

True Colors

By: Katy Cook

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Interior Painting Studio

Characters:

Maggie Kelly - Wife, tightly wound though loving, has issues

Ben Kelly - Husband, jokester, slightly in denial there are issues but willing to work things out

Flora or Florence (Florey) - Instructor (Could be male or female) - Eccentric, intelligent & encouraging

Lights UP  
(In the studio)

Ben  
Tell me why we are here again?

Maggie  
To see if we can sort through some of our problems. Bring us closer. We haven't been intimate in months.

Ben  
And you think me painting a stick figure is gonna bring sexy back.

Maggie  
Laughs...I don't know but it's worth a shot.

Ben  
Should an artist really be giving therapy? I mean they've got issues right. What's that guy's name, cut his own ear off?

Maggie  
Van Gogh. Well Flora comes highly recommended. She's helped to patch up some of the worst.

Ben  
Are we supposed to be some of the worst?

Maggie  
Remember Mr. Henkel, ran off with his kids Girl Scout leader.

Ben  
Yeah well she was selling more than Thin Mints! Girl Scout leaders don't dress like that.

Maggie  
Well he ran off with her and nobody thought he was coming back. A couple sessions with Flora and he and his wife are like high school sweethearts all over again.

Ben  
(Ben is touching things and investigating the materials)

So you would take me back if I ran off with girl scout  
cookie lady?

Flora  
(Flora enters abruptly)

Welcome!!! To True Colors! "It doesn't matter how the paint  
gets put on, as long as something is said" Jackson Pollock!

Ben  
Now that I'm down with!

Flora  
Good evening Mr. & Mrs. Kelly. Our goal here is to help  
you to take your mind off of things! Things that are  
preventing you from connecting with each other!

Through the painting of the portrait, you can begin to  
really see one another again. And I know Ben you probably  
feel like you see each other every day.

Ben  
(Nodding his head)

Y-e-s

FLORA  
But do you really see one another?

(Up close in Ben's space)

Are you fully present in the moment?

(Ben leans back to put some space between)

"Art is to console those who are broken by life" Van Gogh!

Maggie  
(Slightly embarrassed)

We're not THAT broken.

(Flora acknowledges Maggie with a nod. Ben goes to grab a  
brush & dip it in some paint. Flora stops him)

Flora

Ah, ah, ah...I want you to really quiet the mind first Ben. This can take some practice.

Let's go ahead and situate ourselves in front of our canvases but where we can see one another.

(Ben & Maggie are across from one another)

Maggie you are going to paint Ben and Ben you are going to paint Maggie.

Flora

Ben, look at Maggie. What shapes do you see?

Ben

(Looking at Maggie and outlining the silhouette of her figure with a brush in the air)

I'm seeing some curves Flora!

Flora

Ben we are not in figure painting for married partners. That is session 2!

(Flora redirects Ben's brush and gaze up)

The face Ben! I want you to first concentrate on the silhouette of your partner's face.

Maggie, take a good look at Ben's face. Tell me what shapes you see!

Maggie

(Maggie studying Ben's face)

Well...I'm seeing a triangle..

(Pointing at Ben's nose and using her brush to air draw a triangle)

Some circles...and a square. I see a square!

(Outlining Ben's head with a square shape)

Ben

You see a square? This is definitely.....Yeah, I'm feeling the closeness...already.

Flora

Good Maggie! Keep looking! At the lines, the lights & the shadows! Pay attention to the things you wouldn't normally because you're too busy...paying the bills, doing the dishes, taking out the trash.

(Ben & Maggie continue looking & painting)

Notice the flicker of gold in each other's eyes. In the hair.

Pick the colors from your palette that represent your feelings for your partner.

Ben

Take the black away from her Flora.

Flora

Ben, quiet yourself! I want you to feel Maggie.

"Creativity takes courage" Henri Matisse. Do not be afraid to make mistakes on your canvas. In a painting, there are no mistakes that can't be fixed.

Ben

I'm liking the sounds of that!

Maggie

Me too!

Flora

Do not be judgmental of yourselves or your partner. Be free!

Maggie

She's talking to you Ben.

Flora

"Art should be something that liberates your soul" Keith Haring.

(Phone rings - Flora has to leave the room to take a call)

Pardon, I have to take this call. Continue on with your paintings & I'll be back momentarily.

(Ben & Maggie continue looking at each other and painting.)

Ben

(Slightly annoyed with himself & Maggie)

Can you stop moving your face around so much? You're making it hard for me to paint you.

Maggie

There, how's that?!

(Holds position for a few minutes while Ben concentrates & paints)

Maggie

I can see you making faces over there. This is a joke to you. You're not even trying.

Ben

I am trying! You haven't even seen my painting. How can you say I'm not trying?

Maggie

I can tell by your brush strokes!

Ben

My what?

Maggie

Your brush strokes! They aren't soft and loving. They're very brushy and loud!

Ben

You've got to be joking!

Maggie

Nope. I can hear your brush with E-V-E-R-Y stroke!

Ben

(Ben stops painting)

I told you this wasn't going to work. I told you this was a waste of our money.

Maggie

Ok, but you'll spend \$3000 a year for that stupid golf club membership that you never use! But a \$75 art therapy session to save your marriage is going to break our bank!

Ben

Save our marriage? Maggie...we don't need saving! Me dipping a paint brush in some paint & splashing it around on a canvas is definitely NOT going to save our marriage! That's not how this is done.

Maggie

Ok, so how is it done Ben? Since you have all the answers?

Ben

I don't know.

Maggie

(Maggie dips her brush in paint, walks over to Ben & paints a stripe down the center of his smock)

How about like this Ben. Is this how it's done?

Ben

You did not just do that.

Maggie

I did! Whatcha gonna to do about it?

Ben

What am I going to do about it? I'll show you what I'm going to do about it.

(Ben takes his brush dips it in paint, walks over to Maggie and paints a smear in the center of Maggie's smock (torso))

Ben

Oh...Oh...Who's the Jackson Pollock now!

(The two start frantically dipping their brushes in paint and start circling one another with brushes in air)

Maggie

You eat meat!

Ben

What?!

Maggie

I found the sandwich wrappers under your car seat!

Ben

Ok..you caught me! I still eat meat! Sometimes! But you met me while I was working at Piggly Wiggles! Slicing a piece of ham!

Maggie

You're not giving this marriage a fair shot!

Ben

You keep stacking me up with task after task. Who has time Maggie?! You don't cut me a break!

Maggie

Who do you think is holding this marriage together? I do everything. I'm working all day. Then I come home and I'm cooking, cleaning, folding the laundry! I'm tired Ben!

Ben

And I'm out working construction after my day job just to be able to afford everything!

(Door opens up & Flora walks in. Ben & Maggie are like deer in headlights brushes in air)

Flora

What is going on in here? I leave you two alone for a minute & you're behaving like a bunch of pre-schoolers! Drop your weapons!

Ben

Does this mean I get a refund?

Maggie

You would say that Ben!

Flora

Let's take a breather here. Ben, Maggie breathe! Have a seat. "Art is anything you can get away with" Andy Warhol but surely he did not mean this!

Now Let me take a look at what you have done...on your canvases!

(Flora takes a look at Maggie's in approval, walks around  
takes a look at Ben's also in approval)

Flora

I see some real potential here!

(Maggie & Ben hang their heads in embarrassment)

The first session is always a bit of an unraveling. But I think the two of you opened up a little bit and I can tell from your paintings that there is a genuine love for one another here. Let's go ahead and share your paintings with one another. Maggie, you first.

(Maggie turns her painting around. It's a very child like painting of her husband's face encircled in a heart but you can see she really tried)

FLORA

Ben, what do you think of Maggie's painting? Go ahead & tell her.

Ben

That's really nice Maggie. I didn't know that you had such an artistic ability. I've never seen you do any art work around the house.

Maggie

Thank you Ben.

Flora

Now Ben, show yours to Maggie.

Ben

Well I'm no Picasso but..

(Ben turns his painting around and it's a painting of a flower)

Maggie

(Maggie's body language changes. Her defenses are down. She is very taken with Ben's painting and his efforts. She goes over and gives Ben a hug)

Flora

Now this is magnificent! We broke through some barriers today! I hope when you look back on this it's a reminder

to you that no matter what comes your way, the love that you have for one another will carry you through! Remember that your partner always sees your beauty. The love is always there.

Maggie

Thank you Flora.

Ben

(Ben shakes his head in agreement with Maggie)

Thank you.

Flora

Now then, when shall we schedule your next session?

(Though feeling good, Ben & Maggie quick turn to one another with a look of We Out!)

Lights Down