

# ***Better Left Unsaid***

*by*

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Cast of Characters

RIGGS:

Teens

SAL:

Teens

Place  
River

Time  
Evening

2.

Setting: The play takes place outside next to a river.

At Rise: The play opens up with both Riggs and Sal throwing rocks in the river.

RIGGS and SAL throw rocks in the river.

SAL has a freshly made swollen black eye.

After a moment, SAL becomes wobbly and falls to his knees and palms.

RIGGS: Hey, you okay Sal?

SAL: Feel dizzy.

RIGGS: Maybe you should drink some river water.

SAL: Yeah...

SAL raises his arm for help.

RIGGS grabs hold of SAL'S arm and gets him to his feet.

The two young men walk a few feet further downstage, SAL leaning on RIGGS.

SAL lays down on his stomach and drinks.

RIGGS decides to do the same.

Both sit on the dirt.

RIGGS: Stopped swelling.

SAL: Yeah?

RIGGS: Doesn't look like it's getting any bigger.

SAL: I don't care.

RIGGS: You feel alright?

SAL: Told ya I'm fine. Just got dizzy is all.

RIGGS: You probably have a slight concussion. Happened to my brother when he fell off the barn.

SAL: Probably.

RIGGS: My old man hits me too.

SAL: Yeah?

RIGGS: Pretty much.

SAL: You ever fight 'em back?

RIGGS: Nah.

SAL: Me either.

RIGGS: You have the fattest eye I've ever seen.

SAL: I do?

RIGGS: Ha, ha, ha. You look crazy.

SAL: Can't even see out of it now.

RIGGS: Maybe we should get you some ice.

SAL: Don't matter.

RIGGS: It may stop the swelling.

SAL: Nah, it's already damaged.

RIGGS: Why he hit you so damn hard, Sal?

SAL: Cause I kicked the cat.

RIGGS: I know but...

SAL: I kicked the cat cause the cat clawed my sister's face. Wasn't trying to hurt the cat, you know, I kicked it in its ass, to let it know, you know, to let it know that it's not supposed to do what it did. Wasn't the first time. This one time she bit my leg. I was just walking to the bathroom and she bit my leg. I think she was using the bathroom too, though...she was in her litter box so, I probably disturbed her.

(pause.)

My dad said that if I come back home he's gonna kill me.

RIGGS: He did?

SAL: Shouted after me as I was running. He didn't give chase but his words were loud and clear. I don't wanna go back there.

RIGGS: Where you gonna go?

SAL shrugs his shoulders.

Well, you could always stay by me, I mean, we have the shed next to the barn, you could stay there unnoticed. I'll bring you food and drink every day.

SAL: That's stupid.

RIGGS: You got a better idea?

SAL: I do.

RIGGS: What's your bright idea?

SAL: Kill him before he kills me.

RIGGS: ...

SAL: I been giving it some thought...figure it's only a matter of time before he kills me for good.

RIGGS: That's not true.

SAL: It is.

RIGGS: Your dad won't kill you for real.

SAL: He fights me like I'm a grown man. You should see him, Riggs. Closed fist and all, grinding his teeth, look of dark hell in his eyes...he means it. I've taken blows from him before, that time he cracked my ribs...this time it was different.

RIGGS: Different?

SAL: I felt his hatred for me. Like, how can I explain, like he wanted to get rid of me.

RIGGS: You can stay in my shed till we figure out a better plan.

SAL: I said that's stupid! Don't you think I already thought of that?

RIGGS: You have?

SAL: Yeah! This ain't no game. The man is gonna kill me, Riggs.

RIGGS: ...Shit...why don't we go to the precinct?

SAL: Hell no.

RIGGS: We can speak to what's his name, that cop we friends with, the one we see at the bagel shop all the time.

SAL (unenthusiastic): Sonny?

RIGGS (excitedly): Yeah, Sonny!

SAL: I thought about that one too.

RIGGS: And?

SAL: And no way is what I say. Stupid.

RIGGS: But if we get Sonny on our side and explain everything to him, he's sure to help us out.

SAL: What do you mean us, Riggs? It's me. ME! Me and my lousy life. Don't even know why I was born. I mean, I never got that...why have kids if you're gonna treat them so bad...right? Makes no sense. Unless I was an accident. Probably was, even though when I asked my mom she said I wasn't. But I don't buy that crap. If I was wanted, I wouldn't get treated like I wasn't wanted. I ain't that dumb. Hell, I know I don't come from some decent family. Don't even know why you're still friends with me. You come from a good family. Hard working, friendly...I never knew that a family existed like that till we started hanging out. I was shocked in comparison to my family of lunatics. You're lucky Riggs. You're real lucky.

RIGGS: Nah, there's problems in my family, too.

SAL: Where? I don't see any.

RIGGS: That's the whole point. My family is good at keeping things hidden.

SAL: Like what?

RIGGS: I rather not say.

SAL: You won't even tell me...your best friend?

RIGGS: It's better that I don't...

SAL: ...I get it...some things are better left unsaid.

RIGGS: Something like that.

SAL: Will you help me?

RIGGS: Help you how?

SAL: Help me kill him.

RIGGS: There's no way I can do that, Sal.

SAL: Why not?

RIGGS: Cause I ain't the murdering kind.

SAL: How do you think I should do it?

RIGGS: I don't.

SAL: Well, I'm gonna. Make it look like an accident.

RIGGS: You can't Sal.

SAL: Why not?!

RIGGS: Because that's not who you are.

SAL: Yes it is...that's how they wanna make me, then that's who I've become.

RIGGS: Shut up.

SAL: You shut up.

RIGGS: No, you shut up before I bust your other eye and then you'll be blind.

SAL: Why you talking to me that way?

RIGGS: Because you ain't no criminal and I won't let you do something as bad as killing your own damn dad, even if he is the scum of the earth. What kind of friend would I be if I let you ruin your life?

SAL: I'd be free.

RIGGS: No, you'd go to jail...forever. That's not how you beat him. You need to survive him, no matter what it takes, no matter how hard he beats you, you gotta survive it, cause one day you gonna grow up and get bigger and stronger than he ever was and he'll be too afraid to raise a hand to you, trust me, cause he'll know just by the look in your eye that you mean business and that you'll crush him for all the things he's ever done to you and when that day comes, you won't have to raise your fists, you won't have to do anything but look him in the eye and he'll know Sal, he'll know...and that's when you'll be free. You stay by me tonight, let things cool off, we'll tell my dad what's going on and this way you have someone on your side that's on your dad's level and I think that will help.

SAL: What if it makes everything worse?

RIGGS: Sal, there are things about my family you don't know about, better left unsaid, remember?

SAL: Yeah.

RIGGS: Let me help you the right way, okay?

SAL: You sure?



RIGGS: Yeh, don't worry. We'll get you out of this.

END OF PLAY