

FIRST MOMENT

Tagline: “Except...you’re not laughing. Are you.”

[Empty stage, but for a battered sandwich board reading “THANK YOU FOR RESPONDING TO THE AD! PLEASE BE PATIENT. I WILL BE WITH YOU IN A MOMENT.” MAXWELL FINK appears, carrying a lot of papers, maybe he’s wheeling a cart of some kind. He appears distracted. He knocks over the board, and re-sets it back up. He forgets something, exits, re-enters. He begins to set up his stuff. Finally, he turns to the audience.]

MAXWELL: Oh! Oh, my God. It’s...it’s you. I mean...there’s never been so many before. Only just one or two, and you can’t count Kevin. I wouldn’t. I mean, I definitely don’t count Kevin, he’s...

[MAXWELL begins to cry a little.]

MAXWELL: I’m sorry. That’s embarrassing. I need to just...okay. *[He picks up a clip board and begins reading, clearly from some sort of defined script.]* Hi, I’m Maxwell Fink. *[Looks up.]* Max. You can call me Max. Anyway. *[Continues reading.]* Before we begin, I would like to thank you for responding to the ad. No doubt you find it strange. Please know that I want you to feel entirely comfortable through this entire experience. *[Maybe directly to them.]* There’s no need to be afraid of me. I’ve been looking for you my entire life. I’ve been a lot of places. I...

[Looks up again, suddenly suspicious. Pauses a moment, and then says the rest in a rush.]

MAXWELL: Look, if you’re just here to make fun of me, I want you to know that I’ve been through that before, and it doesn’t bother me. I really don’t care. I have the proof. I know I’m right. If this is going to be like Tucson...*[Closes his eyes and shudders]* ...God, Tucson. *[Opens his eyes.]* It’s more than just me, you should know that. I’m not even the only moderator. And we’re used to being laughed at, trust me. We’re used to it. *[Pauses and looks at them.]*

MAXWELL: Except...you’re not laughing. Are you. And...your eyes. Your eyes are just like I thought they would be. Your eyes are... *[Catches himself.]* Your eyes are beautiful. And you know what else? I think you’re real.

NOTES:

Maybe put the ad in their hands top of show? I’d love to see it, I think audience would too.

Next moment: first test? Sarah appears?

Do we need rehearsal space for this? I’d like to see it on its feet soon.