

Rainbow

written by

Rebecca Shearin

Atlanta, GA
(404) 491-0154
rsshearin.creative@gmail.com

THE CURTAIN RISES ON A 40 SOMETHING WOMAN, IRIS, IN A BOAT WITH OARS DRESSED IN A BRIGHT YELLOW RAINCOAT AND HAT WITH A MATCHING UMBRELLA. SITTING WITH HER IN THE BOAT IS A LITTLE GIRL NAMED RISSIE WHO IS AROUND 4-5 YEARS OLD WITH A LIFE JACKET ON OVER HER PURPLE RAINCOAT.

Iris is frantically rowing.

Out of breath, she finally slows and then stops.

IRIS

Are you alright?

Rissie nods her head.

IRIS (CONT'D)

I'm out of breath. That was some storm. I didn't think we were going to make it.

RISSIE

I knew you'd get us through.

(Pause)

What are we going to do next?

IRIS

I don't know. I was just focusing on getting out the storm.

*Iris puts the oars into place and hands the Rissie the umbrella. **Fact check***

IRIS (CONT'D)

Here, you hold this. There's some water in the boat. Let me get that out before it starts storming again.

RISSIE

It doesn't look like it's going to storm.

IRIS

Well, I'm not taking that chance. We better get ready.

Iris starts scooping out what little water is in the boat.

IRIS (CONT'D)

Better open that umbrella

Rissie opens the umbrella.

RISSIE

But,...

A faraway voice is heard and becomes louder as the boat floats closer to the voice.

CARA

Iris! Iris! Iris!

As the boat gets closer, visible is a woman in her forties dressed in blue carrying a rope.

RISSIE

Who's that?

IRIS

That's my friend, Cara.

RISSIE

Oh right, I remember her. She's helped keep us afloat during the storm.

CARA

Iris! You made it through. Come to shore. Here I got some rope.

IRIS

I can't do that yet! It's going to storm any minute.

Cara has a puzzled look on her face. Rissie holds her hand out from under the umbrella and looks up at the sky.

The boat is slowly passing by Cara.

CARA

The storm's passed. Craig might be gone, but you're still here. You're so strong. C'mon, I'll throw the rope and you catch it. I'll get you to shore.

IRIS

Cara, I can't. You saw how bad that storm was. I gotta make sure the boat is ready for the next one.

CARA

Look around you. The clouds are passing.

She throws the rope close to the boat. Rissie stands up and tries to grab the rope.

IRIS

Honey, sit down you'll tip the boat over.

RISSIE

But, I want to go ashore.

Iris nudges Rissie to sit back down. The boat keeps floating pass.

IRIS

Cara, I can't.

Cara is visibly frustrated. She starts pulling the rope in and is no longer visible on stage.

RISSIE

Who's Craig?

The question startles Iris who looks at the little girl for a moment, then looks away anxiously at the shoreline and then back at the sky. She answers the question in a distracted way.

IRIS

You know Craig. He was my husband.

RISSIE

Was your husband? Did he die?

IRIS

(big annoyed sigh)

No, he didn't die. He left me.

RISSIE

Why did he leave you?

IRIS

He had problems that he needed to fix.

RISSIE

What problems?

IRIS

You're too young to know.

RISSIE

Well, I'm in this boat with you so I think I ought to know.

IRIS

(deep breath)

Fine. He has depression and addiction.

RISSIE

Oh

There is a pause.

RISSIE (CONT'D)

What's depression?

IRIS

Depression is when you're sad and you can't cheer yourself up.

RISSIE

Oh. Was he sad because he couldn't add?

IRIS

What?

RISSIE

You said he had problems with being sad and addition.

IRIS

No, a-dict-tion. Addiction is where you can't stop doing something that is not good for you.

RISSIE

Oh

(pause)

Couldn't you fix it?

IRIS

What?

RISSIE

Couldn't you fix his problems?

IRIS

No, I couldn't. It's hard to fix someone's problems when they aren't willing to take help for others.

RISSIE

Oh, like when you wouldn't let Cara help you?

IRIS

What?

RISSIE

When you wouldn't take the rope?

Iris starts messing the straps on Rissie's lifejacket.

IRIS

I can take help when I need it. It could storm any minute and I'm going to be ready for it. *What if a storm hit while we were trying to get to shore? This boat would break to pieces on those rocks. (fact check)*

RISSIE

Doesn't look that stormy to me.

IRIS

Well, I've fallen for that before. Thinking the skies were clear and it was safe and then...

A faraway voice is heard calling for Iris. As it gets closer, we see it's a man in his forties dressed in red standing on a dock waving his arms to get Iris' attention.

WILLIAM

Iris! Over here! This way!

The boat gets closer to the dock.

RISSIE

Who's that?

IRIS

That's William.

RISSIE

He's cute.

IRIS

Yes, he is.

RISSIE

You like him, right? You should totally like him. I think I'd like him.

WILLIAM

Row over here and I'll help you up.

RISSIE

Yep, I like him. I'm ready to get out of this boat.

IRIS

(to William)

You're not strong enough to lift me out of this boat.

RISSIE

Looks strong enough to me.

WILLIAM

Iris, there's a ladder right over here. I'll talk you through it.

IRIS

What if I mess up and fall in?

WILLIAM

I'll be right here if anything happens.

IRIS

(to William)

People have told me that before.

RISSIE

What people?

IRIS

(to William)

I'm safer in the boat.

WILLIAM

But, but I'm right here. I want you to be with me. I'm not going anywhere.

IRIS

I'm sorry, William.

The boat passes the dock. As William goes out of sight, his voice from faraway is heard.

WILLIAM

(faintly)

I love you.

Rissie closes the umbrella she's been holding. She carefully fastens the Velcro strap that holds it together. She looks very determinedly at Iris. Iris is looking around and up at the sky. Licks her finger to find the direction of the wind. Rissie grabs an oar and starts rowing the boat back.

IRIS

Rissie, what are you doing?

Rissie not making much progress, persistently keeps rowing.

RISSIE

He's cute and he loves you. We're going back.

IRIS

So what that he loves me? It doesn't mean he'll stick around.

RISSIE

You don't know that.

Rissie keeps rowing. Iris picks up the other oar and rows in the other direction.

IRIS

No, but chances are he'll leave.

The boat starts to move in circles since each is rowing in opposite directions.

RISSIE
We're getting nowhere like this.

IRIS
I know, but we're not going back.

RISSIE
Yes, we are!

Rissie lunges forward in the boat trying to grab Iris' oar. In the scuffle, Rissie drops her oar and starts to fall out of the boat. Iris drops her oar and grabs Rissie before she hits the water. They both try to grab the oars but it's too late. They're gone.

IRIS
Great. Now we're just drifting.

RISSIE
(sarcastically)
Weren't we doing that before?

IRIS
Excuse me? Wh..

RISSIE
(interrupting)
So, what people?

IRIS
What people what?

RISSIE
You said people have told you they'd be there for you, and they weren't. What people?

IRIS
Oh.

Iris looks down pensively.

RISSIE
Well, what people?

IRIS
My family. Some of my other friends.

RISSIE
Go on.

Iris sighs.

IRIS

I divorced Craig. Some of my family and friends didn't think it was the right thing to do. "Rissie, what are you doing leaving your husband when he needs you the most?" They said they loved me, and they left me. Just like Craig.

RISSIE

Well, it looks like Cara is there for you.

IRIS

Yeah.

RISSIE

Has she left you?

IRIS

No

RISSIE

And William wants to be there for you?

IRIS

Yes

RISSIE

And he knows about Craig?

IRIS

Yes

RISSIE

Sounds like if he wanted to leave, he would have already.

IRIS

Yes

RISSIE

And you love him.

Iris exhales a big sigh.

IRIS

(quietly)

Yes, I do.

RISSIE

So??

IRIS

So what?

RISSIE

So what's the problem?

IRIS

What if... I mean if he...I just don't think I could...

Off in the distance is a voice is heard shouting.

DAVID

Mom! Mom!"

Iris whips her head around.

IRIS

David??

RISSIE

David??

IRIS

(to Rissie)

Yeah, David, my boy.

Rissie looks out and squints.

RISSIE

Doesn't look much like a boy to me.

David rows up in his own boat, a young man dressed in green.

DAVID

Mom, what are you still doing in this boat?

IRIS

Well David, I needed this boat to get through the storm.

DAVID

(patiently)

Mom, the storm's over. You made it through.

IRIS

But David, I'm going to need this boat when it storms again.

Rissie slaps her hand against her forehead.

DAVID

Mom, Dad is gone. It's time to take care of yourself.

IRIS

What do you think I've been trying to do!?

DAVID

Mom, get in the boat.

Iris sits there staring into David's eyes, hands tightening on the umbrella.

IRIS

If I risk getting in that boat, I might fall in.

DAVID

And you might not. Mom, you gotta stop worrying and start taking risks.

(pause)

Mom, look up. There's been a rainbow above you the whole time.

As David, Iris, and Rissie look up in amazement, the rainbow above them sparkles.

IRIS

(shakily)

Ok

David ties the boats together.

Iris reaches out to David. David and Iris lock arms. Iris starts to take a step over.

IRIS (CONT'D)

I don't know if I can do this.

DAVID

I gotcha Mom. Just like you've always had me.

Iris makes it into David's boat and looks over at Rissie. David starts untying the boats.

IRIS

Rissie, come on!

Iris reaches for Rissie, but Rissie shakes her head.

DAVID

Standby Mom, the boats are almost untied.

Iris urgently waves for Rissie to come over.

RISSIE

No, Iris. Here.

Rissie hands her the umbrella.

RISSIE (CONT'D)

I'll be there for you whenever you need me. Always.

DAVID

Hold on, Mom.

David pushes the other boat off.

Rissie in the boat floats away.

Rissie waves at Iris as she floats off.

David rows toward the shore where Cara and William stand.

Cara throws the rope for David to catch.

*Cara and William help bring the boat to shore. **Fact check***

David jumps out of the boat and helps Iris out.

Cara embraces Iris.

CARA

You made it.

Iris then goes to William.

IRIS

You're still here.

WILLIAM

Of course, I am. I told you I'm not going anywhere.

Iris and William embrace and kiss.

DAVID

(points)

Look at that rainbow.

As they turn to look at the sky, they stand in rainbow order of the way they are dressed - William (red), Iris (yellow), David (green), and Cara (blue).

IRIS

(in awe)

What a beautiful rainbow.

House lights go down.

As the light rise again, actors turn toward audience.

Rissie runs back on stage to stand next to Cara.

The actors dressed in their respective colors make a rainbow of their own - red, yellow, green, blue, and purple.

Actors take a bow.