

***Lights rise on ERIN at 34. It is 2015.***

ERIN at 34

I didn't come that last Sunday night. I had left that morning for Mizzou. It was welcome week the next day and I wanted to be there. I didn't want to miss it. It was the first day of college! You meet all the people in your dorm! Friends you'll have for life! To waste that in order to see some movie? It seemed stupid. ...And I think I wanted to hurt him. To not be there on the last night when he needed me. To let him know what that was like.

***ERIN regards the photos.***

He has been good with Sean. Spends a lot of time with him. ...Trying to make up for all those lost years. Or maybe he'd changed. ...Or both. ...When I came home from school that first Christmas he took me to the Palmer House for dinner. He was very polite and pleasant. Didn't get drunk. Asked me about my classes. We were both trying to pretend that last Sunday night didn't happen. ...We never mentioned it again. ...A couple months ago I was cleaning his apartment and I found a manila envelope in the bottom drawer of his dresser. It had his favorite movie. Still gift-wrapped.

***ERIN at 34 picks up the wrapped VHS.***

Sean was with me. "Is that for me, Mommy?" "No, Honey. It's a gift my dad gave me." "Is it a book?" "No, it's a movie." "Grandpa liked movies." "He does."

***ERIN at 34 unwraps the VHS, regards it, chuckles a bit, as if she knew it would be that film. She holds it up for the audience.***

*The Rules of the Game.* By Jean Renoir. Do you know it? It's about these rich people who spend a couple weeks partying at this big house in the country. They hunt. And eat. And play cards. And do crazy dress-up skits in the evening. There's a lot of extra-marital stuff going on too. People sneaking in and out of each other's rooms. The guests *and* the servants. ...Everybody understands it's just for fun. They know the rules of the game. Give your body but never your heart. ...There are these two guys in the film--one is a famous aviator whose been invited to hang with these people and the other is the groundskeeper of the estate. They come from different worlds, these two guys, but they both have something in common. They both love with their all heart. ...And they're both destroyed! ...The movie opened the 1<sup>st</sup> of September, 1939. The day Germany invaded Poland. The French government immediately took it out of circulation. They didn't think it was a very flattering portrait of their society. They didn't show it in its completed form for another twenty years.