

AMANDA MOON'S KITCHEN
A Ten-Minute Play for Five Women

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CHARACTERS

(In Order of Appearance)

Jen	Third ex-wife of John Hatcher, school teacher
Sylvia	Second ex-wife of John Hatcher, marketing manager
Dara	First ex-wife of John Hatcher, Showtime producer
Yolanda	Fourth ex-wife of John Hatcher, youth counselor
Amanda Moon	Widow of John Hatcher, yoga instructor

The women should range in age from late 30s to early 50s, with the earlier wives of John Hatcher generally older than the later wives. It would be good for the actors to represent a mix of ethnic backgrounds.

SETTING

Amanda Moon's kitchen.
The present.

AMANDA MOON'S KITCHEN

A kitchen. Morning. The day after John Hatcher's funeral. A table and chairs downstage. Upstage, a sink, a counter with a coffee maker, and a stove with a teapot. A door leading outside upstage. An entrance right or left. Jen and Sylvia, in PJs and robes, read the paper and drink coffee. A thought strikes Jen.

JEN

They should write a play about us.

Sylvia keeps reading.

SYLVIA

It's been done.

JEN

No it hasn't. Not about us specifically.

SYLVIA

If it was about us specifically it wouldn't be a play. It would be a documentary.

JEN

They could call it, "The Five Wives of John Hatcher."

SYLVIA

There's only one wife. The rest of us are exes. And the one isn't anymore.

JEN

"The Four Exes and One Wife ..." uh, "*Widow of John Hatcher.*" Are we all widows or just Amanda Moon?

SYLVIA

You're not very good at titles, are you?

JEN

The title is the least important part.

SYLVIA

Titles are very important. Ex, widow, wife. Titles are everything.

JEN

I think it would make a great play ... or a movie!

Dara enters in a running outfit.

DARA

Any coffee left?

JEN

Hey, Dara.

SYLVIA

The coffee will be flowing all day. Until the wine starts flowing.

Dara gets coffee and stands at the counter.

JEN

Going for a run?

DARA

Didn't exercise at all yesterday. I go nuts.

SYLVIA

Should have gone before the funeral.

DARA

Should have.

JEN

Josie get off okay this morning?

DARA

Before dawn.

JEN

Sylvia and I were just talking. We think it would be great if someone made a movie about us.

SYLVIA

You think.

DARA

Not gonna happen.

JEN

Oh, but Dara, you're a producer. This could be a Movie of the Week!

DARA

Amanda Moon up yet?

SYLVIA

You know as much as we do.

JEN

It was so sweet of Amanda Moon to invite all of us to stay with her. She didn't have to do that.

SYLVIA

We're here to support each other.

Dara thuds her coffee cup on the counter and tops it off.

JEN

I guess she needs it more than anyone, poor thing. What an ordeal. Out in the middle of nowhere and he has a heart attack. (*Shudders.*) I can't imagine.

The door opens and Yolanda enters looking lost.

Hey, Yolanda.

YOLANDA

Hey, Jen.

JEN

Go for a walk?

YOLANDA

(*Absently.*) I don't know.

JEN

You don't know? Silly.

DARA

There's coffee.

JEN

You know what Bob Hatcher said to me yesterday after the service? He's so cute. He said it was nice that all his brother's exes got along so well. He said we'd all learned to "bury the Hatcher." (*Laughs.*) Get it? Bury the Hatcher? Laugh out loud.

Yolanda sits and begins to weep. Sylvia finally turns her attention away from the paper. She and Jen stroke Yolanda's back.

JEN (cont'd)

I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that. I'm ...

YOLANDA

It's not that. It's just ...

JEN

What?

YOLANDA

I feel so stupid.

SYLVIA

It's all right.

YOLANDA

It's just that I thought ...

DARA

What?

YOLANDA

I thought that ... I was determined. I was doing visualizations. You know, "acting as if." And then ... now ... *(She weeps some more.)*

DARA

You wanted him back.

This resonates with all of them. First Sylvia and then Jen remove their hands from Yolanda's back.

YOLANDA

I blamed myself for losing him to Amanda Moon. If I'd only supported him more, or talked more about the things he wanted to talk about. We'd been married only two and a half years. And the way it started, I just knew ... *thought* it was going to last forever. I felt it from the moment I met him.

JEN

At the Kirshner's Holiday Party? You felt it then?

YOLANDA

I was standing in the doorway between the kitchen and back entry. I wasn't feeling very sociable that night. Not unusual. The back room was dark and I could hide in the shadows, alone with my glass of wine, watching people come and go from the kitchen. Then this man, a total stranger, came in and got a beer from the fridge. He noticed me and just smiled. There's a way someone can look at you for the first time, and you think, this is not a stranger. It feels odd, a little dangerous, like, somehow, your souls have always been connected but separate, and you'll do anything to get back together. I know he felt it too. He held out his hand and said, "Hi, I'm John Hatcher. I think I need to know you."

JEN

He said that that night?

YOLANDA

The way he looked at me --

DARA

Like a predator?

YOLANDA

He made me feel like I'd never really been *seen* before.

DARA

He worked fast.

SYLVIA

(*Chiding.*) Dara.

DARA

(*Defiant.*) What, Sylvia?

Pause.

JEN

I guess I felt that way too.

SYLVIA

What way?

JEN

The night John and I met.

DARA

Which was?

SYLVIA

(Eagerly.) Oh, I know. John told me.

YOLANDA

You talked to him about Jen?

SYLVIA

We talked about everything after we broke up. Even the woman who stole him away from me. *(To Jen.)* He met you on parent-teacher night. Right?

DARA

Was I there?

JEN

No. You were in ... was it Maine? Where you did the movie about that affluent black neighborhood?

DARA

Martha's Vineyard.

JEN

Right. He came alone. And I had all the parents sit at their kids' desks. He looked so funny squeezed into Josie's. And after I'd dismissed them, he introduced himself to me. He said ... *(She can't finish.)*

DARA

What did he say?

JEN

It's embarrassing. *(They wait.)* He said that Josie was always talking about me at home, when he had her -- which was often because Dara was on location a lot. That I'd made Josie interested in school in a way that none of her teachers had before. He said Josie loved me ... and that ... he did too.

DARA

What?

SYLVIA

Yep. That's how I heard it.

DARA

Why would he say he loved you? He didn't know you.

JEN

I guess he was saying that ... he appreciated the care and interest I showed to Josie.

Dara sets her cup down hard.

DARA

I'm going running.

Amanda Moon, dressed for the day, enters. The other women watch her intently. She is expressionless.

AMANDA MOON

Hi. *(Pause.)* I'll have tea.

Jen goes for the teapot but Dara snatches it first. Amanda Moon sits. Dara fills the pot and puts it on the burner.

YOLANDA

How did you sleep?

AMANDA MOON

Okay. *(Pause.)* I heard you talking.

SYLVIA

Last night?

AMANDA MOON

Just now.

YOLANDA

I'm sorry, Amanda Moon, I --

AMANDA MOON

How did you meet him, Sylvia?

SYLVIA

Me?

AMANDA MOON

Did lightning strike?

Sylvia sees that she truly wants to know.

SYLVIA

I guess you could say that. It was at a marketing conference in Boston. I was on a panel discussing, I don't know, marketing accountability or metrics or something, and the other panelists were all men. They were talking over the top of me and ignoring what I said. Finally, I laid into them. Said I'd had enough of their bullshit and they were going to listen to me.

JEN

That's our Sylvia.

SYLVIA

John came up to me afterwards and said, "You look like you could use a pint." We went on a pub crawl, then to dinner, then back to the hotel.

DARA

Who's room?

SYLVIA

Mine. Sorry, Dara, but the sex was great.

DARA

Don't apologize.

SYLVIA

Then, in the middle of the night, he woke me up to say that he thought I was making a difference in the world. I said that I was a marketing manager, working for a corporation whose sole purpose was to make money and screw the competition. How was that going to make a difference? And he said that it wasn't *what* I did but *how* I did it that mattered. It was who I *was*.

The teapot whistles. Dara takes it off the burner. Everyone looks at her.

DARA

What? Oh, no. No, I'm not playing this game. (*Pause.*) Look, we all fell for a line and got screwed. It's as simple as that.

AMANDA MOON

What was the line, Dara? Please tell me.

DARA

Why? Why do you want to know? So you can gloat? I lost him to all of you!

Pause. Dara leans against the counter.

DARA (cont'd)

It was the first week of my second year of film school. A bunch of us had gone up to the Park. John was with us, but I didn't know him then, didn't even register him. It was one of those humid Indian summer days. We were tossing a Frisbee on the Great Lawn and it sailed into the lake. I waded in after it and suddenly I felt like I was going to combust if I didn't dive in. So I did. And when I came out, you could see through my shirt. I wasn't wearing a bra and you could see everything. But I didn't care. That's when he came up to me and said, "You get an A for amorous." And that was it.

SYLVIA

That was it?

DARA

Nobody had ever called me anything like that before. I'd never had a boyfriend. Thought I was asexual. And that was fine with me. I had plans. Films to make.

AMANDA MOON

But he woke something up in you.

DARA

I guess so. Apparently, that's what he did best.

AMANDA MOON

Apparently.

DARA

Well, you win. You had him last.

AMANDA MOON

I'm not so sure.

YOLANDA

There wasn't someone else.

AMANDA MOON

Dara, you guys were married how long?

DARA

Thirteen years.

AMANDA MOON

Sylvia?

SYLVIA

Six.

JEN

Four and a half.

YOLANDA

Two and a half.

AMANDA MOON

I'm no good with math, but we'd been married eighteen months. Wasn't it time?

SYLVIA

No, you two ...

AMANDA MOON

The day he died? We stopped for coffee before heading up to the mountains. I'm half awake, but he strikes up a conversation with the barista, a woman in her thirties maybe. In no time he's got her talking about some failed relationship of hers. How she e-mailed a love poem, a haiku, to this guy, and the guy e-mailed back saying the haiku had almost made him lose the yogurt he'd eaten for breakfast. So we get our lattes, and John says, "Hey, good luck with the haiku and yogurt." And she laughs and their eyes linger on each other, like John did with people. And he gives her his card and says, "Send me some poems. I love a good haiku." (*Pause.*) And then we went skiing.

Pause.

DARA

That doesn't mean ...

AMANDA MOON

No, I think it does. I think it does mean. (*Pause.*) I'd like lemon ginger, please.

Dara prepares a cup of tea and hands it to Amanda Moon.

Thank you, Dara.

DARA

You're welcome.

Fade.

End of Play