

Unseen Love

(Lights up on a wooden, two-person school desk. CARL and ANTON sit next to each other on the side of the table farthest from the audience. Their heads are bent over their papers, their pencil scribbling as they take notes. They are in math class, but the audience cannot see any of their surroundings.)

MS. THOMPSON: (offstage) The trigonometric function of the sine of X is equal to the value of the length of the side opposite X divided by... (voice fades out)

(CARL screws up his mouth and looks at his paper, trying to understand what he has written. He nervously chews the end of his pencil, erases something, writes something down, and pops the end of his pencil back in his mouth. He still doesn't get it. He lays his pencil down, sighs heavily, and puts his forehead on the desk. ANTON, however, looks calm and composed as he writes on his paper.)

CARL: (to Anton) You understand this?

ANTON: (without looking up) Heck no.

CARL: Then what have you been writing for the last half hour?

(ANTON holds up his paper so both CARL and the audience can see. It is a drawing of a superhero with a triangle for a face.)

ANTON: (In an announcer voice) Trigonometry Man! Able to bore any villain to death!

(They laugh. Lights up on AMY, sitting at her own desk USL with her hand raised.)

AMY: Ms. Thompson, what do we use the cosine for?

MS. THOMPSON: We'll come to that later, Amy. Let's first go over the tangent of X. The tangent is equal to the... (voice fades out)

(Lights on AMY come down slowly. ANTON looks at her as they fade.)

ANTON: You think Amy understands this?

CARL: Amy? Probably not. She's not exactly a straight A student.

ANTON: (Still staring USL) Poor girl.

CARL: (What???) What do you, have a crush on her or something?

ANTON: (a little too serious) Shut up!

CARL: Okay, geez. Sorry.

ANTON: (goes back to his drawing)

CARL: So who *do* you like?

ANTON: (Annoyed) Carl...

CARL: Just wondering.

ANTON: (sighs) It's... It's complicated. She doesn't even like me back.

CARL: How do you know?

ANTON: She's taken.

CARL: (pause) That sucks.

ANTON: I know, right?

CARL: Have you told her yet?

ANTON: No.

CARL: Hey, you never know. Just 'cuz she already has someone doesn't mean she-

ANTON: She doesn't like me, okay?

CARL: But she might.

ANTON: She doesn't.

CARL: But how do you-

ANTON: I just know, okay? It's not like I don't want to tell her. I do. But I know that there's no chance she'll say she likes me back. (CARL opens his mouth to protest) I just know, okay?

(Pause)

MS. THOMPSON: (offstage) I will now give you time to work on your homework assignment together. Use your time wisely, because the inverse tangent to the 11th degree of the Pythagorean theorem... (voice fades out)

(Long, awkward silence)

CARL: Are you ever going to tell her?

ANTON: I... I don't know. I've wanted to tell her for months now, but-

CARL: Months??? (Beat) you really like this girl, don't you?

ANTON: (Closes his eyes and nods)

CARL: How bad?

ANTON: I... I can't stop thinking about her. I mean, I... sometimes, when I'm alone, I just... It just... makes me cry, you know? Thinking about her and knowing I can't have her.

(Unnoticed by them, AMY has entered and is walking towards them)

ANTON: Thinking about her hands and knowing I can't hold them... thinking about her face... her eyes... her-

(AMY places her hand softly on his shoulder. He straightens up, closes his eyes, and breathes in sharply.)

ANTON: Amy?

AMY: Do you think you can help me with this, Anton?

ANTON: Y- Yeah, sure.

AMY: Cool. I'll go get my book.

(She exits)

CARL: I thought you didn't understand this.

ANTON: I already knew how to do it. I thought you were asking if I understood Ms. Thompson. And I didn't.

(AMY re-enters with her math book)

AMY: So how do you do problem one?

ANTON: You, uh, you... so problem one asks for the tangent, right?

AMY: Yeah.

ANTON: So you... you have to... *(takes a deep breath)* How do you find the tangent of an angle?

AMY: I don't know.

ANTON: Think about it.

AMY: *(pause)* Tangent equals... opposite over hypotenuse?

ANTON: *(Go on)* No...

AMY: Opposite over adjacent.

ANTON: Right. So what side is opposite to angle A?

AMY: I don't know!

ANTON: Calm down, calm down. Look at the diagram.

AMY: *(Pointing in her book)* It's... this one.

ANTON: Right, because it's on the opposite side of A. Now which one's the adjacent side?

AMY: *(points)* This one.

ANTON: *(Sorry)* No.

AMY: *(frustrated)* But why?

ANTON: Calm down, it's okay. Here. *(Takes her hand and looks into her eyes)* Take a deep breath. *(She does)* Now listen to me. Listen. It's okay. It's going to be fine. You can do this. We'll get through this together. *(Lets go of her hand)* Now which one of these is adjacent?

AMY: *(calmly, but a little frustrated)* I don't know.

ANTON: Look. There's two sides touching angle A. One of them's the adjacent and one's the hypotenuse. Which one is the hypotenuse?

AMY: (pointing) This one?

ANTON: The hypotenuse is the side opposite the right angle.

AMY: (Excitedly) Oh, so it's this one! (She points)

ANTON: Right. So which is the adjacent?

AMY: (points) That one.

ANTON: Right! You're doing great. So what does the tangent equal?

AMY: Opposite over hypotenuse.

ANTON: Opposite over...

AMY: Opposite over adjacent. So it's three over four!

ANTON: Right!

AMY: Thank you so much!

(She grabs ANTON by the hands, pulls him to his feet, and hugs him. He is shocked at first, but he soon calms down and begins to rub her back softly.)

ANTON: (Slowly) You did a great job. I'm really proud of you.

(They release each other.)

AMY: I think I can do the rest by myself. Thank you! (She exits)

ANTON: (As she leave) Amy, I... (But she is gone)

CARL: Jesus, Anton. It's Amy, isn't it?

ANTON: (Closes his eyes, bites his lower lip, and nods.)

CARL: But she already has a boyfriend.

ANTON: (A little too loud) I know that! I told you-

CARL: Sh, sh!

MS. THOMPSON: (offstage) Carl and Anton, please focus on your work hyperbolic pi linear quadratic.

CARL: I can never understand that woman.

ANTON: Look, I told you the girl I like is taken.

CARL: Maybe you need to move on.

ANTON: (Too loud) I ca- (He catches himself and lowers his voice.) I can't move on.

CARL: Why not?

ANTON: Because I think I might love her.

CARL: (Beat) What?

ANTON: I don't know. I mean, I know I'm only in high school, but...

CARL: (pause) And she's taken.

ANTON: (Nods)

CARL: Oh, man, that's gotta suck.

ANTON: I've never felt like this with anybody else.

CARL: (Puts his hand on Carl's shoulder) Are you okay?

ANTON: Yeah, I'm... I just...

CARL: (After a short pause) Must hurt.

ANTON: (Nods slowly) But the weird thing is... I don't want it to stop.

(They sit in silence for a while. AMY re-enters)

AMY: I'm sorry, Anton. Were you trying to tell me something when I left before?

ANTON: Me? I... no.

AMY: There's nothing you wanted to tell me?

ANTON: (Shakes his head)

AMY: Alright, my mistake. Thanks again for the help. I couldn't have done it without you.

(She kisses him lightly on the nose and skips off happily. ANTON sits there in frozen silence for a while, staring at the place she just exited)

ANTON: (Bites his lower lip, holding back tears) I love you so much.

(CARL places a comforting hand on his friends back as the lights fade out.)

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