

DNA

A Ten Minute Play  
By, Dana Hammer

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

Seymour - a man in his forties

Lavina - a woman in her forties

Samira - their daughter

AT RISE:

LAVINA, a woman in her forties, sits at a table, messing around on her phone.

SEYMOUR, her husband, also in his forties, enters. He is excited, holding two envelopes.

SEYMOUR

Lavina! Guess what came today?

LAVINA

What?

SEYMOUR

Our DNA tests!

Lavina puts down her phone and reaches eagerly for her envelope.

LAVINA

Did you read yours yet?

SEYMOUR

No, of course not! I thought it would be more fun to do together.

LAVINA

Aw, you're the sweetest, honey.

SEYMOUR

You're the sweetest.

LAVINA

No, YOU'RE the sweetest.

They playfully push each other, then make out.

LAVINA

Ok, I really do wanna open this.

SEYMOUR

Me too.

LAVINA

I mean, I know this is cool for both of us, but being adopted, this is cooler for me. It just is.

SEYMOUR

I know it is.

LAVINA

I mean, you already pretty much know what yours is gonna say. But I have no idea. Like, I could be a direct descendant of...I don't know. Anyone! I could be royalty!

SEYMOUR

Ok, let's just open them and find out.

They open their envelopes and look over the contents eagerly.

LAVINA

Seymour! I'm Chinese!

SEYMOUR

Really?

LAVINA

I am, look!

Seymour looks at her results.

SEYMOUR

Ok, you're like point zero two percent Chinese. That's hardly anything. See? I am too.

He shows her his results.

LAVINA

Oh? That's weird.

SEYMOUR

Not really. It's probably because of Genghis Kahn.

LAVINA

What?

SEYMOUR

Genghis Kahn. Everyone is related to him.

LAVINA

That doesn't sound right, but ok.

SEYMOUR

Hey, it says here we can connect with our family members on the website.

LAVINA

Wait, what? You mean...if I go on this website, I can find people who are related to me? By blood?

SEYMOUR

Yep.

LAVINA

I didn't...I didn't know you could do that.

SEYMOUR

Yep, you can. Anyone who has had their DNA tested by this company will show up on there. So anyone you're related to will be able to find you. And vice versa.

LAVINA

I don't...I don't know if I'm ready for that. Seymour...what if my mom is on there? Or my dad? I mean, I wanted to know my heritage, but...meeting actual people is a whole different thing.

SEYMOUR

Well, hey. We don't have to do this if you don't want to.

LAVINA

No. No, I think I should. I mean, how bad can it be, right? And it's not like I have to meet these people in person.

SEYMOUR

That's absolutely right.

LAVINA

Unless I want to meet them in person.

SEYMOUR

Right.

LAVINA

But what if I do meet them in person, and I hate them? Or they hate me?

SEYMOUR

Ok, I think maybe we shouldn't do the website thing. It's clearly freaking you out.

LAVINA

No! We're doing it. This is just me processing.

SEYMOUR

Are you sure?

LAVINA

Positive.

SEYMOUR

Ok. Let's do this.

They type into their phones. A few moments pass while they look over the info.

Seymour's face changes. At first, it's confused. Then it's horrified.

He snatches away Lavina's phone.

LAVINA

Hey! What are you doing?

SEYMOUR

Nothing.

LAVINA

Give me my phone back.

SEYMOUR

It's not safe.

LAVINA

What do you mean it's not safe?

SEYMOUR

Phones. They explode. Yours had smoke coming out of it.

LAVINA

What? No it didn't.

SEYMOUR

Your phone was smoking.

LAVINA

No it wasn't!

SEYMOUR

Yes it was. It's dangerous and you can't touch it.

LAVINA

Give me the phone!

Seymour throws the phone onto the ground and smashes it.

Lavina stares at him in shock.

LAVINA

What the hell has gotten into you?

SEYMOUR

Nothing. I'm fine. Everything is fine and we are fine and everything is totally fine.

Seymour is trying not to  
hyperventilate. He stands and paces.

LAVINA

Ok, Seymour, you're freaking me out. What is happening?

SEYMOUR

Ok. I don't think I can keep this from you. I mean, morally.

LAVINA

Keep what from me?

SEYMOUR

I mean. Ok, let's say there was some information that I had. And this information might upset you.

LAVINA

This isn't a hypothetical Seymour. You obviously have information and you don't want me to hear it. Was it something in the DNA report? Do you have some kind of predisposition to some terrible disease or something?

SEYMOUR

No.

LAVINA

Well then what is it?

SEYMOUR

The thing is. If you know this information, you can't unknow it. You'll know it forever. And it might...it will be bad.

LAVINA

Ok, at this point, whatever it is can't possibly be as bad as what I'm imagining.

SEYMOUR

Well, it might be.

LAVINA

Tell me.

SEYMOUR

Are you sure?

LAVINA

TELL ME RIGHT NOW!

Seymour hands Lavina his phone with a shaking hand.

SEYMOUR

Look.

Lavina looks. Her face is confused. Then horrified.



She throws the phone.

LAVINA

Oh my god.

SEYMOUR

I know.

LAVINA

Oh my god oh my god oh my god.

SEYMOUR

Ok. I know. But let's just talk about it.

LAVINA

Talk about it? This says you're my...my...

SEYMOUR

Yeah, I know what it says. But you know, these things make mistakes all the time I'm sure.

LAVINA

Seymour...it says you're my brother.

SEYMOUR

Well...half brother, but yes. That is what it says.

LAVINA

Oh my god.

SEYMOUR

I know. But here's what I'm thinking. Our samples must have gotten mixed up. Like in the lab. They mixed some of my saliva with yours, and voila! The system thinks we're siblings.

LAVINA

But Seymour...I'm adopted. What if-

SEYMOUR

Don't even think it! No! My mom would have told me if she'd had another baby. Also! We're only four months apart in age.

LAVINA

(Desperately) That's right! We're only four months apart in age!

SEYMOUR

So it must be a mistake.

LAVINA

It must be! Except...

SEYMOUR

What?

LAVINA

I mean, your dad. Your dad could have...you know.

SEYMOUR

My dad would never cheat on my mom.

LAVINA

I know. Of course not. It's just...what if he did?

SEYMOUR

He wouldn't do that!

LAVINA

I know. He would never. But...what if he did?

SEYMOUR

Oh my god, what if he did?

LAVINA

He wouldn't though.

SEYMOUR

No, he wouldn't.

Lavina and Seymour sit in stunned  
silence for a few moments.

LAVINA

You know. We both have autoimmune disease.

SEYMOUR

What?

LAVINA

I have rheumatoid arthritis. And you have psoriasis.

SEYMOUR

Those are two completely different things.

LAVINA

But they're both autoimmune. We could have a genetic-

SEYMOUR

NO. They're completely different.

A few beats.

Seymour buries his face in his  
hands abruptly. He moans.

LAVINA  
What?

SEYMOUR  
Samira.

LAVINA  
Oh god, Samira.

SEYMOUR  
What about Samira?

LAVINA  
What are we gonna tell her?

SEYMOUR  
We're not. We're not gonna tell her.

LAVINA  
She gets home from soccer in (looks at the clock)  
five minutes. We need to get it together by then.

SEYMOUR  
We can do that. Let's practice.

LAVINA  
Practice?

SEYMOUR  
Practice acting normal.

LAVINA  
How?

SEYMOUR  
Just act how we always do.

LAVINA  
Ok.

Beat.

LAVINA  
So, how was your TV show you were watching earlier?

SEYMOUR  
That's not normal! You would never ask me that, like that.  
You sound like an alien or something.

LAVINA  
No I don't.

SEYMOUR

Ok, let's try not talking. We don't have to talk at all.  
Let's just...be calm and quiet.

LAVINA

Ok.

A few moments while they stare  
straight ahead, shell-shocked.

SEYMOUR

Samira...she's ok, right?

LAVINA

Of course she's ok, what kind of question is that?

SEYMOUR

I mean, remember in third grade when she was having trouble  
with math? What if it's because...what if it's because of...

Seymour gestures between Lavina  
and himself.

LAVINA

What are you saying?

SEYMOUR

WHAT IF SHE'S BAD AT MATH BECAUSE SHE'S INBRED?!

Lavina gasps.

LAVINA

How dare you say something like that about your own daughter?

SEYMOUR

I'm sorry, but I don't know how to deal with this.  
Our daughter...sweet Samira...

Lavina stands and goes to Seymour.  
She sits on his lap and throws her  
arms around him.

She brings his face up to meet hers.  
She moves to kiss him.

She stops.

They look at each other with horror.

SEYMOUR

We can't...

LAVINA

I don't think...

SEYMOUR

This is gross now, isn't it?

LAVINA

It's so gross!

She jumps off his lap and resumes her seat.

At that moment, SAMIRA enters. She is a teenaged girl, dressed in soccer clothes.

SAMIRA

Hey guys. What's up?

Seymour and Lavina both look at their daughter.

They look at each other.

They look back at their daughter.

SAMIRA

Um, is everything ok?

LAVINA

Yeah. Hey, did you know that most people are related to Genghis Kahn?

SAMIRA

Um, no? Ok, you guys are clearly in the middle of something. I'll just head up to my room and let you...do whatever it is you're doing.

Samira exits.

Lavina and Seymour exhale simultaneously.

Seymour reaches across the table and takes Lavina's hand.

She looks at him across the table. Their eye contact is desperate, sad, and longing, all at the same time.

BLACKOUT.

