

The following is excerpted from

“BACKGROUND CHECK”

A Two Character Comedy

By Ken Levine

Chris and Sam are two young women who realize their lives exist only to be background extras in the fictional world of the TV show FRASIER. They're seen on camera but never heard. They decide to rise and be noticed. Everyone deserves a voice. But how do they do that? And what do they learn?

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# BACKGROUND CHECK

A Ten-Minute Comedy

by

Ken Levine

**SYNOPSIS:** Chris and Sam are two young women who realize their lives exist only to be background extras in the fictional world of the TV show FRASIER. They're seen on camera but never heard. They decide to rise and be noticed. Everyone deserves a voice. But how do they do that? And what do they learn?

**CHARACTERS:**

CHRIS – A young woman in her 20's, assertive

SAM – A young woman in her 20's, game for anything

**SETTING:**

A café that's supposed to be Café Nervosa from FRASIER. But all that's needed is a small table and two chairs.

BACKGROUND CHECK

INT. CAFE -- DAY

\*

SAM and CHRIS sit at a small table drinking coffee. Both are young women in their 20's or 30's.

AT CURTAIN RISE they are talking, gesturing, reacting, laughing -- very animated. But in SILENCE. We don't hear their dialogue. Sam finally glances downstage left, then speaks. NOTE: During this whole exchange, they remain seated in place.

SAM

Okay, they're gone.

CHRIS

This is just nuts.

SAM

I know.

CHRIS

I don't understand it. Every time that Frasier Crane from the radio comes in here with his goofy brother all of a sudden no sounds come out of our mouths.

SAM

Why is that?

CHRIS

I don't know. It's like the only thing that matters is those two and everyone else is, well... just background.

SAM

Why do we even go to Cafe Nervosa? I don't think I've ever seen a waitress.

CHRIS

No, but we always have coffee.

SAM

Weird.

CHRIS

I'll tell you what's weird. We must live here or something because I can't think of anywhere else I go. Can you?

SAM

No. And yet we have different clothes every week.

CHRIS

Our hair and make up is always perfect.

SAM

And for all the coffee we drink we never once have had to use the bathroom.

CHRIS

Does Cafe Nervosa even have a bathroom? I've never seen one.

SAM

They must have a bathroom. This isn't the south.

CHRIS

Hell, they don't even have four walls. We just look out into nothing.

SAM

Yeah, that's right.

CHRIS

You never noticed that?

SAM

I'm always looking and talking directly to you for some reason, so no. But these are all good questions to ask.

CHRIS

No, the real question is why are we here?

SAM

Isn't that a little existential for two people who are not certain they even have names?

SAM

That's what I mean. It's like our lives are not our own.

CHRIS

Or we're not as important as other lives.

SAM

Like Frasier Crane and his gay brother.

CHRIS

Right. (beat) His brother is gay?

SAM

I may not know our names but I know that.

CHRIS

Still, of the two, he's my favorite.