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**SUPERFAN**

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# SUPERFAN

A play in one act

## CHARACTERS:

BITTY, mid- to late-teens.

MOM, BITTY's mom.

AUNT JONIE, MOM's sister.

WOMAN, middle-aged tourist, can be played by same actress as MOM.

JUST SOME DUDE, vaguely resembles Al Roker.

NBC MAILBOY, an intern.

(Split stage. Lights off SL. Lights on SR.)

## BITTY

I love weathermen. I mean, love, love them. Many scoff, but I just can't help it! To me, the ability to read climate-related charts and graphs and then take that information, interpret it in a professional, scientific setting and reveal the results to an anxious and awaiting public via national television is a gift. A sexy gift.

I also have a thing for chubby, jolly, bald bespectacled men. The way their bare skulls glisten with sweat in the hot July sun after inhaling half a dozen hot dogs at the neighborhood block party, the manner in which their second, and sometimes third, chin jiggles ever so joyfully with each guffaw as they enjoy their favorite joke, the way their oversized eye glasses emboss crimson circles on the tops of their pudgy little cheeks: pure heaven.

Knowing what pushes my fat-friendly buttons, it is easy to see why I would be especially infatuated with the ebullient Al Roker. This passion brings me much joy and peace, which is why I become particularly frustrated when a certain few poke fun at my fascination or "diagnose" it as an obsession. If the foxy face featured on the bountiful posters covering the walls of my bedroom and the chests of my homemade t-shirts were of Brad Pitt, notice would not be taken. If the legally-changed surname on my birth certificate read "Ledger" or "Timberlake," such odd stares would not be thrown. It

may be perfectly acceptable for young girls to fantasize about hobbits and elves with absurd names like Elijah and Orlando, but not for them to dream of smart, successful small-screen stars? Society may sneer at a girl like me, but to it I raise my third finger in anger and contempt.

(Lights dim SR. BITTY runs SL. Lights on SL.)

MOM

Why Al Roker? I don't get it.

BITTY

Mom, do you ever get anything? You are an ignorant woman.

MOM

I was okay with the whole Al Gore obsession. I mean, he does lead a zealous crusade against environmental destruction. But Al Roker? I didn't know you were into those kinds of guys.

BITTY

Well you obviously don't know me or understand my ways. You are so retarded. Ugh, I hate you!

(Lights dim SL. BITTY runs SR. Lights on SR.)

I must admit my disgust with society fades when I gaze lovingly at the glossy headshots of Mr. Roker, intentionally ignoring the unsightly glare of his large glasses and pretending that I have a clear view of those soulful brown eyes.



My admiration has recently led to the writing of a simple yet poignant letter to Al himself, subtly outlining the ways in which he has inspired my life and influenced the decisions I have made along the way. I also requested a five-night travel package to New York City to view a taping of "The Today Show" and perhaps a few moments of airtime to profess my love.

(Light dim SR. BITTY runs SL. Lights on SL.)

BITTY

(Composing letter at a desk.)

Mr. Al Roker: my name is Bitty. I am your biggest fan. My dream in life is to one day visit New York City to see "The Today Show" live and give you a big hug! Lovingly,  
Bitty. P.S., would you autograph a photo of yourself for me? My address is...

(Lights dim SL. BITTY runs SR. Lights on SL.)

BITTY

After re-reading the first draft, however, my requests came off as greedy and demanding.

(Lights dim SR. BITTY runs SL. Lights on SL.)

MOM

(Reading draft of letter.)

You are so greedy and demanding! Why would you bother this poor man? Can you leave him alone? Please?

(Lights dim SL. BITTY runs SR. Lights on SR.)

BITTY

So, in an effort to transform myself into a heartwarming human interest segment, I edited in an extended lie detailing my history with pacemakers, how the kids at school tauntingly referred to me as Heather Mills-McCartney due to my recent amputation below the knee, and my tragic and incurable premature female baldness. I signed it as my dying grandmother whose last wish was to see her granddaughter overcome pancreatic cancer.

(Lights dim SR. Lights on SL.)

NBC MAILBOY

(Reading letter.)

Mr. Al Roker: my name is Bitty. I am your biggest fan. My dream in life is to one day visit New York City to see "The Today Show" live and give you a big hug! Lovingly,  
Bitty. P.S., would you autograph a photo of yourself for me? My address is...

(Lights dim SL. Lights on SR.)

BITTY

Sealed with a kiss, the outgoing envelope was stuffed in my mailbox and I was left with nothing to do but wait. Seventeen days later I received a response.

(Lights dim SR. BITTY runs SL. Lights on SL.)

BITTY

(Reading letter.)

Dear Ms. Bitty, thank you for your interest in "The Today Show." We gladly invite you to visit [www.nbcstore.com](http://www.nbcstore.com) to browse official NBC merchandise. New features include "The Biggest Loser" cookbook with favorite low-cal recipes from last season's winner... (Pause.)

(Lights dim SL. BITTY runs SR. Lights on SR.)

BITTY

A personal invitation to New York from Al Roker himself?! I could only say yes! He only sent one plane ticket due to NBC's budget cuts, so I figured why not keep the invite to myself and not tell anyone? What a shock it would be to have Mom see me on television, right there in the middle of Rockefeller Plaza waving a homemade sign and accepting long-awaited affection from the man I love. Tugging around my official NBC luggage, (Lights on SL to reveal a suitcase covered in promotional stickers of "Deal or No Deal" and "Will & Grace." Lights off SL.)

I rushed through Cleveland Hopkins International Airport and arrived at the terminal with minutes to spare. Boarding the plane, I found myself surprised with a most glamorous treat as I was immediately upgraded to first class. I couldn't wait to thank the producers of the show and, of course, Al Roker, for this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

(Lights dim SR. Lights on SL.)

MOM

Honey, have you seen my AmEx card? I swear it was right here in my purse. Bitty do you know where it is? Bitty? Bitty?  
(Picks up ransom-style note made from magazine clippings.)

Off to visit Al? This again? Christ.

(Lights dim SL. Lights on SR.,



BITTY

I had never seen post-9/11 New York, and was grateful that few effects of it were lingering on NBC's breath (Beat. BITTY crosses herself) bless the victims and their families. The studio was in full tact, but tours hadn't started for the day so I chose to instead browse the world famous NBC store. Disappointed by the selection—no I do not want a pair of official "Scrubs" scrubs, thank you—I made my way down 49th street looking for a bite to eat.

After grabbing a pie, as they say, I was utterly exhausted by the hoopla and zoomed over to Sheraton Times Square where "The Today Show" had reserved a cozy little suite: room 36, which just so happens to be Al Roker's number from high school football. What a peculiar coincidence for an impromptu pilgrimage!

(Lights dim SR. BITTY runs SL. Lights on SL.)

AUNT JONIE

Sure, you can stay here, but if your mom finds out I'm a part of this, you can say good-bye to Christmas presents for the rest of your life. Not like you're gettin' shit this year anyway, you little brat.

BITTY

Thanks, Aunt Jonie. Don't worry, she won't have to know.

AUNT JONIE

Yeah, whatever. Bathroom's up the hall to the left. Don't touch my shampoo. It's Pantene. Money don't grow on trees, you know.

(Lights dim SL. BITTY runs SR. Lights on SR.)

BITTY

After a restful night's napping, the bright Manhattan sun shook me awake to greet Monday morning. After sampling a number of sandwiches from New York's abundant stretch of world-famous delicatessens,

(Lights on SL.)

JONIE

Yeah, we're out of milk. Tough shit, kid. You never had water with Honey-O's?

(Lights dim SL.)

BITTY

I skated over to The Rock like a true Manhattanite where I was greeted with incredible pandemonium. Hundreds of fans bounced hand-crafted signs, shouting to the camera, "Happy Birthday, Nana!", or "25 years! We made it, honey!" The buzz of the crowd, the unity wired secure by a common love and excitement, the waves, the shrieks, the smiles; I was at home! I had been seduced by the crowd and was seeing fireworks. I was no longer a lonely girl making out with my mirror; this was my first real kiss with superfandom.

(Lights dim SR. Lights on SL.)

MOM

(Dials a phone. Beat.) Jonie? (Beat.) Have you talked to Bitty? (Beat.) Did she— (Beat.) Okay, that's what I thought. (Beat.) Yeah, it's just hilarious. I can't belie—what is she doing anyway? (Beat. Beat.) By herself? You can't let her go. Keep her in the house until I can get out there. (Beat.) What do you mean what's it to you? (Beat.) You're kidding me. (Beat.) Fine. Whatever. Just don't let her go. (Beat.) Yeah, I'll check the flight schedule and call you back. (Hangs up phone.) God dammit!

(Lights dim SL. Exit MOM. Enter AUNT JONIE and BITTY. Lights on SL.)

AUNT JONIE

Get back here, you little shit.

BITTY

What?

AUNT JONIE

I'm not supposed to let you leave.

BITTY

What.

AUNT JONIE

Your mom called. Blah, blah, blah. Something about you and a fat guy. I dunno.

BITTY

What. What? (Pause.) How did she know?!

AUNT JONIE

Couldn't say. Move over, wouldja? You're blocking the T.V. I like this commercial.

BITTY

Whatever. You can't stop me. I'm still going. I'm going!

AUNT JONIE

Look, I could give two shits if you go or not. You could be on your way to the gallows and I'd still have my mani-pedi at quarter-to-two. But what the hell do you think you're gonna accomplish?

BITTY

It's a profession of desire. Haven't you ever loved somebody?

JONIE

I never get the chance with you taking all the good ones! (Chortles.) Who was your last lover? Ted Bundy?

BITTY

You're thinking of Al Bundy and his name is Ed O'—whatever! I'm over him. I'm over them all, and I'm late for the taping! I will leave you to your Maury.



JONIE

Suit yourself. Wait, you gotta see this! This guy's seven feet tall and he's married to a midget. It's like, what the hell? He's real tall, she's real short. She's a midget. Hah! Hey, pick me up some milk, would ya?

(Lights dim SL. Exit JONIE,  
enter WOMAN. Lights on SL.)

WOMAN

I can't wait for Emeril to come out! A man after my own heart. My daughter and I went to his restaurant down in New Orleans last spring. Dee-lish! I have never in my life had crabcakes so good. Do you watch Emeril?

BITTY

He's okay.

WOMAN

Who are you here to see then?

BITTY

I have made an incredible journey to see my one love, Al Roker.

WOMAN

Al Roker? The weatherman? Ha! Different strokes for different folks, I guess. You're not gonna be a happy camper today. Al's on leave to recover from surgery.

BITTY

Surgery?

WOMAN

Yeah, didn't you hear? He gained all the weight back and he's having his stomach stapled again. It is a drastic measure if you ask me. I got Emeril's new "Lite-Eating" cookbook. Lost three pounds already. And I tell you, I have never had pruschetto so good...

(Lights dim SL. BITTY  
runs SR. Lights on SR.)

BITTY

I must have fainted. Or punched someone, because the next thing I know, the fuzz are dragging me out of Rockefeller Plaza. I couldn't believe it! Gastric bypass? How could I not have known? My comfort soon became a dish from Ben and Jerry's, and I wept liberally into a half-eaten scoop of something pink and chocolaty. Cursing myself and the ever-silent media for keeping Al's operation under wraps, I noticed a man in the booth across



the restaurant poking eagerly at a melting cone with his tongue. I instantly recognized that luscious, gourmet chocolate brown skin; that big, round head, smooth and polished as the belly of a seal; that fine, wool suit, its storm cloud color screaming class and understated glamour... I knew this man because I love him.

(Lights dim SR. BITTY runs SL. Lights on SL.)

BITTY

Mr. Roker!

JUST SOME DUDE

You talking to me?

BITTY

Mr. Roker!

JUST SOME DUDE

I ain't no Mr. Roker.

BITTY

No, I understand, Al. I know you need to lay low because of your "stomach stapling" or whatever, but really, I'm your biggest fan. I've come so far—

JUST SOME DUDE

Al Roker?! (Sarcastically,) Ha, ha. Haven't heard that one before.

BITTY

Oh, I'm sure you have, I mean, you have fans all across the nation, but I am your biggest! I just adore you! Ohmygod I can't believe this is actually happening.

JUST SOME DUDE

No, you don't understand. I'm not—

BITTY

Oh god, how rude of me! I'm terribly sorry to interrupt you while you're out dining. I feel so bad, but do you think you could just autograph something for me?

JUST SOME DUDE

I am not Al Roker. I don't know if you're trying to be funny or what. If you are, it's not. It's not funny. Now please just leave me alone.

BITTY

Mr. Roker. You've got to be kidding me. I came all the way from Ohio to see you!



JUST SOME DUDE

I don't care where you came from. Get the hell away from me!

BITTY

I have been through hell to see you. I stole my mother's credit card to fly to New York. I escaped the tight reigns of an evil aunt and fled to Rockefeller Plaza, where I was manhandled by a small gang of cops and thrown out into the cold streets of the big city. I put up a fight. I fought for you, Mr. Roker, and the one chance I get to ask for a measly autograph from my life's greatest hero, you treat me like an idiot and deny your own identity? When I am clearly on to your little scheme? I cannot believe this!

JUST SOME DUDE

You are insane! (Pause.) You know what? Here. I'll sign this napkin for you. Okay? You gotta pen? Look. Al... Ro... ker... Here. Here you go. Now please go away!

(Lights out SL. BITTY runs SR. Lights on SR.)

BITTY

I mean, of course I felt bad disturbing him playing hooky, but I couldn't resist! It was Al Roker! In the flesh! In the flesh and blood! Al Roker! Mom was more than a bit upset that I left without informing her of my expedition and objective, but she calmed down and realized she had been overreacting when she saw this.

(Waves napkin in air like a golden ticket.)

It might be just a Ben and Jerry's napkin, but it was Al Roker's Ben and Jerry's napkin. Al Roker's napkin signed by Al Roker. The real thing! I'll have to write him a thank-you letter...

(Lights fade.)

END

Erin Beal