we'd definitely be rescued by 3 weeks, but not a day before.

LILY

That sounds like a reasonable thing to say.

MARCUS

And you said no one could survive twenty days without eating.

LILY

But we had all that wedding food!

MARCUS

You said it would be gone in a week.

LILY

Well, it most likely would. Or less. Greedy people attend weddings.

MARCUS

You cut up the wedding programs and wrote each person's name on a slip. We were to draw names to see who would be the first to go.

LILY

You're scaring them.

MARCUS

I thought you were joking. We all did. You always liked to play games; everyone knew that.

LILY

Games are imperative for living a healthy life—children, monkeys, even for adults. If you read articles, you would know the studies.

MARCUS

Well, I saw you with those slips. You were estimating each person's weight and writing that number on the back. You ordered the slips of paper, the heaviest person to be drawn first. It wasn't going to be random at all.

LILY

Well, why waste two thin people's lives when you could simply give up one hefty person's life? Isn't that the most economical? The most thoughtful? Humane?

MARCUS

But we were only trapped for a few hours. Not even the whole night. The roads got cleared out. We were all still stuffed from the wedding dinner until we went home. It started as a game, but it turned into something much more to you.

(LILY gets up and picks up a tray of food)

LILY

Well, that happens sometimes. And it's often called "making it through" or "thinking ahead." You can criticize me, but thinking ahead, or making it through is what has gotten me—gotten us—this far. Gotten you to have a place to be on New Year's Eve. Gotten us to have a glass of wine to drink, and these pigs in a blanket to eat. Gotten Daisy to have a friend in my darling little Scruffy. Gotten me to remain alive all these years after you have left me. Maybe you regret that. Not leaving me, of course, how could you. What with Daisy and all...But my remaining alive. Maybe you wish I would think in the moment only. And then you wouldn't be here and neither would I. You'd like that, wouldn't you?

MARCUS

Now, you're being silly. You're hyperbolizing, Lily.

LILY

Do you want to be here?

MARCUS

Would I be here if I didn't?

LILY

Very likely, yes.

MARCUS

Lily...

LILY

Obligation has a strong pull on a weak man. So does fear. And guilt. And worry that I might waste away without you on this, this day of treachery?

MARCUS

No...I'm not here for any of those reasons.

LILY

None at all?

MARCUS

I don't know, Lily. Can we really be honest with each other about it? I don't know if I can. But, on some level, you know, I want to be here. To have you see Daisy again. And I always want to know how Scruffy is doing.

LILY

He's fine, of course. We're all fine. He's practicing for a marathon. He's quite the runner. I always tell him he's part greyhound, don't I, Scruffy?

MARCUS

But he's not.

LILY

Of course he's not. I only tell him that. What is Daisy?

MARCUS

I'm not quite sure. She looks like her mother.

LILY

How dreadful. I hope she doesn't act like her.

MARCUS

Her mother was...no worse than me.

LILY

All the more reason to be careful of how Daisy acts.

MARCUS

I'm doing my best to protect her...

LILY

Sometimes your best is actually your worst if you don't know what your best should be. But I understand. I have to be careful around Scruffy too. We'll always have a battle since he's inherited genes from his father.

(pause)

MARCUS

I hope our conversation will be more—delightful over dinner.

LILY

Oh, I hope so too, but you know I can't make any such promises.

(pause)

MARCUS

(grabs a pig-in-the-blanket)

These look delicious.

LILY

Scruffy and I made them from scratch!

MARCUS

From scratch, did you?

(LILY tussles Scruffy's hair)

LILY

He's quite the little chef.

MARCUS

He ought to make a career of it!

LILY

He just might. I tell him that every day. Every day, don't I, Scruffy? How you ought to make a career of your cookery? But right here with me, is the best place for it.

(SCRUFFY nods)

Well, what aspirations do you have for Daisy?

MARCUS

She's too young to put that sort of pressure on her just yet.

LILY

I wasn't putting any—

MARCUS

No, I know you don't mean it. It's just—she's so naïve, so innocent to the world.

LILY

She does have those large eyes.

MARCUS

She follows me everywhere.

LILY

She's loyal.

MARCUS

She misses socialization with her peers, I'm sure.

LILY

That's why it's good she's here. She can play with Scruffy.

MARCUS

It does look like they're hitting it off.

LILY

Scruffy is very kind to strangers. He rarely bites.

MARCUS

She always wants to do what I do. Go where I go. I fear she's forgetting she's a dog sometimes.

LILY

Well, she probably is. You must constantly remind them they're dogs. Otherwise, they'll think they're cats or mice or elephants, or—whatever they're surrounded by. They're called the chameleons of the mammal world.

MARCUS

Is that right?

LILY

That's how we play it.

MARCUS

Well, she's taken to wearing dresses lately.

LILY

I noticed.

MARCUS

She does look nice in them though, doesn't she?

LILY

She looks like a hussy.

MARCUS

I thought she looked rather modest.

LILY

Hussies do not look modest, Marcus. Where does she find these dresses? The one she's wearing...it looks very...very distinctive.

MARCUS

Oh, yes, well, she just finds them. Around the house.

LILY

Lying around?

MARCUS

Or in a closet. In a box. She saw me open an old box one day with some skirts in them, and she right away took to them. Pulling them out, one after another, trying them on, twirling in front of the mirror. I put them away in the box, but the next day, I saw it had been dug up and she was wearing three skirts at the same time, one on her head and two on her bottom.

LILY

I bet she looked silly.

MARCUS

Yes, or, well, not entirely. She looked silly in one respect, I suppose. A dog wearing skirts. And more skirts than necessary. But there was something about her in them...the choice of skirts, the flowing quality of them as she walked, and the way she looked at me when wearing them. It was as though she were from...a fairy tale. I was mesmerized.

LILY

Do you know that's how the devil ensnares his victims?

MARCUS

With skirts?

LILY

Enchantment. We're not in a fairytale, Marcus. We're in a frozen woods in a house on an island. And it's dark and it's cold and it's dead all around us. There may be ogres and trolls and evil witches somewhere out there, but there are no princesses or fairies. And without them, it's not a fairytale, now is it?

MARCUS

I think Daisy looks nice, is all.

LILY

Daisy looks nice. Daisy looks nice. Yes, yes, we all know, Daisy looks nice. Daisy looks just like her mother. Everyone loves Daisy with the eyes and the dress and the glass of white wine in her paw.

(pause)

Surely, you've had enough hors d'oeuvres. Are you ready for the entrée? Shall we retire to the dining room?

MARCUS

Yes, of course, if it's time.

LILY

Well, it is. It was time thirty minutes ago. Come along Scruffy. *Daisy*. You can have a quick dinner with us, then we'll let you play. You'll love a good game or two. I know you will.

(They exit)

ACT I
Scene 2

(The living room is empty. DAISY runs onstage and darts around the room. SCRUFFY follows.)

SCRUFFY

Don't even try to hide, because you know I'll catch you!

DAISY

I'm not hiding! You can see me clear as a stream! You're just too chicken to chase me!

SCRUFFY

I'm not chicken! I'm—

DAISY

You're scared! I can see it—I can see it in your eyes! You're so—you're so beautifully scared! I think it's charming.

SCRUFFY

You do?

DAISY

Uh huh.

SCRUFFY

Well, I'm not really scared—I'm just...I haven't played with anyone in a long time...

DAISY

No?

SCRUFFY

No, I...I mostly keep watch over the house for Mother.

DAISY

Well, can't she watch over it herself?

SCRUFFY

She doesn't have very good eyesight. At least, not like mine. I have the eyesight of a—

DAISY

Hawk. I know. I heard her.

(pause)

She should let you go out more. They should let us both go out more.

(stops running)

Here—you can catch me.

(SCRUFFY stops running too)

SCRUFFY

It's no fun like that. Too easy.

DAISY

You don't think I'm fun? I don't wanna be boring...

SCRUFFY

No, no. You're fun! You're a lot of fun! You're probably the funnest living thing I've ever met. You have this, you have all this energy and nice fur and...well, I don't think you're able to be boring.

DAISY

But, I am, Scruffy. Well, I'm not really. The real me isn't boring, but...it's just...he makes me that way. (I'm gonna tell you a secret, ok?)

SCRUFFY

Your father?

(pause)

DAISY

Do you know how to play "Skin The Puppy?"

SCRUFFY

No.

DAISY

So how it works is I circle around you and howl four times and by the time I'm done howling my fourth, you have to have your dog fur all off.

SCRUFFY

How can I do that?

DAISY

It's just metaphoric. And then, I go back and I circle around you the other way and howl four more times, and by the time I'm done, you have to look like a human.

SCRUFFY

But how—

DAISY

It's no fun if I tell you everything, Scruffy. You have to figure it out yourself. It's a game.

SCRUFFY

I don't know.

DAISY

Come on. Would you rather just sit here and watch the house?

(pause)

It doesn't need watching tonight. My father will take care of it. He's good at protecting too.

SCRUFFY

Okay.

DAISY

Great! Now, you stand there. Or sit, whatever. Be comfortable.

(SCRUFFY sits)

Good. Are you ready?

SCRUFFY

Not really.

DAISY

That's okay. You don't have to be ready. You'll just do it when I start howling. Trust your instincts. You do still have instincts, don't you?

SCRUFFY

What do you mean by that?

DAISY

I'm gonna start howling now.

(SHE starts howling and circling him. SCRUFFY slowly starts pulling off the brown sheet he is wearing. DAISY stops circling after four howls, then turns around in the opposite direction and begins howling again and circling. SCRUFFY starts standing on his hind legs until he is as tall as a human. He grabs a pair of reading glasses off a table and puts them on his face. He wraps the brown sheet around his waist like a skirt. He starts pointing with his finger and shuffling in place. DAISY stops after her fourth howl and begins laughing.)

That's amazing, Scruffy! You're so human! You're so human!

SCRUFFY

I am?

DAISY

(still laughing)

Yes, you are! Oh, look at yourself! You're like this—
(she imitates his gestures)

SCRUFFY

I am?

(DAISY nods and laughs)

I do look a little...funny...

DAISY

Yes! Don't you see it! Oh! You must have played this before!

SCRUFFY

No. Never.

DAISY

Well, you're a genius at it! Really, Scruffy!

(SCRUFFY laughs a little with her. DAISY calms down.)

SCRUFFY

Thank you.

(pause)

Now you do it.

DAISY

Oh, no.

SCRUFFY

Why not?

DAISY

I just—well, I like seeing the game, but I...I have a problem.

SCRUFFY

With what?

DAISY

With—you know, becoming...human, I guess.

SCRUFFY

You're not human.

DAISY

I know...only...well, see, I've always liked playing "Skin the Puppy." Actually, here's another secret. I made it up myself. And at home, I'd have to do both parts. It's so much more fun with two dogs playing though!

SCRUFFY

I'm glad I could play it with you.

DAISY

But, the thing is, I got really good at it and then...it's just, my dad doesn't like me to leave the house by myself and...

SCRUFFY

You don't have to leave the house to play it.

DAISY

No...that's true. If I play like you just did. And I liked seeing you play it!

SCRUFFY

Then play it with me.

(pause)

DAISY

Your mom doesn't like you to leave the house either?

SCRUFFY

I have to stay to watch the house.

DAISY

True. But I don't watch the house for my dad. He watches the house. He doesn't need me for that. I don't even cook like you do. I just sort of—I don't know, I just sit around and walk around and look at things and lie down. It's just so boring—it's not who I'm meant to be. I know that.

SCRUFFY

You could start watching the house. Listening for sounds. Practicing your sense of smell.

DAISY

But I don't wanna do that. I think about people walking across our property and I don't feel like I want to chase them off or bite their leg. I want them to come inside. I want to find out who they are, and talk to them, and feel their warm bodies.

SCRUFFY

Well, that's okay sometimes.

(pause)

DAISY

I did get out once. By myself.

SCRUFFY

Did you catch anything?

DAISY

Not hunting, Scruffy. That's what I'm trying to tell you. I don't want those things. I went out and...He doesn't know. I found some old liquid in the bathroom that I'd seen on a television show once. And I put it in his nightcap—that's another form of alcohol, Scruffy, like wine, but it's not that exactly. And he drank it right up and just fell asleep until the next afternoon.

SCRUFFY

Wow.

DAISY

Yeah.

SCRUFFY

Why did you do that?

DAISY

So I could get out. Every night, he makes me go to sleep after it gets dark and the moon is high in the sky. Do I have a say in when I go sleep? Never. Not once has he asked if I'm ready for some shut eye. Not once. So I just took out the prettiest dress I could find and I played "Skin the Puppy." But when I finished the last round, instead of lying at his feet, I grabbed the key, opened the front door, and...well...

SCRUFFY

You went out.

DAISY

If I could show you the things I saw, Scruffy!

SCRUFFY

Well, I've been out before too.

DAISY

At night time?

SCRUFFY

Sure. Even last week, I heard a big rustling around the back porch. So Mother let me out and I ran around for a good fifteen minutes. Found out it was a 'coon making all that noise. Trying to get our trash. I scared him away and he hasn't been back since.

DAISY

Well, that's great, Scruffy. You're a really strong dog and I'm sure you scare away all those pesky little creatures.

SCRUFFY

Mother says I'm the envy of the island.

DAISY

She's right.

(pause)

But this wasn't like that. I don't live in the country like this. I live in town with no water surrounding me, telling me I can't get leave. It's not a big city, nothing like the western or even eastern side—just a little town. But there are people around at night. And dogs. Not raccoons.

SCRUFFY

So what did you do?

DAISY

I played games.

SCRUFFY

Like, who to eat first?

DAISY

No! Like, "Skin the Puppy"—with finally with other dogs. Of course, they didn't understand the rules as well as you or I do—leaving out the last round usually, but...there are so many dogs lining the street at night.

SCRUFFY

Well, I don't know if I'd like that. I don't like a lot of dogs around. I mean, one or two, okay, but...how many?

DAISY

More than I could count! You'd be surprised, but a lot of them actually look a little like humans.

SCRUFFY

How did you know who was who then?

DAISY

Well, I sort of figured it out. The humans mostly stay inside and say things like, "And how are you this evening, my darling little Daisy," and sit around and drink coffee with caramel or wine or nightcaps and talk on their phones, but the dogs—they just want to have fun. They grab you and you go and play and do other stuff, and that's that.

Huh. SCRUFFY

I almost thought you were a human at first. DAISY

Me? SCRUFFY

The way you just sat there, then put our coats away and stuff. DAISY

I'm more dog than you are. SCRUFFY

Mm. DAISY

You don't even chase critters! SCRUFFY

You like being inside. DAISY

I like protecting the inside. There's a difference. SCRUFFY

The point is, when we were sitting next to each other, and I was cozying up to you and you looked at me...you just...you just said it all in one look. You had the spark. DAISY

The spark? SCRUFFY

Humans can't have the spark. It's impossible. And I knew right then, you were a dog. And I wanted to know you more. DAISY

(pause)

I'd like to know you more too, Daisy. SCRUFFY

Good. DAISY

(pause)

Why don't you give me another glass of wine?

(pause)

SCRUFFY

Okay.

(he goes to fill up her glass)

DAISY

Your house is weird. It's so dark. It seems old. Like we're living a long time ago or something. You can fill it up more than that.

(SCRUFFY tops off the glass)

Yeah, there's definitely something strange about this house. I went to several houses that night I was out—they all brought me back to their houses and fed me and petted me. And I've never seen one like this before. Doesn't this place make you want to bolt?

SCRUFFY

Not really.

DAISY

Well, I guess it's all you've known.

SCRUFFY

Maybe. I don't really remember.

DAISY

That's your problem, Scruffy.

SCRUFFY

What?

DAISY

When you look back on this past year, what do you remember?

SCRUFFY

I don't know.

DAISY

Think about it.

SCRUFFY

Well...I remember watching the house and...licking the pie crust and...you and Marcus coming over.

DAISY

But that all just happened today. Assuming you licked the pie crust today?

(SCRUFFY nods)

Look, Scruffy, tomorrow is the start of a new year. Do you know what that means?

SCRUFFY

I...it means new...new...I don't know. New days?

DAISY

It either means another year of remembering one day at a time...or it means starting a new life. A new adventure.

(pause)

With me.

(pause)

I've already decided. The moment I saw that invitation with the fireworks. I knew this was my chance. There's no more liquid in the medicine cabinet, so this is it for me. I will not spend another night being told when to sleep because of the moon! Maybe I don't want to sleep at night. Maybe I don't want to sleep at all. I don't know. And that's the beauty of it! I don't know, Scruffy! But I'm gonna find out. What I'm good at, what my life is meant to be like. Maybe I'll become a soprano and sing in the opera! I love to howl! Maybe I'll dance for a king or create some vaccine. Who knows—I could do anything still, right? I'm young. There is more than fetching sticks, Scruffy. Now, I know you haven't been planning this, and I wasn't planning on asking you, but...now that I met you, I...I think we might make a good team. I...I like you, Scruffy.

SCRUFFY

I like you too, Daisy.

DAISY

You're honest and you're cute and sweet. And I'd like to show you some things. It kills me to see a dog like you all caged up with that mother.

SCRUFFY

She loves me.

DAISY

Did you get in trouble when you licked the pie crust?

SCRUFFY

Well...

DAISY

See—that's not right. You should be free. Out there—out there, Scruffy, no one cares if you lick

a pie crust. If it's on the street, it's fair game. And if it's in someone's house, well, then you're a guest—because you don't live in a house—and then you can't get in trouble.

SCRUFFY

But how will we be guests? We don't know anyone.

DAISY

We'll meet them—everyone—dogs and people!

SCRUFFY

I don't know if I want to meet everyone.

DAISY

Well, then we'll be choosy. Pick who we want to meet. Only la crème de la crème for us!

SCRUFFY

I don't speak like that. With all those fancy words...

DAISY

I'll speak for you. I'll speak and you'll guard us!

SCRUFFY

You don't need guarding. You'll be fine on your own.

DAISY

But I don't want to be on my own this time, Scruffy. I want to be with you.
(pause)

SCRUFFY

You—

DAISY

I don't want this to be the last time we see each other.

SCRUFFY

We'll see each other next New Year's.

DAISY

How do you know that? How do we know it's not just this one time I'm here? Just this one chance for me and you to really see each other. To be with each other in the world.

(There is rustling off stage)

They'll be in here soon. Now's our chance.

(she pulls his arm)

Come on!

I can't. SCRUFFY

(pause)

Why not? DAISY

I'd love to be with you, Daisy. I'd love it so much, but... SCRUFFY

What? DAISY

I—I'm just not supposed to leave. SCRUFFY

(pause)

You're scared! DAISY

I—no, I mean, of course I'm not scared. How could a dog be scared of anything? Why should I be scared? SCRUFFY

It just seems like maybe you're scared. DAISY

Well, I'm not. SCRUFFY

It's ok if you are. Just because I'm not scared doesn't mean you can't be scared. DAISY

But I'm not! SCRUFFY

I think you are and that's why you don't wanna come with me. DAISY

You can't imagine that someone would ever say no to you. That maybe someone just doesn't want to go with you. Did you ever think of that? SCRUFFY

DAISY

But you just said you'd love—

SCRUFFY

Well, maybe I'm thinking better of it now, and I think you're a little pushy. And if I went with you, you'd always be telling me what to do or what I'm thinking when you don't even know me.

DAISY

I was just—

SCRUFFY

You were "just"—sure, I know. And you'd keep being "just" this or that, because that's how you are. Telling me I'm scared when I'm clearly not scared!

DAISY

I'm sorry...

SCRUFFY

I protect this house, you know.

DAISY

I know. You do a good job. You're very brave.

(pause. DAISY looks at Scruffy, who looks away.)
(There is more rustling off stage)

SCRUFFY

Can I get your coat for you?

DAISY

Oh, um, I guess—or, no actually. I don't want them to think I've left yet. I'll just—it can't stay cold forever, can it?

(small laugh)

SCRUFFY

You're a dog. You have your warm fur.

DAISY

I guess.

(pause)

Well, then.

LILY (o.s.)

Now I don't allow smoking in the sitting room, but you may hold a pipe in your hand, if you wish.

SCRUFFY

Good bye, Daisy.

MARCUS (o.s.)

That's very kind of you.

SCRUFFY

Maybe I'll see you next New Year's.

(pause)

DAISY

I do believe you're brave when you're meant to be.

(starts to leave)

Good bye, Scruffy. We would have made a good team, you know.

(SCRUFFY nods, then watches as DAISY exits. He then puts his brown sheet back on, circles a few times by the couch, and lies down.)

END OF EXCERPT

For more information on *The Last Two*, please visit:

<https://www.tarmeddaugh.com/the-last-two>

Or contact:

<https://www.tarmeddaugh.com/contact>

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT



Tara is a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University's MFA program in Dramatic Writing. Her work has been presented by Fusion Theatre, The Directors Company, Le Petit Theatre de Terrebonne, Theatre One, Westchester Collaborative Theater, One Armed Man, Oracle Theatre, Inc, the Bobik Theatre Ensemble, The Acme Theatre Company, The Harlequin Players, *Woman Seeking...*, and numerous schools, universities and colleges including Gardner-Webb, Prince Williams, and Colgate. Her work has also showcased at the Artists of Tomorrow Festival in NYC, The Bangkok Community Theatre Fringe Festival, the Pittsburgh New Works Series and the Last Frontier Theatre Conference in Alaska. Students, teachers and actors world-wide have utilized her plays and monologues for competitions, Directing, Acting and Dramatic Literature courses and workshops in schools, colleges and theatres. Serial monologues she wrote were performed for two years by the internationally recognized receptionist-robot, Valerie. She has taught Playwriting and Screenwriting at Carnegie Mellon, the Pittsburgh Public Theatre, and for The Westport Country Playhouse, and she has led Creative Dramatics Workshops for children in underserved areas throughout New York and New Jersey. Additionally, she toured in a Children's Theatre Troupe, which she wrote for, co-directed, and performed in. Tara's work has been published by YouthPLAYS, Oxford Press South Africa, the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts (LAMDA), The Hunger Journal, Meriweather Publishing and Applause Theatre & Cinema. She is a two-time recipient of the Shubert Fellowship in Dramatic Writing, the Sloan Screenwriting Fellowship, the New Works for Young Women [Actors] Award and is a member of the Dramatist's Guild. Tara has written children's books, short stories, a novel, and writes and records music in the chick-core rap band, [Girl Crusade](#). She lives in Westchester County with her husband and two dramatic children.

For more information about Tara Meddaugh or her work,
visit her website at www.tameddaugh.com.