



Tunnel of Love

a ten-minute play

Gordon Blitz

On a darkened stage, there are six chairs; three sets of two chairs side by side along the sides of the stage giving the impression of parked cars. A short overweight man wearing an earring, DANIEL, is holding a theater program and strolls onto the stage. A dog BARKS, and he quickens his pace. He mumbles to himself.

DANIEL

I guess there are other cheapskates like me who use this tunnel, and don't want to pay for parking. I've never seen it so crowded here.

He uses his car clicker to identify his car. He hears the sound of footsteps behind him. Just as he opens the car door, he stops. He feels an object digging into his back. A hand grabs his neck. TUCKER, a teenage boy, choke holds him and fakes a manly voice ... to sound older than his nineteen years.

TUCKER

I want your wallet.

DANIEL turns around and sees TUCKER and his age, and he relaxes a bit.

DANIEL

Leave me alone. Help!

TUCKER

I said, give me your wallet!

DANIEL

Help!

TUCKER

If you cry 'help' again, I'm going to stab you. Where's your wallet?

DANIEL

It's in my front pants pocket.

TUCKER keeps one arm around DANIEL's neck and uses his other hand to reach into DANIEL'S pocket.

TUCKER

It's not there.

DANIEL

It's in the other pocket.

As TUCKER rummages around DANIEL's pocket trying to find the wallet, DANIEL is squirming and begins moaning.

TUCKER

Hey, are you trying hit on me? You queers are all the same.

TUCKER pulls his hand away.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

It's too tight. I can't get into the pocket. My hands are too big.

DANIEL

Let me do it. I have to loosen my belt.

TUCKER

I have a knife so if you make any sudden moves, I'll stab you.

TUCKER continues to choke hold DANIEL as DANIEL nervously undoes his belt to retrieve the wallet. TUCKER releases his arm that was around DANIEL's neck and tries to grab the wallet from DANIEL's hand. DANIEL keeps gripping his wallet.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

Let go of it!

DANIEL lets go of the wallet, and it falls to the ground. TUCKER loosens his hold on DANIEL and scoops up the wallet from the ground. He looks in the wallet.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

Fuck! There's no money. Fucking shit!

DANIEL

Nobody carries cash anymore.

TUCKER touches Daniel's earring. DANIEL gasps.

TUCKER

You poor fucking faggot. Well, at least there are credit cards.

Offstage sounds of PEOPLE. TUCKER shoves the wallet into his own pocket and runs off. DANIEL pantomimes opening his car door. He is shaking and crying. He pantomimes driving away.

Lights dim.

Lights come up. DANIEL is driving. His iPhone rings.

DANIEL

Hi, Colton. Listen, something awful just happened to me. I got mugged. And don't start telling me 'I told you so' because I parked in the tunnel near the Music Center rather than paying for parking. Correct, I didn't get hurt, but he took my wallet with all my credit cards. No, nothing else was stolen.

(he pauses)

But I have to tell you, something weird happened. I was getting a little turned on when he was trying to get my wallet out of my pants pocket. I can't figure it out. In some ways it's a milestone. You know how I've told you that when I've been with these sexy guys, I couldn't perform? Crazy! And here I was getting mugged by this hoodlum, and I get a hardon! And he wasn't even good looking! I don't get it.

DANIEL starts laughing.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I can't believe I can laugh, but this whole incident reminds me of the song in *Carousel*, "What's the Use of Wondern'," where Julie has fallen in love with Billy Bigelow who's a low-life. It was Jacob's favorite musical. Maybe this is a sign from him, from the grave. Let's face it. It's been five years since he died, and I've never had sex. I guess maybe there's hope for me.

And as if that wasn't enough, I got stopped by the cops for swerving between lanes. The cop thought I'd been drinking, and he couldn't understand why I couldn't show him my license. I'm not even sure he believed me when I told him I'd been mugged, but eventually he let me go. Yeah, I cried a little. That always works. I swear he must have kept me there for half an hour. He must have been checking out my license plate to see if I was a criminal! What a horrible night! Look, it's really late, and I just got home. We'll talk tomorrow.

Lights dim.

Lights come up. DANIEL is walking toward his condo when TUCKER jumps out and grabs DANIEL from behind and uses one hand to cover DANIEL's mouth and the other hand has a knife pointing at DANIEL's neck.

TUCKER

Now, don't make a sound. Open the door; we're going inside.

DANIEL is squirming and trying to cry for help, but Tucker's hand is covering his mouth.

DANIEL

Help! Help!

TUCKER

I said to shut the fuck up! Now move!

DANIEL uses his key to open the front door. TUCKER pushes him into his condo. TUCKER is carrying a backpack and pulls out a rope.

DANIEL

Help!

TUCKER

I told you to shut up!

TUCKER pushes DANIEL into a dining room chair and ties him up. He pulls out duct tape and shows it to DANIEL.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

If you make a sound, I'm going to use this duct tape on your mouth. Are you going to keep quiet?

DANIEL shakes his head up and down. TUCKER keeps moving around the room.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

Good! Now that you understand me, we're going to talk.

DANIEL

How did you get into my security building?

TUCKER

Ha! Are you kidding? I just followed one of your neighbors into the building.

DANIEL

How did you know where I live?

TUCKER

Your license was in your wallet.

DANIEL

And let me guess. You somehow flew across town and beat be home.

TUCKER

I'm tired of you asking so many questions. We're supposed to be having a conversation.

DANIEL

What do you want from me? There's nothing of value here. No jewelry.

TUCKER

Okay. Were you trying to hit on me in the tunnel?

DANIEL

Did you want me to? Let's face it, you were holding me at gunpoint. And now you've followed me home..

TUCKER

It wasn't a gun, anyway. It was a knife. And not very sharp. And you were getting a hardon when I went into your pocket.

DANIEL

I don't know what you're talking about.

TUCKER grabs another dining room chair, turns it backwards and sits directly in front of DANIEL. His eyes are darting back and forth. His hands are quivering.

TUCKER

I want to ask you something.

DANIEL

Go ahead.

TUCKER

Are you gay?

DANIEL

What does that have to do with anything?

TUCKER

Last winter I was caught with my best friend, Arthur, jacking off in the

TUCKER

high school bathroom. We were taken to the principal's office. They called my father. When my dad found out, he started hollering:

(takes on a loud belligerent tone)

'Are you a fag? No son of mine is going to be gay. It's bad enough you're sickly. I'm going to beat the shit outta' you. Tell me what you were doing with Art! Tell me, god dammit!'

(returns to his own voice)

He kept screaming the whole time.

DANIEL

What did you tell him?

TUCKER

What do you think? I said,

(speaks loudly and definitively)

No I'm not gay. We were just fooling around.'

(returns to his own voice)

But I could tell he didn't believe me.

DANIEL

Can you loosen the rope? It feels like it's cutting into my skin.

TUCKER is grimacing and holding his stomach.

TUCKER

Where's your bathroom?

DANIEL

There's one in the hall over there.

TUCKER is keeling over as he runs to the bathroom. DANIEL squirms for a while and tries to loosen the rope. Unable to break free, he hollers.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

What happened to you? Did you leave?

TUCKER enters the dining room.

TUCKER

I told you not to shout.

DANIEL

It's been so much time, I thought maybe you left and forgot to untie me.

TUCKER smiles.

TUCKER

C'mon, you have to promise you won't scream for help, or I'll use the duct tape. Do you understand?

DANIEL

Can't you tell I wouldn't know the first thing about defending myself. I've never been in a fight. I'm a five-eight, one-hundred-eighty-pound weakling.

TUCKER loosens the rope and DANIEL moans.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Careful, it's scraping against my skin. Feels like sandpaper. So, where was your mother when all this was happening?

TUCKER

She died when I was thirteen. My father kept hammering at me.

(takes on a loud belligerent tone)

'You faggot. Get out of my house. I don't want you here.'

(returns to his own voice)

He was out of control. He kept shoving me up against the wall. I thought he was going to kill me. I ran away.

DANIEL

Where'd you go? You had this friend, Arthur, who was with you in the bathroom.

TUCKER

Yeah, some friend. When we were in the principal's office, he said,

(takes on a whiny tone)

'Tucker pulled me into the bathroom and took out his dick. He started it.'

(returns to his own voice)

TUCKER

I couldn't believe he turned on me. We'd been friends since junior high. It had been a game. We would play with our cocks and see who could come first. He was daring me to do this in the school bathroom. Anyway, so I left home. Didn't want to deal with my asshole father.

DANIEL

Where did you live?

TUCKER

I met these guys on Santa Monica Boulevard, and I stay with them.

DANIEL

Hustlers?

TUCKER

Yeah. I don't know if I'm gay, but I suck off men, and they pay me fifty bucks.

DANIEL

How did you get from downtown to my place?

TUCKER

I hitched a ride.

DANIEL

I didn't think anyone hitched anymore. It's so unsafe.

TUCKER

I can handle myself. Most of these men are pussies. I'm good at reading people. If they look

TUCKER

suspicious, I'm outta' there.

DANIEL

Please untie me, Tucker.

TUCKER slowly unties DANIEL. When DANIEL is free, he hugs TUCKER. At first TUCKER backs away. DANIEL faces TUCKER and holds his hands. They stare at one another. When DANIEL tries to kiss TUCKER, TUCKER turns away so that DANIEL's kiss lands on his cheek. TUCKER starts to cry.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

TUCKER

I don't really know. Why are you doing this after the way I treated you? I don't deserve any kindness.

DANIEL

Don't say that. I can see you're hurting and confused.

TUCKER

I'm afraid to be gay. I would hate myself if I was gay. I have enough problems in my life.

DANIEL

But you like men?

TUCKER

Can't I like men without having sex? I feel like sex is only good for making money.

DANIEL

Are you saying you always get paid? You've never had a crush on another boy or a teacher?

TUCKER

No. Ever since I got caught with Arthur, I don't trust anyone.

DANIEL

And what is this thing about you being sickly?

TUCKER

I have Crohn's Disease. And my father refused to let me be treated for it. Said I should just take some Tums. My doctor said there was a new kind of therapy, sort of like chemo, that could work.

DANIEL

God! Your father was a real shit.

TUCKER

Tell me about it. Don't be offended by this, but there's something about you that reminds me of my father. Maybe the way you comb your hair or the way you smile.

DANIEL

I hope you're not looking for a father in me.

TUCKER laughs.

TUCKER

Ha! No way, but I have to tell you that most of the tricks I've had were lonely older men. Married and, I guess, afraid to come out.

DANIEL

You'd think that wouldn't be an issue these days. It's almost the end of the twentieth century, for god's sake! Have you been having safe sex?

TUCKER

Yeah. I always use a condom even when I'm giving blowjobs. I'm very careful. What about you? What's your story?

DANIEL

I'm the Merry Widow. Well, that's what my friends call me. My lover, Jacob, died of AIDS five years ago.

TUCKER

Are you sick?

DANIEL

No. I'm fine. I get tested every six months.

TUCKER

Me, too. I get my blood taken at the LGBTQ Center.

DANIEL

What about your stomach problems? Crohn's is pretty serious.

TUCKER

That's why I used your bathroom earlier. Sometimes the cramps are unbearable. I've been trying to save up for getting those injections.

DANIEL

Is that why you mugged me? Thinking you could get cash.

TUCKER

Yeah. But honestly, I'd been following you, and you had a kind face. I thought you might be willing to help me.

DANIEL

You know you're the first man that I've been attracted to since my lover died. I haven't had sex with anyone in five years!

TUCKER

Really?

DANIEL

I've been having a difficult time. But you've helped me. I almost feel like I should repay you.

TUCKER

No. Don't do that.

DANIEL

Maybe I can help you find a doctor.

TUCKER

And maybe we can have sex. I don't know if I'm gay, but I like talking to you, and, well, I find you attractive.

They both kiss and proceed to take off their clothes as the lights dim.

THE END