

# Selfie in the Dark

by Maria Burnham  
written for [REDACTED]

CHARACTERS

HOSTESS

ROSIE

BECKY

SETTING

A bedroom in a Chicago apartment.

TIME

Late fall/early winter

*In the dark, the muffled sounds of a party.*

HOSTESS

You can just throw your coat on the bed in here. We have a ton of food and drink in the dining nook. Come get some when you're ready.

*The sounds of the party are louder for a moment, as if the door to the room the audience is in has been opened, and then muffled again. A beat before the lights come up quickly like a light switch being flicked on.*

*In the middle of the bedroom is a bed covered in a huge mound of coats. Several bags and purses lie around the room as well.*

*ROSIE, stands near the stage entrance with her back to the audience, wearing a coat. She turns toward the bed and then begins to shrug off her coat. She is slightly winded from her walk up three flights of stairs to this apartment. She puts her coat on the pile and then decides to sit down for a moment to catch her breath. As she sits there is a muffled cry from under the pile of coats. Rosie immediately stands back up and looks at the pile confused. She pokes at it with her fingers.*

BECKY

Hey! Stop poking me!

*The coats shift and a young woman sticks her head out of the pile.*

ROSIE

I'm sorry. I had no idea you were under there.

BECKY

Well maybe you should check next time before you go sitting on people and then poking them in the kidney.

ROSIE

That's not even a...why would I...What are you doing under that pile of coats?

BECKY

Could you just turn that light back off when you leave? Thanks.

*Becky reburies herself under the coats. Rosie crosses to the bed and uncovers her once again. Becky glares at her and then reburies herself. Rosie once again uncovers her. Becky buries herself even further under the coats. Rosie attempts to remove the coats once again, but Becky is holding one over her head and won't let go.*

BECKY

*(Peeking out from under the coat)* Look. I was here first. Where is your party etiquette? Your common human respect? Your sense of decency? I swear this country is going to hell. Go find your own pile of coats or a closet or curtains to hide in. *(Piles more coats on top of herself)*

ROSIE

That's my coat you're hiding under.

BECKY

Fine.

*Becky tosses the coat at Rosie and then pulls another one over her head.*

ROSIE

Are you supposed to be at this party? I'm going to get Jean. I don't think...

*Rosie starts toward the door. But Becky grabs her hand before she can take a step.*

BECKY

No! Please! Don't tell them I'm in here!

ROSIE

Then tell me why you're in here. And why you're burrowed into those coats like a beagle in a blanket?

*Becky abandons trying to cover herself and sits up.*

BECKY

I'm hiding from the party.

ROSIE

It's not a hunting party, you know. You'd be perfectly safe in the same room with the 20 different kinds of dips.

BECKY

I hate parties. I don't know how to do parties. I'm awkward at small talk. I get food all over my clothes. I spill drinks. Sometimes there are cats at the party and that's better. I'm pretty good at making friends with cats.

ROSIE

You could just go home. You don't have to hide out with the coats.

BECKY

No! I can't leave yet. I have to stay till at least 10 p.m., so I can check in with a funny selfie.

ROSIE

Is this one of those scavenger hunt things?

BECKY

I don't know what that is.

ROSIE

Where you have to run around town collecting items on your list so you can win a prize. *(Becky looks at her blankly.)* OK, you know what. Nevermind. *(Starts to leave again.)*

BECKY

If I don't post photos and check ins from parties, people will stop inviting me to parties.

ROSIE

Isn't that's what you want?

BECKY

No! I have to give the appearance of being social. If people stop inviting me to parties and cookouts and baptisms and all I do is post photos of cats in funny hats on my social media, people will think I'm a weird anti-social cat lady misfit with no life.

ROSIE

You are hiding in a bedroom under a pile of coats. I believe you have, in fact, proved their point.

BECKY

If it's not on Facebook, it didn't happen. *(Becky suddenly jumps up)* Oh my god! You didn't post this on Facebook, did you?

ROSIE

Have you seen my phone in my hand?

BECKY

I just really need this job.

ROSIE

Something tells me this is going to be a long conversation. Hold on a minute.

*Rosie exits the room.*

BECKY

*(Shouting, but in a sort of whisper so no one outside the room can hear her.)* Don't tell anyone I'm in here!

*While Rosie is gone, Becky examines the room, looking at photos and peeking in drawers, before settling back onto the bed and having a pretend conversation with imaginary party-goers. Rosie re-enters the room with two paper plates with food and two plastic cups.*

ROSIE

Here.

BECKY

Is that guacamole?

ROSIE

I certainly hope so. Since it's green.

BECKY

*(Dipping several chips in and shoving them in her mouth)* I love guacamole. *(She immediately spills some on her clothes. Rosie hands her a napkin.)* Thanks.

ROSIE

I got you some wine as well. I don't drink alcohol, so I wasn't sure what to get you, but I thought you needed something more than sparkling water. *(Indicating her own glass as she speaks.)*

BECKY

What kind is it?

ROSIE

Red. Probably from Trader Joe's. Because everything is from Trader Joe's at parties these days. Would it make you feel better if I just made up some name for it? It's Belle Epoque Blesbok. 2014.

BECKY

That doesn't sound like a wine.

ROSIE

And Arrogant Frog and Fat Bastard do?

BECKY

Well...

ROSIE

I don't really think we find ourselves secreted away in the coat room to discuss wine. What's this about a job? Please tell me you aren't working this party in some capacity.

BECKY

No. It's a customer service job that I'm interviewing for. I actually made it past the first round this time. I've been on about 20 interviews since I moved here and I never make it very far. I do really well on the aptitude and skills tests and my interviews always seem to be well received. I couldn't figure out what was happening. So I finally asked and you know what they said? They said based on what they extrapolated from my online profile, I was not a very social person and therefore wouldn't be a good fit in their workplace environment. I.e. I do not go to enough parties.

ROSIE

I don't know that that's actually what that means.

BECKY

No. It totally is. And so I started going to everything people invited me to on Facebook. And sometimes, I just go places where they're crowds of people and I'll stand near someone and take a selfie so it looks like I'm with them, but I'm totally not. And because I started going to

stuff, people started inviting me to stuff. Like this party. Where I don't really know anyone, but the roommate of the girl throwing the party was in this Barre class I went to a couple times because I got a Groupon and she invited me and it's not too far from where I live so....Second interview.

ROSIE

You don't know anyone at this party?

BECKY

Just the Groupon girl. And you. Are you on Facebook?

ROSIE

You don't even know my name.

BECKY

*(Pulling out her phone)* But I can add you as a friend and then I'll know.

ROSIE

So can't you just go to a party, check in and then go?

BECKY

I need to show some extended time at places. And it helps if I can be tagged in other people's photos or statuses.

ROSIE

Have you actually tried talking to people at parties? My daughter is the girl throwing the party. She suffers from anxiety too, but she's out there talking to people. Sometimes you just have to force yourself to be social and then before you know it you actually are being social. Come on. I'll introduce you two. My daughter can talk about cats for hours. You should be fine.

BECKY

I can't go out there yet! It's only 8:30 p.m.!

ROSIE

You may be surprised to find that a party is actually ongoing all night long. You know my daughter also works in customer service. She may have some tips for you. She may actually know some folks at the job you're interviewing for. She could put in a good word for you? *(Becky looks nervously at the door.)* She's really good at taking selfies...

BECKY

Would she take one with me?

ROSIE

We both would.

BECKY

Really?

ROSIE

Definitely. *(Rosie takes out her phone.)* In fact, what if you and I take one right now. To warm up.

BECKY

OK. *(Rosie and Becky crowd together in front of the bed to take the selfie. Rosie gets ready to take a photo)* Wait! You can see the coats in the back. People will know we're in the coat room and not in the party room. Let's get that cool stained glass window in the background.

*They hold their pose, but shuffle around so their backs are to the window. Rosie snaps a few photos. Once done they move back to a comfortable distance apart while Rosie selects a photo for adding to social media.*

ROSIE

*(Indicating the afore mentioned stained glass)* I made that.

BECKY

Shut up! You did not!

ROSIE

Yeah. That's what I do. I'm an artist.

BECKY

I've never met a real artist before.

ROSIE

Don't worry. We're housetrained. I'm Rosie.

BECKY

Becky. Are you adding that photo to Facebook?

ROSIE

As soon as I'm done friending you. What's your last name Becky?

BECKY

Howard. *(Rosie types on her phone.)* You don't have to friend me, you know. It's ok.

ROSIE

I did not just spend 20 minutes in the coat room at a party with you for no reason. I have to know you better than Groupon Girl does.

*Becky smiles. Takes out her phone and accepts the friend request. Rosie finishes tagging her new friend in her photo and then puts away her phone.*

ROSIE

So, shall we go see what other kinds of dips await us?



BECKY

*(Reading)* 'Sometimes a stranger is just a friend you haven't met yet.' *(Becky looks at Rosie and Rosie nods. Becky grins back.)* Let's go.

*The two walk toward the exit and flip the light off. The muted sounds of the party grow louder like the door is opening.*

BECKY

I hope they have hummus.

ROSIE

There are at least three white people gathered together in one place. I guarantee you there will be hummus.

*The sounds of the party mute once again as if the door has shut.*

*End of play.*