



**Association of British
Columbia Drama
Educators**

**1998 YOUTHWRITE
ANTHOLOGY**

INTRODUCTION TO THE 1998 YOUTHWRITE ANTHOLOGY

by John Lazarus

This is my third time adjudicating the Youthwrite Festival, and my third introduction to its annual anthology, and something very interesting is starting to happen here.

Not that the two previous Youthwrites haven't been fascinating. To repeat three observations from previous anthology intros. The Youthwrite Festival (in Prince George, this year) continues to represent a dream come true, in that I used to dream of some day adjudicating a festival of plays not only directed, designed and acted by students, but also written by them. And (2) these young playwrights continue to give us all hope for the future of Canadian theatre. And (3) the Festival continues to provide a fascinating insight into the concerns, the hopes and dreams and fears, of 1990's high-school students.

But the new thing is that the students seem to be starting to influence each other. It may be fair to say that there is the beginning of a "school" here, in the sense of (says my dictionary) "a group of people, especially philosophers, artists, or writers, whose thought, work, or style demonstrates a common origin or influence or unifying belief." I think we're starting to see the influence of previous years' plays on this year's plays. This isn't the same as these students plagiarizing each other. Influence is a different matter. High school students may read the work of established playwrights (even living, Canadian playwrights) without identifying with them or thinking in terms of doing something similar. But when they see their peers succeeding in creating original and exciting theatre, well, it does appear to get contagious.

It may be dangerous to try to pin down this "school", but I would suggest that within Youthwrite, there has been a growing interest in dream, surrealism, and the Theatre of the Absurd. (And that's not just our jury's taste in choosing these six!) In the original, classic Theatre of the Absurd of the early 1950's, the great theme was alienation and lack of communication. It is the same in these plays - which I am pleased to give the name "Neo-Absurdist" - but the alienation is often tinged with a heartfelt loneliness, and, sometimes in the very same play, the absurdity can be hilarious.

Each year, teachers Linda Beaven and Howard Baker and I choose six plays to come to the Festival. You hold this year's crop in your hands. In alphabetical order:

Carmen, by Matthew S. Pagels, is a light comedy on that most popular of Youthwrite themes, teenage dating. This manages to be both a reality-based comedy and a dream play. The playwright reverses the usual convention of the loveless, luckless hero who dreams of sexual conquest but gets shot down in real life. In Matt Pagel's cheerier version of the theme, the hero gets nowhere in his dream life, but reality proves more forgiving. I especially enjoyed the parodies of theatre and film cliches - and the funny but sensitive presentation of the hero's friend Laurissa, who gets advice from her talking lunch.

A Penny for Your Thoughts, by Jonathan Crossen, is a poetic, whimsical piece about a guy who lives down a well, and the various people who come to talk with him. My original notes on the script described it, accurately, as "funny", but in watching the show in performance at Prince George, I was also struck by how melancholic and touching it is. My original notes concluded: "Cryptic...but beautiful sound and rhythm, and insightful, surprising lines of dialogue. Quite brilliant, actually."

That Day at the Park, by Nellie McLean, is a welcome exception to my tidy generalization about surrealistic, dream theatre. It is a gripping, naturalistic scene in which a psychiatrist questions a disturbed boy names Stan about the murder of a little girl with whom he was friends. Ms. McLean manages to convey the horror of the situation while making us continue to feel some compassion for all concerned.

The Two Step, by Reid Morgan(who submitted his script under the *anagram de plume* "Die Anogrrm") is a classic of this Neo-Absurd genre. Two neighbours give each other presents, fall in love and die. Between them lives a madman names Bliss, who seems the sanest of the three. My notes suggest the influence of playwrights Eugene Ionesco(Theatre of the Absurd, 1950's) and Amy Bessflug(Youthwrite, 1997). Linda Beaven also pointed out an echo on Norman McLaren's great 1952 short film *Neighbours*. But danger in citing all these influences is to give short shrift to the originality of the work, and *The Two Step*, like the other five plays in this book, is nothing if not startlingly original.

Whale Song, by the aforementioned Amy Bessflug, is the second play by this playwright to make it to a final Festival. (She's not the only playwright to submit two or more plays in subsequent years; but so far she is the only playwright to have two plays presented at two Festivals.) This play lives in the world of dream and memory and nostalgia, and it's a heartbreaker. Amy's dialogue is poetic, and her poetry is that of the theatre; she thinks in terms of stage pictures and stage movement. She also manages to sustain that delicate, poetic tone while remaining firmly connected to a world of powerful emotion.

Yellow, by Quinn Fletcher, is another play that recalls the Absurdists. The play uses repetition to satirize daily human rituals of politeness and growing friendship. I especially enjoyed the moment when the Colonel, whom we have come to see as a symbol of repression, suddenly bursts out with his own emotional need. And I liked the startlingly dark ending. In its repetition, *Yellow* reminded me of another absurd farce from last year's Youthwrite Festival. It may or may not have been influenced by that earlier play, but the similarity is enough to suggest that we may have here the beginnings of a "school".

I hope these comments won't persuade next year's playwrights to slavishly imitate these plays or to stick rigidly to the genre of absurdity and alienation. These are plays about all kinds of cool stuff: dating, loneliness, friendship, train schedules, whales, wells, murder, suicide and love. There is more to make them unique than to make them similar. Please enjoy them for their uniqueness.

John Lazarus

Carmen

A romantic comedy in one act
By Matthew S. Pagels

The Characters (In order of appearance):
Daniel: A young man, with young man's fantasies.
Carmen: The subject of Daniel's dreams; a beautiful young lady.
Laurissa: Daniel's bizarre best friend; a dreamer in every sense.
Adreon: The big guy.

CAST AND CREW *Directed by Kim Card*

DANIEL	Joel McLaughlin
CARMEN	Dalaena Dickenson
LARISSA	Erin Davies
ADREON	Nick McAdam
Stage Manager	Kim Craddock
Crew	Jenny Bailey Anna Grah

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I would like to thank Ms. Kristine Polgar for her support and enthusiasm as a teacher and friend, the cast and crew for making this show possible, and Jesus Christ for his blessings given to me.

'La Belle dame sans merci' - John Keats

Carmen

(Scene one)

(The stage is split into two locations. SR is a cafeteria/restaurant. SL is Daniel's room. A bed lies UL. Laying on the bed is Daniel. Carmen enters SL and looks at Daniel through the corner of her eye. He gets up and looks at Carmen, surprised. Carmen beckons Daniel with her finger, and he comes. Tango music, or other dance music, comes up and they dance. At the end of the dance Carmen and Daniel are looking eye to eye.)

Carmen: Daniel.

Daniel: Carmen.

Carmen: Do you love me?

Daniel: Oh yes, more than anything, Carmen.

Carmen: How much?

Daniel: You are the cherry on my ice cream. My heart melts when my eyes gaze upon you. The sun, the moon, and the stars are mere distractions compared to your beauty. I would walk through the burning sulfurous lake of hell to smell your hair. I would gouge my eyes out if it meant I could see your face. I would tear off my skin if it meant that I could get closer to you. *(pause)* I would die for you.

Carmen: And do I love you?

Daniel: You must!

Carmen: I do not! *(She pushes him away.)* The day I would love you hell would freeze over! Pigs would sprout wings and take flight before I would love a pathetic, desperate, crater faced nerd like

yourself. If the Earth were to be struck by a deadly plague and wipe out every other man on Earth, I would not even consider a dreamer like you. I would rather die!

(Daniel falls back in bed. Carmen struts out. Daniel sits up suddenly from his nightmare, screaming.)

Daniel: Oh man. I've got to get to bed earlier.

(Scene 2)

(Lights come up on SR, and music comes on. Laurissa enters, wearing a walkman. She dances away and sings to the music, and takes a seat. Daniel enters while Laurissa is bopping about and he looks at her oddly. It takes her awhile to realize she is being watched. Then she turns off the walkman and stops.)

Laurissa: Oh. Hey Daniel. *(Embarrassed)*

Daniel: Hey Laurissa. What exactly were you, just...

Laurissa: I was, uh, you know. I was grooving... with... myself. *(change of subject)* Daniel, you look wasted. What on earth did you do last night?

Daniel: I had a bad dream.

Laurissa: I've had my share of those. I had one last night where a band of pirates kidnapped me and held me hostage.

Daniel: Then what happened?

Laurissa: My dashing prince came to my rescue. He was too late, though. The pirates already threw me into the shark-infested waters.

Daniel: Did they eat you?

Laurissa: Nope! We all did synchronized swimming together. Was your dream like that?

Daniel: No. Nothing that bizarre. I dreamed about a girl from school last night.

Laurissa: Oh.

Daniel: We danced to some La Bamba (*Or any kind*) music or something.

Laurissa: Then what? Did you kiss?

Daniel: No, then she ripped me apart.

Laurissa: Oooh.

Daniel: She called me a crater faced nerd.

Laurissa: That's got to hurt.

Daniel: I need help, Laurissa. I haven't had any sleep for days. That on it's own I could handle, but the dreams are always about the same girl. I can't stand it! Maybe I'll just stop sleeping all together. I don't even know her that well. I just met her this year when we did a Social Studies project together.

Laurissa: What's her name?

Daniel: Carmen Volkhaven.

Laurissa: I know her. She's in my Biology class. (*Pause*) Wow! When you dream about getting dumped, you pick very good looking women.

Daniel: She's in your class?! This is great. You have to find out what she's like for me. Otherwise, I am going to gain some kind of serious insomnia complex.

Laurissa: She has a boyfriend.

Daniel: A boyfriend?

Laurissa: Yep. His name is Adreon. Here, I'll show you his picture. He's in the yearbook, playing sports. *(She hands him a yearbook out of her backpack. Daniel looks at the picture she points to.)* He's right there. The one holding the soccer trophy.

Daniel: *(wide eyed)* That's Adreon?!? That's no boyfriend. He's a bloody behemoth! Look at him! He's pure unsaturated muscle!

Laurissa: Keep looking. *(Daniel flips the pages, astonished)* Adreon is a big time jock. He plays everything. Hockey. Wrestling. Rugby.

Daniel: *(Daniel gasps)* He's standing on that other guy's head!

Laurissa: And he gets jealous, too.

Daniel: Jealous? How jealous?

Laurissa: Very jealous.

Daniel: Great! Just great! That's all I need. I have a crush on a girl, and she has a boyfriend who will probably smear me all over the boys' locker room if I so much as blinked in the direction of his girlfriend.

Laurissa: You'll get over her.

Daniel: That or I'll never get a good nights sleep.

Laurissa: Listen. I'll find out what I can about Carmen, and who knows? She might not even like him.

Daniel: Thanks.

(Laurissa exits. Daniel goes to SL, and lays on the bed.)

(Scene 3)

Carmen: *(Without)* Daniel. Daniel. Daniel, where art thou?

Daniel: *(Daniel has a sword in hand, and shouts for his mistress)* I am here, Carmen. Come hither, my love.

Carmen: *(Without)* Daniel. Daniel where art thou, Daniel?

Daniel: I'm right here Carmen. *(Adreon enters SR, Daniel sees him)* Captain Adreon! Where is she villain? Tell me now, or I'll have thee visiting Davy Jones' locker.

Adreon: At last we meet, Sir Daniel. Aye, I have the bonnie lass, she's on me ship, and if you ever be wanting to see the light of day agin', you'd best not try and go through me.

Daniel: What wilt thou do with her, villain?

Adreon: I'll be courting her.

Daniel: You fishmonger! You Cur! How could you? *(He draws his weapon, and then so does Adreon)* Face thy blade now then, thou vile detestable creature! *(They fight)*

Adreon: Ha! You wave that sword like a feather duster, ye scurvy swag.

Daniel: And you sir... are not a very nice person. *(Daniel corners Adreon at sword point)* Now villain, thou shalt hang for thy crimes. *(Carmen enters with a gun)* Ah, Carmen, my love, I have the villain, Captain Adreon. I told you I'd rescue thee. I would do anything for thee, Carmen.

Carmen: Anything, my love?

Daniel: Anything.

Carmen: Good. *(She shoots Daniel)* Die!

Adreon: *(Adreon puts his arm around Carmen and chuckles)* He fell for it.

Carmen: The fool! *(They laugh sadistically over his dead body as the lights fade out)*

(Scene 4)

(Laurissa is at the table. She has a hamburger and a milkshake. She picks up the hamburger and moves the buns together and apart to make the hamburger talk to herself.)

Hamburger: Hey Laurissa!

Laurissa: Wow! A talking hamburger.

Hamburger: Oh course I am. I'm "Grade A" quality, don't you know. Daniel stood you up, didn't he?

Laurissa: Yeah, I'm pretty cheesed off at him.

Hamburger: That boy has no respect for you, does he?

Laurissa: No, Mr. hamburger, he doesn't.

Hamburger: And after all you've done for him.

Laurissa: Yeah, smart girl. *(Sarcastically)*

Hamburger: How ungrateful he is! I'll be your friend.

Laurissa: *(short pause)* No, I think I'll just eat you.

Hamburger: Nooo, don't eat me. Ahhgg! *(Laurissa stuffs the burger in her face while making screaming noises. Daniel enters. He is a complete mess. He staggers over to the table and sits down)*

with Laurissa. As Laurissa notices that someone is sitting with her, she slowly removes the hamburger from her mouth.)

Laurissa: Hello. You're late.

Daniel: I'm sorry. I completely forgot. I'm a mess. I'm exhausted, and I can't think straight.

Laurissa: Carmen?

Daniel: Uh-huh. She shot me.

Laurissa: And you like this girl?

Daniel: Apparently. What did you find out?

Laurissa: Well, she likes hunting, hiking, and she plays the drums. She has a bad habit of chewing on her finger nails, and spits gum out on the sidewalk, which I find personally just revolting. She is a non-smoker, so you don't have to worry about dying from second hand smoke. She has her Learner's Permit, and drives her father's pickup truck, a very respectable vehicle.

Daniel: Do you think she'd go for me?

Laurissa: No. Her boyfriend would kill you, and dead people make lousy dates.

Daniel: Thanks.

Laurissa: Look, just get over her. Okay? She doesn't even know you exist, and that's fine! There's plenty of other fish in the sea. Why don't you go dream about them?

Daniel: Because I don't like them. I like Carmen.

Laurissa: Well then, *(pause)* I can't help you.

Daniel: Yeah well, thanks for trying. *(Daniel exits)*

(Laurissa lifts the lid of her cup to make it talk, after Daniel has left)

Milkshake: Don't worry Laurissa. I'm sure he'll notice you someday.

Laurissa: Ah, what do you know? You're just a milkshake. *(She starts drinking the milkshake)*

Milkshake: Noooooo...

(Scene 5)

(Daniel is watching TV DL. The lights are raised on him. He is exhausted, but is trying to stay awake. He has a cup of coffee in his hands.)

Daniel: This really sucks. I mean, look at me. I'm watching the Statler Brothers. The Statler Brothers! I'm pathetic! I can't even sleep because I'm going to dream about a beautiful woman. It wouldn't be so bad if it wasn't for her oversized boyfriend... or if there was anything good on TV tonight.

Carmen: *(In a southern accent)* Oh help me! Help me! I am but a poor damsel in distress, being chased by some rotten scoundrel. He's comin' this way. You must help me.

Daniel: *(Also in a southern accent)* Now calm your pretty little face down, miss. What seems to be the problem here?

Carmen: That big dumb ox, Adreon, says that I have to marry him. But, I don't like him. He's nothing but a mean, nasty tycoon who wants me for my body. *(She flaunts herself in front of Daniel)* You just have to help me.

Daniel: Well, I reckon that it wouldn't be gentlemen-like of me to leave a lady in distress.

Carmen: Oh, thank you! Thank you! *(kisses him)* I have always depended on the kindness of strangers.

Adreon: *(Adreon enters speaking in a southern accent, of course)*
Carmen Volkhaven! What in tarnation are you doing with that there boy?

Carmen: I love him! And you can't do anything about it you big dumb ox. *(to Daniel)* Save me, Daniel. Don't make me marry him. The brute!

Daniel: I'm afraid the pretty lady is with me now. So back off!

Adreon: The heck I will. The lady is coming with me. *(Adreon pulls Carmen away. Daniel moves in the way, but Adreon simply punches him in the stomach, and Daniel falls to his knees, and then to the ground. Carmen kneels over him.)*

Carmen: Oh I'm sorry, Daniel. I'm so sorry, but this is what happens when you dream about people you shouldn't. Good-bye Daniel.

(Fade to blackout as Carmen and Adreon leave)

(Scene 6)

(The cafeteria/restaurant. Laurissa is waiting for Daniel, again. This time she has a deck of cards with her, and she's trying to throw them into a hat. She is finding it difficult to get them in from the table so she moves in closer. It's still pretty difficult, so Laurissa moves in even closer. She inches toward the hat closer and closer, but keeps missing. Finally she moves right up to the hat and drops the cards in. Daniel enters.)

Daniel: Having fun?

Laurissa: Oh Yeah. *(Laurissa look at Daniel in the face)* You didn't get much sleep, did you?

Daniel: Two hours, but my dream was better.

Laurissa: Carmen didn't dump you?

Daniel: No. Adreon one punched me, but Carmen said she'd rather be with me.

Laurissa: Really? What do you think it means?

Daniel: I think... (*Carmen enters SL*) ...that I'm going to ask her out.

Laurissa: You're crazy. Adreon will cream you. You don't have to do this Daniel. It's just a crush.

Daniel: It's just something I have to do. (*Daniel walks toward Carmen rehearsing what he is about to say to Carmen. Daniel is a nervous wreck*) Hello, Carmen.

Carmen; Hey Daniel. How are you?

Daniel: (*Adreon enters SR with a couple of meals to go. He walks up right behind Daniel by the end of Daniel's lines*) I'm fine. I really enjoyed working with you in Socials, and I was wondering.. that is if you weren't too busy doing other things.. and if you don't want to I can totally understand.. You see? I'm going hiking, and I, uh... -would you go out with me?

Carmen: Sure, I'd love to. Oh hey, Adreon, thanks for getting the food for us. Daniel, this is my brother, Adreon.

Adreon: Hi! (*to Carmen*) We'd better go.

Carmen: Okay. Call me, Daniel. (*Carmen and Adreon exit, leaving Daniel in shock.*)

Daniel: She said yes. She said yes, and Adreon never beat me up. Adreon is Carmen's brother. (*It sinks in*) Laurissa, you lied to me. What's going on?

Laurissa: Maybe you're not the only one dreaming about something they can't have. Did you think about that, maybe?

Daniel: *(Pause)* I didn't know. I'm sorry.

Laurissa: Me too.

Daniel: *(Pause)* We're still friends, right? I mean, this isn't going to change anything?

Laurissa: I wouldn't have it any other way.

A Penny For Your Thoughts

a one act play

by Jonathan Crossen

Caution: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that *A Penny For Your Thoughts* by Jonathan Crossen is subject to royalty. It is protected under copyright law. Inquiries regarding performance rights and royalties should be directed to Jonathan Crossen, 20373 43A Avenue, Langley, B.C. V3A 3C6.

Setting:

A park, with a wishing well, a bench and a table. The ground is covered in pennies. Present day.

Characters:

- Well Voice
- Samuel
- Baglady
- Samantha
- Caretaker
- Boy Teenager
- Girl Teenager
- Businessman
- 3 Singers

Scene 1

LIGHTS ARE RAISED TO STAGE, AND HARMONICA MUSIC COMES FROM THE WELL. SAMUEL WALKS IN AND SITS ON A BENCH, BEHIND A TABLE WITH A CHESS GAME ALREADY IN PROGRESS.

Well: Bishop takes knight's pawn. Check. How could you let it get this far? It should never have reached this point.

Samuel: I agree completely. I am at fault. King takes bishop.

Well: Rook to king's bishop five. Check.

Samuel: Well, mostly at fault. Pawn to queen's knight four. *(pause)* I blame the rest on false gods.

Well: It has been my experience that blaming things on God does nothing to remedy the problem. King to knight one.

Samuel: Queen to king seven. Not God. False gods... Idols that aren't what they seem. Role models that aren't there.

Well: *(silence)*

Samuel: All my life, I've tried to find people not just to like, but to look up to. A fascination with people. People I wished to befriend, and have them respect me.

Well: Queen takes pawn. Check. *(pause)* And?

Samuel: But. They are all empty heroes. King to rook one. I put faith in gods that don't exist. They end up being.. mere people.

Well: And that's not good enough for you?

Samuel: No, it's not that.. It's not that a deed goes undone, but that a promise is broken.

Well: It's not a fair promise when they haven't been told.

Samuel: I realize that, but it doesn't change anything. Disappointment sets in until I can forget and trick myself into believing once again.

Well: You need a hero. Someone who can't change.

Samuel: But they do change. Dead people are only where you see them from. Sooner or later, you meet someone who calls your hero a fool or a tyrant. Every action can be interpreted infinitely, and there is no way to make sure you understand who they really were. Dead people are no different than living people, except that living people change on their own, and dead people change depending on who's looking.

Well: So be your own hero.

Samuel: An ego-centric worshipping a fool, and vice-versa.

Well: No it isn't. Have some pride.

Samuel: In what? What have I done to be proud of?

Well: Then do something. What's stopping you? Go do something great. Men must do great deeds before they become great men.

Samuel: But there's nothing left to do. Worse yet, there's no reason to do it. What motives are left? Freedom is no longer an issue, nor is Survival, as both are provided for us. I think we've covered gods and heroes. Love and Hate have been done to death and just can't be taken seriously anymore. Neither Fear nor Lust have ever inspired greatness...

Well: There's always Power.

Samuel: You know I don't have it in me. There's nothing in me. No feeling. No passion. I'm numb.

Well: Queen takes knight's pawn. Checkmate.

Samuel: *(laughing)* Thou art a villain.

Well: *(laughing)* All's fair.

Samuel: All right, what is your levy today?

Well: What are you willing to part with?

Samuel: It was a close game.

Well: And if I remember correctly, last week you robbed me of a hat. *(thinking)* Your jacket, and... that book you were reading.

Samuel: I have not finished it yet.

Well: Perfect.

Samuel: *(Drops jacket & book into well)* A villain and a highwayman.

Well: Get thee hence, knave. Thy homely wife awaits your arrival.

Samuel: *(Gripping heart)* A tongue so sharp cuts deeply. 'Til next we meet.

Lady: *(from off-stage)* 'Til next we meet. I'll sit and weep. Little Bo Peep, has lost her sheep..

(Exit man)

Scene 2

ENTER BAG-LADY WITH SHOPPING CART, SOMEWHAT CONFUSED, HUMMING TO HERSELF.

Lady: Little Bo-Peep has lost her sheep, and doesn't know where to find them.
Leave... *(pause)* Leave... da duh da duh da duh da duh da duhdeladuh
da duh da duh da duhda Leave.. leave them..

Well: Leave them alone and they'll come home, wagging their tails behind them.

Lady: I could have finished it without your help you know.

Well: Tom, Tom the piper's son, He learnt to play when he was young;

Lady: But all the tunes that he could play, Was over the hills and far away.

Well: Over the hills and a great way off, The wind shall blow my top-knot off.

Lady: Georgie Porgie, pudding and pie, Kissed the girls and made them cry.

Well: *(Faster)* When the boys came out to play, Georgie Porgie ran away.

Lady: *(Louder)* Jack Sprat could eat no fat, His wife could eat no lean;

Well: *(Faster and louder)* So between the both of them, they licked the platter clean.

(Both getting progressively faster)

Lady: As I was going to St. Ives

Well: I met a man with seven wives,

Lady: Every wife had seven sacks,

Well: Every sack had seven cats,

Lady: Every cat had seven kits.

Well: Kits, cats, sacks and wives,

Lady: How many were there going to St. Ives?

Well: Two thousand, eight hundred and one, including the man.

Lady: Wrong! I win. You lose.

Well: Johnny, tell her what she's won.

(Sandwich flies from the well, into shopping cart)

Lady: Corned beef on rye. Mmm.. *(Exit lady)* Where's the crust? I got ripped off!
Hello?!

Scene 3

ENTER LITTLE GIRL CARRYING DOLL, WHO WALKS OVER TO THE WELL QUITE CONFIDENTLY AND LOOKS DOWN.

Samantha: Hello?

Well: Hello.

Samantha: *(In one breath)* My name is Samantha Wilson and my older brother Josh says you're God. Are you God?

Well: Do you believe everything your older brother says?

Samantha: Well mostly. He's older and knows a lot and he almost never lies and my mom says we're just supposed to have faith and not question God but that's hard so I thought I'd just come ask you and I was going to come yesterday but my mom said I had to clean my room.

Well: Oh.. I see.. *(pause)*

Samantha: Well, are you?

Well: Am I what?

Samantha: Are you God?

Well: Why would God live down a well?

Samantha: Why wouldn't God live down a well?

Well: How would I know if I was God?

Samantha: I think you would just know.

Well: Are you God?

Samantha: Nope. I'm...

Well: Samantha Wilson?

(Girl gasps, Enter caretaker - sweeps pennies off the stage)

Well: What?

Samantha: You are God!

Well: What makes you say that?

Samantha: *(whispering to doll)* He knew my name!

Well: But...

Samantha: Now that I know you're God, can I ask you one more question?

Well: But I...

Samantha: Please?

Well: Uh... What's the question?

Caretaker: Hey, be careful around that well. It's a long way to the bottom.

Well: Actually, it's not nearly as deep as it looks.

Caretaker: How did you get down there?

Well: That's really none of your business.

Samantha: Mister...

Caretaker: Don't worry, I'll get you out..

Well: Oh, don't mind me.

Caretaker: Oh there's some rope here already.. (*Throws bucket over the edge*) Can you grab on while I pull you up?

Well: No. No, I'm afraid not.

Caretaker: Well, can you tie the rope around your waist?

Well: Not really possible.

Caretaker: Then I'll have to go call the fire department. They'll help bring you up and out of there

Well: There's really not much of me to rescue.

Caretaker: How's that? Are you hurt?

Samantha: He's God!

Caretaker: What?!

Well: No.. I'm just empty. How can I explain? It's like God. God exists for you because of your faith that there is something better than where you are now. Something "greater" than everything else. Love is the same thing. It's faith that you will find something, or preferably, someone that will make you happy. However, somewhere along the way, I lost that faith in love. For sometime now, I have been without it. I'm beginning to doubt that I ever had it. I thought I might find it down here, but I didn't. Once down here, I lost hope. Next to go was compassion, followed by pain, then sadness, next hatred and joy. One by one, all emotions just left me. Fading out like shadows at dusk. Now, just like God, I only exist through you.

Caretaker: So, do you want me to call fire department or not?

Samantha: God doesn't need the fire department, He needs to answer my question!

Caretaker: Jesus Christ, kid, would you cut the guy a break? He's stuck down a well, in case you hadn't noticed.

Samantha: He's God. Who cares where He is?

Well: I'm not God and I'm not stuck! Are you people deaf or just stupid?

Caretaker: Hey buddy, if you're going to be rude about it, you can do without my help.

Well: You sir, were not helping. You were simply exchanging services for expected gratitude. This little girl's God said "Do unto one as you would have him do unto you." But what about what he would have you do unto him. Do his wants and needs not matter? The last thing the world needs is another missionary.

Caretaker: People like you don't deserve my help!

(Exit Caretaker)

Samantha: Can you please answer my question?

Well: I can try.

Samantha: If you're God, you know if there's heaven.

Well: Why do you want to know if there's heaven?

Samantha: I want to know where my dad is.

Well: *(pause)* Your dad?

Samantha: My dad.

Well: Where do you think he is?

Samantha: My mom said he'll stay in my memories forever.

Well: What do you remember about him?

Samantha: Less and less every day. That's why I want to know if there's a heaven.

Well: Because..

Samantha: Because he's only been gone for 2 years and I'm already forgetting. I can't remember the colour of his eyes or how his skin felt when he held my hand. What if in a month I forget the way he laughed or even the sound of his voice? And in a year... two years.. what if I forget him altogether? I don't want to lose him.

Well: Do you... *(pause)* remember love?

Samantha: Of course. He loved me as much as a father could. I guess that means he was a good man and a good father. So he must have gone to heaven, right? Right. Thanks for your help. They were right about you giving good advice.

(Exit Samantha, singing "Magic Penny" as follows)

Scene 4

GROUP OF THREE SINGERS ENTER, CATCHING THE TUNE OF THE GIRL'S SONG AND TRYING TO SING IT.

1st Singers: Love is something if you give it away,
Give it away, give it away

All Singers: Love is something if you give it away,
You'll end up having more.

It's just like a magic penny,
Hold it tight and you won't have any,

Singers & Well: Lend it, spend it and you'll have so many,
They'll roll all over the floor.

(Exit Singers)

Well: Money's dandy and we like to use it
But love is better if you don't refuse it
It's a treasure and you'll never lose it
Unless you lock up your door.

Well: Why do I think that my singing sounds good, when it's just the people playing the music or the voice on the radio that have that special quality? How is it that I think that I can actually do this? Because, when you stop the music, and listen to your own voice, (*chuckle*) you realize that the talent was never yours, and the possibility was never there. Is it good to have that kind of dream? Is it worth that disappointment for that momentary feeling that you can create that magic?

Boy: (*from off-stage*) No!

Scene 5

ENTER BOY AND GIRL IN EARLY TEENS, TALKING BETWEEN THEM AS THEY WALK IN.

Boy: No..

Girl: Why not?

Boy: Because it's mine, and I don't have enough of them to throw them away.

Girl: So wish for more.

Boy: It won't come true.

Girl: What if it does?

Boy: It won't. Things don't work like that.

Girl: Prove it.

(Boy throws penny over his shoulder into the well)

Girl: What'd you wish for?

Boy: I wished for my crummy penny back.

(Penny flies out of well, on to the ground)

Girl: Whoa... my turn! (*Over the shoulder throw penny into the well*) I wish for a million dollars.

Well: Sorry, there simply aren't that many pennies down here.

(Children run to edge of well and slowly look over the edge)

Boy: Hello?

Well: Good day.

Girl: Are you all right?

Well: Fine thanks and you?

B&G: Fine.

Girl: What I meant to say was.. can we help you out?

Well: Literally or figuratively?

Boy: Either?

Well: No.

Girl: You mean you want to stay...

Well: Yes.

Boy: Do you mind if I ask how you...

Well: Not at all. I was following the rainbow.. for the pot of gold.

Girl: But why would...

Well: What don't you understand? The rainbow ended here, the only logical next step was to...

Girl: Jump down a well?

Well: Haven't you ever looked for the pot of gold?

Boy: Well, to a point but..

Well: Nothing ventured nothing gained.

Girl: But you're stuck down a well! What have you gained?

Well: I'm not stuck. In fact, I've got everything I need.. except.. well, sometimes the darkness can be overpowering.

(Boy takes out a lighter, flicks it once or twice, then drops it down well)

Well: Thank you. It is beautiful at times, though, you must understand. I don't despise it and fear it like the rest of the world. It is warm and comforting at the same time as it is enormous, almost endless. This money on the other hand...

(End of rope flies out of well)

Well: Pull that.

Boy: Huh?

Well: Pull that.

Girl: But...

Well: Pull that.

(Boy and Girl pull on rope and continue struggling until they pull up a bucket of pennies which splashes over the stage)

Boy: When you have all this, why don't you leave? Come away with us and wander as we do.

Well: Everyone should look for the treasure. No one should ever have to find it. It is in victory that we are inevitably defeated. When you reach a pinnacle of joy, you know there is only sorrow to come. And when you know the future, there is no point in action.

Girl: So you intend to stay where you are. Until when?

Well: As long as I can. *(silence)* Lower the bucket again.

(The girl lowers down the bucket again, then pulls it up and removes a book)

Girl: *(looking at book)* These pages are blank. This book is empty.

Well: Not empty - Incomplete. A penny for your thoughts dears, and there's more than enough there to fill the book.

Boy: But where will we find the pen?

Scene 6

ENTER BUSINESS MAN, WELL DRESSED WITH BRIEF CASE, UMBRELLA.

(Children approach man for a pen)

Man: Fine, Fine.. just get away from me... *(pulls pen out of shirt pocket and hands to to children, who then exit)*

(Man sits on bench, opens briefcase, pulls out lunch and begins to eat.)

Well: Corned Beef? I haven't had a good corned beef sandwich for years.

(Man looks around suspiciously. Paranoid. Then rubs temples, convinced the voice is in his mind)

Well: Down the well.

Man: *(to audience)* Oh, of course.. the man down the well.. why didn't I guess?
(scared, cracking laughter)

Well: Look, if you aren't going to eat the sandwich...

(Man grabs sandwich and drops it)

Well: ... thanks.

Man: You're welcome.

Man: *(to audience)* Not only do I feed him, we exchange courtesies. My therapist will have a field day with this.

Man: .. uh.. anything else?

Well: *(with food in mouth)* mm.. no thanks, that's plenty. *(swallows)* ahem.. did you make this yourself? It's delicious.

Man: No, my wife. She's an excellent cook, and cuts the crust off for me.

Well: I noticed.

Man: She knows to put on just enough corned beef, and to spread the mustard around so you don't get pockets of too much mustard.

Well: She must love you.

Man: She is my wife.

Well: I had a wife once. One day she got very sick and died, while I was out of town.

Man: Is that right? Well then... hey, do you have the time? I'm late for my appointment.

(Alarm clock flies out of well)

Man: It's stopped. What good is a broken clock?

Well: What good is a working clock to someone living in a well? *(pause)* I can make do without the time, or rather, I am free of it.

Man: Free of it! Time is the scale with which we judge our lives. Without time there is no growth, no gain and no motivation

Well: It is a means of slavery. Another restriction, another lock on the door. It isn't your appointment. It's theirs. If it were your appointment, it would take place whenever you wanted it to.

Man: That's just stupid.

Well: Time equals slavery. You are oppressed.

Man: And you are insane! You're in your own little world.

Well: Exactly, my own world. You're living in someone else's world. You think that in time, you'll reach prosperity. You think that if you keep trudging along, eventually you will find happiness. Well, you're wrong. Eventually, you'll learn to push others down, and climb on their backs to get higher. And the closest you'll get to happiness will be the content feeling of superiority. I know. I've been there.

Man: You've been where? You're living in a well for Godsakes!

Well: Ever been to Bay Street, in Toronto? I worked and lived in a third floor office in the Wrotham-Collins building for 28 years of my life. During my time there, I got 13 promotions, laid off more than 8000 people, and watched 18 co-workers have nervous break-downs. I spent so much time overseas for that corporation that I didn't see my own daughter grow up. I was in Japan when she said her first word, in Austria when she graduated from Wilfred-Laurier. I was at a conference in New York when she called to tell me her mother had died, but the secretary told her to call back later because I was busy in a meeting. You're thinking, "I'm not like that and it won't happen to me.. just a little more money, and I'm out. A little longer, and I'll retire." Too late. You're already dead. You died the day you first said "No use trying to fight it. That's just the way things are."

Man: That's not true. I'm just not like that. It won't happen to me. Just a little more money, and I'm out. A little longer, and I can retire.

Well: In a world with people like you, no one needs possessions.

(Enter Samuel, watching and listening from a distance)

Man: I have chosen my life.

Well: You have made one choice, the only choice you have ever allowed yourself to make. You have chosen to continue as you are. Breathing, eating, breeding, consuming. To continue.. always.

Man: Are you done?

Well: Can one really finish anything?

Man: Then, are you satisfied?

Well: Shall I repeat myself?

Man: No!

(Exit man)

Scene 7

HAVING SEEN WHAT HAS OCCURRED, SAMUEL SLOWLY TAKES A SEAT WITH A SMALL SMILE ON HIS FACE.

Samuel: So are you ready to leave that hole now?

Well: I'm enjoying myself.

Samuel: You may be a fool, but you aren't fooling anyone. Not even yourself.

Well: Leave me alone.

Samuel: Quit pretending. You cannot be the sound of one hand clapping.

Well: I regret nothing!

Samuel: Liar.

Well: Nothing!

Samuel: Like I said before...

Well: I just wish that we had had a chance to talk before they left. A chance to be honest. I'm so caught up in these games I play, these stories I tell myself that I can't remember the truth.

Samuel: We both know the truth.

Well: I can try to forget, can't I?

Samuel: Are you asking for my permission? You know my position here.

Well: What is your position here?

Samuel: That we can't go back.

Well: But don't you want to? Don't you long for those days? When love and magic were tangible.. even palpable? Like you could reach out and grab them?

Samuel: No, it was never like that.

Well: It was, I swear it was.

Samuel: You are drunk on nostalgia.

Well: Who needs alcohol when you've got loneliness and heartbreak?

Samuel: Do you really mean that?

Well: I wish I did. Maybe I do.. I can't tell anymore. I know how cold and dark the nights get. I know I have nothing to keep me company but illusive memories. I know that, given the choice, I would prefer never to be alone again. But they are all cowards. Afraid of me or what they believe me to be. They assume there is more to me that what is before their eyes. Living in a hole does not give one depth. I am so lost when things could be so simple.

(pause)

Samuel: It's your move.

Well: I don't want to play anymore.

Samuel: Then, I'm afraid I can't help you.

Well: Then go if you can't be bothered.

Samuel: Adieu.

Well: Adieu.

(Exit Samuel, slow fade of lights begins. A harmonica plays from below, after a while harmonica stops, followed by a period of silence. A lighter is flicked on inside well. Suddenly a penny flies out of well and bounces around on stage. Lighter from inside well continues to glow for a few moments before complete black, lighter goes out)

The End.

That Day At The Park

a one act play

by Nellie Mclean

Caution: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that *That Day At The Park* by Nellie Mclean is subject to royalty. It is protected under copyright law. Inquiries regarding performance rights and royalties should be directed to Nellie Mclean, 5575 Kitsuksis, Port Alberni, B.C. V9Y 8H9.

Setting: In a psychiatrist's office. Pretty nondescript.
Present day.

Characters: Stanley Redford, age fourteen, talking about an ordeal that he has been through. He is an insecure, irregular boy that is struggling with what has happened.

Dr. Daymond, is a professional, and also very compassionate. Able to communicate and gather important information from Stanley.

(Dr. Daymond welcomes Stanley into the office.)

Dr: Hello Stanley. . .(checks over some notes) ahhh, Stanley Redford, I believe. (smiling) Would you like to sit on the couch, Stanley?(gestures over to it)

S: (walks slowly in) Call me Stan.

D: Alright, Stan. Well, we need to talk about some things, don't we.

S: I guess so.

D: So, Stan, how are you today?

S: Tired.

D: Why are you tired?

S: I don't sleep well anymore.

D: Hmm... yes, your father told about your bad experience. Would you like to tell me some more?

S: (after quite some time he says painfully) She was a good kid.

D: Tell me about her.

S: I...I can't, I don't want to.

D: Maybe you should, Stan, maybe it will help you, and also help me better understand you.

S:(speaks slowly) I used to look after her a lot. I took her to the park a lot. Me and Stephe were friends.

D: Yes, that's what her mother said. Stephe always liked to go to the park with you.

S: She paid well too, five bucks an hour, but I said I'd do it for free. It wasn't work for me.(smiling)

D: Remember taking her to the park that last time, Stan?(cautiously asks this question)

S: It was a good day to go. I was going to look after her all day. It was supposed to be fun day. It started out to be good.(long pause)

D: Yes, Stan, it did. Last Sunday was a beautiful day. Stan, why did it turn out bad?

S:(reminiscing, a smile on his face)I pushed her on the swings. She kept screaming, higher higher. I told her I would push her high enough to touch the sun. She said it would be burn her toes. She called me a silly billy. She has such a wonderful laugh.

D:(listening carefully)Stan, you said she has such a wonderful laugh, what do you mean?

S: Why, Doctor, if you met her you would agree. She calls me Stany, isn't that cute?

D: Stan, did you like her very much?

S: Of course, I like her, and she likes me. She does, you know.(getting angry) What do you know, you were never there.

D: No, I wasn't.

S: No one was there but me and her. . . at first.

D: At first, Stan, what do you mean at first?

S: Stephie likes me, I know it. We are good friends, very good friends. We have a connection, Doctor, you wouldn't understand. We are bonded. We won't ever be apart for long, you know.

D: How were you similar to Stephie?

S: Me and her only have one parent. I never knew my mom, she never knew her dad. We talked about it, you know. We couldn't talk about it to anyone else, no one else cares.

D: Did you have a friend at school you could talk to? (no answer) Stan, could you talk to your friends at school or perhaps to your teacher?

S: I said no one else cares, Doctor.

D: I think your father cares.

S: (glaring) Well, I don't care about him.

D: You seem angry, Stan.

S: No one has ever cared about me so why should I start caring about them? Besides, they waste my time.

D: But Stephie didn't, did she.

S: Of course not, we are good for each other.

D: Stan, you are acting as though Stephie is alive, why?

S: (his face goes white) She is, she must be. She is just a little girl, she wouldn't be dead. What are you saying?

D: I think you might know. Stan, what happened at the park, will you tell me?

S: I want you to know, Doctor, that you are wrong, you are very wrong. Someone was there.

D: Who, Stanley, who was there?

S: My name is Stan(yelling), Stan, only father calls me Stanley. (disgusted)

D: I'm sorry, my mistake. (pause) Why does it bother you that your father calls you that, Stan?

S: (angry) He has no. . . he treats me with no respect. He says I'm little, I'm stupid, I'm an oddball. I don't care about him though, or what he says. And you, Doctor, you keep poking your nose in here. You are not involved. You don't know me, you don't know anything about me.(starts to sob)

D: Would you help me, Stan, tell me about yourself. Tell me why you are so sad.

S: I'm not sad, I'm not a baby. You don't call me a baby ever! (jumps up)

D: (firmly) Sit down please, Stan. I want you to calm down.

S: I'm not a baby. I'm not a baby. And she's not either, you know. She and me talked almost like grown-ups. We are friends.

D: Yes, Stan, I know you were friends. Were friends, Stan, were friends, do you understand?

S: That day at the park was no good, no good at all. I hate everything about that day.

D: Are you ready to tell me, Stan?

S: (takes a deep breath)I have a fort in the forest by the park. Stephie and me play in it. I pretended I was her dad, because she never had one. She wanted to know what it was like. I was a good father, Doctor, I will be a good father. I'll have lots of kids. I'll be a good father.

D: Yes, Stan, I'm sure you would make a good father. Did you play her father that day?

S: My father isn't a good father, ya know. He failed me as a father. He failed my mother too, or she would be here, she wouldn't have left me.

D: She never left you, Stan, she left your dad. She didn't want to leave you, Stan, you were just a baby.

S: I was just a little baby.

D: Yes, you were, Stan, an innocent, little baby.

S: I wish she was her, Doctor. I wouldn't be here then, you know, I'd be in her arms. I wouldn't be here. (tensely, looking around the room)

D: Do you want to talk about your mother?

S: How could I, Doctor, I know nothing about her. Father never tells me anything.

D: What does he say if you ask?

S: Shut up!

D: Is that what he says.

S: No, you shut up, you're always in my face. You're always prodding me, poking me. Trying to find my weak spot. And then maybe you can fix me up perfect, huh? Another success story for you. Some more money in your pocket, well, not from me.

D: Stan, I'm trying to help you. I want to help you better understand yourself. We have some unanswered questions, don't we.

S: I'm not listening to you. I don't care.(closes his eyes)

D: You don't care about alot of things, do you Stan. Maybe only Stephanie.

S: (sits up quickly) Don't say Stephanie, don't say her name.

D: Why not, Stan?

S: She wouldn't like you. Wouldn't like you calling her that. She'd only answer to Stephanie around you.

D: Was Stephanie your special name for her? (silence) Stan, was Stephanie your special name for her?

S: (very quietly) Yes, but she started it, she called me Stany and so I called her Stephanie. But I won't anymore. Not ever again.

D: Why never again, Stan, is it because she is dead?

S: She shouldn't be, Doctor, she should be with me. Me and her should be at my fort. And there would be no one else around. Just me and her.

D: Just you and her, you liked it best like that, didn't you, why?

S: People don't accept me, but Stephanie did. She made me happy, and I made her happy.

D: You didn't answer the question, Stan, why did you like it best when you were alone with her?

S: There was no one watching. No one judging. People thought it was strange that me and Stephanie were friends. I wasn't just her babysitter, you know, we were friends.

D: Yes, Stan, I know. Why did that day at the park turn out so bad?

S: We were at my fort.

D: Did you pretend to be her father?

S: (turns away completely, is barely audible)No.

D: I can't hear you, Stan.

S: I said no, no I was not her father that time.(He buries his head into the couch)

D: Stan, Stan.(touches him lightly)

S: (bolts up)Don't you touch me, don't you dare lay a hand on me.

D: I'm sorry, I won't again. Stan, if you did not play her father, what game did you play?

S: The boys at my school are fuckheads. I hate them. I wouldn't care if they died, it would be a good thing. (full of rage)

D: Yes, your father said you had some problems at school.

S: They said I was a queer, and then they say I'm a baby raper. Make up your minds, you stupid jerk offs. They are, Doctor, you should see them in the locker room, they shower together, they check to see who has the biggest you know, and they say I'm weird.(almost spitting these last words out) They say I'm a pedophile. Me and Stephie were friends, we were friends.(close to tears)

D: Do you miss her very much?

S: I miss her so much I can't sleep.

D: Stan, why is Stephanie no longer with us? What happened when you were at your fort?

S: She started crying and screaming. She tried to run away.

D: Why did she, Stan, what happened?

S: There was someone there. They scared her. They must have, and they hurt her, Doctor,so much.(shaking his head, moving in his seat)

D: Did you see this person?

S: She had beautiful hair, it was so curly and you know how some people say their hair is almost gold in color, well, her hair made theirs look like piss.

D: Why do you mention her hair now, Stan?

S: I . . . I saw a rock, and it was covered with her hair but it wasn't gold anymore, it was red. (his eyes start to water)The rock was covered with her blood and hair. That person must of. . . (starts sobbing)

D: Stan, where were you, while she was getting hit by that rock?

S: (sobbing long racking sobs) My father doesn't love me. I have no one now. Do you understand? Do you care?

D: I care,Stan, I care very much. Please help me understand. I want to help you.

S: Help me find him, Doctor, we have to find him, he took away my Stephanie. He took away the only thing I loved.

D: Why did you have blood on your hands, Stan, why were your fingerprints on the rock?

S: You don't think I did it, Doctor, not you. It wasn't me. I would never hurt her. I couldn't.

D: Did you pretend to be her boyfriend, Stan?

S: (sobbing even harder)Yes. . . she wanted to though. It wasn't just me, not just my idea. She said it would be fun.

D: Stan, Stephanie was a six year old girl, do you think she knew what you meant?

S: I'm not. . . a baby raper. I played her father. I played the father she wanted so much.

D: Except that one time, isn't that right, Stan, just that once. She told you to stop, didn't she.

S: Don't talk to me anymore, you assume, you say what is easiest for you. It was some crazy man, he was a mad man. It wasn't me.

D: Did you feel scared that day,Stan, did you feel scared she would run away and tell?

S: You shut up, you shut up right now. She was my friend, my best friend. We were strong together. We were all we needed.

D: What did this man look like?

S: You won't believe me anyway. (lays back on the couch)I can feel presence here, she won't ever be far from me. Like I said, we won't be far apart for long.(sounds distant)

D: Stan, why did you keep hitting her?

S: Oh, Doctor (sadly) I saw her eyes. They weren't innocent anymore. I . . . I should never have pretended to be her boyfriend.

D: No, you shouldn't have, Stan, why did you?

S: She was so beautiful. . . I'm not like those boys said. They know nothing.

D: They taunted you a lot, didn't they. They said things, made you think things.

S: If only she didn't cry so much. She shouldn't have tried to run.

D: You got scared, and you panicked, is that right, Stan?

S: Why would she be so mad. . . so sad? She made me mad. I don't get mad, but she made me so mad.

D: You totally exploded, didn't you. How much do you remember about what happened next?

S: You don't need to know. (turns away)

D: Please tell me.

S: I want her, I want Stephanie to come back. She has to, I need her so much. (frantic)

D: She can never come back, Stan, she is gone now.

S: Why, Doctor, why? Where is she? (buries his head in his face) Who would do such a thing?

D: Stan, I think you would.

S: How dare you, you're a fucking idiot. You know nothing. You, my father, those faggot boys, you all know nothing. (yelling)

D: You are regressing, Stan, you have to work through this.

S: I miss her. (starts sobbing) Oh God, I miss her. She was my best friend, I need her. And then some bastard took her away. He killed her. She's dead, she's dead (he says this over and over)

D: Stan, Stan, calm down, listen to me, you must work through this. You have to face it. I will help you, just as I have always promised.

S: That day was bad.

D: Yes, it was, Stan, very bad.

S: She didn't deserve what she got.

D: I know, it should never have happened.

S: Why did it happen, Doctor?

D: Why don't you tell me, Stan.

S: It's so hard.(long pause)

D: Please continue, Stan.

S:(looks up at the clock hanging on the wall)My time is almost up.

D: They can wait. Stan, tell me what happened after she tried to run away.

S: I thought of my mother.(looking blankly)

D: Why?

S: She would hate me if she knew what I did. I have lost her forever now. I have lost Stephe, too. Everything is gone.(begins to cry again)

D: You got angry at Stephanie because you felt this destroyed any love your mother may have had for you, is that right?

S: (Speaking through his sobs)The rock was right there, I tripped on it before, and I remembered it. I picked it up and I made her stop her screaming. I made everything but the wind go silent. Yes, I was angry, Doctor, I was so angry.

D: Are you ready to answer my question, Stan?

S: Yes.

D: Did you kill Stephanie Wilson?

S:(numbly)Yes.

THE END

The Two Step

a one act play

by Reid Morgan

Caution: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that *The Two Step* by Reid Morgan is subject to royalty. It is protected under copyright law. Inquiries regarding performance rights and royalties should be directed to Reid Morgan, 2472 Tolmie Avenue, Coquitlam, B.C. V3K 3E7.

The Two Step

by Dic Anogrrm (Reid Morgan)

Act I scene i

Two houses, one stage right and one stage left each has it's own fence separating it from the other house. This makes an double fence with a space in between the two fences. There is a perch between the two fences on which a slightly insane individual will sit. The house on stage left is neat and tidy. The other house is a bit messy. It's fence is half painted red. A slightly messy person resides in the messy house and a slightly clean one in the clean house. Bliss enters.
Blue spot on.

Bliss: My name is Bliss, I am a neighbor. We shall begin at the beginning, go on until the end, then stop.

Spot off. Enter others. Bliss to perch. Morty to clean house, Nephridia to dirty house.

Morty: My, what a lovely piece of fruit you are. *(talking to an orange)*

Lights up.

Morty: I just have a few chores to do my dear, then I will be home to snack deliciously upon you. Yes, yes, you will be a nice little treat won't you?

Morty gathers up his suitcase and puts on his suit jacket, and puts down the orange.

Morty: And how are you today Bliss? Feeling fine? Any news or pressing business for you today, I suppose not.

Bliss: Your ears are small, my ears are small. Small ears are a sign of ferocity in elephants. I am not an elephant...

Morty: Goodbye.

Morty exits stage right sneaking a passing glance at the sleeping woman. Nephridia wakes, washes her face and combs her hair. She eyes her half painted fence.

Nephridia: Oh bother, I suppose I can't ignore you much longer.

She picks up an already opened can of red paint and a knife that has been previously used as a brush.

Nephridia: Maybe I'll start work at lunch. *Puts down paint can.*

Nephridia: Have a wonderful day, Bliss. Don't work too hard. After all, we don't want a major ruckus do we?

Bliss: I run to one side, then to the other. Sometimes, when it hits me, I eat it all. I am much too full, too much inside me.

Soon Nephridia grows tired. She spies the orange hungrily. Nephridia climbs over the fences and approaches the orange.

Nephridia: He really won't mind half will he?

Nephridia stabs the orange right in the center and tries to cut it. To her horror, the knife is stuck and it will not cut the orange. She leaves the orange and runs back to house, leaping the fences. Morty returns.

Morty: I'm back my yummy piece of oh dear god! What's going on here? Is this some kind of cruel prank? No, this is much more than that, this is obviously some kind of warning to my personal being. You there, orange you symbolize me, and you, knife covered in blood, you are my murderous assailant. All of this is a symbolic representation of an attempt on my life! Oh my, this is terrible. Who in the world would possibly want to see me dead?

Bliss: I am an astronaut, and from my astronomical position I can see a silly tart, Jam I believe.

Morty: Go away you babbling invalid. I don't have time to-did you see who desecrated my orange?

Bliss: Those communist bastards from the filthy planet Pluto I tell you. They....

Morty: Filthy huh? So, it seems my would be attacker is the poor ignorant neighbor, Nephridia! Thank you terribly Bliss your brilliant powers of observation have once again justified your pseudo existence. Nephridia, the weirdest of the wyrd sisters is paled by the diseased Nephridia. I will kill her! I will rip her limb from limb. I will impale her from tip to toe and she will know the pain of my orange.

Bliss: Impale, impale, impale. Split the heart in two! She will die! Split the heart and they die! For the orange kill for the orange. My toe hurts, it is swollen to the size of an orange...

Morty: Kill for an orange? What was I thinking. This is simply a small misunderstanding of course. Nobody could really want to kill me. My goodness, how close I came to disaster with that previous outburst, it shall not happen again. *(Thrusts orange toward Bliss who takes it)* I will be a human being not some irrational violent savage. It must be a misunderstanding, it better be.

Both characters sit and Bliss contemplates them. The orange is in the possession of Bliss.

Act I scene ii

Morty awakes, washes face and combs hair all the time thinking very hard about the trouble with Nephridia and her possible attack on his life. He puts on his jacket, picks up his suitcase and leaves to work.

Morty: And how are you today Bliss? Feeling fine? Any news or pressing business for you today, I suppose not.

Bliss: Your head is all out of proportion. Too big and your ears are shrinking again. Again, yesterday I went shopping. Shopping is a dangerous activity in my house of...

Morty: Goodbye.

Nephridia wakes fixes self up a bit, all the time thinking very hard about ways to convince Morty that the orange was not a threat, simply an accident.

Nephridia: Have a wonderful day, Bliss. Don't work too hard. After all, we don't want a major ruckus do we?

Bliss: It's all very difficult to find the right path when your not asking people, the right one is hard. I like words, they're simple, sweet and send semaphore, succulent, secrets, straightforward...

Nephridia: A present! Oh yes, yes, yes, that would work wonders to clear this nasty air, I think. Well what should it be? *She rummages through her belongings tossing garbage aside, and eventually finds a small tin. Peanuts!!* Of course, they aren't to forward, they aren't threatening and they are quite practical, I suppose.

She climbs the fences for a second time and approaches the house. Nephridia spies one of Morty's belongings and takes it. She opens the tin onto the table and leaves. The break in is obvious due to Nephridia's knocking over and disturbing of various objects. Enter Morty. Morty spies the garbage in front of Nephridia's and takes a piece. He sees his house.

Morty: ...

He becomes more and more distraught over the break in with each step. Not paying much attention, he sits to try to recover and absentmindedly begins to eat the peanuts. He quickly has a massive allergic reaction to the peanuts and must inject himself with a needle. Once he has recovered he discovers the identity of the culprit.

Morty: Nephridia, would you please come here.

Nephridia approaches to the edge of her fence

Morty: Why have you done this?

Nephridia: I felt it was the best way to deal with the problem.

Morty: *(Aside)* Only a filthy fool of minimal brains would admit to such an act-

Nephridia: Excuse me, what was that you just said?

Morty: That only an IDIOT would be so stupid as to not think of allergies when giving a friendly gift.

Nephridia: That, sir, is not what I heard. I heard you call me a fool, a fool and now and idiot. This is unacceptable, I will not put up with it.

Morty: Perhaps next time I will write it down to make sure that the illiterate unsanitary bits of fluff do not take offense.

Nephridia: Morty, you have such a wonderfully clean life, it fits perfectly with space between your ears.

Both return home and remember their stolen objects. They hold the objects and look at them. Both Nephridia and Morty apologize and make up with the object; finally they put the object down, outside their houses. They go to their windows in hopes that they may watch the other for a moment. When they see that they have both looked towards one another they scowl and sit. Light on Bliss.

Act I scene iii

Morty wakes and washes his face, behind ears and in ears vigorously. Nephridia wakes and cleans herself not quite as well as before. She neglects her neck and doesn't pay enough attention to her forehead, as well as the places mentioned earlier. Morty and Nephridia both leave their houses and walk towards their respective exits.

Morty: And how are you today Bliss? Feeling fine? Any news or pressing business for you today, I suppose not. Goodbye.

Nephridia: Have a wonderful day, Bliss. Don't work too hard. After all, we don't want a major ruckus do we?

Bliss: I have somethi-

Morty: Enough, Bliss.

Nephridia: Be quiet

They meet in the middle and when they try to side step one another, they step to the same side, this happens a few times before Nephridia finally grabs Morty and moves him to one side. Morty immediately discards his jacket and gets another from his suitcase. They exit.

Bliss: I want to be stronger. I want to be smarter. I want to be better.(continuous repeat)

Both enter and go to each other's houses. They see one another, rush home and sit in rocking chairs facing one another. Each is waiting for the other to speak first. She begins to twist the knife in the orange. During this time Bliss' repetition has grown in volume and intensity. This continues until the tension has reached a critical point.

Bliss: I want to be stronger. I want to be smarter. I want to be better. Than you.

At this time Bliss hurls the massacred orange and knife against the ground like the hammer of a gun setting off a bullet. Both people are yelling at the same time.

Morty: Twice, two times, one, two! First with the knife you desecrated my orange, then with the peanuts you tried to kill me! Damn you, you are a work of the devil! You torture the people of this planet with your dirt and your ugly face! You have been put here to give me an ulcer haven't you. I hate you, I hate your house and how it's sickening stench wafts over to my property and eventually stinks up my whole house. I hate your homely appearance, you make your half painted dilapidated jar of feces you call home look like a palace. You pick your nose and roll it between your thumb and fore finger. You snore and drool in your sleep and you eat with your fingers, never mind the fact that you never wash your hands. Yes I probably would kill you! Ha! you call that a life what a sad excuse and another thing your trash blocks my sunlight in the afternoon and you, you and your mice, lice and cockroaches breathe my air, and still you walk about like you own the world. You can't speak properly anyway. Speaking requires brains.

Nephridia: Why are you so angry with me! This entire business has been a simple misunderstanding. I gave you that present in a desperate attempt for friendship. I don't know why I could possibly have desired your companionship. Why would I want a fascist, unbending, pretentious and shallow person like you. Go clean your house some more you sick twisted defect. It is, of course, the only thing that hasn't run from you because you tried to bleach it. You just can't handle something that threatens to shatter your pristine little world of clean. You lose it when you can't control everything, don't you. What would you do if I spat on your property, huh? Would you kill me? Is the perfection of your property worth more than a life. *(she does or does not spit)* You just think you're better than me don't you, with your nice little house and your perfect bed.

God must have rolled you up in a charm when he made you because... look, look at this, because of you I can't even speak properly!

Nephridia: If anyone deserves death, it's you!

Morty: I don't deserve death because I'd kill you first!

Nephridia: So! Are you going to kill me now?

Morty: I am seriously considering it.

Nephridia: Fantastic, at least we're on the same level!

Both storm back into their houses and retrieve the objects of their love and threaten to break them. Neither has the heart to destroy the hope, so they put the objects back.

Act I scene iv

Morty awakes and washes even more than before. He gets ready to leave. While heading off for the day he stops to talk at Bliss.

Morty: Nephridia, she's done it again. Another attempt on my being! She is becoming more and more bold in her attacks... and devious, oh how devious she is with her twisted little plots. Well, what should I do? What can I do Bliss, she's a mistress of a savage simple race.

Bliss: ...My two parents were dead like frogs. Frogs are killer, killer, killer. First you put in a cup of flower, two eggs and...

Morty: Yes I think it necessary as well.

Exit Morty. Nephridia wakes and pays only the slightest bit of attention to her appearance.

Nephridia: This is insane, this business. I tell you, that pretentious immaculate bastard won't get the best of me! I would rather have green toad eyes stuck up my nose than allow Morty to hate me without reason. Well, are you with me?

Bliss: I don't know what your talking about, how dare you stroll in here like a bat out of Hell and dance a jig. Hell is for those who murder, butcher, assassinate, kill, dismember! Dismember, you are out of the club I don't want...

Nephridia: I agree with you whole heartedly, though I don't see how you came up with such a thought, or a thought. Ahh, it's of no matter, Morty must die, correct?

Nephridia returns to her house and finds a club like weapon which may be within the house or part of it. Morty returns with a stiletto.

Act I scene v

Morty rises and washes with vicious precision. Nephridia wakes and pays no attention to her appearance or hygiene whatever. Both get ready to leave their houses. The two cross center stage, once past each other they simultaneously draw their concealed weapons.

Morty: How dare you try to kill me.

Nephridia: Me, look at yourself, you too have a weapon, and it looks to be much more deadly than anything I've got.

Morty: Oh, I am so shocked! The stupid twit has uttered more than three words at a time. My goodness what a glorious day, words have spewed forth from the gigantic pile of-

Nephridia: Shut up. I have had just about enough of your filth from that gutter of a mouth of yours.

Morty: FILTH! I am not filthy. I am clean. I wash every morning. I am not you.

Nephridia: You are disgustingly filthy. Sure, I see you every morning scrubbing your teeth, first the right side, then left and finally the front, but that sort of thing only allows for the appearance of clean.

Morty: I am clean right down to the core. That which is stained in one place is stained throughout!

Nephridia: I will not have such a beast insulting my person.

Morty: Person, HA!

Nephridia: This person is about to walk over there and kick you very, very hard! *Throws down weapon.*

Morty: Fortunately, you are too slow to ever understand, much less properly perform the concept of one foot in front of the other. *Throws down weapon.*

Nephridia: I am going to kill you.

Morty: You, kill me! After every single one of your dull-witted attempts to end my life, I have been courteous. Beyond courteous, I have been understanding that someone with

only half a brain could possibly lack the ability to know that murder was wrong. You are going to kill me after I have loved you for all this time.

Nephridia: You... love me?

Morty: I suppose, I might.

Nephridia: I, think I love you too.

Morty: Why do you love me?

Nephridia: I have always admired your ability to be clean.

Morty: I have been taken by your charming, relaxed nature.

Morty tries to touch Nephridia, she flinches, it disintegrates.

Morty: You are simply jealous because you live in lowly muck, next to my divine sanity.

Nephridia: You are a vile strutting lump of grime that tries desperately cover it's repulsive nature.

Morty and Nephridia run into their houses and retrieve the objects of their love. They return to the place of the fight and smash the objects in front of each other. In doing so they both die. Bliss climbs down from the perch. Blue spot on.

Bliss: Pity.

Spot off. Bliss exits through audience.

Whale Song

A One Act Play

by Amy Bessflug

Characters

Suzanne
Patrick
Guy
Lila
Evanna

Dancers: The ocean. Market people.

Caution: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that *Whale Song* by Amy Bessflug is subject to royalty. It is protected under copyright law. Inquiries regarding performance rights and royalties should be directed to Amy Bessflug, Box 81, Edgewater, B.C. V0A 1E0. 250-347-9210(Phone) 250-347-6595(Fax). The fee for a single production of this play will be \$10.00.

Act one
Scene one

*A desert tree, beach rubble, the ocean.
There are quiet sounds of waves and wind.*

Enter Lila, stage right.

Lila Here is a tale about the deep. It rises from the ocean and is told through the sounds the whales make when they breathe through their blow holes. It is about the children who played on the beach beside them as they rubbed their crusted barnacle skin on the sand. It is about the children who went away to grow up then came back, searching for their memories. I am Lila. I used to lay with Suzane and her brother in the sand of Baja California. We didn't know much about the whales then. But when they rose above the surface and blinked their eyes at our games, we were somehow drawn to them. Our own eyes were pulled after them as they bent their flukes against the hot sky, then sounded silently into the quivering rays of the deep. The mystery of their under water life fascinated Suzane the most. She would sleep on the beach through the cold desert nights and mimic their calls, blowing gently through her curled tongue. She absorbed their peace. Clung to their sad bodies as they soared through a dark slab of blue water. To many, her life seemed a tragedy. To those who loved her, and saw as she did, it was an incredible event. One of a human who tried too hard to become a part of the sea. (*She exits stage left*)

Enter Suzane (She wanders towards the tree then sits down and begins to write.) Well Patrick (*Pause*) I'm here. (*Pause*) Wandering the beaches and waiting for the migratory season. They gave me a grant. I am to study the perceptions of Whales. How they see through their watery world. We know about the evolution of their eye. A retina that evolved to give them vision in the black parts of the sea. But how do they perceive? What instincts leave a mother howling, long into the night, for a lost calf. I've heard it before, Patrick. There is mourning in the deep. (*Pause*) While waiting for them to come I sit down here under a flat leafed tree and paint the sea. Leave spaces to fill in with flukes. (*Pause*) You should come visit me Patrick. I'll be here all winter.

Enter Patrick You should come visit me Patrick, I'll be here all winter. (*Long Pause*)

Enter Guy stage left.

Guy I got your post card Sue. Don't you love the desert? (*Pause*) There is an article in a National Geographic I picked up in the laundromat downstairs. Ten pages of bloody fish mixed with hunks of shriveling coral, stiff turtles, sea horses, and star fish. The men on the boats take a lunch break after hauling in the nets. By the time they throw the excess bodies back, they are stained by the rusty deck and half rotted under the noon day sun. (*Pause*) Remember the time we came upon the dolphin wrapped in a net. It was

screaming and bleeding through the nylon. By the time the tide came back in and was strong enough to take it out, its body had become stiff and sticky. We poured water over it for hours. Its gazed at us, eyes all cloudy like those of a frozen fish. You put your small ten year old hand over it's right eye and said, "Guy, I want to be a dolphin."*(Long Pause)* Please be careful Suzane.

*All characters exit.
Lights fade to black.*

Enter Patrick, stage right.

Patrick (Shouting) Suzane! Where are you?*(Long silence)* It is still beautiful here. *(He picks up a piece of driftwood.)* A whale.

Enter Suzane stage left.

Suzane Patrick. Did you see them?

Patrick (Turns surprised toward her) Suzane!*(He moves towards her)* See what?

Suzane The Whales! They are out on the Horizon.*(Pause)* Listen...They are coming closer. Yesterday they came right to this spot. They rubbed their barnacles on the sand until late.*(Pause)* They are wearing away the beach.

Patrick Is that the tree where you wrote me from?

Suzane (She keeps her eyes out at sea.) Yes.

Patrick I imagined you there. Hung your letters from my window sill. Your head was shadowed by the dancing leaves.*(Pause)* A worry stone of skin smoothed by ocean.

Suzane (Frustrated) Patrick. Do you listen to whales?*(Silence)*

Patrick Whales don't speak to me Sue.

Suzane If you listen they will speak.*(Silence)* There is a new calf in this pod. She's small. Isn't growing at usual rates. Down there Patrick... there is a pipe...the sludge that washes in is smothering their food sources. We're doing it and we can't even..

Patrick (Interrupting) It's not your fault Sue.

Suzane The tide is changing. They will be coming in to filter the sand.*(Silence)* Patrick?

Patrick (Long silence, quietly) What?

Suzane (Silence) Nothing...(Pause) I'm going out there to watch them. (She exits stage right.)

Patrick (Writing) Dear Lila.(Pause) Now I am under the tree. As I watch the sun reflect on Suzane's bare back, the leaves sprinkle shadows over my forehead. Suzane hasn't found the whales yet and is out past the point playing in the crashing swell.(Reflective) You should come down. We would be children again.(Pause) Suzane slept by the water last night. She is trying to find some patterns in their hollow vocalizations. Earlier this morning a Hump Back came ten feet from shore and pushed its head above the water. They are magnificent Lila(Pause) I am beginning to understand why Suzane spends her days at sea. She has told me that the whales are starting to open the curtain to their world. She gets peaks in but is stuck to the surface. Her lungs aren't big enough, she says.(Softly) Her body has become limp in the noonday sun.

Patrick looks for Suzane.

Patrick (Quietly) Suzane?(He paces along the water's edge.) Suzane!

Enter Lila, stage right. She stands at the waters edge and watches Patrick. Dancers enter. They move like water, pulling blue cloth and moving around Patrick as he looks for Suzane.

Patrick (Frantically)Suzane!

Lila (Intensely) He spoke to her, wanting to see her worn sandpaper body at the point. Wanting to copy the shape of her bobbing head on the bark.

Enter Suzane. The dancers collide with her and tangle their bodies with hers between the pieces of cloth. Loud music.

Patrick (Screaming) Suzane. Answer me. Please...

Lila He broke through the iron of the sun looking for her that day.

Patrick Suzane

Lila He ran towards the point, squeezing the balls of his feet harder and harder over the mud flats. He ran through the tidal line, not stopping to pick the thorns that ground into the webbing between his toes.

The dancers and Suzane fall into a heap. When they exit Suzane is covered in the blue cloth and the dancers rub against her, pushing and pulling her off the stage.

Patrick Suzane... Where are you?

Lila His eyes, pinned against the wind became dry. He didn't blink. Afraid that a shut lid might block out her green flash. Hoping her body would appear somewhere, far on the horizon as a dolphin who has lost her pod, he searched under the swollen moon.

Patrick *Suzane (He falls to his knees now and cries to the sky.)*

Lila Suzane did not resurface. *(Speaking to Patrick in a hard tone.)* She's gone Patrick. Underwater swimming with the whales.

Patrick *(Stands up and throws his head back and forth as he yells.)* I'm listening for you Suzane. I can hear the whales. Fuck you Sue! Whales can't sing!

Lila He stayed beside the point until darkness laid a cool shawl over his sun slashed back. He smelled the salt drying on his palm and remembered Suzane's chin grinding those salt crystals to powder. The moon sprayed torn pieces of light over the pulsing surf. Against the sharp stillness of a barnacle coated rock was another darkness. It moved as a woman bending . Arched back to a shiny obsidian floor. The narrow indentation of a dancer sloshing in currents.

Patrick *moves to the tree.*

Lila Patrick slept under Suzane's tree until the whales left the beach to take their young north. During the day he picked its flat leaves and rested the shades of green over her molting footprints. *(She sits in darkness at the corner of the stage.)*

Patrick *exits stage left picking up the piece of whale shaped driftwood from the water's edge.*

Lila Eventually he found her body. Pulled it out of the water and hauled it down the beach.

Enter Patrick, stage left carrying a camera around his neck. He cleans it as Lila speaks.

Lila She was smiling , he told us in the last of his letters. Her eyes were cloudy, just like the dolphin's eyes were when they found it smothered in the net. He buried her under the tree. Wrapped her body in a red Mexican blanket with birds flying across it, and covered her with desert flowers and photographs from when we lived there as kids. He carved a whale out of drift wood and tied her hands around it. This would let her float the next time, he said. Suzane was welcome in the whale's world. She had discovered many of their secrets, and had filled several scrap books with sketches and words that illustrated their life as they floated through the sea. I have visited her grave sight. The surveyors are plotting a golf course around it. Digging sewage slots into the crisp desert flesh. I have told them that the body of Suzane Marie clings to a wooden whale, at the place, as Patrick said when he first came here, where the leaves half drown, half twist their wrists to the sky. One day, I am sure, Suzane will wave her bone hands above the surface. Then we

will all come and rebury her. But for now it is Patrick's funeral. Suzane is safe under the sand, and Patrick says he will never go to her beach again. *(She sits in darkness.)*

Patrick *(Gets up and hold his camera to the light)* The colors of the market whirl around me like an ocean of melted stained glass. I am hidden in this bright market mirage as another quick blur of movement. I take pictures of women who carry large baskets on top of their heads. The long black braids swing down their backs like strands of stretched kelp wavering in the currents. *(Exit Patrick)*

Lila Patrick had seen too much through the eyes of Suzane. He found Evana, a blind woman who was frail and had been a dancer in her youth. She lived in a tall cement building in Oaxaca. *(Pause)* Patrick was there with her, photographing the markets and spaces around the city. He became surreal to me. I ran into him once. He was sitting on a park bench in the square, changing lenses.

Patrick rises and moves across the stage taking pictures at different angles. There is loud market sound and heavy percussion music as brightly dressed people enter from all directions and walk around Patrick. Lila enters stage right carefully examining a Guatemalan blanket. Eventually Lila sees Patrick and moves towards him from behind.

Lila Patrick! Its Lila! Hi! *(She peers into his eyes)*

Patrick Lila? Hi! *(Patrick cleans his camera. The music fades as the market people disperse.)*

Lila Guy is buying cloth to sell at Flea Markets in Arizona. I'm with him.

Patrick Who is Guy?

Lila *(She puts a hand on his shoulder)* Guy, Patrick, Is Suzane's brother. *(Silence)*

Patrick Have you been back there?

Lila Yes.

Patrick How is she?

Lila She's fine Patrick. *(Long Pause)* Fine. *(She stands up beside him. He continues to clean his camera.)* How are you Pat?

Patrick Me? *(Sighing)* Oh... I have been fine... *(He pauses)* Evana is at home waiting for me to bring her these pictures. She's blind Lila. *(He stops cleaning his camera and looks at her.)*

Lila (Moving away) You should take her to San Jaun de Chemula. There is a church there with scents and air so warm that they push you over in dizziness when you stand in the doorway. They are having festivals there this week. Guy and I are going, you could bring her along.

Patrick (Quiet and definitely) I don't want to see Guy.

Lila Statues hang from the ceiling in a network of spider webbed rope. They cast shadows over the pine needle coated floor. The stained glass is so thick that it slices the sun into rays that bleed in reds and blues and greens over the people below. Children climb the pews that have been stacked against the wall while their parents sit amongst the rows of candles and drink Pepsi to belch out their sins. There are images there Patrick. You could find a story.

Patrick I have pictures here Lila...I am free of any sin. This town is full of color and design. The boy next to the meat section in the market sells fish and pieces of leather with his art burned into them. He makes pictures of his ancestors while waiting in his skiff for the nets to become tight. He tells me stories of the sea. We are happy here. *(He puts the camera around his neck.)*

Lila You don't need to see to feel the whirlpool of body heat and pine needle scent in the stone building. Evana would like it. She could feel the shadows of the statues as they charted the light skin on her face like constellations in the sky.

Patrick Evana will not leave the room. She has not felt light since she was very young. She would get a sunburn. She can't swim. *(He gets up and stands beside Lila)* How's the desert Lila?

Lila Dry Patrick, very, very dry. If you want us, we are camping in the field next to the market. We will be there until tomorrow. *(Frustrated)* She can taste can't she? You should bring her for coffee. *(She exits stage right brushing her hand over his shoulder. Patrick exits in the opposite direction.)*

Set change.

Same tree with a bed, a porcelain wash basin, and a bamboo door down stage left.

Enter Evana in darkness. She lies on the bed on her stomach, motionless and wrapped in a sail white sheet.

Enter Patrick from behind the door carrying a bucket of water and a bag of sea salt.

Patrick .) Evana look....I've brought you the sea. We can fill the room with whales who spray coolness to the ceiling. Wake up Evana...Please wake up.*(He sets down the bucket of water beside the basin and moves to the corner where he stands peering down at her and biting his nails.)*

Evana (*Quietly*) I'm sleeping Patrick.

He takes his camera from around his neck and sets it on the bare bed. He pulls a pile of photos from under the mattress and moves across the room to sit between the angles of her folded body.

Patrick I want you to see Evana.

Evana I can't see Patrick, You know that. (*Evana opens her eyes and stares out past him.*)

Patrick Shhh. Just look.

He runs a picture over her shoulder.

Evana They are cold today Patrick. (*She does not move*)

Patrick This is a canyon. Its smooth rock walls contrast sharply against the blue sky. It smells as sweet as the muscles that roam on a horse's chest.

Evana Are there fig trees there?

Patrick The fig trees break through the skin of the red rock. Cracking it so the leaves are green lightning that strike slowly through time. When you lie in the dry riverbed you are cooled by their shadows that spill from high on the wall. (*The picture is at her ankles now. He leaves it resting on the diamond space above her ankle bones. He takes another photo and holds it against her open palms.*)

Evana Tell me about the time you lived together on the beach Patrick. The Pelican. Tell me about the Pelican.

Patrick On the beach where the Pelican slept there is a shallow imprint in the black sand.

Lights brighten around the tree.

Enter Guy, Lila, and Suzane. They pull magnets behind them playfully and follow Patrick's narration as he speaks to Evana.

Patrick In the morning the tide is low. Three children drag magnets tied to shoelaces and pieces of fishing line. Tiptoeing quickly over the aching morning, they collect globules of the magnetic beach. Mold it into polar animals that walk on leashes to tide pools between the rocks where a bird's limp wing shelters their shallow harbor. A break water of feathers lifts in the wind. (*Pause*) The youngest pokes at Pelican's neck. A long stick pulls its throat against Sirius clouds reflecting on round faces stung by salt. He rips apart the six pack plastic, says he will take it to the beach, bury it. (*Long pause*) Sunlight filters over

barnacles. The molting body swings; a sodden lantern carried through daylight by children's sun painted hands. In the feather pattern hole they cover his silky body. Watch the sand spray patterns over his swollen throat one child handful at a time.

Lila , Suzane, and Guy scrape up the sand around the tree and cover the bird one handful at a time. They exit single file stage left.

Patrick holds the picture against Evana's back. Evana gets up.

Evana (Breathing deeply and moving her head as if she is feeling something in the air with her face.)The air is moist now.

She feels around the room until she finds the bucket. Patrick takes her arm and guides her towards the bed. She smiles and puts her feet in the basin. Patrick pours the salt from the clear plastic into the water and lifts the bucket above her pouring the water over her legs.

Patrick Can I tell you a story?

Evana Yes.

Patrick We are at the edge of the water. Sitting just as we do now. I have a piece of drift wood and am whittling it into a whale. You come up behind me and whisper in my ear... (He leans towards her, she cuts him off.)

Evana I know this part Patrick. You say it in your sleep. I will be her.(Pause) In the morning the whales come. Before the Sombrero capped tourists line their fluorescent lawn chairs on the brim. (She swishes her feet in the water.) When the sun tosses the first strands of its yellow hair over the horizon mothers sing to their calves. Teach them about Jesus rays of the deep. Streams of light that weave around transparent plankton. Buoyant in their sadness they frolic through a sea of tears. Mirror the sodden face of the man who walks over cold desert sand.(She plays with the water.) Resting their black eyes on the glassy surface, they blink curiously at the shivering procession. (She speaks slowly and carefully, her voice mixing with sounds of waves and wind.)This body tripping through the tidal line does not pause to pick a shell. He waivers, like currents, warm from the south, cold from the north, colliding and mixing in a dark rippling line.(Pause) The whales know this feeling. It swims though their black and white souls. Wades around the blowhole colored by reflections of earth. Recognizing her body, they follow the fin shaped feet. A long curving wake is drawn in sand. This woman was with them yesterday. Scratched a pectoral fin. Hung between rough barnacles as they sang soundless across a deep slab of ocean. She stayed with the pod until the light rays faded out and could be seen above as star shaped patterns. At the center of their beams she struggled in the swell. Blew air through a startled school of jacks, then floated still. A star fish flung from a dory. (She steps out of the basin.)The whales called to her when she rose to the surface. They cried against the crackle of coral. Stared at the dark silhouette of her body.

An exotic bead, hung from a clear strand, bending in currents. *(Long silence)* Patrick I see.

Patrick (Sits on the bed and picks up his camera.) We will go sailing Evana.

Lights dim almost to black and Lila and Patrick freeze.

Enter Lila, stage left.

Lila Suzane taught Patrick a lot about the whales. Later he took Evana to sea in a small wooden sloop, teaching her to swim while she taught him to listen. They made a book with Suzane's paintings and notes and Patrick's recent photographs. As you flip through the aging pages you will notice the ocean is changing. The drawings that Suzane made from memory are clean and spray across the pages with sea life that flickers in a colorful underwater world. Patrick's photographs seem barren. He waits for days to come upon a mother and her calf. They have found countless nets drifting around under their bow and have visited shrimp boats that try so sell them dried sea horses and turtle shell. Guy has launched a major campaign against this slaughter. Using Suzane's data he speaks about the importance of the Planet's oceans. I went sailing with Evana and Patrick the other day. Evana took us to a bank where a group of whales were singing to a full moon. We took down the sails and drifted silently through the night. The whales sparkled in the phosphorescence beneath us. Patrick and I told Evana about Suzane. She smiled slightly at the image of Suzane's long body blending with the underwater sun rays as she drowned next to the whales.

Exit Lila, stage right. Lights fade on the tree. Darkness.

Curtain

Yellow

a one act play

by Quinn Fletcher

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Yellow

Scene 1:

(Curtain rise on darkness. The song "I get Lonesome" by Beck is heard. Fades out after first verse and chorus. Lights come up on bench with Stu sitting on far left. There is a sign overhead that reads "Crossroads Station." Stu is wearing jeans or khakis and a neutral business coat with a plain shirt underneath. The coat is unbuttoned. After twenty seconds, Mr. Carlisle enters from stage left. He sits on the far right of the bench. He is wearing a very dark three-piece suit and is carrying a briefcase. He sits with the briefcase on his lap and his eyes forward. Stu appears relaxed, with his arm outstretched on the bench. He is slouching and sits low in the bench. Stu looks over at Mr. Carlisle, looks him up and down, then away. Mr. Carlisle glances at Stu, but never looks at him for long. After two minutes, Colonel McTaggart enters from stage left and approaches the bench, on the side of Stu. The Colonel is wearing very obvious military wear.)

Colonel: (to no one in particular) Er...has the...uh...8:14...arrived yet?

(Carlisle shakes his head)

Stu: (loudly) Nope!

(Both Colonel and Carlisle look at Stu. Carlisle has a reproachful look on his face. Colonel stands behind the bench, to the left of Stu. After thirty seconds, a train is heard arriving and the Colonel and Carlisle exit stage right, as though boarding a train. Lights fade with Stu on the bench.)

Scene 2:

(A new day. Everything is as before. Stu is on the bench. After twenty seconds, Carlisle enters as before. They nod to each other. After one minute and forty-five seconds, Stu speaks.)

Stu: (Not looking at Carlisle, with an air of casualness) 'Morning.

Carlisle: (Surprised) Oh! Uh...Good morning.

(Colonel enters as before. Walks to bench again)

Colonel: Has the...ah...the...the 8:14 arrived yet?

(Carlisle shakes his head.)

Stu: 'Fraid not!

(Colonel stands in same spot. After 30 seconds, the train arrives and the Colonel and Carlisle leave. Lights fade with Stu on the bench.)

Scene 3:

(A new day. Lights come up on same scene as before. Carlisle enters as before. They nod again, this time with a slight smile. After one minute and forty seconds, Stu speaks.)

Stu: (Still casual, still not looking at Carlisle) 'Morning.

Carlisle: (Less surprised, but still shaken) Yes. Good Morning.

Stu: (After a few seconds, turns to Carlisle) You know, it's odd.

Carlisle: (Nervous, self-conscious) Hm? Wha-

(Colonel enters as before. Carlisle stops talking and looks forward.)

Colonel: Has the 8:14 arrived yet?

(Carlisle shakes his head)

Stu: No.

(Colonel slowly moves to same spot. Train arrives as before. Lights fade as before)

Scene 4:

(A new day. Lights come up as before. Carlisle enters. Stu looks, but there is no nod. Carlisle sits, more rigid than before, if possible. After one minute and fifteen seconds, Stu speaks.)

Stu: 'Morning.

Carlisle: Good morning.

Stu: (Casual as before) Well?

Carlisle: Pardon me?

Stu: (Turning to Carlisle conspiratorially) Don't you want to know?

Carlisle: (Shifting in his seat, looking around) Know what?

Stu: What's odd!

(Colonel enters before Carlisle can reply. Strides up to bench.)

Colonel: Has the 8:14 arrived yet?

Carlisle: (quietly) No.

Stu: You heard the man!

(Colonel pauses before walking to same spot. The rest of the scene is as before. Carlisle looks frustrated)

Scene 5:

(A new day. Lights come up on same scene as before. Carlisle enters and sits down. He fidgets, uncomfortable in his seat. After one minute, he turns to speak)

Carlisle: Good morning.

Stu: (pleased) 'Morning!

Carlisle: (Quiet, almost whispering) Well?

Stu: (surprised) Well what?

Carlisle: What is so...you know...odd?

Stu: Odd you say?

Carlisle: (getting angry) The other day, you told me something was odd! Now what was it?!

Stu: (Nervous, backing off) Oh...it was nothing, really. Um, let's just forget about it.

(Turns away and appears non-chalant again)

Carlisle: (placating) No, no! I'm sorry, I was a little harsh. Tell me, please. I'm curious. Should I guess?

Stu: Yes! Yes! Do! I mean, please do!

Carlisle: Oh. Well. Let me think. Er...what would you guess?

(The Colonel enters. Both Stu and Carlisle sigh and relax.)

Colonel: Has the 8:14 arrived yet?

(Pause)

Stu: Uh, no.

(Colonel takes same position, this time more slowly. Lights fade as before)

Scene 6:

(A new day. Lights come up and Carlisle enters as before. After thirty seconds,)

Stu: 'Morning

Carlisle: Good morning.

Stu: I just thought...because...you know we see each other pretty much every morning...

Carlisle: And that is what's odd?

Stu: No! No, not at all. What is odd, is that we've never spoken to each other.

Carlisle: Never?

Stu: Never.

Carlisle: I see. What about now?

Stu: What?

Carlisle: We are speaking now aren't we?

Stu: Actually, what I meant was...never mind. You're right we are speaking. I was just being dumb.

Carlisle: Oh, no! I didn't mean to imply-

(The Colonel enters. Carlisle sighs. The Colonel approaches as before. Pause)

Colonel: Has the 8:14 arrived yet...fellows?

Stu: Not yet.

(Colonel takes his spot quickly. Scene ends as before)

Scene 7:

(A new day. Lights come up and Carlisle enters as before. After fifteen seconds,)

Stu: 'Morning.

Carlisle: It is, isn't it?

Stu: (Reaching into an inside coat pocket) Do you smoke?

Carlisle: No.

Stu: (Quickly removing his hand) Me neither. That stuff'll kill you.

Carlisle: But...what's in your pocket?

Stu: What do you mean?

Carlisle: Your pocket! You were just reaching for it!

Stu: Was I?

Carlisle: Yes!! I mean, yes. You were.

Stu: Oh...it's just...some...old...stuff. You know how it is.

Carlisle: But you-(takes a deep breath)Stuff. I see.

(Silence)

Carlisle: So...

Stu: Yes?

Carlisle: I...watched this show last night. On TV.

Stu: Really? I watch TV too! I like...I mean...what do you like?

Carlisle: Oh...lots of things. Er...this and that. I especially like the...funny ones?

Stu: Yeah, yeah! Me too. What about...the cops shows...maybe?

(Carlisle nods slowly. Silence)

Carlisle: I watch the news a lot. What about yourself?

Stu: (Withdrawing slightly) Oh...I...(Looks toward stage left) I don-

(Colonel enters. Stu turns to greet him in delight, then pauses when Carlisle resumes rigid stance)

Colonel: Has the 8:14 arrived yet?

Stu: No.

(Scene ends as before)

Scene 8:

(A new day. Lights come up as before. As soon as Carlisle sits down,)

Stu: 'Morning.

Carlisle: Good morning to you too, sir!

Stu: Why thank you.

Carlisle: Watch any TV last night?

Stu: Yes! And the news! Did you see the news?

Carlisle: I was watching...you know.. one of those cop shows.

Stu: Really? (Pause) Was it a good one?

Carlisle: I suppose. Somebody murdered somebody else. And I think some policeman's brother had to find out where the gangster had hidden his money. Or some such.

Stu: I love that one! When Green was framed I almost kicked in my TV!!

Carlisle: What did the news have to say?

Stu: Oh, stuff about...this place in...uh...well, anyway it's in a depression. Or a war. Or maybe budget cuts. Or a famine. Or a new high school program. Guns program? Health program. One of those. It was really...neat. (Looks at Carlisle, who is nodding sympathetically) I mean informative.

Carlisle: Right. That's what the news is for.

(Pause)

Stu: Did you...have a nice breakfast?

Carlisle: Two fried eggs on toast. Which is...my...well, not really...uh...if you like...you know what eggs are like.

Stu: Yes. Yes, I suppose I do, don't I. (Thinks. Looks at Carlisle for a clue. Takes a breath.) They're quite tasty.

Carlisle: I love it when they're sunny-side up!

Stu: Oh, of course! I can't eat them any other way!

Carlisle: Well...

Stu: Don't be silly, not *any* other way, but...I read a book once where a man had to eat eggs every day because he thought his wife was poisoning the cereal. Did you read that one?

Carlisle: Uh...Let me think...er...well...yes. Yes I did. It was quite...quite...(looks to stage left)

(The Colonel enters. Carlisle sighs. Stu turns to greet him again, but turns away again as well.)

Colonel: (Quickly, so it can barely be heard) Good morning, fellows. (Normal pace) Has the 8:14 arrived yet?

Stu: (looks at Carlisle, who doesn't react, then directly at Colonel. Then apologetically) No. (Shrugs)

(Colonel nods, then takes his spot. Scene closes same as before)

Scene 9:

(A new day. Lights come up and Carlisle enter as before. As soon as he sits down,)

Carlisle: Don't you find a bit of a chill in the air this morning?

Stu: Um...What?...I...uh...'morning.

Carlisle: Eh?

Stu: 'Morning.

Carlisle: Oh. Good morning. So isn't there a chill?

Stu: Yeah, it's kind of cold.

Carlisle: Oh, it's worse than that.

Stu: Pretty darn cold.

Carlisle: I should've worn gloves.

Stu: Hm.

Carlisle: Well, I suppose not quite that cold...

Stu: Cold enough.

Carlisle: Cold enough?

Stu: Um, yeah, cold enough.

Carlisle: Enough for gloves?

Stu: I guess. Maybe. I don't know!

Carlisle: I see.

(Pause)

Stu: I wonder...

Carlisle: Wonder what?

Stu: It's nothing, just idle thoughts.

Carlisle: No, tell me. Please.

Stu: It's just that...if...if God created the earth, then why did he make seasons? Why didn't he just make everything everlasting and ever-growing? And warm?

Carlisle: Yes...that's quite a thought.

Stu: (panic-stricken) Oh no! I didn't mean...if you're...what I meant was...oh Christ! No, not Christ! I mean-

Carlisle: I was just saying that it was quite a thought. It's not like I'm...hey, are you all right?

Stu: Yeah! Of course! Why wouldn't I be? I was just joking around.

Carlisle: Right. Well...the way I see it...if God. (Ends purposefully mid-sentence. Both look stage left. Colonel enters. Carlisle resumes rigid position and Stu puts his head in his hands.)

Colonel: Has the 8:14 arrived yet?

(Stu doesn't react. The Colonel looks at him quizzically.)

Carlisle: No. Excuse me? (The Colonel starts, realizing that he's being spoken to) No it hasn't.

Colonel: What? Oh. Yes. Thank you.

(Scene ends as before.)

Scene 10:

(A new day. Lights come up as before. Carlisle enters and sits down. As soon as he sits,)

Carlisle: I thi-

Stu: 'Morning.

Carlisle: Yes, yes, good morning. I was saying that I think today will be a very good day.

Stu: Oh, yeah? Why's that?

Carlisle: It's just...oh, never mind.

Stu: Oh, ok.

(Silence)

Carlisle: I was thinking about what you said yesterday.

Stu: Uh...what did I say yesterday?

Carlisle: You know...(Stu looks blank)The thing about...God.

Stu: I don't remember.

Carlisle: What?! You're lying! It was only a day ago! You even-

Stu: Of course I remember! (Stu laughs)

Carlisle: Hm. But...anyway, I think it's because he didn't.

Stu: Didn't...?

Carlisle: Create the world.

Stu: I see...

Carlisle: But I could be wrong! I'm probably wrong. I mean who else did if He didn't, right?
(Gives a feeble laugh. There is an uncomfortable silence)

Carlisle: Did you go to Sunday school? As a child?

Stu: Sort of.

Carlisle: What does that mean?

Stu: It means that my moth-uh, it just means sort of.

Carlisle: Oh, ok. Well, I did. I hated it. All those terrible, shrewish women, clucking about. I just didn't get it.

Stu: My mother taught Sunday school! She wasn't terrible or shrewish!

Carlisle: Oh! Oh my! Well, I meant to say...

Stu: No, it's all right. It's not like you knew her. Do you want to know something?

Carlisle: Yes. I suppose.

Stu: I always imagined. (Stops on purpose and sighs relief. The Colonel doesn't enter. The two both stare at stage left expectantly. After awhile,)

Stu: Uh...Well...that is...um..er... (Confused, scared. He begins to breathe quickly and look around stage)

Carlisle: Er...What?

Stu: Huh? What? What do you mean "What?"

Carlisle: You always imagined...

Stu: (Looks at Stage left once imploringly) I always imagined...It's silly...(train sounds Carlisle begins to stand up. Stu yells over the sound of the train.) I always imagined death wearing yellow! (Stu stands and begins to go towards stage left, but is stopped when,)

Carlisle: Me too! (Stu turns slowly, his mouth moves, but no words come out.) I have to catch my train! (Runs towards stage right) See you tomorrow! (lights fade)

Scene 11:

(A new day. Lights come up as before. Stu is leaning forward on the bench, gazing stage left. Seconds before, Carlisle enters.)

Stu: 'Morning!!

Carlisle: (Offstage) Good morning! (Carlisle enters and sits in the middle of the bench.) Yellow! Yellow! (Lets out a whoop. Stu just stares at him with big grin) I never thought...wow! Do you still see it in a robe?

Stu: (Silent for a few seconds before he realizes he's being spoken to.) Yes. No. Well, sometimes?

Carlisle: I can never figure it out. It's always just...there. And yellow. I can never quite decide what it's wearing or not wearing. What about you?

Stu: (Embarrassed) Well...it's more like...

Carlisle: Like what?

Stu: When I think of death, a big patch of yellow enters my mind. Pretty stupid, huh? I think the way that *you*-

Carlisle: (Thoughtfully) No, no. Yes, I see...it's just a big...colour.

Stu: Yeah, I guess. But what *you* said really makes sense.

Carlisle: Thanks, I suppose. Let's stop talking about death, shall we? What else do you do in your spare time?

Stu: Uh...well...I...all sorts of things.

Carlisle: Such as?

Stu: (Nervous) Me? What do I do? You don't want to know about me.

Carlisle: Yes I do. Tell me.

Stu: You do? You really want to know? What *I* like to do?

(Carlisle nods, smiling)

Stu: Well, I...(Pause. Shoulders sloop) I like to watch TV. I watch the cop shows. And the funny ones. And the news!! Boy, do I love the news!

Carlisle: Oh. Of course. Anything else?

Stu: Yeah, of course! Like...reading! Remember the book about the guy and the eggs? I read that!

Carlisle: Hm. Right. Do you fish?

Stu: (Relieved) I love fishing!! I go nearly every week-end!

Carlisle: Really? Not me. I hate fishing and all that stuff.

Stu: Oh, well its not like I'm in love with it or anything. In fact, I really don't like it at...well, what I mean is-

Carlisle: Know any good jokes?

Stu: What?

Carlisle: Jokes. Ha ha. You know, jokes.

Stu: Yes! Yes, I do! Do you want to hear one?

Carlisle: That's why I asked.

Stu: Yeah, of course. I'm such an idiot. Ok, here goes. (Long silence while he thinks) A man walks in to a bar carrying a chicken. The bartender says "Hey! What are you doin' hangin' around with a pig like that?!" and the guy says "Hey! What are you, blind?! This is a chicken!" and the bartender says (starts to snicker) just wait...ok, ok...phew! The bartender says "Look, buddy, I was talking to the chicken!!!" (Stu begins to laugh uproariously. Carlisle emits a few "Ha ha"s. The sound of a train arriving is heard. Carlisle begins to laugh more loudly. Stu looks at him and then begins to laugh louder as well. This goes on until the sound of the train fades away. As the laughter fades, Stu looks toward stage left)

Carlisle: Oh no! It looks like I missed my train!

Stu: What?!!! Oh, no! Maybe if you run...

Carlisle: Hey, don't worry about it! The boss has been asking me to take a few days off for years! What say just you and me go do something today?

Stu: Really? You and me? I'd love to!

Carlisle: Great! Come on, I'll buy you some breakfast!

(They both stand up and exit stage left, chatting. Lights fade.)

Scene 12:

(A new day. Lights come up on Stu leaning forward in his seat, tapping his feet and humming a tune. Carlisle enters)

Stu: 'Morning...buddy.

Carlisle: Good morning!

(Silence)

Stu: Man...that was some good breakfast yesterday, eh?

Carlisle: Yes it was.

Stu: Nothing quite gets me like fried eggs on toast. Mmm-mm good! But I didn't know you liked Eggs Benedict.

Carlisle: Well...I do eat more than just eggs on toast, you know.

Stu: Yeah, right. That makes sense.

(Silence)

Stu: So...I really liked that movie we saw. I've never seen one like it before.

Carlisle: But it was a sequel to a movie that you said you saw "hundreds" of times. You also told me that the star was your cousin!

Stu: Well...people...you know...say things. I was just trying to...(Trails off. Longer silence than before.)

Stu: So...I guess you're going to work today?

Carlisle: I don't *have* to go. Why did you have something in mind?

Stu: Oh! Um...Yeah! I was thinking maybe we could head over to this place I know where you can eat fresh oysters and-

(Colonel enters stage left. He is early. Stu pauses to turn and look at him, his mouth moving but no words coming out. He turns back to Carlisle who is waiting patiently. He continues)

Stu: (Flustered and confused) And then...I was...thinking we could go see another-

Colonel: Excuse me-

Stu: (Louder than before) MOVIE. AND THEN MAYBE WE COULD-

Colonel: Hey, look all I-

Carlisle: Yes that sounds like a good plan I just have to-

Colonel: (Explodes in rage) HEY!!!! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING! IS IT SO MUCH TO ASK FOR A GODDAMN RESPONSE I JUST! WANT! TO KNOW! THE GODDAMN TIME!!!!

Carlisle: (Stands up quickly.) Look you, I don't know-

Colonel: SHUT UP! JUST SHUT UP! YOU...YOU CAN...YOU CAN JUST KEEP ON IGNORING ME BECAUSE THAT'S ALL YOU DO ANYWAY!! (Gets quieter all of a sudden and looks scared and confused) No, wait. That's not...not what I wanted to say...

Stu: (Panicky) Hey let's not do this...

Carlisle: (Beginning to get mad as well) No, no. If that's what needs to be said than so be it!! So what if I ignore you!! What the Hell do you want me to say!! (Voice begins to rise) ALL YOU EVER WANT TO KNOW IS IF THE TRAIN HAS COME YET!!! IT'S NOT MY FAULT THAT...THAT...(Points to Stu)...HIM AND I CAN HAVE A CONVERSATION!! IT'S NOT MY FAULT THAT I CAN'T MAKE FRIENDS!! (Gets quieter as well) I mean...you...I think...

Stu: (Talking to the Colonel) Look, I'm really sorry-

Colonel: (Mad again) YOU!! YOU'RE SORRY! YOU STUPID BASTARD!! HOW MANY WORDS DID YOU EVER SAY TO ME? I HATE YOU!! WHY COULDN'T YOU JUST START TALKING TO YOU?!! I MEAN, ME?! ME?!!!

Stu: (Pleading) No! Please! I just wanted-

Carlisle: (To Stu) WANTED WHAT?! WHAT ABOUT ME!! WE ARE FRIENDS, AREN'T WE? I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU! YOU'RE ALL INSANE!! AAAAAARRRGHHH!!! I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK-

Colonel: THINK! I'LL TELL YOU WHAT TO THINK!! (Points to Stu) THINK ABOUT HOW THIS SPINELESS, COWARDLY, INSECURE, MISERABLE LITTLE BASTARD WAS SO CRUEL TO US THINK ABOUT THAT!! AND THEN YOU-

Carlisle: SHUT UP! SHUT UP! SHUT UP! SHUT UP! SHUT! UP!!!! I CAN'T THINK WITH ALL YOU'RE MEANINGLESS *DRIVEL* RUNNING THROUGH MY HEAD (Points at Stu. The sound of a train arriving is heard. Carlisle has his eyes shut and ears plugged. The

colonel just stares at Stu. While the noise of the train drowns out all sound, the Colonel walks up to Stu and begins to beat him. He is yelling, but due to the train, what he says cannot be heard. After the train fades away,)

Colonel: (On each word is a blow to Stu) -YOU!!! I HATE YOU!! I HATE ALL OF YOU!! I HATE YOUR LIFE!! I HATE YOU!! I HATE MY-(Chokes on his next word. The Colonel looks around in panic, then runs off stage left.)

Carlisle: THAT WAS MY TRAIN!!! YOU IDIOT!! (Stu is curled up on the bench) I CAN'T JUST MISS A DAY OF WORK!! I'LL GET FIRED!! WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH YOU!! US!! WITH EVERYTHING!! I CAN'T-(Screams in what sounds like pain, then runs off stage left. Stu raises his head and begins to get off the bench.)

Stu: (Speaks weakly while walking stage left) No..wait...I just...just wanted...to...to...to be...(Exits. Lights fade.)

Scene 13:

(A new day. During the entire scene, "I Get Lonesome" by Beck is played. Lights raise on Stu sitting on the bench. His arms are crossed in front of him and he is gently rocking back and forth. After the first verse and chorus, Carlisle enters. He in no way recognizes the existence of Stu. He walks to the opposite side of the bench, and stands beside it, looking straight forward. An expression of utter indifference is on his face. Stu looks at him, but says and does nothing. After the second verse and chorus a faint train sound is heard. Carlisle goes toward stage right and waits. As soon as he steps offstage, the Colonel enters stage left crosses quickly and exits stage right. For the last verse, Stu looks around and stands up. He begins to sob silently. Another faint train sound is heard. Stu looks stage right for a few seconds, then runs stage right and appears to jump off stage. There is the sound of a train screeching to a sudden halt. As the song ends, the lights fade. Curtain)

the end