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THE DIFFERENCE

Monologues / Romance / 2 min
Cast 1 Female x1

The maid of honor stands up to toast her best friend and the groom at the rehearsal dinner. She has an index card with a safe, cute speech on it. She has also had two glasses of wine and a secret she has kept for eleven years.

CHARACTERS

NORA - mid 30s, the maid of honor, funny and honest, more nervous than she looks

SETTING

The back room of a restaurant strung with lights, present day, the night before a wedding.

A restaurant back room strung with lights. Long tables, half-eaten dinner, wine. NORA, mid 30s, stands with a glass and a folded index card she has already stopped looking at.

She taps the glass. It doesn't work. She just starts talking.

NORA

Hi. Hi, everybody. I'm Nora, I'm the maid of honor, and I'm also the reason Claire failed Intro to Statistics, because I made her come to a party the night before the final and that's where she met Ben. So. You're welcome. And also, sorry, Mrs. Whitaker, that one was on me.

Laughter. She waits it out.

I had a whole thing written. It's cute. It's got a joke about Ben's car. But I've had two glasses of wine and I've known Claire since we were eleven, and she's looking at me right now like, "don't," which means I'm gonna.

Okay. So.

(she puts the card down)
I was in love with Ben first.

Beat. She lets it land.

Yeah. For about four months, junior year. Before the party. He sat next to me in the Statistics class Claire was failing, and he was kind, and he laughed at my stuff, and I just, I fell. Quietly. He never knew. I never said a word.

And then I dragged Claire to that party, and I watched him look at her, and I watched her look at him, and I thought, oh. Oh, okay. That's what it looks like. That's the real one.

She looks at Claire.

And here's the part I actually wanna say, and then I'll sit down. I was so sure that was gonna wreck me. I thought, I'm gonna lose my best friend to the guy I like, and I'm gonna have to smile through it for the rest of my life.

And instead, I got a front row seat. For eleven years. To what it looks like when two people are just right. I got to learn it by watching. What patience looks like. What showing up looks like. What it looks like when somebody's sick and the other one just, quietly, does everything.

I didn't know any of that before you two. I didn't have a picture of it.

(quieter)
And it turned out fine. It turned out better than fine.

She picks up her glass. Her eyes drift to a man at the far table, who has gone very still.

Because now I know what I'm looking at. When
I see it.

(to him, barely)
Hi, Theo.

Back to the room, bright again.

To Claire and Ben. Who taught me the
difference.

END OF SCRIPT