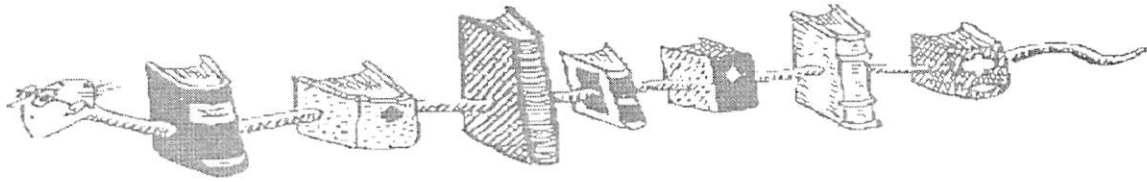


Youthwrite 2001

The definitive anthology of student written plays

*Published by ABCDE
(Association of B.C. Drama Educators)*

Youthwrite 2000



Dear Readers,

It is with great pleasure that I present the 2001 Youthwrite Anthology.

The following plays are the winners of the 2001 B.C. Youthwrite Competition, held under the sponsorship of the Association of the British Columbia Drama Educators. Fifteen plays were submitted from schools around B.C. and then given to three adjudicators to read (Ian Fenwick, Libby Mason, and Linda Beaven). Each reader gave feedback to the playwright. Six plays were then chosen and given the opportunity to perform at the B.C. Drama Festival, and now given the opportunity to see the work in print as a part of the Youthwrite Anthology.

Five out of the six plays participated in the B.C. Drama Festival by the school that the playwright was attending. The playwright that were in attendance with their play received an adjudication and encouragement. It was a most memorable and moving experience at the festival for all these students involved.

The Association of B.C. Drama Educators feels that these plays are of an interest to teachers and students around the province, and these works could provide challenging and interesting scripts for further productions. We would like to remind you that these scripts are covered by copyright and the payment of royalties to the playwright may encourage them to write more plays. Royalty information will appear with each script.

I know you will be impressed with the variety of talent these young writers possess. Enjoy!

Gordon Hamilton

Youthwrite Coordinator

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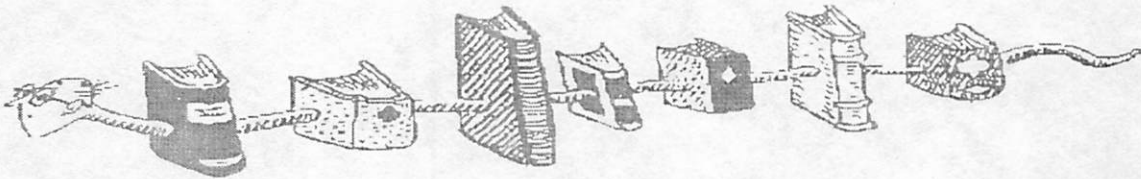
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Jennifer Oleksiuk



Caution: Professionals and Amateurs are hereby warned that "Stalling" by Jennifer Oleksiuk is subject to royalty. It is protected under Copyright Law. Inquiries regarding performance rights and royalties should be directed to: Jennifer Oleksiuk at 3508 197A St., Langley B.C. V3A 7C5. The fee for a single production of this play will be \$20.00.

“Stalling”

Setting: A girl’s bathroom at Jackson High. On stage right is the entrance door to the girl’s bathroom. Center stage are three bathroom stalls. There are two frames for mirrors which are suspended at the front of the stage. On stage left there is a flat bench on an angle. There is a garbage bin on stage right beside the door and stack of paper towels and magazines on a side table.

Cast of characters:

Allen Fick: Nerdy, opinionated, analytical 15-year-old boy. Has had a crush on Jaime Miller for two years (Since eighth grade). Best friends with Wallace.

Jaime Miller: Popular and pretty. Best friends with Candice, Natalie, Lori, and Carrie. Very involved in school and hangs out with almost everyone.

Candice Rally: Natalie’s best friend. Very flirty and thinks she has the answer to all guy problems. Is cheating with Clint, Natalie’s boyfriend.

Natalie Chase: Good friends with Jaime. Suspects her boyfriend, Clint is cheating but doesn’t know with whom.

Lori Derkland: Low self-esteem and uncertain of herself. Is having trouble getting a guy to ask her out. She assumes that it has to do with her flirting techniques.

Carrie Reed: A slight feminist who feels girls should take charge in the relationship. Has a pessimistic point of view on the male species. Is seeing a guy she met at a hockey game.

Phil Wallace: Jerky, loud, obnoxious, aggressive nerd known by his last name. Likes playing video games and playing on the computer and watching the cheerleaders at the school football games.

Clint Jacobson: High school football player. Cheating on Natalie of two years with Candice of three weeks.

Big Bertha: Giant female man butch who constantly interferes with Allen’s pursuit to ask Jaime out. (Played by the actor of Clint Jacobson).

Lights come up revealing the two girls in the girl's washroom at high school, Allen is in a stall. During the course of the play Allen hides in the stall, while he observes other characters, only the audience can hear him.

Candice No I don't think he's cheating on you. Why would you think that anyway?

Natalie Well, he's been acting really weird around me lately, almost nervous. Especially when you're around, probably because you're my best friend, you must have noticed?

Candice No, not really.

Natalie So, you really don't think Clint is cheating on me?

Allen Of course he's cheating on you! Why do girls insist on giving jocks the benefit of the doubt?

Candice If you want my opinion, no, I don't think he is at all. You just need to stop stressing about it.

Allen Don't listen to her. If you really want to find out if he's cheating or not then just ask him. If he starts acting really aggressive and weird and nervous, then he is.

Natalie Well, how do I do that?

(Candice goes to say something but is just mouthing her answer because Allen's voice is talking over her)

Allen Well, you shouldn't really listen to me anyway because I get really nervous around girls when they just walk by me in the hallway or when they wear skirts and stuff. But what am I talking about? I don't even know what I'm talking about! I never cheated on a girlfriend let alone had a girlfriend to cheat on.

(Girls giggle to themselves and leave the bathroom. Door to first stall opens revealing nerdy boy sitting on the toilet. Allen stands up and starts towards audience)

Allen Girls are as unfamiliar to me as my own penis. *(Pause. Contemplates)* Well, maybe not. *(Pause)* I am a fifteen-year-old boy who has absolutely no clue as to how girls think. But I believe I have found the solution. I believe that the girl's washroom is the key to the female mind. By hiding in this stall I will be able to understand the way they think. Yes, I've had dork syndrome my whole life but doing this doesn't make me more of a dork, it makes me a genius. Whether we admit it or not, guys are all dorks in disguise including the popular ones, they just have pecks and cute butts. Guys are completely clueless when it comes to connecting with girls. But today that will no longer be. Because today is the day I will no longer stress over the details and complexities of the female species. Guys think of the washroom as a place to go to pee and get out as quickly as possible. It stinks all the time and isn't exactly the social spot. But for girls, it's different. It smells good all the time, it's spacious but most of all it's a private place in the middle of the gossiping walls of high school where they can confide in each other about their problems and touch up their makeup. *(Pause)* Jaime wouldn't need to touch up her makeup though, she just naturally looks perfect, smells perfect, dresses perfect, acts perfect, she's perfect. If I could gain insight to any girl at all today, it would be Jaime Miller. I've had a crush on her since grade eight. That's two years of gazing at the back of her head in English, memorizing her course schedule so I can change the way I go to my locker so I can just see her pass in the halls. Two years, that's seven hundred and thirty days of pretending that today is the day I'm going to confront her. Today is the day I'm going to talk to her. Two years of knowing that after third period every day she comes to the bathroom with her best friend Candice.

(Candice enters the washroom. Allen closes door quickly.)

Allen *(Waits a second before he speaks almost as if to double-check something).* Wait a minute what's going on? This isn't right. *(Lori walks in to join her. Grunts in frustration)* They always come in pairs!

Candice *(Goes into one of the stalls)* Can you turn on the tap for me please?

Lori I can't believe you of all people has to pee with the water on. *(Lori turns on the faucet. Allen pokes his head over the stall door to observe the girls.)*

Allen That better not be it. It has to be something way better than that. No guy has waited this long to find out that the reason girls go to the bathroom in pairs is to be able to have every appliance on so that no one will hear them. I swear that if a guy asked them why they go in pairs, they wouldn't even know. *(Allen slumps back down into the stall)*

Candice *(Toilet flushes and Candice is now looking at herself in the mirror with Lori)*. I can't believe he didn't do anything. Guys are so stupid they should just know these things.

Allen I told you. We have no clue.

(Door to washroom opens and Jaime walks in, smiles at the girls and joins them in freshening up.)

Lori Well, maybe I should have been more obvious or something. Sometimes I wish I could come right out and tell him instead of just trying to get the point across and failing.

Allen You have no idea how much easier that would be. *(Impressed by the comment Allen pops over the stall and sees Jaime standing there with them and becomes completely frozen.)*

Candice Yeah right. You could never do that. You would look so stupid. *(Looks at Jaime for help)* Jaime?

Allen *(Gazing at Jaime)* Why can't I move right now?

Jaime Well, I don't know, you're talking about Trevor, right? *(Lori nods)* Well, why not? *(Turns to Candice and imitates Lori asking Trevor out)* Trevor... I knew I loved you before I met you, I think I dreamed you into life.

Lori You know what I mean. I just like him so much and I hate knowing that he doesn't like me.

Allen I have to say something.

Jaime *(Sarcastically)* Yeah, okay.

Allen *(Looking at Jaime)* How can I say something to you? You could never like me.

- Candice** You know that's not true. He totally likes you. You did say you were flirting and he was too.
- Lori** I know, but it was flirting, he was just being really touchy and stuff.
- Allen** What can I say?
- Candice** Okay, well what were you doing to flirt with him?
- Lori** Well, you know, I asked for the time and grabbed his hand pretending I needed to look at his watch and I made cute little smiles at him.
- Candice** Did you compliment his shirt or something? That always works.
- Allen** *(Mesmerized by Jaime)* Look at her, just standing there... in that cute little shirt.
- Lori** No, maybe he's lost interest. God, you have guys crawling all over you. How do you get them to ask you out?
- Allen** I just have to do it.
- Candice** Well, I don't know they just do. *(Lori gives Candice a begging look. Candice looks at Jaime and then back at Lori)* I just really pay attention to things, like hair. Guys are way into tresses. Next time you see him twist it, toss it, flip it, shake it, whatever, it will guarantee him to look twice.
- Jaime** What!?
- Lori** Where do you get this crap?
- Candice** From magazines and stuff, it may sound like crap but it works.
- Jaime** *(To Lori)* Why do you want Trevor to ask you out anyway, He's such a dumb jock.
- (Allen grabs his chest in awe of what Jaime said.)*

Candice Yeah, a jock who rocks! He is so hot and dumb he so is not. He is such a mister and most likely a really good kisser.

(Both girls burst out laughing)

Allen *(Allen drops back down into his stall)* Jaime... My love for you is so strong, please don't knock it, I hold a pic of you in my pocket and...

(Girls exit. Candice forgets her jacket.)

Allen *(Opens the stall)*...you shoot straight through my heart like a rocket. *(Notices no one is there.)* Nice Allen... nice. *(Closes stall then opens it again. Pauses, notices Candice's jacket.)* I really don't know why people insist on asking Candice for advice. She never tells people what they want to hear and she rarely has anything relevant to say. I got a hold of one of those creepy magazines once. And most of it is crap but every so often they're dead on. When they say guys are stupid they're right. Especially when it comes to flirting. *(Allen has a sudden flash of brilliance and stands up)* I think there should be some sort of button that when a girl is flirting with a guy the button flashes right in our face; just this bright neon light that blinks over and over again in our face. It could blink a blinding neon pink and say "I am flirting with you" blink, blink *(Allen motions actions)* "Ask me out" blink, blink. That way we won't have to wonder if they touched our hand to see our watch because they're flirting or if they need it closer because they're just really stupid and can't tell time. When it comes to flirting *girls* are way off. They all have some kind of plan or organized attack. They have all these different tactics and moves with all these different meanings. And then there are guys; if we just talk to a girl it means we're interested. Anything that could possibly seem out of our way means we're interested. Our whole intentions when becoming friends with a girl is to eventually go out with her. It isn't exactly the same for girls. Girls like having guys as friends. The girls we talk on the phone with and approach are the ones we're interested in; it's really straightforward.

(Candice and Lori reenter to pick up the forgotten jacket. Allen leaps into the stall for cover. Candice picks up her jacket and double checks herself in the mirror. Lori does the same.)

Lori You have no idea how much I like him. God, it sucks. I've even starting to notice all the little habits he has. I feel like I'm on the verge of being a stalker.

Candice You may be walking a fine line but I think you're just leaning more towards a creep.

Lori Gee thanks. I always thought you were the nice one.

(Allen watches both double-check themselves again before they leave).

Allen *(Allen leans on side of bathroom stall and sighs)* Jaime always does this thing with her feet in English class. Whenever she's really nervous for a test or something she'll slowly start shaking her right foot. Then she'll start rotating her ankles and then switch to the other foot and do the exact same thing. It drives me nuts. I always end up frantically rushing to finish my test at the end of class because I will just get so fixated on it. And I can't turn my head away until I know she's okay. I have to wait until she suddenly stops and crosses her ankles over each other and wraps them around the poll of her chair. It's really cute.

(After a short pause Allen realizes he suddenly has to go to the bathroom. Is starting to mention that out loud when he hears the door to the washroom opening.)

Allen Oh damn. Damn it! Allen, you knew this was going to happen. I knew I should have gone before I set up camp.

(Allen's best friend Wallace's head pokes through the door.)

Wallace Psst, Allen. Buddy, you in here? *(He starts to enter)*

Allen *(Allen pops head over stall before opening stall door).* What are you doing, I told you not to come here?!

Wallace *(Ignoring Allen, starts to look around)* So this is what it looks like! Wow. *(Turns to Allen)* It smells really good too.

Allen *(Starts to get as interested as Wallace)* Yeah it does. *(Remembers Wallace isn't supposed to be there)* Get out man!

Wallace You didn't tell me you were going to be living in luxury. *(Continues to wander around).*

- Allen** You really have to leave Wallace!
- Wallace** *(Still ignoring Allen)* So, has every one come in pairs so far?
- Allen** *(Disappointed what his answer has to be)* Yes.
- Wallace** Has Jaime come in yet?
- Allen** Yep.
- Wallace** Well, did you talk to her?
- Allen** *(Sad but still having to go to the bathroom)* No.
- Wallace** Well you got till third period...*(Notices that Allen's body language is squirmy and weird)* What are you doing?
- Allen** I really have to go to the bathroom.
- Wallace** *(Pauses and looks around)* So, what's the problem?
- Allen** Well, I thought you were one of them and...
(Door to the washroom starts to open. Allen immediately pulls Wallace into the stall with him).
- Wallace** Yes! *(Referring to the girls)*
- Allen** Okay this is no good.
- Wallace** What are you talking about? *(Wallace pervertedly pops his head over the stall)*
- Allen** Get down! *(Frustrated he tries to pull Wallace down).*
- Wallace** What are you doing? Let me see. *(Finally gives in and comes down. Girls are quietly doing their own thing. Guys are whispering loudly).*
- Allen** I'm seriously going to pee my pants.
- Wallace** Then go to the bathroom. They'll just think you're a girl.
- Allen** I can't go with you in here!

Wallace What!?! Do you want me to ask them to turn on the faucet for you; I'll just turn around. *(Wallace pops his head back over to watch the girls. Rustling noises are heard. Allen is mumbling to himself about how he doesn't want to go and how he thinks he won't be able to. Wallace looks suddenly worried and acknowledges Allen).* Wait a minute. Wait a minute.

Allen What!?!

Wallace *(Drops back down into the stall)* What if they can tell?

Allen What!?! What do you mean what if they can tell? Can tell what?

Wallace Well, what if it sounds different and they can tell that it's a guy.

Allen Why would it be any different?

Wallace I don't know. It may just sound different.

Allen You're making me paranoid just let me go to the bathroom.

Wallace *(Slowly rises his head back over the stall door)* Well, wait a minute. I mean... you're standing, right?

Allen *(Impatiently responds)* Yeah.

Wallace Well, if you were to squat then it would be closer, *(Allen's head pops over stall door to further join himself into the conversation)* but since you are to stand, it's farther away. *(Waits for Allen's response)*

Allen You think they could hear the difference?

(Wallace looks at the girls talking for his answer while Allen waits anxiously)

Allen Well?

Wallace I don't know.

(Both look at each other not knowing what to do. Allen still badly needing to go to the bathroom. Allen slumps back down into the stall. Wallace waits a second then drops back in too.)

Allen I can't hold it any longer I'm taking the chance.

- Wallace** Are you sure?
- Allen** I have to go now. *(Rustling is heard. Allen starts talking frantic and confused)* Oh, I don't know. I can't go with you in here and now I think that girls have super powers and will be able to tell it's a guy...
- Wallace** *(Excited cuts Allen off)* Fine, I'll create a diversion.
- Allen** What!?! No. Just give me... *(Wallace jumps out of the bathroom before Allen can finish.)* Oh shoot. *(Finally goes to the bathroom because he can no longer hold it. Realizes Wallace left the door open and tries to close it while going to the bathroom.)*
- Wallace** Hey ladies, nothing to see here! *(Wallace is using traffic signals trying to direct the girls out of the bathroom. Girls are screaming, shocked and confused)* That's right, move out, nothing to see here.
- (Allen finishes and is peering through the slightly opened stall door. Girls are just leaving when Jaime walks in the bathroom door.)*
- Jaime** What the... What's going on? *(Everyone is confused. There is a big commotion and Wallace is trying to push all the girls out of the bathroom.)* Wallace, what are you doing?
- Allen** *(Opens the door more to see Jaime. Goes to speak but none of the girls can hear him over Wallace.)* No, wait Jaime... *(Allen's voice fades as he watches her disappear out the door)*
- Wallace** Let's keep it moving folks! Come on now. *(Exits with the girls. The commotion fades off into the distance till it's completely silent with just Allen alone in the bathroom.)*
- Allen** *(Angry, Allen walks out of the stall.)* Why does this always have to happen to me?! *(Stressed out, he sits on the bench.)* When ever I have the chance... stupid Wallace, as soon as he saw her he should've... I didn't even... damn it! The worst... you know, the worst time, now that was bad. The one time I thought I had actually gotten up the courage to talk to her, *that* I would call pathetic.

(Jamie enters stage through a stall door as if she was leaving a classroom. Characters reenact the story while he tells it to the audience)

Allen cont. She had just finished Chem. class and was going to her locker to get her books for lit. And there she was... dressed in this really great white button down top and this really cute knee length, light blue skirt. And there I was. I took a deep breath, quickly rehearsed my lines I had practiced the night before and went for it. *(Allen walks over to Jaime. Jaime doesn't notice him standing there, and continues to pretend to gather things from her locker. Allen is looking down at his feet nervously).* Hi... Jaime... you may not know me but my names Allen Fick...

(Jaime, not noticing Allen, walks away. Allen is still busy looking at his shoe that he doesn't notice.) I sit behind you in English class and I overheard you mention to Donna that you really wanted to see that new Sabastian Kelly movie and... uh... *(Big Bertha enters stage through the same stall Jaime did and is standing at her locker right beside Jaime's)* I was just wondering if you maybe wouldn't mind, well I mean I'd love to take you, I mean, if you were still wanting to go that you might want to... would you like to go to the movie with me?

Big Bertha Yes I will.

Allen *(To audience)* So I looked up and there she was. But no longer in the form of the beautiful Jaime but instead *(Allen looks up disgusted)* in the form of a giant butch by the name of Big Bertha. *(Allen turns and begins to walk away.)* Not only was she on the wrestling team but she was the captain of the rugby team... the boys rugby team! *(Allen looks at her then looks down, cringes and starts to walk away.)*

(Big Bertha shrugs her shoulders and exits stage.)

Allen cont. There are many more unfortunate instances with Big Bertha but but I'd uh... prefer not to think about them. Right now all I should be thinking about is what to do about Jaime. *(Sits on the bench)* What do I say? How am I supposed to tell her how I feel without sounding like a totally creepy, gross, nerd guy? You know, now is the time I wish I was a girl. I mean, I wouldn't have to think about what to say, I'd just know and I wouldn't have to be hiding in this stupid bathroom waiting to ask a "completely out of my league" girl to go out with a "totally not good enough for her" guy.

(Whispering is heard outside the door. Allen sighs and hustles into the stall. Clint and Candice enter. Allen pokes his head over the stall.)

Clint Wow! So this is what it looks like! It's so clean and it doesn't smell like piss either... *(Looks around notices side table)* wow, you guys have even got magazines... Ooh! Trendy.

(Candice puts the magazine down. Clint looks upset, waits a second then picks the magazine back up.)

Candice I didn't sneak out of Mr. Litmens class to read magazines.

Allen I knew it, what an ass!

Clint *(Doesn't clue in)* But it has a quiz! *(Flipping through magazine)* Awh, ten ways to get him to ask you out!

(Candice quickly grabs it from him before he can read any more. Grabs his hand and pulls him towards Allen's stall. Allen quickly pops head back in his stall. She pauses, turns to Clint and continues to the next stall. Allen's head slowly pops back over.)

Candice What do you say we try door number two this time? *(Both enter stall and lock the door. Giggling and rustling is heard.)*

Allen Oh man! I don't want to be involved in this. *(Sounds continue)*
Awh gross... awh stop it.

(Door to bathroom opens and Carrie enters. Hears noises and pauses to listen.)

Allen Oh no.

Candice Wait, Clint shhh... shut up for a second.

(Everyone is silent. Natalie enters bathroom. Carrie quickly turns her head towards her nervously.)

Allen Oh, oh no. This is not good.

Carrie *(Nervously trying to act normal)* Hey.

Natalie Hi... *(Notices Carrie acting weird)* What's wrong?

- Carrie** Oh nothing. So, Ms. Plats class is so boring huh?
- Natalie** *(Starts to walk towards the stall that Clint and Candice are hiding in)* Yeah, tell me about it.
- Carrie** Where are you going?
- Natalie** To the bathroom.
- Carrie** *(Rushes in front of her)* What? I didn't think you had to go.
(Smiles awkwardly at Natalie)
- Natalie** Well, I do. Sorry I didn't fill you in. *(Waits for Carrie to move)*
- Carrie** Well... You don't want to use this one because I went to go use it earlier and someone didn't flush and it's really gross.
- Natalie** Okay thanks. *(Points to the one beside it)* I'll just use this one.
- Carrie** Okay, that should be fine.
- Natalie** Okay. *(Enters stall)* Oh shoot this one has no toilet paper.
(Heads towards Allen's stall)

(Clint's foot drops)
- Carrie** *(Coughs to disguise the noise)* Hey you know what, why don't we just go use the one upstairs. I have to talk to Lori anyway.
- Natalie** Well, why can't I just...
- Carrie** *(Grabs Natalie's hand and pulls her towards the door)* Just don't worry about it.
- Clint** *(Thinks everyone has left)* That was close man...
- Candice** Clint shut up.
- Natalie** *(Quickly turns around)* Clint?
- Carrie** What are you talking about? Come on lets go.
- Natalie** Carrie, stop it. Clint? What are you doing?
- Clint** Oh way to go Candice.

Candice You idiot. Shut up.

Natalie Candice?

Carrie Candice?

Candice *(Trying to act normal)* Yeah?

Carrie I can't believe you!

Natalie *(Knocks on the stall door)* What are you guys doing?

Candice Nothing.

Natalie *(Tries opening the door)* Open the door.

Clint We're just hanging out.

Candice Oh shut up Clint. *(Candice and Clint come out of the stall)*

Natalie I can't believe you're cheating on me... with her! *(Other lines are said while Natalie continues yelling at Clint.)*

Candice *(Said while Natalie is still yelling)* What! Oh thanks!

Carrie You better keep your mouth shut on this one Candice.

Natalie How could you? I can't...

Clint I don't know!

Allen Oh shut up!

(Everyone freezes in position. Allen takes off his glasses and wipes his eyes in frustration. He accidentally drops them. As soon as they land everyone resumes what they were doing.)

Allen Oh crap. *(Looks over at everyone to make sure they didn't hear)*

Carrie Come on Natalie, you shouldn't have to take this. Dump the chump.

(Everyone is arguing)

- Allen** I can't see anything. I need my glasses. I can't see anything without my glasses. *(Tries reaching his glasses from under the stalls door but can't reach. Carrie takes a step backwards and almost steps on them.)*
- Allen** No! *(Allen gets up and opens his door slowly and begins trying to sneak behind Carrie and Natalie.)*
- Clint** *(Notices Allen)* What the...
- Natalie** *(Mad that Clint isn't paying attention and slaps him)* That's right, you better be paying attention to me.
- Carrie** Alright Natalie! *(To Clint)* You jerk.
(Clint forgets about Allen and everyone continues yelling. Allen grabs his glasses and starts heading back to the stall)
- Candice** You pervert! What are you doing in here? Get out!
- Allen** Boy's washroom full!
- Clint** The boy's washroom is never full.
- Candice** *(Slyly under her breath)* How would you know? You're never in the boy's washroom.
(Natalie whips her head towards Candice and glares. Turns and looks at Allen and then at Clint. Aggressively grabs Allen by his shirt and kisses him then pushes him aside.)
- Carrie** Natalie what are you doing?
- Clint** What the... you kissed him!
(Allen stumbles back into his stall.)
- Natalie** *(To Clint)* Now we're even. *(Starts walking out)*
(Everyone exits in a big commotion talking over each other. Everything is silent for a few seconds. Carrie enters the washroom and walks directly towards Allen's stall. Allen begins scrambling under the stalls.)

- Carrie** Allen Fick, what are you doing in here? *(Waits a few seconds for a response)* I can see you crawling under the stalls... Just because I'm a girl doesn't mean I can't use force to get you out.
- Allen** I never doubted that.
- Carrie** What?
- Allen** Nothing. *(Gets up off the ground and slowly opens stall door trying to discreetly cover his crotch scared she's going to hurt him)*
- Carrie** *(Raises her arms as she speaks, Allen mistakes her and squeals covering his face.)* What the hell are you doing in here?
- Allen** The boy's washroom was full.
- Carrie** Don't give me that crap. The boy's washroom is never full.
- Allen** Oh yeah, well how would you know?
- Carrie** Every one knows that, especially girls. *(Allen goes to speak but she cuts him off)* Don't you have something better and less perverted to do with your time, like go to class; I'm surprised you're even missing class right now.
- Allen** Why is that?
- Carrie** Well you are a nerd and most nerds enjoy school and teachers and stuff... You can leave now.
- Allen** That's alright I think I'll just hang out here.
- Carrie** Excuse me. Uh yeah, goodbye Allen.
- Allen** What, are you leaving now?
- Carrie** No actually, you are.
- Allen** I'm not ready to go yet.
- Carrie** Get out of the bathroom Allen.
- Allen** *(Allen looks at his watch. Speaks under his breath)* Almost third period.

- Carrie** What?
- Allen** It's almost third period.
- Carrie** Yeah so you'd better run along. *(Waits for Allen to leave but he doesn't move. She gestures to the door but still doesn't move. She stares at him, Allen is slightly nervous but doesn't do anything.)* Get out!
- Allen** No.
- Carrie** Get out.
- Allen** No. *(Carrie goes to say something but Allen interrupts)* I can't leave yet.
- Carrie** Uh yeah you can.
- Allen** No I can't.
- Carrie** And why not?
- Allen** I have to wait until after third period.
- Carrie** No you don't.
- Allen** Yes I do, I have to wait until after third period is over before I can leave.
- Carrie** *(Stares at him for a second)* Why?
- Allen** Look, I'm not trying to peep on anyone I'm just supposed to meet someone here.
- Carrie** In the girl's washroom?
- Allen** Yeah, well I'm not really meeting them, I'm just waiting for them.
- Carrie** In the girl's washroom.
- Allen** Yeah... You don't believe me do you? *(Carrie just looks at him)* Yeah I thought so.
- Carrie** Get out Allen.

- Allen** Please, don't make me leave. I can't go. Not until...
- Carrie** After third period. *(Both stare at each other for a few seconds)*
Fine, if you tell me why you can't leave until after third period is over then maybe I'll let you stay... although most likely not.
- Allen** I can't leave until after third period because...
- Carrie** And don't ramble on about nothing.
- Allen** Okay... *(Waits a long time, looking at his watch etc, before deciding to tell her.)* I'm waiting to ask Jaime out.
- Carrie** *(Laughs)* Jaime Miller, on a date, with you? You can't be serious.
- Allen** Yeah. Now will you leave me alone?
- Carrie** *(Still slightly laughing)* No. What does that have to do with peeping on girls in the bathroom, you planning on asking her out in here?
- Allen** No, well, I wasn't really sure how I was going to do it. I just thought that I would gain some insight first before I asked her out.
- Carrie** Gain some insight? By hiding out in the girl's washroom you thought you'd gain insight?
- Allen** Yeah, you can learn everything about girl's in here. And that way I'd know how to ask her out and I'd know what to do.
- Carrie** You think you're going to learn how to ask Jaime out by hiding in the girl's washroom? *(Allen nods)* First of all, you're not going to learn that here and second of all it's Jaime and to tell you the truth, you don't have a chance in hell. She's too good for you.
- Allen** *(Sits on the bench)* I know that, but I have to ask her out... *(To himself)* I have to. *(Pause)* Have you ever liked someone so much that they're all you think about and all you want to think about? And when you do, you think about the perfect way of asking them out, but when you actual try it for real, they make you so nervous that you can't even say hi. Then when you finally do say what you've always wanted to, something goes terribly wrong... like, say Big Bertha.

Carrie What?

Allen *(Allen waves his hand for Carrie to ignore)* I'm tired of screwing up and I'm tired of backing down and wimping out. I promised myself that today was the day I was going to talk to her and it has taken me two years to do this and I'm not going to back down this time. I can't leave until third period.

Carrie Why third period, what happens then?

Allen Jaime comes to the bathroom with Candice.

Carrie You knew that?

Allen Two years.

(Carrie turns to the mirror, fixes her hair and turns back to Allen and sits beside him on the bench)

Carrie Okay, go ahead. *(Allen pauses for a second then awkwardly leans in to kiss her. Carrie shoves his head out of the way)* No! I meant go ahead and ask me about girls you idiot.

Allen Oh... *(Pauses to think)* What's the right way to ask a girl out?

Carrie Okay. Well, you should never ask her out in front of a crowd especially around your guy friends; It just puts her on the spot and then if she doesn't know how to handle the situation she'll just say yes whether she wants to or not. *(Allen nods)* But when you do it make sure you compliment her first, but nothing like I like your shoes or you look really good today. Tell her something about her that is the reason you want to go out with her so badly.

Allen Okay. Like, you're perfect with all your imperfections and I need to learn all there is to know about you because learning about you in my dreams just isn't good enough.

Carrie *(Smiles)* Yeah.

- Allen** Well, what about when you're actually on the date? I mean, I would think to bring her flowers first or something and opening the door for her and paying for movie and dinner and stuff, perhaps even meeting the parents to make sure they're okay with it. But Wallace said that girls don't like that. He said that you should let the girl pay for herself to show that you think of her as an equal.
- Carrie** Well Wallace is an idiot. Because if you did everything you said, you'd be going above and beyond the regular dating requirements and that's good. And bringing her flowers is definitely a plus. It's something unexpected.
- Allen** Well I would never think of doing anything less than that for Jaime. Who should make the first move?
- Carrie** It depends. If a girl wants to then she should but most girls would prefer for the guy to make the first move because we don't feel confident enough.
- Allen** And you think we do?
- Carrie** You're hornier, so we assume, yeah.
- Allen** Alright, then how do we know if we should?
- Carrie** Well guys normally only think about whether or not they want to kiss the girl and how to go about doing it but they should really be paying attention to whether she wants to or not.
- Allen** How are we supposed to be able to tell?
- Carrie** I don't know. You just have to watch to see if she's been having a really good time or not and if she's confided in you or not and if she's been lingering by the door when you're saying goodbye.
- (Bell for third period rings. Allen is immediately nervous)*
- Allen** Third period. *(Takes off his glasses and begins to clean them)*
- Carrie** *(Gets up)* I gotta go... You know, you don't have anything to worry about. I mean, you're a nerd but you're cute, especially without those glasses on. *(Walks to the exit)* Good luck Allen. *(Smiles and leaves)*

- Allen** Thanks. *(Finishes cleaning glasses and puts them back on)*
- (Allen begins to wait for Jaime. Gets up and grabs his backpack from the stall and then sits back on the bench. Pulls out his headphones and walkman. Music fades in. Looks at his watch. Waits. Fixes the rolls in his jeans. Pulls out his lunch kit and begins making a rose out of apple peels etc. Song ends fading out. Sighs, looks at his rose then stands up, pauses, looks at his watch one last time, picks up his backpack and slowly walks towards the exit. Goes to open the door but it swings open and hits him.)*
- Jaime** Oh my god, I'm sor...
- Allen** *(Fanatically cuts her off)* No that's oka... *(Sees girls heading toward bathroom. Sounds of them talking are heard. Allen thrusts the rose at Jaime and bursts into his stall)* No! Damn it, why did I do that!
- Lori** *(Off stage)* Yeah I'll see you later. *(Enters washroom pauses by Jaime)* Jaime what's wrong?
- Jaime** *(Turns to Lori)* Allen Fick is hiding in that stall.
- Allen** She knows my name.
- Lori** What!
- Jaime** *(Points under the stall)* Look.
- (Allen's feet are shuffling nervously)*
- Lori** Oh my god! Allen!
- (Door opens to the bathroom Natalie enters)*
- Natalie** What's going on...
- Lori** *(Quickly turns to Natalie)* There's a guy hiding in the bathroom.
- Natalie** What!
- Lori** Come on! *(Grabs Natalie's arm and heads to the exit)* Jaime you stay here and make sure this creep doesn't leave.

(Carrie enters the washroom and is attacked by Lori and Natalie)

Carrie Hey, where are you guys going...

Natalie There's a creep hiding in the bathroom.

Lori Come on. *(Starts pushing Carrie out the door)*

Carrie Where are we going?

Lori To go get someone.

Carrie What? Wait...

Natalie We're going to get the principal.

Carrie Don't you think that's a little rash?

Lori *(Pushes Carrie out the door)* Fine. We'll get Big Bertha.

Allen Oh please no.

(Girls exit)

Jaime *(Confused)* Get out of the washroom... What are you doing in here... *(Looks at the rose)* What is this?! *(Allen doesn't respond)* This rose in my hand, what is this?

Allen *(To himself)* Oh my god, oh my god, oh my god. God damn it Allen! It's now or never! *(Unlocks the stall door, pauses, then steps out)* So I stepped out of the stall... *(Looks at her)* and then I said to her what I've always wanted to say... Hi. And then she said to me what I've always wanted her to say.

Jaime Hi. *(Waits almost impatiently for him to explain)*

Allen *(Pauses breathing heavily. Puts his hands up to explain but stops himself. Brings his hands to his pants and wipes them off. Takes in a deep breath then blurts everything out)* Jaime I don't know how to say this, but you're the most perfect person I've ever met in my whole life and I've waited two years to just hear you say hi to me. And I was in the stall to learn about girls to figure out a way to get up the courage to talk to you, uh whatever, that's not important. Look, I know I'm a dork and you're way too good for me, for anyone. But I know that no one would treat you better than I would because there's no way they could like you the way I do. I sit behind you in English class and I helped you with that question that one time when Mr. Trumpit was picking on you because you were talking to Donna but, oh uh, yeah never mind that. But I tried asking you before but I never could because you just made me so nervous and I couldn't get out all the words I wanted to say to you. And even if I could've there wouldn't have been any word to express how beautiful you are or how your smile makes me melt and how fabulous you are. I've watched all your volleyball games and you are by far the best on the team. Uh I just...

(Sounds of Big Bertha and the girls are heard coming towards the bathroom. Allen looks at the door waiting for it to open. Jaime doesn't turn her attention from Allen.)

Allen ...I uh... I just... *(Stops fidgeting and takes a breath to relax)*
Will you go out with me Friday?

(Big Bertha walks into the bathroom with the Lori, Natalie and Carrie)

Big Bertha What the hell are you doing in here? *(Stomps towards Allen)*

Allen Oh no. *(Turns to Jaime)*

(Big Bertha grabs Allen arms behind him and starts trying to drag him out. Allen is struggling to free himself. Everyone is making a fuss.)

Allen Jaime I just... Will you? *(To Big Bertha)* Let go of me! *(Looks back at Jaime and just looks at her while he's being pulled out.)*

(Jaime looks down at her rose then back at Allen. Allen slightly frantic looks back to Carrie. Carrie goes to speak but Jaime cuts her off)

Jaime **Sure.**

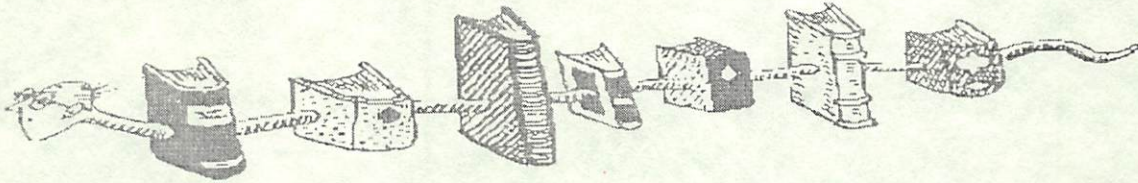
(Allen looks back at Jaime in shock. Jaime nods yes back to him. Allen stops struggling, smiles and is pulled out of the bathroom. Door shuts. Jaime laughs and looks down at the rose again and shakes her head in confusion and then smiles to herself again. Exits)

Fade to black.

The East Bridge

by

Brittney Bogyo



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The East Bridge

Setting:

The audience is looking at a pedestrian bridge segment with a railing. There is a lamppost to one end on the outside (closest to the audience) of the railing. At the base of the lamppost there is enough space for a kid to sit, somewhat hidden from the actors on the bridge.

Lights fade with house, a splash and a siren is heard; lights come up slightly. Audience perceives faintly a scene of busy people. It's cold. There is tense murmur, vicious press reporters (but complete questions inaudible), tearful people and ends with a policeman clearing the crowd from the bridge. Lights fade again, allowing actors to clear stage in darkness, lights up on the bridge. It is early morning some days later.

Each person is dressed drably in black, white, grey, or tan except the fishing kid. All players wear or carry something bright yellow (a yellow cell phone, yellow police ribbon, yellow water-guns or super-soakers) except the fishing kid, Petey.

The Fishing Kid - part I:

Child enters with fishing gear, climbs through or around or over the railing and edges to the lamppost. Without dialogue, the child sets up for fishing: green tackle box, rod, worms in an old can. The child sets up a paper napkin like a tablecloth, puts on it two apples. After cringing at baiting the hook, the child casts his line with a flourish and settles back for a day of fishing, remaining on stage for the length of the play...

The Joggers:

Two joggers enter stage left, one ahead of the other...

Jogger 1: Hey, come on! Hurry up!

Jogger 2: Wait up...let's...take a break...

They come to a stop centre span, breathless, and lean on the rail...[tighten laces, drink from bottle, taking pulse etc.]

Jogger 1: That vacation didn't help you much. You're in worse shape now than last month.

Jogger 2: That was no vacation... we had a ... family crisis...

Jogger 1: Sorry to hear that... everyone OK?

Jogger 2: Well, no...you know how it is, with work, the wife, the kids... there just isn't the time to do everything...anyway, my nephew and his friend saw something happen ...and he refused to go back to school... we had to get some help in...help change schools... then there was the police...

Jogger 1: Police!? Woah! This must have been some family crisis...Hey, you don't have to give me all the details if you don't want to ...

Jogger 2: Naw, you already know most of them... it was in the papers ...
[reflective silence]... We know my nephew and his friend "Petey" know something about what happened but they won't say a word... Hey, when you were a kid, were you ever picked on?

Jogger 1: Yeah, and how! That's when running became my friend...
speaking of which, heart rate's droppin – let's go! Race you to the parking lot...

The Gang With Water Pistols

Joggers exit as a partially wet kid rushes in, pauses mid span looking terrorized. He has a backpack typical of those taken to school. He crouches behind the lamppost where the fishing boy is. Two other kids, somewhat older than him, with backpacks and water pistols/soakers enter.

Scared kid: Petey?! [in loud whisper]... What are you doing here? ...I haven't seen you around... Petey, they're after me...Shh! keep quiet, they're coming...

Kid 1: Where are you, you little fag? Did you see which way he went?

Kid 2: Nah, he gave us the slip...[huffing]... Almost out of amo anyway... Why are we after this kid again? I don't even think he goes to our school any more...

Kid 1: That's just the point! He's a little weasel, one bit of trouble and he...[speaking loudly and mockingly]...gets all scared, runs to his mommy...[normal voice]... he's just a little faggot and we gotta teach him and his pal, Petey, a lesson...

Kid 2: Oh! So he's the one they think saw...

Kid 1: He didn't see ANYTHING. No one saw ANYTHING. You get me?
He and his idiot friend don't know anything...

Kid 2: ...Do you?

Kid 1: Do I what?

Kid 2: You know...what happened that night? Why she went over the edge?

Kid 1: Everyone KNOWS... She wasn't pushed, she jumped. I heard my sister say she deserved it. She was a lesbo... an ignorant, skanky, queer, fat little whore... She even tried to make friends with that football player, whatshisname...He lost interest pretty quickly once she "fell" down those stairs... Seems she's pretty clumsy ...

Kid 2: Hey, I saw that! That was pretty subtle but I saw Cindy give her a little push

Kid 1: That's NOT what you saw. She's simply a clutz. Anyway, No football jock would wanna be caught dead with any clutzy lesbo...

Kid 2: I didn't think lesbos were interested in guys...

Kid 1: It's just an expression, you idiot...*[Distant school bell rings]*... Look, lets get goin'... we'll find that faggot later...

The group exits to opposite side of stage, Scared Kid looks to see if the coast is clear

Scared Kid: I think they're gone... I gotta go too... My Mom's going to be checking on me in my new school... Don't worry, I haven't said anything... yet, anyways... Look, Petey, I... I gotta go...

The Cop and The Detective:

Scared kid leaves hiding spot and runs off in the opposite direction just as a uniformed cop and a detective mount the bridge...

Cop: That's the school bell. There won't be any kids for a while...

Detective: Great. Now, go over the scene for me again...

Cop: [*referring to flip notes*]...I arrived on the scene at 0233 in response to an anonymous 911 call — likely a teen female from the tape — reporting a body under the East Bridge. I came up on the bridge and looked around. As you can see, it is a relatively short drop to shallow pools along the edges but the centre is really rocky and the water much rougher. I saw the body over there... I called for an ambulance, technical rescue crew and made my way down the embankment...

Detective: And you found her there...

Cop: Yes, I checked and there was no pulse. One eye was swollen and there was a bruise..

Detective: That's what the coroner said, [*reading from his own notes*] ...let's see... old broken collar bone... ah, here it is: "Bruising...swollen eye...inflamed tear ducts"

Cop: What was that last thing? Inflamed tear ducts? How does that happen?

Detective: I think that's pretty obvious. Anyways, the coroner feels the bruising happened just an hour or so before the death. He places the time of death near 2300 the night before.

Cop: So how's the investigation going...

Detective: Well, there are no key witnesses we can find; just that one kid and he gave us nothing substantial. There are reports of the victim being subject to constant teasing and harassment. There are rumours among some of the kids about a fight between the victim and an informal gang of "in kids" but the rumours conflict one-another over several details. Well, she was pushed over the edge, one way or another...Have you kept in touch with the parents?

Cop: Yeah, the Mom is pretty distraught and the other kid, the boy... [*searching notes*] has become totally introverted, hasn't said a word to anyone and keeps sneaking off on his own. I've checked and he's been missing time at school...

Detective: Do you think he knows something?

Cop: It's hard to say... The psychologist we brought in isn't sure. It may be

that he just misses his sister or he identifies with her, but yeah, there is always the possibility he knows what's up...until he is willing to talk, we can't really tell...

Detective: Well, keep me posted... I want to hit the school administration before lunch...

[exits towards the school with cop...school bell rings]

The Fishing Kid - Part II

The kid fishing, his line now drooping a bit, takes a bite of the apple and contemplates the area where the cop said the body was found. Eventually, he takes the other apple and tosses it with care in that direction. A sound plays indicating a drop to a greater depth than apparent...

The Young Couple

Two young adults come on to the Bridge...

Young adult 1: It's such a beautiful afternoon, peaceful.

Young adult 2: Yeah ... and kinda solemn, tomb-like.

Young adult 1: How so?

Young adult 2: That's where they found the body, right over by that yellow marker.

Young adult 1: Oh, the girl? Do you think she committed suicide?

Young adult 2: I dunno, no one really knows...Still, it makes this place kind of creepy, doesn't it.

Young adult 1: I don't think so...Remember when we were in highschool...

Young adult 2: I would rather forget it. You were the smart one and I was the class clown...

Young adult 1: *[laughing]*... well, I was remembering that story about building someone into the bridge—burying them alive—as a sort of sacrifice-

Young adult 2: Yeah, I remember...Mrs. McIntyre was obsessed with it. She

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said the spirit would protect the bridge and those that travelled on it... It was the second verse in London Bridge... "London Bridge is falling down, falling down, falling down" then it went "Set a man to watch all night, watch all night, watch all night" ... a human sacrifice in the bridge's foundation, so that the spirit could "watch all night."

Young adult 1: Well, maybe it's like that. It would sure make people feel better.

Young adult 2: ...Maybe...

The friends, left somewhat melancholy by the site stroll quietly from the stage.

Woman on cell phone:

A distraught, frantic woman enters

Rachel: Petey! [*the boy tries to hide but never leaving the lamppost*] Where are you? It's Aunt Rachel--Petey...

Her cell phone sounds. She comes to the centre of the span and answers it...

Rachel: Sheri?... No...I'm still looking for him... No he didn't go to school, I checked at noon and even went to his first class after lunch, he is no where to be found. Did you check the tree house?... Well, what more can I do?... No, I've done that. I----I --- I've even come to the bridge... [*long silence*]... Sheri... Sheri, I know you said that but... I had to come Sheri. She used to bring Petey here when she looked after him... Oh...No.no no no...Don't cry, Sheri... Sheri... [*curses under her breath*] Look, I'll be right there... we'll find him...just hold on...

[bell rings – school is over]

Two executives:

She exits still talking on the line as the two joggers, now dressed in business suites head back over the bridge one carrying a bouquet of flowers...

Worker1: What a day!

Worker2: Profitable I hope...

Worker1: I'll say... [*stop adjust papers in his briefcase and puts down bouquet*]... I finally got rid of that stooge in accounting.

Worker2: Oh, that guy, he was such a wimp, amusing to have around but what a fag... Only down side to getting rid of him, is there's one less guy to make coffee.... Feel sorry for him? [*sarcastically, pointing to the bouquet of flowers that Worker1 holds*]

Worker1: Hell, no. You remember your biology? What was it Darwin said? "Survival of the fittest". Why, he was just one of those freaks of nature. [*laugh...*]

Worker2: And the flowers?

Worker1: Anniversary.

At some point in this scene a yellow flower falls out of the bouquet, obvious enough that the audience can see it.

The Fishing Kid - Part III

The bridge is now still...the small boy's rod is drooping and his eyes have been downcast for some time... The lighting has faded and indicates it is now evening... With a heavy sigh, he carefully folds the napkin and replaces his tackle.

Leaving his rod and tackle behind he walks along the outside of the rail (closest to the audience) to centre stage. He contemplates jumping, leaning out. He sees the fallen yellow rose and picks it up. He goes back to his tackle box and retrieves a piece of string. He then packs up his stuff, carries it with him to center stage where he ties the rose to the railing.

Kid: I miss you, Sis...

Now at peace, he looks a long time at the rose and the bridge below... he picks up his stuff and walks off stage.

---The End---

APPENDIX

Excerpts from the Dictionary of Symbolism (on-line edition).

<http://www.umich.edu/~umfandsf/symbolismproject/symbolism.html/Y/yellow.html>

YELLOW

Yellow often stands for light, the sun's rays, intellect, faith, and/or goodness. However, yellow can also be a sign of cowardice, betrayal, and/or jealousy. Insects that bear yellow and black stripes are often poisonous, or attempting to mimic another poisonous insect, and in this respect yellow can be seen as a warning, and/or protection for it's bearer. In medical terms, a yellow flag means quarantine.

BRIDGE

The bridge is inherently symbols of communication and union, whether it be between heaven and earth or two distinct realms. It may be the passage to reality, or merely a symbol for travel and crossing. In dreams, a bridge symbolizes the passage from one state to another, higher one, like an ascension; it is the end of one cycle and the beginning of another.

WATER

Water popularly represents life. It can be associated with birth, fertility, and refreshment. In a Christian context, water has many correlations. Christ walked on water, and transmuted it into wine, thus these acts can be seen as a transcendence of the earthly condition. Christians are baptized with or in water, symbolizing a purification of the soul, and an admission into the faith. However, water can also be destructive (as in the biblical flood which only Noah and his family escaped); water drowns and erodes, wearing away even the densest of stones given enough time. Water is also one of the four elements essential to life in traditional western philosophy; in this form it is represented by undulating lines, or a triangle pointing down. Colors commonly associated with it are blue and green. Its qualities are fluidity and cohesiveness. Flowing water usually represents change and the passage of time.

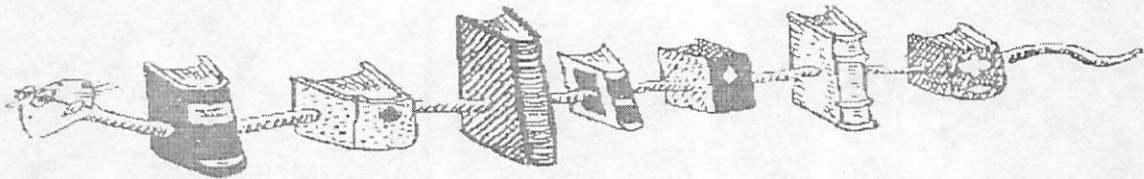
FISH

The symbolic nature of fish is as inseparable from that of water as the two are connected in life. In psychology, water symbolizes the depths of the unconscious, and fish are the "live material from the depths of the personality, relating to fertility and the life-giving powers of the maternal realms within us" Fish can also be symbolic of the faithful submerged in the waters of life. Yet fish are also cold-blooded, not driven by passion, and often represent such emotionless entities. In latin Christian symbology, the fish is related to Christ. Jesus told Peter (the first apostle), a fisherman by trade, that he would become a "fisher of men" if he were to follow Christ.

Dysfunction Junction

by

Erin Breen



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"DYSFUNCTION JUNCTION" *By Erin Breen*

CHARACTERS:

TAMARA- the narrator, a symbol of normalcy in her weird family

DEREK- Tamara's younger brother, not too bright but can be witty, girl-crazy

MOM- their stressed-out, booze-drinking, man-using mother

HEALTHFOOD CHICK*- Derek's vegetarian girlfriend

RELIGIOUS CHICK*- Derek's fanatic Christian girlfriend

CYBERCHICK73*- Derek's much older cyber-girlfriend

GRANDMA*- old, frustrated and mean

HOLLIS- Derek's drug-dealing buddy

KATIE- Tamara's best friend

AUNT EDITH- fat and whiny

AUNT KAYLA- not a good cook

COP #1- a male cop (required)

COP #2- a cop (male or female)

* these characters are all played by the same actress. This is an important part of the plot.

(Set: A typical living room, with a couch, coffee table, waste basket and bar. Two doors, one on the left: to outside, and one on the right: to kitchen. Background music: "American Psycho" by Treble Charger. The spotlight comes up on TAMARA sitting on the couch)

TAMARA: For as long as I can remember, I always wanted the 1950's T.V. show kind of life. You know, like "Leave It to Beaver" or "The Brady Bunch." The kind of life where the mom stays at home and bakes cookies and the dad wears a suit and when he comes home from work he goes to his den and reads the newspaper and the younger brother is a mischievous little imp. But I never got any of that. Instead, here I am at my house, which I fondly call "Dysfunction Junction". My parents are divorced, which is no big deal, because at my school it's practically abnormal to have your parents still together. Besides, there was no dad on "The Partridge Family", just that creepy Rueben guy. And their divorce isn't the only thing, it's more like a bunch of little things, things like...

(TAMARA is interrupted by a loud clanging of pots and pans from offstage. The spotlight follows her as she crosses the stage and looks into the kitchen)

TAMARA: Derek, you'd better clean up that mess you made on the floor! You are such a dork! Get the dog's paws out of that bowl! Mom has to eat that for dinner, you idiot!

DEREK (from offstage): Whatever. I happen to think that Sparky is a much better cook than you are.

TAMARA: Ewww, what's that smell?

DEREK: For your big fat information, it happens to be my speciality, Cheesy Pleasy Tofu Casserole.

TAMARA: That's vomitous. It's just Hamburger Helper with tofu and Cheese Whiz. Couldn't you put real meat in it?

DEREK: No, cuz it's mean to kill animals and stuff.

(DEREK enters, wearing an apron. All of the lights come up.)

TAMARA: Since when are you a vegetarian?

DEREK: Since I started dating Healthfood Chick.

TAMARA: Healthfood Chick?

DEREK: I don't know her real name. We aren't at that stage in our relationship yet. You know the talking stage.

TAMARA: Oh, I see. You haven't asked her out yet.

DEREK: Tamara, Tamara, Tamara. You obviously don't understand the ninth grade dating system. Allow me to enlighten you. (he wipes his hands on his apron) Right now, our relationship is at the making-out-in-the-hallways-between-classes phase. Next, I'll be carrying her books for her, then we'll go on an actual date, and then we'll talk.

TAMARA: You are so messed.

(MOM enters through the left door)

MOM: Is that Cheesy Pleasy Tofu Casserole I smell?

DEREK: Of course.

MOM: So, what's new?

TAMARA: Derek thinks it's mean to kill animals.

MOM: Speaking of animals, I just finished talking to your father's lawyer, and he said that you two need to go see your father next weekend.

TAMARA (clicking on remote control, to 'pause' MOM and DEREK. She speaks to the audience): Oh, goody, my dad. Where to begin? Okay, first of all, the reason my parents are divorced is because Mom caught Dad with another woman in the kitchen. Mom just told dad she had something important to discuss, then went ballistic and threw a blender at his head. Then as soon as the stitches were healed, the two of them were in court fighting over custody and who got to keep the Naugahyde couch. Mom got the kids, and Dad got the couch. It's funny, but Derek and I never tried the whole "Parent Trap" thing. Maybe it's because we both can't stand Hayley Mills, or maybe it's because we both realize that maybe they are better off divorced, Dad married to Isabel the stripper, and Mom carefully tending her windowsill of Chia Pets, and throwing herself at every available man...(TAMARA 'unpauses' MOM and DEREK)

MOM (continuing): You're both going and I don't want a fight out of either of you. Anyway, I'm going out on Saturday night, and you shouldn't have to stay home alone.

TAMARA: I hate going to Dad's. He's always dissing you and touching the scar on his forehead and saying (she switches to a gruff voice) "Damn that Caroline. How can you stand to live with her, Tammy?" (switches to normal voice) And I hate being called Tammy!

DEREK: I'm not going to Dad's. His concubine never lets me go to Hollis's.

MOM: Derek, don't call Isabel a concubine.

DEREK (whining): But Mom...

MOM: She's a whore.

TAMARA(shocked): Mom! What about your new Zen lifestyle? Your resolve to put forth good karma?

MOM: Screw the karma. I can't stand that tramp.

TAMARA: But Mom, doesn't that make Dad a tramp, too, for marrying a woman half his age?

MOM: Don't bring your father into this. If drinking gin was a paying job, he'd be a millionaire.

TAMARA: Calm down, Mom. I was insulting Dad.

MOM: Good. I can't believe that balding jerk is playing sugar daddy to Isabel's painted whore of Babylon.

DEREK: I thought that Dad and Isabel lived in Surrey.

TAMARA: She meant it metaphorically, dimbulb.

DEREK: Whatever. Isabel still won't let me go play Dungeons and Dragons at Hollis's place.

TAMARA: Well, I can see why. ('pauses' MOM and DEREK, speaks to the audience) Hollis is a twenty-four year old high school dropout who lives in a drug house and plays Dungeons and Dragons with a bunch of fourteen year old boys who have more education than he does. I guess Hollis just decided to give up after his third year of eighth grade. ('unpauses' MOM and DEREK)

(HEALTHFOOD CHICK knocks on the left door. MOM answers the door)

HEALTHFOOD CHICK: Is Derek home?

DEREK: Come on in!

HEALTHFOOD CHICK(entering and sniffing): You made Cheesy Pleasy Tofu Casserole!

DEREK: Shall I escort you to the kitchen?

(DEREK offers his arm to HEALTHFOOD CHICK and they walk into the kitchen)

MOM: What was that all about?

TAMARA(singsong): Derek's in lo-ove!

MOM: Let me guess, he calls her "Hippie Girl" or "Granola Chick".

TAMARA: Almost. She's Healthfood Chick.

MOM: I'll bet you five bucks that she's out of here within the next ten seconds.

TAMARA: You're on.

MOM(looking at her watch): Okay. Ten, nine, eight...(continues counting)

(HEALTHFOOD CHICK enters on the count of five and stomps towards the door, looking disgusted and angry)

MOM: One.

(HEALTHFOOD CHICK slams the door)

MOM: Okay, pay up.

(TAMARA grumbles, pulls the money out of her pocket and hands it to MOM)

TAMARA: I wonder what happened?

(DEREK enters from the kitchen, tears his apron off, and throws it down)

DEREK(frustrated): Damnit, why do the two of you have to be such sugar-loving carnivores?

MOM: What?

DEREK: FYI, Healthfood Chick opened the fridge to get a drink and saw cold roast beef, two bottles of Coke, and Tamara's half-eaten ham and cheese sandwich. (to TAMARA) Oh, yeah. You left your retainer in the fridge, too. (he stomps back into the kitchen)

MOM(to TAMARA): You left your retainer in the fridge?

TAMARA(weakly): I didn't mean to...

MOM: I didn't pay the orthodontist four thousand dollars to straighten your teeth just so you could screw it all up by putting your retainer anywhere but inside your mouth. And shouldn't you be wearing your headgear, too?

TAMARA: I refuse to wear headgear. It makes me look like a die-hard Trekkie.

MOM: Lewis next door wears his headgear.

TAMARA: That's different. Lewis is a die-hard Trekkie. He thinks he's Captain Kirk or Spock or something.

MOM: I think Lewis is a nice boy.

TAMARA: You'd probably think Hitler was a nice boy. Come on Mom, Lewis is hardly cool. He went to Math camp last summer, for Pete's sake. And he wears Spock ears to school. And Lewis was the one who started Derek taking like William Shatner last New Year's Eve.

MOM: I knew there was a reason I didn't like that wookie-loving freak.

TAMARA: Uh, Mom?

MOM: Yeah?

TAMARA: Wookies are from Star Wars.

MOM: Oh. (looking at her watch) It's still early. Do you want to go to the movies? I hear that the Rocky Horror Picture Show is playing.

TAMARA: I'll go as long as you promise not to dress like the transvestite.

MOM(arguing): But I...

TAMARA(interrupting): Don't make a scene. Now, go get your purse and coat and remember to use the bathroom before we leave.

(MOM exits, kitchen door)

TAMARA(yelling): Derek, do you want to come see "Rocky Horror Picture Show" with me and Mom?

DEREK(entering): As long as she promises not to dress like the transvestite.

TAMARA: She already said she wouldn't.

DEREK: Do you think there'll be any cute girls there?

TAMARA: Yeah, but first you'll have to make sure they aren't really men.

DEREK: Thanks for the nasty mental picture.

TAMARA: It's what I do best.

(MOM enters, wearing a long coat)

MOM: Are you two ready to go?

(MOM, TAMARA, and DEREK exit through the left door. Short 'fast-forward' effect with the strobe light. Effect stops and they re-enter, MOM and DEREK happy, TAMARA embarrassed)

TAMARA: I should have known that you were dressed like a transvestite under that coat.

MOM: Come on, Tamara, it's just not the same experience when you're not dressed up.

DEREK(to MOM): I thought you were the prettiest female impersonator there.

TAMARA: What are you so happy about, Creep-Boy?

DEREK: I met a girl. A real one, not just a guy in drag. She was outside boycotting the film, 'cuz she says it goes against God's plan for the human race.

MOM: Oh, that's nice. What's her name?

DEREK: Religious Chick.

MOM(sotto voce, to TAMARA): Betcha five bucks that she'll become convinced that Derek is Satan and she'll have to act as the Sword of Jesus and purge him from the earth.

TAMARA: You're on.

(MOM and TAMARA shake hands. TAMARA points the remote control at the stage, 'fast forward' effect, clicks the control again and it stops. MOM enters, putting on a necklace or earrings)

MOM: How do I look?

TAMARA: Fine

MOM: Are you okay staying home alone?

TAMARA: Fine.

MOM: I'm having Michael Jackson's love child.

TAMARA: Fine.

MOM: You didn't hear a single word I said, did you?

TAMARA: Yeah, I did.

MOM: Then why did you say "fine" to everything?

TAMARA: Well, knowing you, it isn't entirely impossible that you would be having Michael Jackson's love child. You know, considering your previous track record with men.

MOM(prottesting): I haven't dated that many men since your father and I divorced.

TAMARA: Get real, Mom. I've seen you go through enough men to make up not one, but two, rugby teams. Let's see...first there was Tim, then Randy, Joe, Randy again, Tom, Paul, Adam, Marcus, Sven who couldn't speak English, Peter...

(DEREK enters)

DEREK: Wassup?

TAMARA: Just listing all of Mom's old boyfriends.

DEREK: How about the guy with six fingers on each hand?

TAMARA: Grant?

DEREK: Yeah, he was cool, but not as cool as the guy who was a soldier in 'Nam.

TAMARA: Stan told us all about the unbelievable pain and torture of warfare.

MOM(trying to change the subject): Speaking of unbelievable pain and torture, I forgot to tell you that we're going to your grandmother's for Thanksgiving.

TAMARA: I'm not going. I have my period.

MOM: Well if you have it now, it'll be over by next Sunday.

TAMARA: Fine. It starts next Sunday

MOM: Nice try, but you're going.

DEREK: I'm not going. I have my period.

MOM: It didn't work for her, and it's not going to work for you, buddy. We're going.

TAMARA('pauses' MOM and DEREK and speaks to the audience): Oh no, it looks like it's going to be another fun-packed holiday at Grandma's. I can't stand her. She's big, loud, and Ukranian and she always finds a way to offend or insult everybody, but she thinks it's okay because she's old. And her house always always smells like borscht. Last Christmas she got really drunk and started singing like Janis Joplin until she passed out under the Christmas tree. She made Derek cry. (she smirks) Actually, that was kind of funny. ('unpauses' MOM and DEREK)

MOM: Look, Derek, my numero uno son, your grandmother is very old and probably a little senile, too. It would make her very happy if you were to go to Thanksgiving dinner...

TAMARA(covering her face with her hands): Oh no, here it comes...

MOM(continuing): ...Because you know that if you don't, Grandma is liable to get upset and have a heart attack or break a hip. And if she dies, the blood will be on your hands...

TAMARA(shocked): Mom!

MOM: ...And if you don't go to Thanksgiving dinner, you can bet your Gameboy that you'll be going to the funeral instead.

DEREK(ashamed): Well, when you put it that way...

MOM: Good, and I expect you to be on your best behavior.

DEREK: Whatever. I'm going to Hollis's.

MOM: No, you're not. You're staying home tonight, and I don't want any trouble.

DEREK(whining): But Mom...

(Sound of a horn honking offstage)

MOM: Sounds like my date's here.

TAMARA(sarcastically): Wow, looks like you picked a real winner.

(MOM glares at TAMARA and exits)

TAMARA(to DEREK): Leave me alone. I'm going to watch 'Titanic' and bawl my eyes out because my life really, really sucks.

DEREK: Tamara, you have to help me.

TAMARA: I don't have to do anything.

DEREK(begging): Please...

TAMARA: Look, Derek, I'm not in any big hurry to help you. The last time I did, I ended up standing in the rain with a huge saxophone while you broke up with Choir Chick.

DEREK: Okay, number one, that was Violin Chick, not Choir Chick. Number two, you don't even have to leave the house this time.

TAMARA: Absolutely no way! Last time I helped you in the house, we had to call the fire department.

DEREK(pondering seriously): Do you think Mom will let me get another hamster.

TAMARA: Not after what you did to Fluffy.

DEREK: How was I to know hamsters are flammable?

TAMARA: Well, you're flammable.

DEREK: I am?

(TAMARA rolls her eyes)

DEREK: Well, whatever. I desperately need your help this time.

TAMARA: No. The last time you desperately needed my help...

DEREK(interrupting): Shut up. All I want this time is to go to Midnight Mass with Religious Chick.

TAMARA: I'm not driving you.

DEREK: As if I'd want to be seen with you driving the Mom-mobile. I just need for you to distract Mom.

TAMARA: She's not home yet.

DEREK: Duh, it's called Midnight Mass for a reason. I need you to help 'cuz I'll probably be leaving as she's coming in.

TAMARA: That is, if she comes in.

('fast forward')

DEREK(looking at his watch): I'd better get going.

(MOM stomps in, goes into the kitchen, slamming the door behind her)

DEREK: Damnit.

MOM(re-entering, carrying a load of cosmetics): That's it! (she dumps the make-up in the garbage can) I've given up trying to impress men!

TAMARA: Mom, you just threw out about two-hundred dollars worth of lipstick!

MOM: I don't care how I look anymore! I'm giving up make-up!

DEREK(stage-whisper to TAMARA): Do you think she's going to give up deoderant, too?

TAMARA(shuddering): I hope not.

MOM: This is the last time I'm going to let a man hurt me!

TAMARA('pauses' MOM and DEREK, speaks to the audience): She says this everytime, but usually she just crawls into bed for a week and makes me call in to the office for her and say that she's sick, which I guess is kind of true. But this is different. She never freaked out like this before. ('unpauses' MOM and DEREK)

MOM: Tamara, would you mix me a drink?

(TAMARA crosses over to the bar)

TAMARA: Mom, you just can't drink away your problems.

MOM: I know that, but a margarita just makes them easier to bear.

TAMARA: I'm not making you a margarita.

MOM: How about a kahlua mudslide?

TAMARA: No! I'm not mixing you a drink!

MOM: Fine, then. Be that way. Derek, go into the kitchen and get me a lime and a salt shaker. Tamara, pass me the tequila. I'm taking matters into my own hands.

TAMARA: You are so immature. I can't believe you. (she brings out the tequila)

DEREK: I'm not even going to call you Mom anymore. You can be "the Parent Formerly Known as Mom" (he stomps off to the kitchen)

TAMARA(to MOM): Are you going to let him compare you to Prince?

MOM: I will not let him talk to me like that in my own house! (she grabs the bottle of tequila and stomps away to the kitchen)

(RELIGIOUS CHICK knocks on the left door. TAMARA answers the door)

RELIGIOUS CHICK: Is Derek home?

(DEREK enters with the tequila bottle, not realizing that RELIGIOUS CHICK is there)

MOM(yelling from offstage): You'd better bring that back, young man!

DEREK(yelling to MOM): Go to Hell, bitch.

MOM(offstage, enraged): What did you say? If you said what I thought you said, I'm going to be washing your mouth out with bleach!

DEREK(yelling): I said "I have a hell of a bad itch" (under his breath) Bitch.

RELIGIOUS CHICK(shocked): Blasphemer! Satan!

DEREK: What?

RELIGIOUS CHICK: I should never have allowed the lure of sin and evil to lead me to you! I must act as the Sword of Jesus and purge you from this earth, demon! (she takes a self-righteous stance)

TAMARA: Just wait a second here. I learned about conflict resolution at school. (to RELIGIOUS CHICK) Derek may be annoying, and he did just break about five of the Ten Commandments in the last ten seconds, but I don't think he's the Devil. Besides, I think you could go to jail for purging someone from the earth.

RELIGIOUS CHICK(thoughtfully): I suppose that's true.

TAMARA: So, why don't you go home and get out your rosary beads and ask God to forgive you for entering the den of the serpent?

RELIGIOUS CHICK: I never thought of it that way.

TAMARA: Maybe God will strike Derek down for you.

RELIGIOUS CHICK: Thank you. I will pray for your soul. (she exits)

TAMARA: Derek?

DEREK: Yeah?

TAMARA: I love God and Jesus as much as the next person does, but please don't bring home another fanatic like that.

DEREK: It's a deal. Hey, maybe I'll meet a new girlfriend while I'm on band tour. There's this really cute girl who plays the flute...

(TAMARA rolls her eyes)

MOM(from offstage): You owe me five bucks, Tamara.

TAMARA: Damn it.

('fast forward' to TAMARA sitting alone on the couch. KATIE enters)

TAMARA: Hi, Katie! ('pauses' KATIE, speaks to the audience) That's my best friend. She comes over every Thursday night so we can watch "Pacey's Pond" together. She isn't allowed to watch it at her house because her dad's an elderman at the church, and he thinks that the show is the Devil's work. So, she tells him we're doing homework, but really we're just staring blankly at the T.V., drooling over Pacey. ('unpauses' KATIE, and KATIE sits on the couch)

KATIE: I'm exhausted. I just got back from band tour this afternoon. So, what's "Pacey's Pond" about this week?

TAMARA: Pacey's brother comes back from military school and Pacey catches him in a compromising position with the English teacher.

KATIE: Good thing my dad thinks we're studying for Biology.

TAMARA: Yeah, well, your dad has a crucifix up his butt.

KATIE(shocked): Tamara!

TAMARA: What? I wasn't dissing God or Jesus, just your anal-retentive father. (changing subject) so, how was band tour? Derek wouldn't tell me a thing.

KATIE: It was a lot of fun.

TAMARA(micheviously): I heard you had a lot of sax.

(DEREK enters, carrying the largest saxophone case possible)

DEREK: Wassup?

TAMARA: Just asking Katie how much sax she had this weekend.

DEREK: Don't get me started. Band tour was crazy this year, all I did was have sax.

TAMARA(to KATIE): You had sax with my brother?

KATIE: Everyone loves to have sax with Derek because he's got the biggest one and he's so good at it.

DEREK: I'm particularly good at solo sax.

TAMARA: Who else did you have sax with? Greg?

KATIE: Yep.

TAMARA: Bryan?

KATIE: Yeah, but he's only got a little one.

TAMARA: Mark and Justin?

KATIE: Of course.

TAMARA: Jeff?

KATIE: No. Jeff plays the tuba.

(KATIE and TAMARA laugh)

DEREK: I'd love to stay and watch mindless teen melodramas with you, but I've got stuff to do on the Internet. (he exits)

KATIE: He isn't trying to auction off his vital organs on E-Bay again, is he?

TAMARA: Nah. He stopped doing that after some Chinese guy came to the door and tried to get the kidney he bought.

KATIE: Is Derek still buying porn using your Mom's credit card?

TAMARA: Actually, I'm kind of worried about him. I haven't caught Derek downloading any porn since he broke up with Religious Chick.

KATIE: Do you think he's gone, well...you know (flops her wrist)

TAMARA: You mean that he became so straight he looped right around to gay?

KATIE: Yeah!

TAMARA: Then why isn't he downloading pictures of naked guys?

KATIE: 'Cuz your mom already has them saved on the computer.

TAMARA: I forgot about that, and I was hoping never to remember it. (sarcastically)
Thank you, Katie.

(MOM enters)

MOM: Hi, Katie. Tamara, where's Derek?

TAMARA: On the Internet.

MOM: I don't want that Chinese man coming back, so Derek better not be on E-Bay.
(yelling) Derek, get your kidney's out here! I've got something important to tell you!

TAMARA(to KATIE): Run while you can. Last time she had something important to tell us, Dad ended up with a blender flying at his head.

KATIE: I guess I'd better go, then. See ya. (she exits)

(DEREK enters)

MOM: Your grandma just called...

DEREK(interrupting, hopefully): ...And she died and Thanksgiving dinner is cancelled?

TAMARA: If she died, how would she call?

DEREK(hopefully): From beyond the dead? Like in a cheesy horror movie?

MOM: Unfortunately not. Apparently, she's having her house fumigated and she's already told Aunt Edith and Aunt Kayla that dinner is going to be at our house this year.

DEREK: Is there any way we can back out of it?

MOM: It's impossible. I've already tried.

DEREK: What if I had dysentery? Or flesh eating disease?

MOM: She wouldn't believe it. Remember, you already had dysentery last Christmas, and flesh eating disease at Easter.

DEREK: That's right. How about if I had a hysterectomy?

TAMARA: As long as Aunt Kayla doesn't bring her infamous macaroni salad in an ice-cream bucket, I'm fine. What's her problem, anyway? Doesn't she know what bowls are?

MOM: The reason it's in an ice-cream bucket is because she makes a big batch and then freezes it so she'll always have something ready to bring to a family gathering.

TAMARA: That's disgusting!

DEREK: Isn't there a disease you can get from eating mayonnaise that's been frozen?

MOM: I don't want you saying that to Aunt Kayla. We're going to have a pleasant holiday, dammit! (she grabs a bottle from the bar and stomps off to the kitchen)

DEREK: Well, isn't there a disease?

(HOLLIS enters with a backpack and blanket)

HOLLIS: My mom kicked me out of her garage. Mind if I crash here?

TAMARA: Speaking of diseases...

DEREK(to HOLLIS): No, that's totally cool. My mom's busy trying to get "pleasant" before Thanksgiving.

HOLLIS: Sweet. (he puts his blanket on the couch, lies down, and goes to sleep)

TAMARA(to DEREK): Couldn't you have found Hollis a nice ditch to sleep in?

DEREK: I'm feeling charitable, okay?

TAMARA: Since when are you charitable?

DEREK: Since I met Cyber Chick 73.

TAMARA: Awww. That's cute, you have a cyber girlfriend.

DEREK: Yeah. There's just one problem. She's in town tonight and she's coming to visit.

TAMARA: That's cute,too. I'll put out a plate of cookies for your little date and I promise not to bother you.

DEREK(sheepishly): There's another problem,too.

TAMARA: I'm sure it's not that big a problem. Everyone who chats on the Internet is ugly.

DEREK: No, that's not it. (mumbling) She thinks I'm twenty-eight.

TAMARA: She drinks hard lemonade? That's no problem. I think Mom's got some in the bar. (she goes behind the bar to look)

DEREK: I said, she thinks I'm twenty eight.

TAMARA(popping up from behind the bar): What!?!

DEREK: She's thirty-four, so I lied and said I was a twenty-eight year old accountant.

TAMARA: Accountant? That's a laugh. You failed Math last year. Remember?

DEREK(weakly): I wanted to impress her.

TAMARA: I used to think that befriending Hollis was the stupidest thing you ever did, but this takes the cake.

DEREK: Just shut up and help me. I need to look really old really fast.

CYBERCHICK73(knocking on door): Derek? Are you home?

DEREK(in a fake deep voice): Just a minute,darling. (to TAMARA in his normal voice) Help me! That's her!

(TAMARA is struck by an idea, and rummages through the garbage can)

DEREK: How's garbage going to help me? (he looks in the garbage can) Wow, look at all of those empty booze bottles. Did Mom invite Guns N' Roses over for cocktails last night?

(TAMARA triumphantly pulls an eyeliner pencil out of the garbage can)

TAMARA: I guess this is going to have to work. (she begins to scribble a "beard" on DEREK's face)

CYBERCHICK73(from offstage): Derek?

DEREK(in deep voice): One more minute, sweetness.

TAMARA(critically surveying her work): There. Done. You seriously owe me for this.

DEREK(in deep voice): Come in! I'm ready!

(CYBERCHICK73 enters)

CYBERCHICK73(excitedly): Derek! (confused and let down) What's that thing on your face.

DEREK(in deep voice): My beard. Isn't it sexy? I grew it especially for you.

CYBERCHICK73: It's not even a real beard. (she looks at DEREK closely) You don't even look like you've hit puberty yet.

DEREK: Well, I've been meaning to tell you that I made a typo when I told you my age.

CYBERCHICK73: Just my luck. You're only twenty, right?

(DEREK is about to say "yes" but TAMARA stops him)

TAMARA: Do the right thing for once in your miserable little life, Derek.

DEREK(mumbling): I'm only fourteen.

CYBERCHICK73: Fourteen?! Fourteen! (to herself) That's sick! Almost pedophilistic! You really know how to pick them, don't you? First all of those disgusting filthy old cyber perverts, and now this, this prepubescent computer nerd who's voice hasn't even changed yet! Argggh! (she stomps offstage)

DEREK(in despair): Will I ever find real love? (he flops onto the couch dramatically, only to jump up after landing on HOLLIS. HOLLIS, however, just keeps sleeping. TAMARA points the remote control and 'fast forwards')

(MOM enters the living room quite visibly drunk, wearing a bathrobe, carrying a booze bottle.)

MOM(holding the bottle like an Oscar): I'd like to thank my close friend Johnnie Walker Black for making me what I am today...

TAMARA: I think you've had enough.

MOM: I'm not as drunk as you, young lady. Now I must go hence to the kitchen and prepare the roast bird thingy for Give-thanksing dinner. (she stumbles back into the kitchen)

DEREK: Well, today should be interesting. In addition to roast turkey, dinner will be featuring Pickled Mom and Fried Hollis.

(HOLLIS wakes up)

HOLLIS: Dude, did you say my name?

DEREK: Yeah, dude. Chill.

HOLLIS: What day is it?

DEREK: Thanksgiving.

HOLLIS: Oh. Cool. Does your Mom make the yams with the little marshmallows in it?

DEREK: I don't think so, dude.

HOLLIS: Well, that sucks.

DEREK: Aunt Kayla makes macaroni salad, though.

HOLLIS: Sweet!

(AUNT KAYLA enters with an ice cream pail)

AUNT KAYLA: I brought the macaroni salad!

DEREK(worriedly, to TAMARA): Do you think Mom'll make us eat it?

TAMARA: I hope not.

HOLLIS(pick up line style to AUNT KAYLA): How you doin'?

DEREK(disgusted): Dude, that's my aunt! Nasty!

(AUNT EDITH enters)

AUNT EDITH: Do I look bloated?

AUNT KAYLA: No. Of course not.

HOLLIS(to DEREK): Dude, who's the water buffalo woman?

AUNT EDITH(to AUNT KAYLA,upset): I thought you said I didn't look bloated! I hate you! (she runs into the kitchen)

AUNT KAYLA(following AUNT EDITH): At least I wasn't the one who said you looked like a water buffalo...

HOLLIS: I remember this one time on Jerry Springer there were these two chicks fighting with this other chick and they thought she was too fat to wear sexy clothes and the episode was called "I may be fat, but I'm all that" and it was really cool.

DEREK: What does that have to do with my aunts?

HOLLIS: The fat one shouldn't wear spandex, or ya'll are gonna end up on Springer.

(GRANDMA bursts in the door, very disgruntled)

GRANDMA: Don't bother me. My goiter's been acting up again.

DEREK and TAMARA: Hi, Grandma.

GRANDMA(to DEREK): What's that thing on your face?

DEREK: It's my beard, and it won't come off. (he glares at TAMARA)

GRANDMA: Where's your mother? (looking at HOLLIS) Is that her new boyfriend? I thought your father was bad, but that thing is awful. It only proves what I've known all along, that Caroline's tast in men is getting gradually worse.

TAMARA: She's in the kitchen, Grandma.

GRANDMA: I hope she's got some decaf. I can't drink regular coffee anymore because of my ulcers, you know.

(GRANDMA exits to the kitchen)

HOLLIS(to DEREK): So, dude, do you think I've got a chance with your mom?

DEREK: No,dude! Nasty!

(MOM enters)

MOM: The turkey's ready!

(COP#1 and COP#2 burst in the door)

COP#1: We have a warrant for the arrest of Hollis J. Kirkberger.

COP#2(cuffing HOLLIS): You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be held against you in a court of law.

HOLLIS: Will you be held against me in a court of law?

DEREK(disgusted): Dude, that's a cop!

HOLLIS: Hey, it was worth a try.

(GRANDMA enters)

GRANDMA: What in Hell's name is going on?

COP#2: This young man is being arrested for the possession and sale of narcotic drugs and marijuana.

GRANDMA(yelling): Caroline, I think you'll want to see this! The police are taking your boyfriend off to the slammer!

(TAMARA looks closely at GRANDMA)

TAMARA: Derek?

DEREK: Yeah?

TAMARA: Look at Grandma. Doesn't she remind you of somebody?

DEREK(gasping): It can't be!

TAMARA(gleefully): It is! All of your girlfriends look like Grandma! You've got some problems, Derek. I think it's called an Oedipus Complex. Oh, some therapist is going to make a lot of money off of you one day!

DEREK: No! Nasty! (he runs to the kitchen, nearly knocking MOM over, who is on her way out)

MOM(pickup line style to COP#1): How you doin'? Is it hot in here or is it just you?

COP#1: Ma'am?

MOM: Crap, I'm not wearing any makeup! (she digs through the garbage can and applies makeup with a heavy hand) How about you and me get some dinner once this drug bust is over?

COP#1: Sure.

(MOM and COP#1 exit)

(AUNT KAYLA and AUNT EDITH enter)

HOLLIS(to DEREK): Bring me my teddy bear when you visit me in jail, okay?

DEREK: Okay.

(COP#2 and HOLLIS exit)

GRANDMA: I don't want to be around when those cops come back for evidence. I'm not peeing in a cup for anyone. At my age you get enough of that every time you visit the doctor.

(GRANDMA and AUNT EDITH exit)

AUNT KAYLA: I left the salad in the fridge in case you want it. Bye! (she exits)

TAMARA: Let's just feed it to the dog, okay?

DEREK: I don't want Sparky to get the mayonnaise disease!

TAMARA: Yet you had him neutered.

DEREK: Well, I'd rather be castrated than eat Aunt Kayla's salad!

TAMARA: I guess that's true. Man, this is a mess.

DEREK: I know. Maybe we should just sweep it under the carpet, you know?

TAMARA: Won't Mom notice the lumps?

DEREK: Damnit, Tamara. You've foiled my plan!

TAMARA: I'm not cleaning all this up. It's your fault the cops were here.

DEREK(in a snit): Actually, it was Hollis's fault.

TAMARA: It was your fault Hollis was here.

DEREK: Don't get all technical on me.

TAMARA: Whatever. I'm going to bed. (she exits)

DEREK: I hope the monster under the bed gets you! (he turns on the stereo, picks a few scattered items up, before becoming compelled to launch an elaborate and tacky lip synch/ dance routine to "Stop in the Name of Love" by the Supremes)

(MOM enters and the music stops with a loud scratch. She is wearing the cop's hat, perched at a jaunty angle)

MOM: What are you doing up so late?

DEREK: I could ask you the same thing. (he looks at the hat) I hope you did it to get Hollis out of jail.

MOM(confused): Hollis is in jail?

(MOM and DEREK glare at each other. The music starts again and both dance and lip synch. TAMARA enters and looks at them)

TAMARA: God, you two are weird.

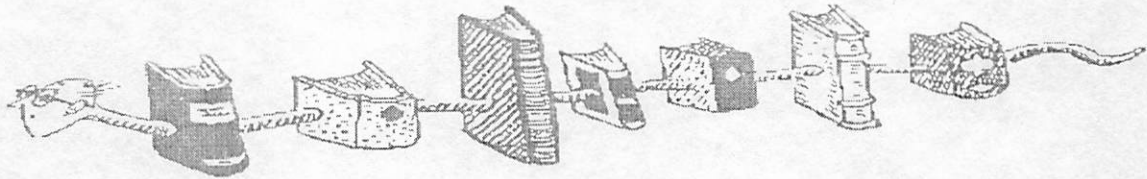
(The lights fade as TAMARA exits, shaking her head. The rest of the cast enters through the left door in a conga line and exits through the kitchen door, taking MOM and DEREK with them)

THE END

The Otherside of the Storage Room

by

Wendy Debott



Caution: Professionals and Amateurs are hereby warned that "The Otherside of the Storage Room" by Wendy Debott is subject to royalty. It is protected under Copyright Law. Inquiries regarding performance rights and royalties should be directed to: Wendy Debott at 7412 192 St., Surrey B.C. V4N 3G5. The fee for a single production of this play will be \$10.00.

Character Descriptions For:
“The Other Side Of The Storage Room”

Set:

This play takes place inside a high school. The stage is set to show the hallway and the storage room. The storage room is center stage and it is represented by masking tape on the floor. Inside of the storage room, there are boxes that have different supplies. Upstage right, there is a set of lockers were BROOKE has her books stored in.

Characters:

Nathen- Nathen is a boy who is ‘middle class’ in the high school that he attends. He is very judgmental towards people that seem to be more popular than him. He automatically considers them to be snobs and gossip queens. His family is poor and to earn money for graduation, he does a lot of odd jobs around his school.

Brooke- Brooke is one of the most popular girls in school . Everyone knows who she is and everyone wants to be her. She is captain of the basketball team and an honour roll student. Her family is well off and never has to worry about money.

Janitor- The Janitor in this play is in the beginning and the end. The role is a person who seems to be a little cold hearted.

“The Other Side Of The Storage Room”

By: Wendy De Bodt

AT RISE: At center stage there is masking tape on the floor to show that there is a room. Inside that room, there are many boxes stacked at the upstage wall. Upstage right there is a set of lockers. The whole stage is set for a school hallway with a storage room.

JANITOR: *(Enters with mop and bucket.)* Where’s that boy? Oh, well. I told him to be here right at five o’clock sharp. *(Turns to walk away.)*

NATHEN: *(Runs in from stage left.)* Wait! I’m here. *(Out of breath.)*

JANITOR: Listen, kid. I’m doing you a favor by waiting around, just so you can make a couple extra bucks sorting boxes. Next time, be here on time.

NATHEN: I will. I’m sorry, sir.

JANITOR: *(Mimes unlocking the door, DC.)* By the way, you have to keep one of these boxes here in front of this door. It’s heavy and it closes quickly. That normally wouldn’t be a problem if the lock wasn’t broken right now, but it is. So if it closes, you might not be able to get it open.

NATHEN: *(Looks concerned.)* Um....

JANITOR: Don’t worry about it, kid.

NATHEN: Okay. *(Nervous.)*

JANITOR: Go grab one of those boxes and put it here while I hold it open.

NATHEN: Yes, sir. *(Does as he is told and gets the box.)*

JANITOR: I’ll be back around in a bit to see how you’re doing.

NATHEN: Thank you, sir.

JANITOR: Yeah, yeah. Don’t mention it. Oh, by the way. You can mop up the floor in there, too. *(Hands NATHEN a mop and bucket.)*

NATHEN: Yes, sir. *(JANITOR exits off stage left.)* How did I get myself into this? *(Sighs and places the mop and bucket inside the storage room.)* Oh, well. Might as well make the best of it. Okay. Let’s start with this box. *(Opens it up and adds the contents to a pile of chalk boxes.)* I guess I could be doing worse things.

BROOKE: *(BROOKE enters from stage right and goes to her locker. She is dressed in a basketball uniform.)* Okay Bee, what’s for homework today? *(Pulls out her planner.)* Oh no! My geography project is due tomorrow. Damn. I haven’t even started it. *(Sighs.)* Oh well, not much I can do about that now. I just have to remember to snag a piece of poster board from the storage room if it’s not locked. *(Continues at her locker and then makes her way into the storage room. She walks in, stepping over the box that is holding the door open.)*

NATHEN: *(Turns around startled.)* Oh great! The snob of the school enters. *(Rolls his eyes.)*

BROOKE: What was that for?

NATHEN: No reason, no reason at all. *(Sarcastic.)*

BROOKE: I just need a piece of poster board and I'll be out of your hair. Where is it?
NATHEN: You can't just take a piece.
BROOKE: Why not?
NATHEN: Because it's school property.
BROOKE: Big deal! I'm one person, taking one piece of poster board. Is that really a huge problem?
NATHEN: You wouldn't think so.
BROOKE: What do you mean by that?
NATHEN: If every person in the school took just one piece of poster board, how many would that be?
BROOKE: Oh, drop it! It's not that big of a deal. Where are they?
NATHEN: In that box over there.
BROOKE: That one? *(Points to the one holding the door open.)*
NATHEN: Yeah, but if you get caught, it's your own fault. *(Turns around and starts working again.)*
BROOKE: *(Picks up the box and moves it into the middle of the room.)* Hm, what color do I want?
NATHEN: Figures that that would be all you're worried about.
BROOKE: *(Stops what she is doing.)* What is that supposed to mean?
NATHEN: It means... that's all you popular people worry about, petty, little small details in your own life when there is so much more going on around you. You don't have any *real* problems.
BROOKE: What do you mean? I do, too!
NATHEN: Yeah. Like who's sleeping with who? Or, did you hear about so and so at last weeks party? That's all you do. You always have to be gossiping about other people instead of focusing on the things that actually matter.
BROOKE: I can't believe you just said that. I'm outta here. *(Goes to open the door [mimed] but realizes it's locked.)* Why won't this open?
NATHEN: Oh my God! You pulled that box away from the door, didn't you?
BROOKE: Yeah.
NATHEN: The lock on this door is broken. It locks when it closes. We're stuck in here now.
BROOKE: Are you serious?
NATHEN: *(Sarcastic.)* No. I'm completely joking.
BROOKE: That wasn't what I meant. I was just saying 'are you serious'? Now what am I going to do? We're stuck in here!
NATHEN: Cut it out! We won't be stuck in here forever. The janitor said that he would be coming around in a bit to see how I was doing. He'll let us out.
BROOKE: Oh, thank God! I thought I'd be stuck in here all night. When am I going to do my homework?
NATHEN: Oh, big deal.
BROOKE: Why do you have to be such a jerk?
NATHEN: Well, isn't this just the pot calling the kettle black?

BROOKE: Ugh! You make me out to be someone completely different than who I am. Like I have no feeling, or emotion. But if you really knew me, if you really understood me, and took the time to get to know me, you'd see that I'm not what you think I am. I'm a real person, with real feelings and a real heart. That is if you could look past my 'social standing' and try to learn about the real me. I'm not who you think I am Nathen, and if you ever took the chance to get to know me, you'd see that.

NATHEN: Oh I would, would I?

BROOKE: Yeah, you would! I've never done anything to you. EVER! So why are you being so nasty to me?

NATHEN: That's right. You've never done anything to me. Including talk to me or acknowledge me. You're a superficial snob!

BROOKE: Well, you've never talked to me either. Just because we have never carried on a conversation doesn't mean that I have pushed you out of my mind. I have always known who you were but why should I take the time to talk to you when you have never taken the time to talk to me? And why is it that in this situation, I'm considered the snob and you're just classified as quiet?

NATHEN: Because you're 'high society' and all you people are the same. You're all snobs.

BROOKE: High society? Where did that come from? All I wanted was a piece of poster board and I end up getting called all these names and being placed into some imaginary group that I didn't even know existed.

NATHEN: You just keep thinking that way. You're innocent. You're fine. Just carry on in your simple little life, forgetting about the normal people and pushing them aside like you always do.

BROOKE: What are you talking about? What normal people?

NATHEN: You know what, Brooke? Forget it! Forget it all! You'll never understand anyway.

BROOKE: Try me, Nathan. Please do. Because I shouldn't have to stand here and take this without at least some explanation of what you mean. That's not fair.

NATHEN: Forget it, Brooke. We're just totally different people, with totally different lives.

BROOKE: Why do you think we're so different?

NATHEN: Because we are. Look at our friends and where we hang out. The things that we do. We are totally different people.

BROOKE: Come on, Nathan! Look at the big picture here! Just because we hang out in different crowds, that doesn't make us from separate planets. We could still be friends.

NATHEN: *(Laughs.)* You and I couldn't be friends even if we wanted to.

BROOKE: And why is that, Nathan?

NATHEN: Because your friends would take one look at me and call you a loser for hanging out with me.

BROOKE: What if I didn't care what they thought? What if I decided that I really like you? What if I decided that I wasn't to start hanging out with you and be really good friends. What if that happened and I didn't care what my friends thought. Then what?

NATHEN: That wouldn't happen and you know that.

BROOKE: Why not? Nathen?

NATHEN: Because. In high school you just can't get away with stuff like that. Everyone has their place. Everyone knows where they stand and that's that. That's where they stay. You know that's the way it is. You just chose not to admit it because then you're faced with the fact that you are considered a snob and you don't want to believe that. Look at it, Brooke. Think about what I'm saying. You have to see my point. Things are the way they are and nothing is going to change that. We all have our groups and that's where we will stay until after.

BROOKE: After?

NATHEN: Yes. After! Once we get away from this place. We'll get away from all the stereotypes and visions people hold of us. Everything will start over and people will be able to mix into their groups. Don't you see it? After high school, everything will change.

BROOKE: I guess.

NATHEN: You guess?

BROOKE: Yeah, I guess. I'm starting to see what you mean but....

NATHEN: But what?

BROOKE: But! I want you to see what I'm talking about, too.

NATHEN: What do you want me to see?

BROOKE: I want you to see that I'm not all of what you think I am. I'm not the gossip queen you see me to be.

NATHEN: But why should I believe that? Why? When that's all I've seen you and your friends do?

BROOKE: Have you ever actually heard me bashing someone behind their back? *(Pause.)* Well, have you?

NATHEN: Well, no. But..

BROOKE: See? How can you say that all I do is gossip when you have never even seen me do it once?

NATHEN: Because all of your friends do it. So why wouldn't you?

BROOKE: That's not fair! You have to see what you're doing. You're totally grouping me into my friends when in reality, I'm nothing like them. If I didn't become part of that group in grade eight, I wouldn't be there. But, reality is that I started being friends with them a long time ago and now I'm basically stuck with them. You can't just change friends, Nathen. You even said that, yourself. I can't just ditch them.

NATHEN: But how do I know that when I've never even talked to you before?

BROOKE: Exactly! You see. It's all just a big miscommunication. We both have these ideas that we refuse to look past. And we get those ideas because we don't know any better.

NATHEN: But maybe I don't know you because I feel I'm not worthy enough to.

BROOKE: What do you mean by that?

NATHEN: Not one person in your group has ever made the attempt to make me feel like I was worthy of even talking to them. They walk into a class room on the first day and they sit where they want to sit. They basically pick what class they want to be in. They choose what seat they get. Everything is up to them. It doesn't matter who else is in the class as long as they get what they want. It's always been that way. They own the room and nobody else exists.

BROOKE: Okay, I see your point. Some of my friends can be that way. But even if they are, you have to see that they don't just *pick* their classes. They can't do that. That is completely out of their reach.

NATHEN: Okay. Maybe it is. But that's they way that it seems, and it's not fair. They are all snobs and they get away with it.

BROOKE: But just because they're snobs, doesn't mean that I am. Have you ever had a class with me before?

NATHEN: Yeah. We had English together.

BROOKE: Right. And did I do that when I walked in?

NATHEN: I dunno.

BROOKE: Think about it. Because I have never done those things. I've never walked into a class and chose my seat just because I wanted to sit with my friends. That's not the way I am. I take whatever seat is left. I don't pick and choose what classroom I go into based on my friends. I am at school to learn and to have fun, not to make other people feel like crap. Do you see what I'm talking about?

NATHEN: Yeah.

BROOKE: So do you see what I'm saying? I have never given you a reason to think that you aren't worthy of me.

NATHEN: I guess you're right.

BROOKE: We're both right.

NATHEN: That's a good way to put it.
(*Silence.*)

BROOKE: Wow.

NATHEN: What?

BROOKE: We just argued for a really long time about things that aren't even true.

NATHEN: I guess we kind of did, didn't we?

BROOKE: It's pretty stupid, hey?

NATHEN: It sure is.
(*Silence.*)

BROOKE: Nathen?

NATHEN: Yeah?

BROOKE: I'm sorry if I have ever made you feel 'middle class' in any way. That was never my intention, ever!

NATHEN: I know. Well, I know that now. Thank you for apologizing. And I'm sorry if I ever made you into some 'imaginary group that doesn't even exist'.

BROOKE: That's all right. The good thing is, we both see that we were wrong.

NATHEN: That is a good thing.

BROOKE: I'm glad that we figured that out. Now I guess we can just relax and wait for the janitor then, hey?

NATHEN: Nope.

BROOKE: Why?

NATHEN: *(Looks around.)* Because if I do, I'm not going to get paid for this, am I?

BROOKE: What are you doing in here, anyway?

NATHEN: You really want to know?

BROOKE: Yeah.

NATHEN: Well. Grad is coming up pretty soon and that can get really expensive. My dad and I are a bit hard up for cash right now. So I'm working around the school doing all kinds of odd jobs for minimum wage.

BROOKE: Oh. *(Surprised.)*

NATHEN: I can see by the look on your face that you are shocked at the thought of me working for the school. You've never had a problem with money, have you?

BROOKE: No. I guess not.

NATHEN: Well, then. How about you help me? Learn what it's like to do a little grunge work?

BROOKE: Might as well. After all, we are stuck in here. What can I do?

NATHEN: Open up each box and empty out the stuff. Just sort it wherever it goes. It's pretty self explanatory.

BROOKE: Okay. *(Starts helping.)*

NATHEN: So what are you doing here so late?

BROOKE: Sometimes basketball practice doesn't start until three or three thirty. So it ends up going pretty late.

NATHEN: I see. *(Silence.)*

BROOKE: Can I ask you something?

NATHEN: Sure.

BROOKE: What happens if you don't earn enough money to pay for your Grad stuff?

NATHEN: Then I don't go. Simple as that.

BROOKE: Are you serious?

NATHEN: Sure am.

BROOKE: That really sucks.

NATHEN: Yeah, it does. But there is nothing I can do about that. My dad lost his job a couple of weeks ago and we barely have enough money to get by.

BROOKE: What about your mom?

NATHEN: I don't have a mom. She left when I was three.

BROOKE: Oh. I'm sorry.

NATHEN: Don't be. I'm over it. Well, I guess I was never really 'on' it seeming as I was pretty young when it all happened.

BROOKE: So it's been just you and your dad for all these years.

NATHEN: Yup.

BROOKE: Do you ever wish that your mom would just walk through the door?

NATHEN: Nope.

BROOKE: You don't?

NATHEN: No.
BROOKE: Why?
NATHEN: Because. Why would I want a person in my life like her?
BROOKE: What do you mean?
NATHEN: Well, she left my dad and I, didn't she?
BROOKE: Yeah.
NATHEN: I saw everything that it has put my dad through over the years. I've saw how hard he has had to work to keep everything going at home. It's hard for a single parent and I don't think that he would be able to handle the pain if she ever came back. I was really young when it all happened, but over all these years, I've seen the pain in his eyes when he talks about her. I just don't think that he deserves that. I guess I can't really blame her for everything, because I don't know what happened between her and my father. But I can have my own opinion, and that's that I hope she never comes back.

BROOKE: Never?
NATHEN: Nope.
BROOKE: *(Under her breath.)* I do.
NATHEN: What was that?
BROOKE: Nothing.
NATHEN: No, seriously. What did you say?
BROOKE: *(Thinks for a minute.)* I said, I do.
NATHEN: You do what?
BROOKE: Never mind. It's stupid.
NATHEN: Guaranteed it's not. What do you mean?
BROOKE: *(Pauses and then decides to tell him.)* My mom left shortly after I was born. I've never really met her. And sometimes I just wish that when I'm sitting there watching TV, she would walk through the door and open her arms waiting for me to run up and hug her.

NATHEN: Your mom left, too?
BROOKE: Yeah. *(Upset.)*
NATHEN: I would have never...
BROOKE: *(Cuts him off.)* You would have never guessed? That's because I look like I lead some perfect life. That's only because I put up this fake cover of myself making me look perfect. I have to. If I don't, everyone in the school will look at me like I'm doing some giant plea for attention. I can't make my problems visible. My friends are the type of people who worry about themselves. Nobody, but themselves. They don't understand that everyone has problems. They aren't willing to spend the time that it takes to help other people. But just like you said, after graduation, I won't have to do it anymore. I'll be able to find all new friends. I'll meet people that won't be immature. I'll have people in my life that will actually want to hear about my problems and try to help me through them. After graduation, everything will change. I won't have to pretend. I'll be free to be who I want because everyone will be there to help instead of judge. Everything will different

NATHEN: You bet it will. We both will be able to. Don't you worry. Everything will be better.

BROOKE: I sure hope so, Nathen. One day, everything will be different.

NATHEN: You're right. It will. *(Looks at BROOKE.)* Are you okay?

BROOKE: Yeah. I'll be fine. Every time I think about this, I just wish that for all these past years, things could have been different. I wish that people weren't the way that they were and that I would have been able to actually trust all of my friends all this time. But I know things will change. I'm just glad that I found someone who sees it like I do.

NATHEN: Me, too. So you're okay?

BROOKE: Yeah, I'm fine.

NATHEN: Good. Cuz we better finish up here. *(Smiling.)*

BROOKE: I agree.

NATHEN: I'm done over here on my side. So I'll start mopping the floor.

BROOKE: Okay. *(Silence.)* Nathen, if you don't wish for your mom to come back, then what do you wish for?

NATHEN: I don't wish for anything.

BROOKE: Come on. Everyone has to have hope. Everyone has to wish for something. What is it?

NATHEN: Honestly?

BROOKE: Honestly!

NATHEN: I wish for the day to come when I don't have to ever worry about money. All my life, I've had to be careful what I would ask for, because I knew that I didn't have a lot of money in the house. And when I have a wife and kids of my own, I don't want to ever have to think about where the rent money is going to come from. I'm going to make something of myself. I'm going to make my life different. That's what I wish for. The strength to do all that.

BROOKE: That's a good wish. I know that you'll make that happen. I can see that you want it bad enough.

NATHEN: You're right. I do.

BROOKE: I'm finished over here, too.

NATHEN: Me, too.

BROOKE: And we're still locked in.

NATHEN: That we are. *(They sit down beside each other on the floor.)* Things are sure weird, aren't they?

BROOKE: Why do you say that?

NATHEN: Well. We went from being completely at each other's throats, to actually letting each other into our lives and private thoughts.

BROOKE: That is kind of strange, hey? But it's also cool. There haven't been too many times when I've felt comfortable enough to say these things to people.

NATHEN: Me, either.
BROOKE: We're so different, yet the same.
NATHEN: Two worlds. Two stories...
BROOKE: Two sides of the storage room.
NATHEN: That came together.
BROOKE: Yeah.
NATHAN: It's definitely cool.
BROOKE: It is.
NATHEN: You really are amazing, you know that?
BROOKE: Why?
NATHEN: Because. You've told me so much about yourself. I know so much more about you now. Yet, you still seem pretty happy, despite everything that's wrong in your life. But, I guess that's just the same old 'perfect look' you give yourself to make things look okay, right?
BROOKE: Actually, it's not this time.
NATHEN: Then what is it?
BROOKE: You want to know why?
NATHEN: Yeah.
BROOKE: Because right now at this very moment, I am happy. *(They lean in like they are going to kiss each other just as the JANITOR enters from stage left. He opens the door and the two pull away before they kiss.)*
JANITOR: How did this door get closed? And where did you come from, girl?
(The two look at each other.)
NATHEN: It was all a big misunderstanding.
BROOKE: A miscommunication.
JANITOR: Well, whatever it was. I hope you're finished in here by now, boy.
NATHEN: Yes, sir. I'm finished.
JANITOR: Good, because I don't want to have to keep checking up on you.
NATHEN: You don't have to anymore, sir. I'm finished now.
JANITOR: Okay. Just close the door behind you. And don't get locked in again, you hear?
NATHEN: *(Gets up to hold the door open.)* I hear you, sir.
JANITOR: You're sure you're finished everything in here? *(Takes a look around.)*
NATHEN: Yes, sir. I'm pretty sure we have finished.
JANITOR: Okay, then. You're dismissed for tonight. I'll see you tomorrow.
(Exits stage left.)
BROOKE: *(Gets up off the floor and walks over to NATHEN.)* Well, I better get going.
NATHEN: Yeah.
(They walk out and close the door.)
BROOKE: How are you getting home?
NATHEN: The same way I always do. The bus.
BROOKE: *(Quietly.)* Oh, okay.
NATHEN: How about you?

BROOKE: My car is parked in the student parking. So I'll be walking out this way. *(Points off left.)*

NATHEN: Okay. Well, I guess I'll see you around.

BROOKE: Yeah. See ya. *(They turn around and start to walk away.)*

NATHEN: Brooke?

BROOKE: Yeah?

NATHEN: You forgot your poster board.

BROOKE: Yeah. Um, about that, I'll just pick some up at the drug store on the way home.

NATHEN: *(Smiles.)* See ya.

BROOKE: See ya.
(NATHEN walks towards stage right and BROOKE towards stage left.)

BROOKE: Nathen?

NATHEN: *(Turns around.)* Yeah?

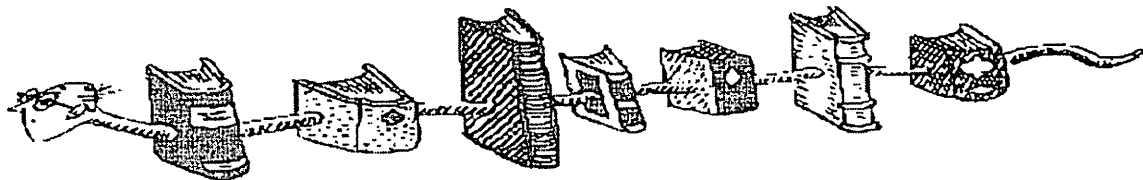
BROOKE: See you after high school?

NATHEN: You can count on it.
(They both exit.)

Blue Monkey Coconut Stench

by

Ashley Slater



Caution: Professionals and Amateurs are hereby warned that "Blue Monkey Coconut Stench" by Ashley Slater is subject to royalty. It is protected under Copyright Law. Inquiries regarding performance rights and royalties should be directed to: Ashley Slater at 121165 New McLekan Rd. Surrey B.C. V3X 2X8. The fee for a single production of this play will be \$20.00.

Characters (in order of appearance)

Bellboy (walk on) - A strange, peculiar lad. An average youth of Amsterdam. Needs a dutch accent.

Trent Johnson - A middle aged, boring, bland, grey stock broker.

He doesn't like his wife, even though she is a good person. He is greedy, and career driven. He a grey suit and has a little grey in his hair.

Blue Monkey - One word: Bizarre. He is a very odd little creature, who speaks in many voices and is a lot smarter than he appears. The actor playing Blue Monkey must be able to do a few impersonations, and must be able to improvise. Flexibility and strange dance moves also a must. Can be played by a boy or girl.

Amelia Johnson (only voice is heard): Amelia is generally a caring person, but can be clingy. She always wants to know where he is and what he is doing because she worries about him.

(Set: An ok hotel room, nothing special. There is a couch, facing the audience a little left of the middle of the stage. There is also a chair perpendicular to it. There is a door stage L. Off to stage R is a bed, very small, horizontal like the . It is further upstage. In the same area, but downstage and very far stage left, there is a desk with a phone and writing utensils and other such items on it. Everything is of a grey tone.)

(The stage is dark. The song "I Wanna Be A Monkey" By Ren and Stimpy plays, then fades when the lights come up. Bellboy enters, with bags)

B: Ahh yes, here were are, room 226. Do you like it?

T: It'll be fine.

B: It certainly will be. (he gives TRENT a mischievous smile. Trent looks back at him with a confused expression on his face). So, is this your first time in Amsterdam?

T: Yes, it is.

B: Well let me be the first to welcome you here to our lovely city. I hope you have a pleasant stay, and if you nee-

T: (interrupting) Just put them over there (the BELLBOY places bags

down) Is there a reason this room smells like (pauses to smell) coconuts?

B: You smell coconuts?

T: Well, yes, don't you?

B: (looks at TRENT suspiciously) Just a second. (He runs over to the phone and calls front desk. He begins to talk to the receptionist about the fact that the guy smells coconuts, in a language that resembles Dutch. It is just gibberish talk.) Hahaha, Canadian.

T: Sir, wha-

B: (to Trent) Yeah yeah, just give me a minute. (he looks over, and then turns back to the phone) Canadian! (laughs at expense. Trent can tell somewhat that they are talking about , but is only perturbed, not angered nor even curious.) Bye. (he hangs up) Right right, so don't worry about the coconut smell.

T: Well can't you just remove the potpourri or whatever it is that's causing the smell?

B: Umm... no. It's against the law to remove potpourri from our hotel rooms.

T: What?

B: Well, .. well, this is Amsterdam. The government just figured that all of the people coming to stay here would want to keep the coconut smell in here instead of... well... another smell? Then they can just ignore the fact that-

T: That's ridiculous! I know exactly what you are implying young man, and let me tell you I do and I will not participate in the... activity that this city is so well known for!

B: I guess you don't need to anyway (he smiles devilishly).

T: Wha is that supp-

B: Let me guess. You're a lawyer? Politician? Any other type of job that involves greed?

T: I'm a stock broker.

B: Right, I knew I was missing one. Well, it all makes sense. So I hope you enjoy your stay here at the De Dutch Pannekook Hotel. If you have any... visitors (tries not to laugh) just make sure the front desk knows they're allowed in before coming.

T: Fine, fine, but are you going to take the potpourri?

B: Sure I will... sure.... Hey look! (points to the window) Someone's dropping guilders out of their window!

T: (greedily) Where? (The BELLBOY runs out of the room) Where is (he turns around) Why, the insolence of that young man. I think he's the one who needs that potpourri, the way he's acting. (In a bit of a hurry, he takes his briefcase and puts it up on the desk, opens it, and pulls out a few files. He picks up the phone and dials a number and waits for someone to pick up. The voice of the other person can always be heard in the form of mumbles) Max? Trent here. Listen, I was thinking about the 800 shares in Dell Co.? Mmm hmm.. put me down for it. I know, I have a feeling this one's a good one. Yes, well I'm not wrong this time. Umm... not since 19.... 81..... 2 years, but it's coming soon, you know how much that money means to me. Yeah, then the wife will stop bugging me for that new mop. (laughs loudly) Alright, Max. (hangs up. He sits down, takes off his shoes, and money falls out. He is pleasantly surprised by the discovery of his hidden money, and puts it into his pocket.) Hello Mr. Laurier. (He stretches out, and then sits for a while, a dead pan grey look on his face. He jolts) Ohh, I forgot to call the wife. (He goes to the phone slowly, almost reluctantly, and dials, waits while the phone rings) Hi Amelia, it's me. I'm here. Mmm hmm. Yes dear. I know. Uh huh. (looking around the room, obviously not interested in conversation) Right. I don't know. Depends how long I'm out here for. Well no longer than a week, maybe tw-. This isn't a profession of scheduled times, Amelia. I have to go with the flow of the stock market, you know that! I-..... yes dear. Fine. Ok., I

understand, dear. Y'know I'm only here to make some money for you so you can still have your perm every week! Why do you have to be so difficult! Stop nagging me! Fine then. Well, I'll be home soon. As soon as I can, ok?! Bye. (He hangs up loudly, pauses by the desk for a moment, and then sits down on the couch. He begins to sniff the air) Strange... that coconut smell is getting stronger! (a small blue monkey pops out from behind the couch)

B: Nnnnnnyya! (he jumps behind the couch again)

T: What the hell was that? (looks around, nothing happens. He shrugs off the noise, and takes off his tie, sitting on the couch, but starts to sniff the air again suspiciously)

B: (from behind bed) Weeeeehaa!

T: Oh my- What is going on? (looks around again, goes behind bed to look) Hmm... I guess I'm still a little jetlagged... I'm tired, need some rest. (looks around once more, and then takes off his jacket, sitting on the bed.)

B: (sticks his head out of the closet) Chupa chapa chupa!

T: What? (looks around once again) That damn recirculated air in the plane must have done something to my senses! (laughs quietly for a moment, then sits down on the couch)

B: (Blue monkey's head slowly appears behind bed, with a disgruntled look. He is angry because Trent isn't paying attention to him. So, he starts to sing.) Blue moooooon! You're always standing aloo-

T: Now, what was that? (looks around again, walks over to bed) Hmm, must have been the radio alarm or something. (contently removes his socks)

B: (comes up from behind couch, angry. He takes a shoehorn and smacks TRENT on the head, and runs off)

T: Owwww! Where did that come from! These sudden headaches really annoy me. Probably got it from talking to Amelia. Hah. I'll sleep it off

though.

B: (shoots up from behind bed, really angry. He jumps on the bed, crawls up behind TRENT, and screeches) Aaaeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!

T: AAAAAAH! (BLUE MONKEY chases TRENT around the room. The whole time, BLUE MONKEY is talking)

B: Oooh, I'm gonna git you, I'm gonna eat you, wweeehehehehehe!
Monkey monkey monkey monkey monkey monkey monkey... wahahahahaa! Who's your monkey? Who's your monkey?

T: AAH! (He gets cornered near the closet) What the hell are you!

B: Well, that certainly got your attention (takes out a mini tape recorder) note to self: the "nyya" and "chupa chupa chupa" approach is ineffective. Try something new. (he stops the tape, thinks for a moment, and then presses record again and makes a farting noise and laughs.)
Oooh, I'm gonna laugh at that later. (puts recorder away)

T: Aaahh.... oh my...

B: Oh, don't be afraid little friend! (pats him on the head) I won't hurt you! Here, have a banana. (hands him a banana)

T: Thank you?

B: Now, how bout we get you a cigar and some rollerskates and make you entertain a bunch of hicks in a circus ring, humiliating you and rendering you scarred for life? Huh? How bout we do that.

T: Ok... there is a giant blue monkey in my hotel room, talking to me.
Ok. Ok. (panics again) AAAAAAAAHAH!

B: Oh, just calm down you silly little man you! Sit down, relax, have a drink from the minibar... it'll cost you \$60 for a can of pop, but hell, the cost just makes it tastier, dun't it?

T: Why are you... I-I-I-I mean, w-w-w-what is, w-w-why, w-w-w-where did,

Who-

B: (takes his finger and does the “crazy” thing with his lips to imitate TRENT) All will be known in good time. Now sit! Sit on your comfy bed. It is so comfy... ooooh... soft... billowy... aaah..... (BLUE MONKEY lies down on bed and poses seductively) D’ya think I could be a model for Monkey’s Secret Catalogue?

T: (sits down on couch) I’m so horribly, horribly afraid right now.
(staring at BM, confused and afraid)

B: Whaaaa? Whachu talking bout, Trentis. Confused? Yes, the monkey seems to have a much larger brain that YOU do. Who’s evolved now? Hmm... perhaps a small musical number shall explain. (BLUE MONKEY sings to the tune of “The Monkees” Theme song)

Hey hey, I’m a monkey
And people say I monkey around
But I’m too busy singing
To learn how to play my own instrument
I’m just trying to friendly!
I already know that you’re rich!
You’re a stock broker from Canada
and you’re wife’s a big freakin bi-

T: Oh my g- You know what? I think I’ve just been inhaling way too much Amsterdam air.

B: Wanna know a secret?

T: No, I don- well, no, I just, get out of here, you weird, blue monkey!

B: (sarcastic) Oh! Gasp! That’s great material! Take that on the road!

T: Hey!

B: Now do ya wanna know or not? (he scurries over to the couch)

T: I don’t have a choice, do I.

B: Ooh, are you feeling pressured, Trent? Better go tell an adult you trust!

T: Hey...

B: The secret... come closer... closer to me....

T: I don't want to-

B: CLOSA! (Trent moves, hesitantly, towards BM. BM whispers) I see dead people.

T: What? I can't hear you.

B: (yells) I SEE DEAD PEOPLE! WALKING AROUND LIKE REGULAR PEOPLE! THEY DON'T KNOW THEY'RE DEAD, TRENT! THEY DON'T KNOW THEY'RE DEAAAAAAD! (he runs around the room screaming, knocking over the lamp)

T: Stop that! Now, stop that right now! And don't do that ever again!

B: Actually, I'd rather not do that then. Ok? Ok. Now, you see this invention? (he picks up the phone) (in amazement) Do you know what this is?

T: Uh... it's a phone.

B: INCORRECT! It's a money maker. (he licks the phone)

T: Eww... ok, this is getting a little strange. (begins to walk towards the door), I'm going to go downstairs to the front desk and compl-

B: (runs in front of the door and blocks it) No! I have just one word for you. ONE WORD! No more, no less. (clears his throat) To-make-a-lot-of-money-you-must-buy-100-shares-in-Amnet-Services-right-away! (takes a breathe) I had to cover when I realised it was actually 16 words (smiles weirdly and dances over to the phone)

T: And why should I listen to you? You're this completely bizarre and insane blue primate thing that popped out of no where and started to prance around my room!

B: But you must admit I have incredible prancing skills (he prances all over the room to the Tune of Vivaldi's "Spring")

T: (looking around to see where the music is coming from) Where is that- No, wait, no, stop that! (yelling over music)

B: (prancing) I'll stop if you call and buy some shares in Amnet Services.... (prances around him annoyingly, the music getting louder)

T: What, do you work for them or something?

B: (the music stops, BM flips characters) I'm never gonna sell out to the MAAAN like you! The corporation is becoming the new symbol of authority, and I ain't gonna obey it, maaaaan! I don't play to the (says the word man for a stupidly long time) MAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAN! (TRENT at him)

T: Ok! Ok! Just shut up, you annoying little thing.

B: Aww, you liiike me. (smiles bashfully and giggles like a little schoolgirl)

T: Right... (he picks up the phone and dials) Hey Max? Trent here. Listen, I got a... stock tip from... a.... well, it doesn't matter where I got it from, but I'm interested in Amnet Services. How's it Selling? For that low, huh? Alright, I want 500 shares. Yeah, you heard me. Well... trust me on this one.... I'm still trying to myself. (he looks over at BM, who does a little dance to impress him. BM then walks towards TRENT when he isn't looking anymore) Ok. Right. So how are the Ruck Co. stocks going? (disappointed) Oh.... I see.... well, (the monkey comes up behind him) I better be going. Alright Max.

B: (in a girlish voice) Trenty? Trenty, I have to be back at the red light district in an hour! I-

T: Would you shut- Oh, what? No Max, that's just the TV... no, of course n-... look, I gotta go now Max. (he hangs up) What did you do that for? (beat) Why am I even listening to you?

B: Oh, I'd say it's my charm and physique that makes you obey me. (turns like a model) look at me, I'm such a sexy monkey! Look at me! You know you want to!

T: This is ridiculous (walks past him at sits on the couch). I'm a distinguished stock broker!

B: Riiiiight, and I'm curious George. Listen babe, in about 35 seconds I want you to call back your little "friend" Maxie poo and ask him how the stocks are. For the remaining 30 seconds I will now dance to one of my favourite songs. (the song "Brass Monkey" by The Beastie Boys plays for 30 seconds, and the blue monkey dances to it B-boy style. Trent looks around, trying to figure out where the music is coming from. He stops when the music stops, and looks over at TRENT) Now you call him. (grabs his tail and starts to hit himself with it)

T: (he inches towards the phone, frightened, and dials) Hey, Max? It's Tr-.... what? They've what? Oh my g- how much? Ha! I can't believe it, I usually make that much in a whole month! Ok Max, I better go. I will! Bye Max! (he hangs up) Oh my God. (he looks at the magical blue monkey, who is now eating ticks out of his fur) You... you were right!

B: Sometimes I'm right... and sometimes I'm left! (he begins to dart back and forth across the room)

T: Look, you gotta tell me more. (BM stops abruptly)

BM: Mooooore? (he looks at the audience with a mischievous look on his face) Weeeelll... ceceeeertainlyyyyy... iiiiiff, thaaaaaaat
iiiiisssssssss, yooooooooooooooooou
siiiiiiiiiiiiimplyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyy

dooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo meeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee
aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

T: Stop that!

B: ... few tasks.

T: Like what?

B: Well, no reward comes without work. Sacrifice. Determination! (he begins to march around the room) So simply do as I tell you and you shall be given stock tips upon stock tips. Yay Monkey!

T: Ok, so what do I have to do?

B: Well, let's start off with something simple.... 10 pushups.... go
Private Greedy-Man, do as I say!

T: Ok! Ok! (he comically struggles to do 10 pushups.) 1.... 2.... (BM becomes bored and uses his powers to lift and drop TRENT. Now he is doing pushups at lightening speed.)
I'm doing it. I'm doing it!

B: No you're not, I'm just bored. (He flips him over, so he lands on his back)

T: Oww. Fine, now, what's the tip? Tell me!

B: (Yawns, stretches) The tip is..... (he stretches again, coughs, scratches his head, and looks around the room) it's... (coughs again, and takes a deep breathe) a company... and it's called.... (sneezes) ahh... what was I talking about again?

T: JEEEEZ! TELL ME!

B: Oh, right. Benson. Benson Inc.

T: Yes! (he runs eagerly to the phone) Max! 5000 on Benson Inc! Bye! (hangs up) Oh, this is just perfect! I'll make millions off of some stupid blue monkey that smells like coconuts! (he looks over, and the

monkey has become entranced by his own feet) Hey, monkey!

B: Mmmhmmm....

T: Give me another task to do!

B: Ok... sing some of that "I Am The Very Model of The Modern Major General" Song. That's a very sensual song.

T: (looks at him strangely, then agrees) Ok, ok, I do know that song!
(eagerly jumps to center stage and begins to sing)

T:

I am the very model of a modern Major-General,
I've information veg-e-table, animal, and mineral,
I know the kings of England, and I quote the fights historical
From Marathon to Waterloo, in order categorical;
I'm very well acquainted, too, with matters mathematical,
I understand equations, both the simple and quadratical,
About binomial theorem I'm teeming with a lot o' news,
With many cheerful facts about the square of the hypotenuse.

B: (does a little dance for TRENT to take a break, then gestures back to him to continue)

T:

I know our mythic history, King Arthur's and Sir Caradoc's;
I answer hard acrostics, I've a pretty taste for paradox,
I quote in elegiacs all the crimes of Heliogabalus,
In conics I can floor peculiarities parabolous;

B: (Another small dance, then gestures back to TRENT to continue)

T:

In fact, when I know what is meant by "mamelon" and "ravelin",
When I can tell at sight a Mauser rifle from a javelin,
When such affairs as sorties and surprises I'm more wary at,
And when I know precisely what is meant by "commissariat",
When I have learnt what progress has been made in modern gunnery,

When I know more of tactics than a novice in a nunnery--
In short, when I've a smattering of elemental strategy,
You'll say a better Major-General has never sat a gee. (falls on
bed, exhausted)

B: Well, I'm impressed. You crazy little monkey.

T: So?

B: Sew what? I have no needle and thread (he laughs hysterically at
himself, rolling around the stage and finally falling face first in
front of TRENT.)

T: (looking down at BM) The stock tip!

B: What? I'm not giving you another one!

T: WHAT? But you said that if I did another task then I'd get another
tip!

B: (like Ed McMahon) You are incorrect, sir. Heyoooo! You asked me to
give you another task. I did. I never said I'd give you a stock tip for
doing it. (evil laugh. He gets up)

T: But- but-.... no! That's unfair! (falls to his knees) C'mon ,Blue
Monkey! Tell me! My financial life is on the line here! I sang the
damned "Modern Major General" song for you, for craps sake! (he sits on
the bed, disgruntled. The monkey copies his movements exactly. TRENT
crosses his leg, rubs his nose etc. Then he looks over at BM, who also
looks in the same direction, except there's no one there. TRENT taps him
on the shoulder, and BM turns his head and smiles)

B: Monkey see, monkey do. Nyyya! (tries to bite TRENT's nose.)

T: Hey! Stop that!

B: I just want to love you!

T: No! Look, just tell me another thing to do, and this time, for a stock tip.

B: Ok.... I want you to open that window and yell out, "I dance naked for bus fare and then walk home"

T: What? I can't do that, there are people out there!

B: People who are much richer than yooooou are, Mr. Can't Get Out Of Debt. Now get to that window and say it!

T: (reluctantly) Ok. (he walks slowly to the window, and sticks his head out, and speaks quietly) Umm.. I... I dance naked for bus fare and then walk home.

B: Louder!

T: (a little louder) I dance naked for bus fare and then walk home!

B: Louda! Sing, my angel of muzak!

T: I DANCE NAKED FOR BUS FARE AND THEN WALK HOME! (laughter is heard coming from outside the window. Someone throws an empty pop can at TRENT, and it hits him in the face)

B: Ahahahahaha! Now THAT'S funny.

T: Oww! (he climbs down from the window) This tip better be worth it.

B: (laughs evilly. Looks over at TRENT) What? Oh right, the tip. That would be (looks up at the ceiling, thinking) Blacktop Industries.

T: Blacktop Industries!!! (laughs and runs to the phone and dials) Max! Max, I got another- Even more? (covers phone and talks to BM) Benson Inc. has quadrupled since I called last!

B: Well slap me with my own tail! (he demonstrates this)

T: (ignores him) Listen Max, sell half of what I've made and put it all

into Blacktop Industries..... That's right.... look, I can't tell you now, you wouldn't believe me. Just call me if you start smelling coconuts (hangs up) Now, what's the next challenge?

B: Well, as you MAY have noticed, my dance stills are beyond compare.

T: Right.

B: Thus, I challenge you to a dance-a-thon! Just hand me a ricecake and a pair of short shorts!

T: But I can't dance!

B: Well, you better learn fast! If you can match my steps, I'll give you another tip!

T: Well, I'll try! I'm sure a pulled groin muscle will be worth it.

B: (in a drag queen voice) Get ready to shake that bon bon baby! (BM claps his hands 3 times, and "Funky Monkey Baby" By Rockapella begins to play. TRENT is confused. BM does a simple, yet strange dance step, then gestures towards him to copy it. TRENT copies it with ease. BM does another one, a little stranger, and a little harder. TRENT copies that one as well, but with a little more difficulty. 3 more of these dance moves take place, and TRENT, although severely hurting himself, copies them all. The music stops)

B: Well! Didn't expect you to be able to even come near my wondrous glory.

T: (panting) Yeah... I.... really..... (falls over)

B: Trent? Oh nononono, this isn't good. (he walks over to him) Is he dead? (he gets an idea. He jumps on the couch and levitates TRENT with his magic powers. He makes his limp body dance around the room) Look at the dead man dance! Look at the dead man dance! Look at th- ok, I'm done. (TRENT falls to the floor. BM goes over to his body and whispers) Access
Network Corp.

T: (leaps up) Yes! (runs over to the phone and dials in a hurry) Max? Trent. Access, Network, Corporation. That's right, half of what I've made. That's half of what I've made? They're all going up? Oh my-, ok Max, I'll call you back. (hangs up) What's the next task? (hysterical) Tell me tell me tell me!!!! You're gonna make me a millionaire!

B: (to audience) Aha, I've got him now!

T: Who are you talking to?

B: Look out there (points to the audience)

T: I don't see anything but the wall, Blue Monke-

B: Shhhhhhhhhh! (pause) Count de walls.

T: Ok. (he counts starting from stage left) 1, 2, 3.... 4. (facing audience again)

B: That's right... the 4th wall. (smiles at audience) Now, look closer.... closer.... if you were in front of a huge audience, how would you feel?

T: Probably nervous, but I don't see h-

B: Shhhh... imagine eyes.... feel the fear.... What's your motivation, Trent?

T: (suddenly sees the audience) OH, MY, GOD. Are those the dead people you were talking about?

B: No! But watch this. (an applause sign appears, audience claps)

T: How did you...

B: Hey, watch this! (he runs out into the audience and annoys people in any way he can. Improvise!)

T: Get back here! Walk back though the wall! How are you doing this?

B: Just open your eyes, Trenty Poo! (runs back onstage)

T: Why did you do that?

B: Numba 1. I am magical. Numba 2. To tell you one simple thing.

T: What?

B: (in a mystical voice) Sometimes it takes a little help and some new information to see things you never saw before. THEME ALERT! THEME ALERT! OoOoOooOooOo! (he jumps around TRENT)

T: What? I don't... alright, look, this night is just getting stranger and stranger, but I'm not getting richer and richer. Well, not enough anyway. So out with the tips!

B: Ok. I will give you (in a loud, booming voice) The greatest, the largest, the most fantastic stock tip of them all!

T: Great! What do I have to do, I'll do anything!

B: Call your wife.

T: What? That's it? (pause) That's easy!

B: And tell her you love her.

T: Ok, I can do that.

B: AND you must be truthful and sincere.

T: What?

B: Dem's de rules, boy.

T: But that's not... I mean, that's nothing like the other tasks you gave me!

B: You're right. This one is much harder.

T: (gives BM an angry stare) Fine, I'll call her. (he picks up the phone and dials, all without taking his eyes off of BM)

B: AND.... put it on speakerphone! (jumps up and down, making monkey noises, pleased with what he is making Trent do)

T: (still angry) Fine. (he dials, the phone rings)

A: Hello?

B: Amelia? It's Trent.

A: Oh hello, dear, I didn't expect you to call! I never expect you to call. You never do. I wish you woul-

B: Ok Amelia, do we have to get into the Trent-bashing right away? Jeez.

A: Well, why are you calling?

B: I just called to say that.... (very matter of factly) I have positive emotions for you.

A: Um, what?

B: I.... express concern for your well being. I.... enjoy your company.... umm..

A: Trent, are you ok? (gasps) Have you been smoking marijuana?

B: No! Amelia, please.

A: You have, haven't you.

B: No, I haven't been doing anything of the sort!

A: Now you stop that before you get addicted!

B: Marijuana isn't addictive, dear.

A: What? And now you're making excuses for yourself. Now let me tell you, Trent Randall Johnson, I- (TRENT hangs up on her)

T: I can't do it, Blue Monkey!

B: She's thinks you're on hash, you don't get no cash. If your heart's saying no, you won't get no dough. Be sweet to your honey, or you won't get no money. Your words haven't thrilled her, so you don't get one guildler. You're being a fool, ya? So you don't get no moola. You want a buck? Well I don't give a truck... to just anyone. They really have to deserve it.

T: (frustrated) I wasn't...(scowls at him) I'll try again, just shut up!
(he dials, the phone rings)

A: Hello?

T: It's me again.

A: Trent, what are you doing? Why did you hang up on me?

T: Long story, dear, but I just had to... well.... (very sternly, he struggles to speak) I love you.

A: Have you done something wrong, Trent?

T: Nothing! I just.... You are my wife, and thus, a pre requisite of that is that I must love you, and I do, so everything is just fine. Just fine. (looks at BM, who shakes his head)

A: What's going on Trent? Tell me! Tell me right now! I want to know!

M: Where have I heard that before. (TRENT scowls at him)

T: I'll call you back. (hangs up) What am I doing wrong?

M: You are not being honest, you silly monkey. I'll give you one more

try. Just ooooooone more.

T: Fine. I can do this. (he dials, the phone rings)

A: Trent?

T: (loudly) I LOVE YOU! I REALLY REALLY DO!

A: What is wrong with you? Why are you yelling?

T: I DON'T KNOW! (to BM) I can't do it!

A: Do what? Trent, are you coming home soon? Or are you still going to be a while? Because I think-

T: AAAAA! (he hangs up) You bastard monkey! You picked the one thing I can't do!

B: You don't love her, do you. (sighs) Sad, innit.

T: I thought I did, but you had to come in here and... make me all nervous about it!

B: Right, blame it on the monkey. Everybody always blames the monkey. (hops onto couch) Well, it's been swell, Trenty Boy, but I'm afraid this monkey has other coconuts to fry. (hops behind the couch)

T: No! Don't go! Give me another chance! Come back here you furry little-

B: What's more important to you? That I stay, or that your wife leaves you?

T: What? My wife isn't-

B: Auf Wiederzeim, Mein Heir! (He stops, tries to think of something crazy to do to leave.) Aww, forget it. (BM walks offstage)

T: Nooooo! (he looks behind couch. BM is gone) Dammit! If only I could.... it's hopeless. (he walks slowly over to the phone and dials. He doesn't turn off speakerphone, so you can still hear the ring)

A: Hello?

T: Hi Amelia, it's Trent.

A: Ok, you are going to have to explain what the he-

T: I'm sorry dear, I'm sorry about all the strange phone calls. I don't know what I was thinking.

A: Oh, that's ok dear, I understand.

T: So you're ok?

A: Yes... I do like it when you call me.

T: I'll remember that. (he smiles a little bit)

A: Hmm.... that's strange.

T: What.

A: All of a sudden, it... it sort of... smells like coconuts in here.

T: What?

B: (heard in background) Heeey, baby, Blue Monkey's movin' in!

A: AAAAAAAHHHHHH!

B: Amelia? (dial tone is heard) Amelia! Oh shitze! (dials again)

V: We're sorry, your call could not be completed as dialed. This may be due to line congestion, downed telephone lines, or a strange blue monkey. This is a recording.

T: No! (he hangs up and begins to pace back and forth) Ok, I need a plan. That monkey is going to... bite my wife, or something! I could fly back now, but then I'd be too late... ooh, that stinky little monkey! Why is he doing this to me? (he runs back to the phone and dials again, this time it rings)

A: (in a very relaxed voice) Hello?

T: Amelia? What happened?

A: (trying to hide truth) Oh, Trent dear! Nothing happened, nothing at all, I just thought I saw a mouse.

T: But the coconut smell, was it-

A: (trying to hide truth) I just forgot that I had put some coconut potpourri in the drawer! When I opened it, I didn't remember that I had put it there!

T: (still suspicious) Oh...

A: Anyway, dear, this isn't really a good time...

T: Why?

A: Oh nothing, just... well... Trent dear, you don't worry about coming home so fast, just, do what you must.

T: What is going on, Amelia?

B: (heard in background) Baby, come back to bed! We've got some monkey business to discuss!

T: (gasps) Amelia? You're... that Blue Monkey is over there, isn't he?

A: (gasps) How did you know?

T: I'd recognise that annoying little voice anywhere! Give the phone to him!

A: Ok.... (there's a shuffle as the phone is handed over)

B: Hello, Trent, how's things back in good ol' Amster-

T: Damn It! Get away from my wife!

B: Why should I? You don't love her. She loves me. I'm fairly indifferent... (evil laugh)

T: No! I do love my wife! I love her! I- (BM hangs up) No! Amelia has been tricked by that tricky little blue bastard! I'm going to call the police, and I'll get Max to get over to the house, an- (the phone rings, interrupting him. He picks it up fast) Hello?

A: Trent?

T: Amelia, what is going on?

A: I don't know, dear, I feel strange...

T: What happened?

A: All I remember is talking to you on the phone, and smelling coconuts. The next thing I know I'm hanging out of a tree covered in coconut butter. And I don't remember a thing!

T: And there's nobody there? Do you see any blue fur anywhere?

A: No, I don't think so. Why would you ask... (has a thought) Oh dear, do you think we've been robbed?

T: I'm pretty sure that's not what happened. (BM pops up behind couch, Trent doesn't see him) Look, I want to you just sit down, drink a glass of water and collect yourself, ok?

A: Ok, I will.

T: And don't worry, I'm sure you'll be fine (BM begins to sneak up

behind him)

A: I'll call Shelly, she'll come over and help me in the meantime.

T: Ok, you take it easy. I'll call you back in a little bit to see how you are, ok?

A: Ok.

T: Ok, bye bye dear. (he hangs up. BM jumps on his shoulders)
OWWWWWW! Get off of me! (he throws BM onto the couch)

B: Miss me?

T: No, I did not miss you! What were you doing with my wife?

B: Proving a point. That I am the ultimate lover! Weeee!

T: What? I'm going to kill you! (he chases BM around the room)

B: Stop! Oh dear me! Stop! You did it! I'm just joking now.

T: (stops) Did what?

B: You told your wife you loved her! And you actually do! (in a mystical voice) Sometimes it takes a little help and some new information to see things you never saw before. THEME ALERT! THEME ALERT! OoOoOooOooOo!
(smiles) I just had to do certain "things" and take certain "actions" to get you to realize a few things. You see, in your life you have two elements. You've got the wife, and you've got the career. Now, imagine you're on the beaches of hawaii, surrounded by clone upon clone of Yasmine Bleeth. (pause) That was fun, wasn't it? Ok, back to my big moral lesson speech. Ok, imagine two small baby goats. One day, you are playing with the goats, and one of the goats picks you a flower. Well, that was very nice of the goat wasn't it? So you give it a little extra food for dinner. Now this happens a few more times, and of course that particular goat is looking very plump and lovely, so you begin to like it more. So you feed it, and feed it, and feed it until it bursts! Goat gore all over the place, just disgusting. Meanwhile, the other goat has

shriviled away to only a shadow of the goat that once was. All of it's goatiness is gone. It's just sitting there, pleading with you. (imitates goat) Pleeese, Treenty! Looove me! Remeeeember me! Why have you left me this waaaaaay! Noooooo! NOOOOOOO!" (calms down) Now both of the goats have become deformed at your ignorance. Do you want that scrawny goat to die Trent? (gets fired up again) Huh? Do you want the goat to die? No! You don't. Do you see what I'm saying here?

T: That my wife is a goat?

B: DON'T BE SO LITERAL, BOY! One goat is your wife. The other is your career. Think about it...

T: But you still slept with my goat! I mean, wife!

B; Oh, don't worry, I've erased everything that happened. Thus, it really never did happen now. It's so magical.

T: Ok. I think I understand now. But to be honest, I really just want to go to sleep, I've had one hell of a night. (he crawls into bed, and BM follows him) Hey, get out of my bed!

B: Ok, ok, I had to try, I was on a roll. (he jumps off the bed, but then crawls right up to him and yells out) YAAAAHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

T: AAAAAAAAAA! Don't yell in my ear like that!

B: I though you would appreciate it.

T: Why?

B: Cuz that's the big stock tip.

T: It is? You just yelled in my ear though!

B: I yelled out "Yahoo."

T: You want me to invest in a company called Yahoo? Why would anyone do that?

B: It's an internet based company that will make billions of dollars.

T: Internet? Nobody but weirdoes use the internet.

B: (to audience) Not much has changed since 1983. (slaps his knee)

T: Are you sure?

B: Have I ever been wrong? (pause) You want your share of a gazillion dollars? Then go Yahoooooo..... (he begins to back up, and whispers) Yahoo..... yahoo....yahooo (he walks into the closet) yahooo..... (he closes the door. There is a pause. Then he opens the door quickly and says) YAHOO! (and shuts the door)

T: Yahoo! (he runs over to the phone eagerly, picks up it, pauses for a moment, and then dials)

T: Amelia? I'm coming home.

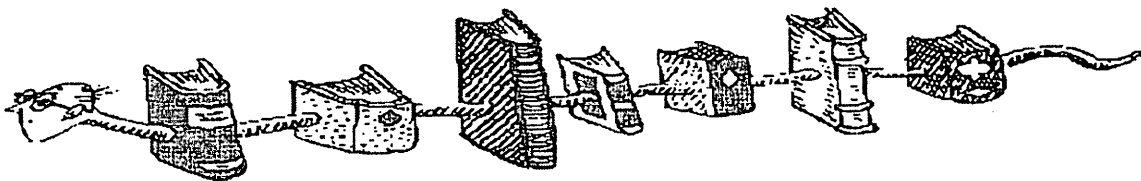
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25

Stopping for the View

by

Kristen Torno



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STOPPING FOR THE VIEW

SETTING:

THE STORY IS SET IN THE PRESENT, ON A SKYTRAIN LATE AT NIGHT. THE STAGE IS A CROSS-VIEW OF A SINGLE SKYTRAIN CAR AND THERE IS A DOOR IN THE CENTER.

CHARACTERS:

- BEA: WOMAN IN HER EARLY- TO MID-SEVENTIES DRESSED CONSERVATIVELY IN A LONG SKIRT AND WOOLEN OVERCOAT, WITH HAIR TIED BACK IN A BUN.
- CLARE: SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLD GIRL DRESSED IN CASUAL CLOTHES. RATHER ATTRACTIVE, WITH BRIGHT RED HAIR.
- TOM: MAN IN HIS MID-THIRTIES DRESSED IN BLACK CASUAL PANTS AND A CASUAL WINDBREAKER SO THAT THE AUDIENCE CANNOT SEE THE UNIFORM HE IS WEARING UNDERNEATH.

Lights come up to an empty stage as music ("Stop Children, What's That Sound?" by Buffalo Springfield) fades up. Bea enters skytrain in time to lyrics. Also in time to lyrics, Clare enters skytrain, hiding her face behind a large textbook. She does not see Bea standing on the skytrain and bumps into her as the lyrics go "I think it's time we stop--"

Clare Oh, I'm so sorry! I didn't see you there.

Bea That's all right, dear. Must be a good book to distract you so much.

Clare No, it's actually for school. I've got a huge test tomorrow and I figure it's time I start studying.

Bea At 11:30 at night? I'd think that the time to start studying would have been closer to the time the sun was going down, not coming back up.

Clare I wish I had more time, believe me.

Bea Well you're not just getting out of school this late are you?

Clare No, I just got off work. It's going to take forever to get home too. I usually drive but my car's broken down like it tends to do, and this skytrain takes forever.

Bea I don't know; I rather like the skytrain. I've been taking it ever since it was built and I've never had a problem. It gets me where I need to go, and you wouldn't believe the interesting people you meet here.

Clare Yeah, see, I usually don't talk to people on skytrains. It's kind of like everybody on the train thinks everybody else is a weirdo. It's the public transportation mentality that I just can't seem to overcome. But then again, there's me: walking right into the only person on an empty train, so who's the weirdo now?! I must apologize again; that was terrible of me.

Bea You're quite forgiven, dear. I know what it's like to get wrapped up in a book. It's as if the words come to life and the real world disappears. Speaking of which, I should let you get back to your reading.

Clare Oh, thank you. *(Can't get back into book.)* Do you have many more stops to go?

Bea I suppose. I haven't quite decided where to get off yet though. I guess only time will tell.

Clare *(Gives Bea a strange look)* What do you mean, you don't know where you're getting off?

Bea Uh uh, no more talking for you! We don't want you to fail your test now do we?

Clare Uh...I guess not. (*Goes back to reading tentatively*)

Train stops and Tom walks in and trips over his shoelace, knocking into Bea.

Tom Oh, I am so sorry. Are you all right?

Bea My, I'm just getting battered from all sides now, aren't I?! Do I have a clumsy-person magnet on my back that I wasn't aware of?

Tom Oh, I'm so sorry, ma'am I feel terrible!

Bea Oh, don't be worried; I'm not. You might want to tie up your shoe, though.

Tom Oh, yes, of course. Thank you....I mean, I'm sorry. Uh, I'm just going to sit down now.

Bea Be careful!

Tom Ah, uh, yes. (*Sits down a few feet away from Clare.*)

Clare (*Leans over to Tom.*) It's okay, I ran into her too!

Tom Oh, I just don't know what's wrong with me today. I can't seem to do anything right. First of all I drop all the receipts and wind up having to stay for two hours re-filing them, and then I ram into a little old lady (*Bea overhears and casts a haughty look.*)! I bet my cats are dying of starvation. Why does the skytrain have to be so slow?

Clare Tell me about it. I have school in the morning, and all I want to do now is go home and get some sleep. The last thing I can afford to do is blow this big test tomorrow.

Tom Oh, you're in school?

Clare Yeah, it's my senior year of high school.

Tom Oh, that's exciting. I remember my senior year. GO WILDCATS! I was so into sports back then.

Clare Yeah...I kind of figured that. (*taken aback*)

Tom *(at train)* Hurry up! I've got to feed my cats! The last thing I want to come home to is a house full of dead cats! Well, I'll let you get back to whatever you're doing. And good luck tomorrow.

Clare Oh, thank you. I, uh, hope your cats aren't dead when you get home.

Tom Thanks.

Clare *(Takes out gum from her pocket and starts chewing some.)* Would you like some?

Tom Well, I would, but there's a six hundred dollar crown back here that would not.

Clare Uh...okay. Would you like some?

Bea Sorry, what's that? *(Bea, standing in front of them turns back)*

Clare I was just offering you some gum.

Bea Oh, that's very kind of you, but these teeth don't work as well as they used to! I prefer to save them for the bare necessities.

Clare Oh, all right.

Bea I didn't catch your names earlier.

Clare Oh, I'm Clarice. You can call me Clare, just not Clare-Bear - I don't like that.

Bea Well, I'm Beatrice. You can call me Bea, but not Honey-Bea - I don't like that.

Clare All right, deal. And you are...

Tom I'm Tom. You can try to make a cute nickname I'll hate out of that if you want, but I think it would be pretty much impossible.

Bea & Clare *(quietly to themselves, rhyming things with Tom)*

Bea Oh, you're one of the lucky ones!

Clare So, Bea, what are you doing on the skytrain so late at night?

Bea Well, I was sitting at home just colouring leaves, and I thought to myself...

- Tom** Did you say you were colouring leaves?
- Clare** Like, with felt pens?
- Bea** *(matter of factly)* Well, no. With acrylic paint.
- Clare** Do you always paint leaves? *(condescending tone)*
- Bea** I don't go around spray-painting trees. Don't think I have a disorder or anything. I only paint fallen leaves that have some colour left, to restore their natural beauty. That way they can live on forever.
- Clare** Wow, that's so interesting.
- Bea** Yes, isn't it *(uninterested)*. Anyway, so I was sitting at home, when I just got an irresistible urge to get outside into the air.
- Tom** So you came to a crowded skytrain?
- Bea** Does it look very crowded to you?
- Tom** Well, no. It's just that most people would rather go outside for a walk if they wanted fresh air, not go on a skytrain for no reason.
- Bea** Oh, but there is a reason. I love going places and seeing different things. See, why only travel around the block when you could just as easily travel around the entire town and experience such a variety of people and sights?
- Clare** So you're not actually going anywhere?
- Bea** Sure I am, we're going that way! I just don't have a point at which I'm getting off.
- Tom** All right, suit yourself. Geez, I can never get off the skytrain fast enough, and then there's people riding it for fun.
- Clare** If you hate the skytrain so much then why don't you just drive?
- Tom** *(Snappily)* I don't drive....
- Clare** Okay....
- Bea** I can't blame you for not driving. It's so stressful, what with all the horns and finger gestures; that's why I gave it up completely.

- Clare** But if you can't drive, then how do you get to places you really have to go? Like what if you broke your leg and had to go to the hospital? Then what would you do? Take a bus?
- Bea** Well, if I broke my leg I think the last thing I'd want to do is drive anywhere. Am I right, Tom?
- Tom** *(Chuckling)* Yeah.
- Clare** Okay, so that was a bad example, but what if you were going over to a friend's house? Or the grocery store? Or...I don't know where else you'd go, but there are lots of places. My car's only been broken for one day and already I'm going crazy.
- Bea** There are always ways around a sticky situation. You shouldn't always look to the obvious solutions, Clare, or else you're missing out on all the fun ones.
- Clare** Yuck, I don't think public transportation is all that fun. I don't know how you could actually like to do this all the time.
- Bea** I guess it just depends how social you are.
- Clare** Well, I'm no hermit; I'm just saying that I don't feel the need to make new friends out of public-transit users.
- Tom** Why? What's so bad about people who use public transit? Just because our daddies didn't buy us cars doesn't mean we're any less respectable than you.
- Clare** *(Defensively)* Actually my dad didn't buy me a car, I worked hard to earn the money for it, and I'd appreciate it if you wouldn't make assumptions about me.
- Tom** Why? That's exactly what you did to us.
- Clare** *(Frustrated)* This is the reason I don't talk to people on the skytrain. If you'll excuse me, I've got some reading to do. *(Turns away from Tom.)*
- A man in black enters skytrain. All characters become a bit uneasy.*
- Clare** *(eyeing new passenger)* Okay, forget what I said about making assumptions about people. I guess sometimes you could be right.
- Bea** Oh, come on, he's perfectly harmless. Just because a person dresses in black and wears a toque doesn't necessarily mean he's a crook.

Tom Either way, he's making me uneasy. Maybe it's just my distrust of society, but I think we should switch trains at the next stop.

Clare I'm with you, Tom.

Bea Well, I suppose I have no choice then.

Tom *(Loudly so Man in Black can hear; sounds fake)* Well, this is my stop. How about you guys?

Clare *(Also loud and unconvincing tone of voice)* Yes. This is also my stop. I will be getting off the train here.

Bea *(Regular voice)* I don't see why this is necess...

Clare What's that? It's your stop too? Okay, let's all get off together then in a group.

Tom *(quieter)* Do you think he heard us?

Bea Unless he's deaf, I'd assume so.

Clare *(Louder once again)* Oh look, the train's stopping. And there are my parents waiting for me right outside. I hope they brought Killer, our pet Rottweiler; he just got his teeth...sharpened.

Bea, Tom and Clare stand and walk towards the door. As door is opening the man in black jumps up and blocks exit. Characters are frozen in shock. He pushes them down with one hand as he draws a gun with the other. Bea falls to the floor right away in front of him and the man in black kicks her as Tom pulls her closer towards him and Clare.

Man in Black Not so fast. Get on the ground! *(Says this while pushing and kicking them.)* Hand over your wallets. Don't move. *(He takes their wallets, still pointing a gun at them. As he is backing out the open door it begins to close. It startles him and he loses his footing, falling to the ground and accidentally shooting his gun at the same time directly at the characters on the floor)*

Man in Black freezes. After a few seconds, the characters begin to look around to see who was shot. When they realize that no one was, they begin to look for a bullet hole, and eventually see the Man in Black still standing there frozen.

Clare Oh my God!

Tom Holy crap!

Bea What the...

Clare *(crying)* What's going on?

Tom Damned if I know.

All three are just huddled together, staring at the robber in disbelief as he is standing frozen, his gun aimed at them.

Clare Please don't shoot us. We won't call the cops, honest!

Tom He's not moving....What's going on?

Bea You're both all right, aren't you?

Clare Yeah, I'm okay. Where did he shoot?

Bea I have no idea. *(All start looking around while still keeping an eye on Man in Black)* Unless...

Tom Unless I'm dreaming! Oh, I must be dreaming! Come on, Tom, snap out of it. *(Clare pinches him.)* OW!

Clare Did that hurt?

Tom YES!

Clare Then we're not dreaming....This must all be some kind of hoax. It must be, what other explanation is there? He must be one of those street mimes who can freeze in midair, and the gun must be a cap gun. Maybe it's some kind of performance!

Tom *(Talks to Man in Black with slight pauses between each plea, as Man in Black does not respond.)* Okay, the show's over, pal. Come on, you can give up the act; we've figured you out....What do you want, a tip or something? Well, you've got my wallet, so help yourself! But seriously, you're holding up the train. These nice people just want to get moving. Okay, seriously. I don't know what you're after, but you've had your fun with us. Yes, we were scared. You did a very good job. Do you do parties? My friend's having a birthday next week. I'll give you a call; you might be able to liven things up a bit. What do you say? Man, this guy's impossible to reason with!

Clare Okay, so maybe I was wrong. I guess the obvious solution isn't always the right one.

- Bea** I don't think we're dealing with a performance. Look outside. Those flies are stuck in mid-air. Are they street mimes too?
- Clare** Oh my God....
- Bea** And in case you haven't noticed (*looks around*), the train isn't moving either.
- Tom** But then, what about the gun?
- Bea** (*Walks over to robber.*) Looks pretty real to me.
- Clare** (*Getting scared*) Well then, where did he shoot it?
- Tom** Nowhere on the train, I'm guessing.
- Clare** But how does that make sense?!
- Bea** Unless....
- Tom** Unless what?
- Bea** Unless he hasn't actually shot it yet.
- Tom** What? We all heard it.
- Bea** Yes, but do we see it?
- Clare** I don't understand!
- Bea** (*Starts to rise to her feet.*) Maybe that shot we heard hasn't actually been fired yet.
- Clare** What do you mean? Of course it has.
- Bea** No. That's the obvious answer. If we hear something, we automatically believe it has happened. But maybe it's still in the process of happening. Maybe it can't be completed until it's determined who the bullet is going to hit.
- Tom** Determined? By whom?
- Bea** Perhaps by fate?
- Tom** Oh God, let's not start this (*turns away in frustration*).

- Clare** *(Disregards Tom)* But then why is everything frozen like this? Why are we the only ones who can move?
- Bea** Maybe because time has frozen to give fate a chance to set things straight.
- Tom** *(Spins around)* Well if fate actually existed, then wouldn't it have already known who would get shot? *(Starts pacing)*
- Bea** Not necessarily. Fate doesn't control everything. Some things just happen.
- Clare** Well then, how is it going to be decided who gets shot?
- Bea** I wish I knew.
- Tom** Listen, Bea. Just because you "theorize" something doesn't necessarily make it true. *(Gets increasingly angry and mocking)* I'm not going to sit here believing that time has frozen for fate or whatever to set things straight. That's bullshit and you know it.
- Bea** Actually, it's not cow dung, but you're entitled to your opinion. I've learned a lot in my life, Tom, and even though I might be just a little old lady to you, I can still teach you a thing or two. You might be some big important businessman with hundreds of people under you awaiting your next command, or you may be some cult guru luring people to your ways, but just because you have control over others does not mean you have control over yourself or the circumstances around you. You can't control the rain falling if you've just washed your car, or choose to meet the love of your life in a corner-store and make it so. I'm not saying that fate controls matters as trivial as the rain; I'm just saying that you're not always in control. Fate plays a major role in your life.
- Tom** *(Starts going off)* Maybe that's what you think you've learned, but the way I see it, fate is nothing but a scapegoat. It's something to blame your failures on. That way, you don't have to take responsibility for anything, because "it was all fated to happen". Well, not me, I've learned to take responsibility for my actions and face the consequences. I don't know what the hell is going on right now and I'm not going to pretend like I do, but I can tell you it's happened for a reason.
- Bea** Hmm...interesting. *(Spins back to Clare standing behind her.)* Clare, I think I have an answer to your question.
- Clare** Did I ask something? *(taken aback by the fighting)*

- Bea** Yes. You asked how it was going to be decided who got shot, and Tom's outburst gave me an idea.
- Tom** *(Starts to object)*
- Bea** *(Turns back to Tom)* Whoa, whoa, whoa, you're still sweating from the last one, sweetie; hold off for a sec. *(Turns back to Clare)* Anyway, what Tom said about taking responsibility for your actions really makes sense. When you make a decision, you base it on past experiences, correct? That's why they say you never make the same mistake twice.
- Clare** Actually, I've been known to make the same mistake three or four times.
- Bea** *(flippantly)* Oh sure, but that's still what they say. Anyhow, if we make decisions about our future based on our past, then why shouldn't fate do the same?
- Clare** So you're saying it's a judgment day situation?
- Bea** Oh, hardly. Don't get me started on religion or I'll go off like Tom over here. *(Turns to see him, crouched down, wiping his forehead of sweat.)* No, all I'm saying is that perhaps our future will be decided by our lives and prospects up to this point.
- Clare** But how can something so sacred as a life be determined by such an impersonal force? In church we were always told how God cared and looked out for everyone. I could just never understand how he could intimately care for so many people.
- Bea** Well, the way I see it, fate isn't some grand plan, but a force, a kind of sixth sense within all of us.
- Tom** You mean like the kind that sees dead people?
- Bea** *(Turns to Tom, unamused)* No...one that looks out for us, but doesn't plan every second of our lives, just sets destinations for us to reach.
- Clare** What do you mean, destinations?
- Bea** Have you ever met someone and thought, "Yes, this is exactly who I want to be with!"?
- Clare** I'm seventeen.
- Tom** I'm single.

- Bea** Okay...or ever been presented with an opportunity and had not a doubt in your mind that you should take it?
- Clare** I guess when chose to go to university.
- Tom** *(Shrugs)*
- Bea** Well, those are the kind of destinations I'm talking about, where it's almost as if a part of you is urging you on, saying, "Yes, go; you're on the right track!"
- Tom** *(Stands up)* Yeah, but you're contradicting yourself, because if that was the way things worked, then that would technically be a "grand plan".
- Bea** *(Approaches Tom)* Not necessarily though, Tom. Destinations may be set to some degree, but you have lots of choices on your way. You can take as many detours and wrong turns as you like.
- Clare** I'm not so sure I can believe all this. I don't think I've ever been completely sure of...anything in my whole life. I mean, even university. I know exactly which courses I want to take, but they'll eventually lead me in different directions. How am I supposed to know where to go?
- Bea** I'm sure it must be overwhelming to have so many choices. I wish there had been more when I was your age. But you can't look so far to the future, Clare. If all you're doing is trying to reach your destination, then you won't enjoy the ride. Pardon the cliché, but life really is a journey. Take time to look out the windows and enjoy the view, and one day you'll look around and be exactly where you want to be.
- Tom** You're both so naïve. Look at you, Bea, filling a young girl's head with your inspirational propaganda! *(Walks over to Clare)* Listen, Clare, that's not the way life works. *(bitterly)* You don't always end up where you want to be. If everyone has a sixth sense that guides them, some enjoy playing cruel jokes.
- Bea** Well, I'm going to take a long shot and assume you're talking about yourself. Let me start by saying that for someone who supposedly doesn't believe in fate, you're taking this pretty seriously.
- Tom** I'm not saying I believe you. I'm just saying that...well, maybe it would be nice to know that everything that happened wasn't my fault. That maybe it was meant to happen. *(Sits down, depressed)*
- Clare & Bea** *(Exchange confused looks)*

- Clare** What was meant to happen, Tom?
- Tom** No point in bringing up the past, especially with strangers.
- Bea** Well, you know, I find that talking about the past can help a lot; you can learn a lot from your mistakes. *(seeming overly optimistic and cheery)*
- Tom** You think so, huh? *(sarcastically)* Well, all right, since you seem to have an answer for everything, why don't I tell you my past and you can explain the wonderful outcomes it had.
- Bea** All right.
- Tom** *(Hesitates and hunches over, almost ashamed)* Two years ago I was driving home down this narrow road from a meeting late at night. I was looking straight ahead, but then this car lying in the ditch caught my eye. *(Starts getting defensive.)* I was going to pull over, but then I thought it might be a trap, you know? Some gullible passer-by sees a car in a ditch and tries to be a Good-Samaritan and then BAM! He gets hit from behind, robbed and murdered. Anyway, I wasn't going to take that chance so I kept driving. The next day I found out it had been my business partner's car in the ditch. He'd slid off the road and his steering column crushed him. *(Snaps back to attacking Bea)* Seems to me that our sixth senses didn't guide either of us very well.
- Clare** *(Sits down beside Tom)* Tom, I'm so sorry. I had no idea.
- Bea** *(Remains standing)* Yes, that must have been very hard for you. Are you all right?
- Tom** *(Unconfidently)* Of course I'm all right. I've had two years to get over it haven't I? What kind of man couldn't get over something in two years?
- Bea** Well, guilt is a hard thing to get over. *(Turns away)*
- Tom** Guilt? *(Stands)* Who said anything about guilt?
- Bea** Well, you seem to have some issues with that whole story...
- Tom** Listen, nothing that happened that night was my fault. Like I said, it could have been a trap, how was I to know? It's not like I could have saved him anyway; I was a lawyer, not a doctor. Any pain I feel is for the loss of a friend and co-worker, not guilt over his death.
- Bea** I didn't say it was, all I meant was...well, you obviously know what I mean.

- Tom** I know what you mean? (*Walks toward Bea*) Actually, it's becoming rather a regular occurrence that I don't know what you mean. Please, enlighten me.
- Bea** (*Turns quickly to Tom so that they're face to face.*) What do you do now, Tom?
- Tom** What do you mean, what do I do?
- Bea** What's your occupation? How do you make your living?
- Tom** (*Turns away.*) That's really none of your business. Look, there will be no more glimpses into the inner workings of Tom tonight if that's okay with you. I don't know what kind of bond you want to form here, but let's try and keep it superficial from this point on, all right?
- Bea** Well, Tom, you said you were a lawyer. WERE. Does that mean you're not anymore?
- Tom** If you feel you must know, then no, I'm no longer a lawyer. It wasn't the right profession for me; it just took me twelve years to realize it.
- Bea** (*Keeps walking toward Tom as he backs up, cornering him in downstage right*) And when did you realize it, Tom?
- Tom** That's none of your business!
- Bea** I'm only trying to help, Tom.
- Tom** No you're not, you're only trying to prove something. I don't know what it is, but I can tell by that look you've got. Just leave me out of it. I'm sick of these twisted conversations. LEAVE ME OUT OF IT! (*Breaks away from Bea and sits on farthest seat.*)
- Bea** (*Slowly walks over to Tom and sits beside him.*) Tom, when did you leave your profession?
- Tom** (*Silent for a moment, then looks up at Bea*) After Chris died.
- Bea** So what do you do now?
- Tom** I don't know; a little of everything really. I was working at a friend's drug store tonight. It's not as bad as it sounds. I'm just stuck with a Masters degree and a name-tag that says "Jim"; they would even get me my own God-damn name-tag!

Bea *(Pauses for a second)* Do you have any family, Tom? Wife? Girlfriend?

Tom No.

Bea Are you happy, Tom?

Tom Should I be? Would you be happy?

Bea That's not the question...I think you're stuck in that ditch with your friend.

Tom Excuse me?

Bea I think you feel so guilty for not helping him and you were so loyal to him that you don't feel right moving on without him. I think that you're stuck at the side of the road. You're afraid to go forward, and you're living in what should be the past.

Tom *(Stands up and speaks with nervous laughter)* I don't know why I'm letting you get to me so much. Maybe it's the fact that a frozen crook is pointing a gun at me or something. I mean, you don't even know me. You don't know anything about me except that one of my friends died two years ago. Other than that I'm a complete mystery to you.

Bea I may not be able to recite your life story, but I'm right, aren't I? Things only bother us when they strike a nerve, and they only strike a nerve when there's truth to them.

Tom And if I admitted that I feel a bit guilty? Would that help you?

Bea No, would it help you?

Tom *(Walks away in frustration.)* I'm just a cautious person. I suppose you could call me a pessimist. When it comes to taking chances, I always see the bad things that could happen.

Clare That's not a bad thing, Tom. It's better to be aware of danger than oblivious to it. So many of my friends take stupid risks every day, not because they're looking for danger, just because they think getting hurt or killed will never happen to them. They think they're invincible because they've never been given a reason to think otherwise. Of course, you're taking it to the other extreme, which I suppose isn't healthy either...

- Tom** It's just that after that night, after losing him, I wasn't the same. He helped me set up my practice in his firm; he helped me cope with law outside of a classroom. And when he needed me to help him, what did I do? Became the coward I guess I always was.
- Clare** So you're going to spend your whole life afraid? You're going to live isolated so that nobody can hurt you again? Tom, did you think you were taking a chance when you came on this train tonight?
- Tom** Well, no.
- Clare** Yeah, and just look how that turned out for you. The thing about taking risks is, you've always got your guard up because you're aware of the danger. I find that bad things usually happen when you're least expecting them. And now you could be dead, with nothing to show for your life.
- Tom** I have plenty to show for my life.
- Clare** Anything from the past two years?
- Tom** *(Irritated)* What's up with this whole thing, anyway? When's time going to start up again? Furthermore, why couldn't we all have been frozen like the rest of the world? *(Glares at Clare and Bea as if to say that he'd rather not have to talk to them)*
- Bea** I think we have to be awake for this. You've both heard that your life flashes before your eyes the second before you die?
- Clare** Yes.
- Bea** Well, I'm beginning to think that's what this is. I mean, obviously reliving your whole life takes more than one second, so time has to freeze to make this possible.
- Tom** So if we're all stuck in time, then...we're all going to die?
- Clare** No, there was only one shot fired. We can't all die from one bullet. That must be why we're all a part of this. Fate has to decide which one of us is going to be shot, and then...
- Bea** ...Time resumes for the other two?
- Tom** So what are we supposed to do? Just sit around waiting?
- Bea** Maybe it will never start again. *(sardonically)* We'll be stuck here doomed to reflect on our pasts forever.

- Tom** Oh, I'll go crazy!
- Bea** Yes, you will. *(Bea and Tom stare at each other)*
- Clare** Is that why you don't drive, Tom?
- Tom** What?
- Clare** Earlier, before all this, you said you didn't drive and that's why you take the skytrain. But in your story, you were driving. Is that why you stopped? Because of your friend?
- Tom** If you were in an airport and you saw the plane next to yours blow up, would you not cancel your flight?
- Clare** I didn't ask for an analogy. Is that why?
- Tom** Like I said, I'm not much of a risk taker. That night it hit me, that everything is a risk, even looking out a car window. You never know what you'll see. It could be a beautiful sunset or it could be something terrible. Something that changes you forever. I just don't think it's worth looking out that window.
- Clare** God, you seem like such a wuss.
- Tom** Excuse me, young lady, are we forgetting that I'm twice your age? Do you have no respect?
- Clare** I respect people who deserve to be respected. Just because you saw a bad thing once when you were driving doesn't give you the excuse to quit! God, if I gave up a subject every time I got a bad grade...
- Tom** No, but driving does mean I have to look back out that window and take that chance again to look ahead. It seems like the only safe place to look is behind you. At least what's already happened can't take you by surprise.
- Clare** You are stuck at the side of the road. I hope it's you who gets shot.
- Tom** *(Completely taken aback, tries to reason things out for a second to himself)* I think we're all overlooking a very important detail: maybe this guy's a bad shot. Maybe time stopped to decide which window would get shattered, or maybe one of us will wind up getting shot in the toe. There's no need to assume that just because time is frozen someone has to die.

- Bea** When have you noticed time coming to a halt any time someone stubs their toe or sends a baseball through a window? This isn't about pain, Tom, it's about life.
- Tom** Why am I even listening to you? I'm not the one who paints leaves for fun.
- Bea** Do you know why I paint leaves, Tom?
- Tom** Yes, you told us before, remember?
- Bea** You really think I'm crazy, don't you? I don't paint leaves to make people question my state of mind, I paint them to remember those who live solely through the memories of others. You should appreciate that, Tom, not make fun of it. I suppose it was my late husband who started me on it. He was a former English professor and he found symbolism in everything around him. He said that leaves symbolized stages of life, and that a leaf streaked with color had fallen before its time, just as many people fall before their time. After he passed away I began painting leaves to commemorate and preserve the lives they had been unable to fulfill; lives beyond their control. When I paint a leaf, it lives on in its prime, forever.
- Clare** I wonder if when time resumes, we'll remember any of this conversation. Or will it all have been a complete waste of time?
- Tom** Thank you. *(sarcastically)*
- Clare** I'm not saying it's a waste talking to the two of you, but I would consider it a waste if I couldn't look back on this night and all that we've discussed. It's not often that I really, honestly talk to people of different ages and outlooks. I must admit, it's much more stimulating conversation than who's dating who, what somebody supposedly said about somebody else; you know, typical teenage gossip.
- Tom** I know you two must think I'm a bastard... I have been acting like a jerk. But I'm really not like this and... *(unwillingly trying to apologize)* even though we may not remember any of this, I wouldn't want to leave things this way. So....aw, geez....
- Bea** Apology accepted, Tom. The three of us have gone through something so intense together it would be a shame not to feel kindly towards one another. Even though we don't have much in common except the fact that we're stuck in time on a skytrain, our relationship will always be special. I'm really glad that we had this chance to talk. *(All sit in silence.)*
- Clare** *(Breaks uncomfortable silence)* I really hope it's not me who gets shot.

- Bea** I can second that one!
- Clare** Well, no offense to the two of you, it's just that I'm young and I have so much ahead of me...or at least I think I do, anyway.
- Bea** So you're saying that I'm the one who should be shot. All right... *(Walks over and stands directly in front of the gun)* If that's the way you feel, just because I'm old, then let's get it over with.
- Clare** *(Grabs Bea away.)* No! That's not what I meant. I just meant....
- Tom** *(Slouched on bench)* I suppose it should probably be me who gets it. Just like you said, I deserve it.
- Bea** We never said anything of the sort. *(Glares at Clare.)* It's not that you deserve it *(motions at Tom)* or that you don't deserve it *(motions at Clare)*. It's just the way things happen. I just realized something rather ironic.
- Clare** What's that?
- Bea** Well, Clare you, are living for the future, even if you are overwhelmed by it. Whereas Tom, you're living for the past. It overwhelms you.
- Clare** So where does that leave you?
- Bea** Right where I want to be. Living for the present. I've had a wonderful life, and I don't know how much more of it I'm going to have. It's not that I'm all that old, it's just that things tend to happen...like tonight. I don't live for what could happen tomorrow, I live for what's happening right now. I live for the moments.
- Clare** Have you always been like that? I can't imagine making it through life not worrying about the future at least a little.
- Bea** To be honest with you, I haven't always been this way. I guess it was three years ago when it first hit me. Three years ago, I fell in love for the first time.
- Clare** Ever?

- Bea** Yes. I was a beautiful-looking, girl. I could have had my pick of anyone, but I think that was part of what turned me off the whole courting scene: was that I could have had anyone, and anyone would have felt lucky to be chosen by me. I wanted to be the lucky one who was chosen by someone else – and not just for my looks. Anyhow, three years ago I was in the hospital getting a flu shot and stopped in to visit one of my dear friends. She was in a split room with another man behind a curtain, though you never would have guessed he was there if it wasn't for the incessant beeping of several machines, for he never spoke a word the entire time I was there. I returned to visit my friend a week later and she informed me that her neighbor had been inquiring about me since the moment I left. I swear that at that moment I plunged to the maturity level of a twelve-year-old; I actually began to giggle! No one had had a crush on me for years. I went through his curtain and it was love at first sight. Some people will try to tell you that love at first sight is based on physical appearance, but trust me; it isn't. Even though this man was about the sickest person I'd ever met, he was beautiful. He was my destination. I visited him every day. He wasn't restricted to his bed, but he tired easily. The longest walk I ever saw him take was when we walked down the aisle together.
- Clare** You married him?!
- Bea** Yes, I did. And he died three months later. You see, we knew from the beginning that we wouldn't have much time together, so we just enjoyed to the fullest the time we had. I wouldn't trade our marriage for anything, even if it was far too short.
- Clare** That's such a beautiful story. You really did live for the moments, didn't you?
- Bea** That's when I learned that for me life was about living for the moments. It's hard to do sometimes, but if you're not enjoying your life in the present, then when will you?
- Clare** God, I'm always so busy, I don't have time to live in the moment.
- Bea** Clare, you're living in a moment right now.... *(Pause)*
- Clare** I've really enjoyed this journey.
- Tom** I thought you hated public transportation?
- Clare** It's the transportation I hate, not the public. When you're standing still it's not that bad.
- Bea** It's like seeing things from a whole other perspective.

- Tom** It's like seeing life from a whole other perspective. But, I've still got my cats to feed.
- Clare** I've still got a huge test tomorrow.
- Bea** I've still got... more train rides.
- Tom** *(Starts laughing to himself shaking his head.)*
- Clare** What's so funny?
- Tom** You two must think that I'm a terrible person.
- Bea** Why would we think that?
- Tom** Because of... everything you know about me, and... this whole situation. I feel like it was me who brought this on, that I invited it. I mean, listening to the two of you, I bet you've never done an indecent thing in your whole life. And now this happens. It doesn't seem fair to you. I'm sorry.
- Bea** Well, it's not your fault. It's true that bad things happen to good people. But good people also do bad things. It's all a balance.
- Clare** It is all a balance isn't it? To think that a young, successful lawyer could die in a freak accident, just as easily as a sick old man... I suppose that means we're all equal when it comes to... *(scares herself by what she's saying)* ... stuff. Doesn't this feel like it's ending to you?
- Tom** I don't know... I feel like there should be some grand sign, like flashing lights or a spinning clock or something.
- Clare** What do we say when this is over? What if we never meet again.
- Bea** Every day when I left my wonderful husband, we knew we might not see each other again. But we never said goodbye, because we knew that nothing was over unless we let it slip away. There was hope for the future and joy in our past. We said, "See you soon." So, I'll see you soon.
- Tom** See you soon.
- Clare** See you soon... *(Suddenly looks up and gets a frightened look on her face. Talks quietly to Bea.)* Bea, when you paint your leaves, what colour do you paint them?
- Bea** Red.

Clare *(Clare grabs her red hair and looks at it for a second and lets it fall again)*
Yes, that would be my choice, too.

Tom and Bea move backwards through their movements as Clare stands still with her eyes closed at the same spot she collapsed on when the gun shot the first time. Once the characters reach their starting positions crouching on the ground, the gun shoots and the music resumes from where it cut out. The man in black freaks out and runs, and Tom and Bea eventually rise (in time to music lyrics) and discover that Clare is not moving. When lyrics go "I think it's time we stop-" and cut off, that's when Tom and Bea suddenly look at each other and freeze. Blacks out.

