

Forget and Forgive
a scene from *Acts of Contrition*

by Pat Montley

Music: Nana Mouskouri singing "Forgive and Forget." RUTH, holding an iPod and wearing earbuds, sways/dances to the music. REGGIE enters on a walker. They are elderly.

REGGIE: I'm sorry about Yvette.

RUTH: *(Shouting.)* WHAT?

REGGIE: *(Shouting.)* I SAID...*(Gestures to his ears, then points to hers. She removes the earbuds. Music stops.)* I said: I'm sorry about Yvette.

RUTH: Did she die?

REGGIE: No! I mean, I don't think so.

RUTH: Then why are you sorry?

REGGIE: For having...I mean...well...we had sex.

RUTH: Reggie, that was forty years ago.

REGGIE: Was it?

RUTH: Yes. You already apologized. I forgave you.

REGGIE: Thank you.

RUTH: It was a long time ago. Forget it.

REGGIE: Okay. *(He starts to leave.)*

(Beat.)

RUTH: You still think about that? I mean, remember what it was like?

REGGIE: What?

RUTH: Sex with Yvette.

REGGIE: Who?

RUTH: Yvette.

REGGIE: Um. I think so. Yes.

RUTH: Do you remember sex with me?

REGGIE: Of course. It was last night.

RUTH: Not...quite.

REGGIE: No? Well, I remember it like it was last night.

RUTH: That's very sweet. Is it...is it a good memory?

REGGIE: Oh, yes. I have lots of good memories of sex.

RUTH: With me.

REGGIE: Certainly. *(Beat. She starts to re-program IPod.)* Did it take long?

RUTH: *(Looks up.)* Did what take long?

REGGIE: For you to forgive me?

RUTH: Well, what do you think? Something like that—it has an effect.

REGGIE: Sure. I bet. It's not an easy thing to forgive.

RUTH: Or forget.

REGGIE: How did you manage it?

RUTH: Which?

REGGIE: Forgetting.

RUTH: I...um...I put another memory in its place.

REGGIE: Oh. Clever. A good memory, huh?

RUTH: Yes, a very good memory.

(Beat. She starts to fiddle with IPod.)

REGGIE: What was it?

RUTH: It's been so long, I— *(She waves the air.)*

REGGIE: Forget?

RUTH: No.

REGGIE: What then?

RUTH: Oh...nothing.

(Pause.)

REGGIE: *(Looking out.)* She had this amazing birthmark...Yvette. Under her left breast.

RUTH: You've never mentioned that.

REGGIE: It was deep red and silky to touch...and shaped like a...like a... *(Reaches for the memory.)*

RUTH: *(Looking out.)* Like a unicorn.

(He looks at her. She turns to him, smiles. Lights out.)