



ASK ME ANYTHING & OTHER SHORT PLAYS

By Philip Middleton Williams

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**Ask Me Anything
And Other Short Plays**

By

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CHARACTERS:

STEVE: early twenties; attractive, dressed for a job interview.

MARTIN: the same.

LEO: older, businessman.

PLACE and TIME:

An office with a desk and chairs. Present day.

Ask Me Anything was written and first performed for a playwriting master class taught by Tina Howe at the William Inge Theatre Festival, April 29, 2006, at Independence Community College, Independence, Kansas. Roles were performed by Luke Yankee (Steve), Steven Kohlar (Martin), and the author (Leo).

Ask Me Anything was first produced in a full-stage production as a part of the Miami Summer 1-Acts Festival at New Theatre in Miami, Florida on July 5, 2013. It was directed by William Roudebush with the following cast:

Steve.....Glenn Hutchinson
Martin.....Jordan Hale
Leo.....Joel Kolker

Scene: An office. A desk with a chair and two other chairs. A small stack of folders is on the desk. At rise, STEVE is standing next to the desk. MARTIN enters. He is carrying a folder.

MARTIN: I'm here for the interview.

STEVE: Right. Take a seat. (*MARTIN sits in one of the chairs. STEVE indicates the folder.*) Is that your application?

MARTIN: Oh, yes. Sorry.

(Hands it to him. STEVE opens the folder, leafs through some of the papers, then sits behind the desk, still reading the papers. MARTIN watches him intently.)

STEVE (*reading papers*): Hmm. (*Turns a page.*) Hmm.

MARTIN: Something wrong?

STEVE (*still reading*): Hmm.

MARTIN: What is it? Did I leave out something?

STEVE (*closing folder*): You do realize that the position you've applied for is extremely sensitive. We'll need to do a thorough background check on you.

MARTIN: I signed the waiver. But...

STEVE (*interrupting*): Yes, I see you signed the waiver. Very good. But there's more to this than just signing the waiver saying that you will allow us to investigate everything about you going back to, oh, high school and beyond. This is, after all, a very sensitive position in the company.

MARTIN: Really? I didn't know that. I thought...

STEVE (*interrupting*): You thought you were applying for the data entry position in the accounts receivable department.

MARTIN: Yes.

STEVE: That position has been filled.

MARTIN: Oh.

STEVE: But you caught our eye in another area.

MARTIN: Oh, really? What?

STEVE: Well, as I said, it's a highly sensitive position. You'd be responsible for some very confidential information and the processing thereof. So I'm going to have to ask you some questions that will determine whether or not you're the right person for the job.

MARTIN (*hesitant*): Okay.

STEVE: You sound hesitant.

MARTIN: No. It's just that...

STEVE (*interrupting*): You thought you were applying for another job.

MARTIN: Yeah.

STEVE: You did sign the waiver, though. It would be a pity to let that go to waste. And you did go to all the trouble to come down here – get dressed up nicely – for this interview. And you're probably just what we're looking for in this highly sensitive job.

MARTIN: Okay.

STEVE: So, I'm going to ask you these questions.

MARTIN: Okay.

STEVE: Good. Ready?

MARTIN: Yes, sir.

STEVE: Have you ever had sex in a public place?

MARTIN (*stunned*): What?

STEVE: I'm sorry, I'll speak up. Have you ever had sex in a public place?

MARTIN: Uh....

STEVE: Perhaps I should have asked if you've ever had sex and then gone from there.

MARTIN: Why....?

STEVE: We have to know these things. You did sign the waiver.

MARTIN: How, uh, how...uh, what do you mean by "public?"

STEVE: In a park. A parking garage. A public toilet. A glory hole. A tea room.

MARTIN: I don't even know what some of those places are.

STEVE: Certainly you know what a park is.

MARTIN: Well, yes...but a – what did you call it – "glory hole?" "Tea room?"

STEVE: Oh, then you're not homosexual.

MARTIN: What?

STEVE: If you were a homosexual you'd know what those terms meant.

MARTIN: Well, I..

STEVE: Are you homosexual?

MARTIN: Can you ask me...

STEVE: You signed the waiver.

MARTIN: I know, but still....

STEVE: You're not a homosexual?

MARTIN: Yes. I mean no.

STEVE: Yes to which question?

MARTIN: The first one.

STEVE: You mean yes to sex in a public place and no to being homosexual?

MARTIN: No... and yes.

STEVE: So that's a no to sex in a public place but yes to being homosexual.

MARTIN: I think so.

STEVE: You think?

MARTIN: Yes...I've never had sex in a public place.

STEVE: What about outdoors?

MARTIN: Why do you – I know I signed the waiver – but...

STEVE: We can't run the risk of someone who engages in risky behavior being in a position that is highly sensitive. There's all sorts of reasons – you can understand. Blackmail, temptation....

MARTIN: But what about being gay?

STEVE: Oh, that's fine. We're very open-minded. We just don't want to find you being gay in a place that could put you at risk of some activity that would compromise you – or us. Now, the next question: Have you engaged in sexual activity within the last 24 hours.

MARTIN: No.

STEVE: Are you sure?

MARTIN: Yes. I live alone. I don't have a, uh, you-know, so...

STEVE: What about self-abuse?

MARTIN: What?

STEVE: Jacking off.

MARTIN: No.

STEVE: What about lusting in your heart? Did you turn on the TV and admire any men? Did you catch the Hamm twins on the gymnastics finals on ESPN?

MARTIN: No, I missed them.

STEVE: What about porn?

MARTIN: No, I don't watch it.

STEVE: Never?

MARTIN: Once. It was...boring.

STEVE: Boxers or briefs?

MARTIN: Briefs...

STEVE: At the beach. Speedos or surfer jams?

MARTIN: Surfer jams...

STEVE: Cut or uncut?

MARTIN: Cut.

STEVE: Hairy or smooth?

MARTIN: Uh...a little hairy.

STEVE: Muscular or athletic?

MARTIN: Me or...?

STEVE: You. I can't see under that shirt and tie.

MARTIN: Athletic.

STEVE: Disco or techno?

MARTIN: Um....

STEVE: Edward or Jacob?

MARTIN: What? Who?

STEVE: "Twilight." Edward with the soulful and dreamy eyes, or Jacob, with the rock-hard bulging biceps? Woof!

MARTIN (*shocked*): They're high school kids! I don't Look, I really don't see...

STEVE (*interrupting*): You signed...