

# **Gas'n'Sips**

Winter Break Edits

Draft 5

by Irene Loy

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## CHARACTERS

WAYNE, a philosopher, in his late 20's, has a mustache

CLAIRE, a dilettante, in her early 20's

DAN, Claire's older brother, in his mid 20's

CUSTOMER

## SETTING

The entire play takes place in a Gas'n'Sip convenience store in middle America.

A bell rings every time the door to the Gas'n'Sip opens, on entering or leaving the store.

## TIME

The play takes place over a series of work shifts at the Gas'n'Sip. The time between each work shift is indeterminate, but each scene marks a different work shift on a different day. The entire play takes place over a period of about a year.

## NOTES

Begin each act in darkness.

A — or / denotes an interruption.



**Act I**  
**Scene 1**

*Start in darkness.*

WAYNE  
You ever wonder what lies beyond our actions?

CLAIRE  
Well depends like do you mean what kind of action? Like running or skipping or jumping or—

WAYNE  
No, I don't mean any specific action. Just, action. Stuff, you know? Doing things.

CLAIRE  
Like what?

WAYNE  
Like anything—it doesn't matter. Like the fact of acting—having agency—being active in the world.

CLAIRE  
Like doing our part?

WAYNE  
Yeah, like all the little mundane things that make up our part in the world or whatever.

CLAIRE  
Like working at a Gas'n'Sip.

WAYNE  
Larger—BIGGER—like the whole array of human activity!

CLAIRE  
And then what?

WAYNE  
No, I mean like, during. Behind it, or whatever. The space right behind action, where if you peak right into it—that dark unforeseeable space—you'll just get bit on the nose by it—?

CLAIRE  
I don't follow.

WAYNE  
It's a no-brainer. Our motivations. Why we're here.

CLAIRE

Like—Why do I work here?

WAYNE

If you insist on being reductive about it, yeah.

*Lights up on the Gas 'n' Sip. It is a fully stocked convenience store in middle America. Wayne and Claire are both behind the counter.*

CLAIRE

I'm savin' up. New car. It'll need sweet wheels and these blue flames painted on the sides. My cousin, he's a rad car painter, he can—Don't look at me like that.

WAYNE

That's a stupid thing to want.

CLAIRE

What—why? Whadyou want that's so great?

WAYNE

Simple. Truth. Capital T.

CLAIRE

You want “Capital T Truth” and you work at a fucking Gas'n'Sip!? Good luck with that.

WAYNE

Simpleton.

CLAIRE

Geek.

WAYNE

Only Truth matters.

CLAIRE

Whatever.

WAYNE

You wish. Why blue flames?

CLAIRE

Because—I got the idea from—

*She gets a Hot Wheels from an endcap and drives it in mid-air.*

It's got blue flames.

WAYNE

I see that. What's the big deal?

CLAIRE

It's pretty cool. You gotta admit.

WAYNE

It's alright.

CLAIRE

Wouldn't it be cool, to ride around town in a car like this?

WAYNE

I guess.

CLAIRE

When I close my eyes, I can see me riding around in a car like this one, with my boyfriend. He drives with one arm around me, and the windows are down so the wind blows through our hair. When we pass by people in town, they turn their heads to look at us. Everybody at that point basically wants to be us.

WAYNE

Does he like the idea?

CLAIRE

Who?

WAYNE

Your boyfriend.

CLAIRE

I don't have one.

WAYNE

But you said—

CLAIRE

It's like the flames. Just an idea. For the moment.

WAYNE

Got it. It's kind of a small dream, isn't it?

CLAIRE

Excuse me?

WAYNE

Not like, “I’d like to cure cancer” or “I wanna make a difference in the lives of children” or “I wanna walk on the moon”? Just—riding around in some blue car with some hypothetical guy?

CLAIRE

It’s my dream. I get to decide how big or small to make it. Who are you to—

*Customer enters.*

CLAIRE

Welcome to Gas’n’Sip. How may I help you?

*Customer picks out a pack of gum and throws it up on the counter.*

CUSTOMER

Just this.

CLAIRE

Anything else?

CUSTOMER

JUST. THIS.

CLAIRE

Got it. Dollar ninety-five.

*Customer pays. Claire gives him change.*

*Customer exits.*

CLAIRE

See—like that.

WAYNE

Like what?

CLAIRE

You want examples, take that guy.

WAYNE

Examples of what?

CLAIRE

That guy. He wants gum. It’s small, but it’s what he wants.

WAYNE

Okay. So?

CLAIRE

So—it's not for you to judge whether what he wants is good enough, big enough, or whatever.

WAYNE

I'm just saying—why go for something that's not all that significant?

CLAIRE

But look. (getting a pack of gum from the shelf) This pack. It's my fave flave! People like it. People like gum. What? You have a problem with gum? Who has a problem with GUM? Really? Not everything is Capital T Truth. Some things are a pack of gum. It doesn't mean anything. It's—I like this flavor. Just. Be. Cause. If you DISMISS all the small things in the world, you're gonna get LOST. You're gonna be lost.

WAYNE

It can be a good thing—getting lost.

CLAIRE

No way.

WAYNE

Have you ever tried it?

CLAIRE

I'm not talking to you about this. You're like—a real life moron. You're like some guru on a mountaintop, but in real life, you're a moron. I can't EXPLAIN stuff like this to you. Make fun of my dream, just 'cause you don't think it's big enough. Who asked you? I mean, who cares what you think?

WAYNE

Listen—I'm sorry if I pissed you off or whatever. I just—that wouldn't be my dream.

CLAIRE

(huffing) What's your lofty goal?

WAYNE

Laying at the edge of a cliff on a mountainside in my sleeping bag under the stars.

*She laughs.*

CLAIRE

(sarcastically) Now that really is big.

## Scene 2

*Claire is sweeping the floor.*

*Wayne enters for work, goes behind the counter, notices a gossip magazine laid out on the counter.*

WAYNE

(reading) *Inquirer Now*. You read these things?

CLAIRE

I'm halfway through it already.

WAYNE

You know, none of that stuff is true. Why do you read it?

CLAIRE

Because it's funny.

WAYNE

There's nothing funny about tearing people's lives apart.

CLAIRE

Well, it's not MEAN. It's just—entertaining. Why do you have to question everything?

WAYNE

I don't question stupid shit. I question BIG THINGS.

CLAIRE

What could be more important than having an interest in people's lives—even if they just happen to be famous?

WAYNE

(laughs) About a million things are more important than that.

CLAIRE

Well name one.

WAYNE

Um—(laughs)—PURPOSE. MISSION. SPIRITUALITY. Uh—The fact that POETRY exists, and languages and, and all over the world, people are contemplating the COSMOS. In fact, we've GONE THERE. That shit is worth thinking about. That shit is worth devoting time to. Not some inquirer magazine thing, and your petty obsession with over-make-uped, over-sexed celebrities. I mean, WHO CARES about—the Kardashians?

CLAIRE

I do.



WAYNE  
Why?

CLAIRE  
Listen to this: They named their baby NORTH.

WAYNE  
So?

CLAIRE  
Nickname Nori—

WAYNE  
Okay, who cares? I'm fast falling asleep here. This is—

CLAIRE  
His last name is West.

*He laughs.*

WAYNE  
Okay. That's pretty funny. Alright. They named their child northwest?

CLAIRE  
Yeah.

WAYNE  
(catching himself) But that's all the more reason not to read that shit. I mean, the neuron that's holding that piece of information could know something about plankton or the circumference of Pluto or the wingspan of some wild bird—I mean, god, THAT'S what you're spending your time on?

CLAIRE  
Yeah! WHY should I care about something that has NOTHING to do with my life?

WAYNE  
How does this celebrity DRAB have anything to do with your life?

CLAIRE  
Well, a friend of mine had a baby, became a baby mama or whatever, and it's something I can relate to—OR I can be fucking relieved that it didn't happen to me.

*He laughs loudly.*

WAYNE

That's it! So you're getting off on other people's misery. That's why you're spending your time on with this inquirer bullshit. Inquiring minds want to know? Come on!

CLAIRE

I don't care what you think. I like it. It passes the time.

WAYNE

Yeah, you pass enough time, then you die.

CLAIRE

Shut up. What do you do—What's the last INTERESTING thing that you did?

WAYNE

I rappelled off a building.

CLAIRE

What does that mean? Rappel.

WAYNE

Uh—rappelling? Like off a rock face? People do it all the time. It's a thing, in nature. It's a big rock and you basically override every instinct in your body that says, "Don't walk off the edge of this rock with your whole body"—'cause you're going backwards like this.

*He does it, off the counter, holding onto some electrical cord from behind the counter.*

You're like this, right? You're like OFF THE EDGE. You're basically sitting down into thin air. Like nothing is catching you.

CLAIRE

So?

WAYNE

So, most of the time people do it off a rock, but—this time, it was off of a building.

CLAIRE

Why?

WAYNE

'Cause we could. 'Cause a buddy of mine knows a guy who has his own company. Some fucking skyscraper. Middle of Pittsburgh, actually. And so we just rappelled down it. Ask me how many stories it was.

CLAIRE

Nah. Who cares?

WAYNE  
ASK ME.

CLAIRE  
(sighs) How many stories was it?

WAYNE  
Forty-five! I rappelled down a forty-five story building. That's fucking cool.

CLAIRE  
It's whatever. It only means something if it means something.

WAYNE  
Yeah, it means something.

CLAIRE  
TO YOU! Not to me. I don't care. Why should I care about that? You're talking, but you're not talking TO ME. I'm right here, so it looks like you're talking to me. But you're not talking to me.

WAYNE  
What do you mean?

CLAIRE  
I mean like—I mean—

*Customer enters.  
He gets a coffee and a newspaper and goes to the counter.*

CLAIRE  
Is that all?

CUSTOMER  
Yeah.

CLAIRE  
Three seventy-five.

*He hands over a five.  
She gives him his change.  
Customer exits.*

CLAIRE  
That guy either. Not talking to me.

### Scene 3

CLAIRE

So like Jack says that he's gonna give me extra hours, but then the new schedule comes out and I have even LESS hours than what I had last time so then I see that Marie got like DOUBLE the hours I got, and I'm like that is SO FAVORTISM but he doesn't even care, he's like rock-face, like rock-solid-face. Can't get through. So Tammy, who's like standing RIGHT THERE, she takes it upon herself to start laughing. Just, haha. Nearly choking on her stupid tongue piercing. So I make a choice. I turn on the waterworks and—

WAYNE

Wait—you started crying?

CLAIRE

Correction. I made a very calculated decision to use my feminine capacities to my advantage.

WAYNE

It doesn't work that way.

CLAIRE

Says who?

WAYNE

It's not like pinching yourself. You can't just MAKE yourself cry.

CLAIRE

Maybe you can't, but/I can

WAYNE

/You are so full of it.

CLAIRE

Seven years old. My dad didn't wanna get me that pink bike I wanted. I start streamin' right there in the K-mart—left the store RIDING the thing. Who says I can't, or won't—?

WAYNE

Well, if you can control it, then it's unethical to—But that's not—

CLAIRE

Who's got more hours than Marie AS WE SPEAK? It sure as hell ain't Tammy.

WAYNE

It worked?

CLAIRE

Of course it worked.

WAYNE  
But it wasn't TRUE.

CLAIRE  
You think only truth works? You been livin' under a stone?

WAYNE  
I'm not stupid.

CLAIRE  
No, just out of touch.

WAYNE  
There is nothing more powerful than truth.

CLAIRE  
I got fifty bucks says otherwise.

WAYNE  
I don't—

CLAIRE  
Scared?

WAYNE  
What are we, five?

CLAIRE  
No, but—how much we make an hour? I'm offering you several hours' worth of pay for something you think is false—unless you're afraid I'm right?

WAYNE  
K, deal. How do we?

CLAIRE  
Just wait and see.

*Customer enters.  
He grabs a soda and a bag of chips, takes them to the register. Claire rings them up.*

CLAIRE  
Four forty-two.

*Customer takes out a five. Claire quickly pushes a jar forward on the counter.*

CLAIRE

And—care to donate to a worthy cause?

CUSTOMER

No thank you. Just the soda and chips.

CLAIRE

It's a shelter for animals that don't have a home.

CUSTOMER

Not today. thank you.

*He holds out his five.*

CLAIRE

It's a no-kill shelter. No matter what. I wish we'd known about those when I was little. We had this Cocker Spaniel, Pickles. Just part of the family. But when we had to move to this low-income housing, it was 'No pets allowed' and we didn't know anybody who could take him—We didn't have any other choice, but we promised we'd visit. When our mom took us back the next weekend, they had already—he had already—

*Claire spontaneously cries.*

*The customer, put off, throws a twenty in the jar and his five on the counter. He takes his soda and chips and exits in a hurry. Claire immediately stops crying.*

I'll see your fifty, and (holding up her prize) I'll raise you twenty.

WAYNE

That's so—

CLAIRE

Clever? I just started making TIPS. Better'n what you get at Steak'n'Shake.

WAYNE

I'm not going to—

CLAIRE

Come on! We had a deal.

WAYNE

Based on lies.

CLAIRE

I kept my part of the bargain. You just hate that I won.

WAYNE  
Alright, okay.

*He hands her a fifty.*

But you haven't proved anything.  
Truth still triumphs.

CLAIRE  
Over what?

#### **Scene 4**

*Utter boredom.*

*Wayne and Claire, both behind the counter, stare off, watch the clock, etc.*

*Claire's mouth is gaping open.*

*Wayne gets a pen behind the counter and starts rapping the counter with it.*

*It turns into a beat.*

*Wayne jumps over the counter.*

WAYNE  
G—od! Don't you ever feel cooped up behind there?

CLAIRE  
(yawning) Not really. It's a place to be. Gives me comfort, like—this is my spot. Just keep returning here/

WAYNE  
/Not me. I need to get out. See more. BE more. Go for a walkabout or some shit.  
(moves about) Kayak. Scale a mountain. Discover a cave.

CLAIRE  
Sounds lonely.

WAYNE  
With the sky above me and the ground below? No way. Just keep going.

CLAIRE  
Never settle down?

WAYNE  
Yech. Like sediment? Like a rock—just sit somewhere? No thank you. I need to feel the wind through my hair and/

CLAIRE

/we get a nice breeze here whenever a customer comes in.

WAYNE

Settling.

CLAIRE

Being fine with what you've got.

WAYNE

You'd seriously stay here? For the long haul?

CLAIRE

Well, yeah. Like I said, savin' up.

WAYNE

Yeah, but that can't be all there is to life.

CLAIRE

What else could there be?

WAYNE

(moves around) Climbing up this huge rock and the view when you get to the top—like some intimate thing—

CLAIRE

I'd rather have a boyfriend.

WAYNE

Are you kidding? Trade in all that space for one little—no way. (moves) It's backpacking across—anything. It's coming to a town where you've never been and just—having to figure out where everything is. Get a sense of things. Wander. Pick a street and just meander.

*He goes through the aisles, darting here and there.*

It's white water rafting and feeling the spray of the water on your face like a wake-up call—like fuck yeah, I'm ALIVE... The way I see it—MONEY IS FOR TRAVEL. I work here six months, I make enough for that canoe trip up north. Friend of a buddy of mine has a cabin up there, nothing but wilderness as far as the eye can see. Workin' this, it's just a PASSAGEWAY.

CLAIRE

Oh.

WAYNE

You hungry? I'm starved. Want a bite to eat?



CLAIRE

It's not break time yet.

WAYNE

Who cares—? I'm gonna fix me a—

*He grabs a thing of nachos from under a hot red light.*

Bit stale I know but hey you know

*He gets some cheese sauce, ladles it up from a square metal vat near the counter and adds some ground beef on top. He puts it in the microwave over by the coffee and sets a timer.*

a few seconds and—You know, once I was down in Mexico, and there was this little tacqueria, a STAND really, with the most amazing, I've never, but hey, when in Rome—

*The microwave timer bell goes off. He takes his nachos out of the microwave and starts to eat.*

It ain't fancy, but it's dinner. Sometimes, you wake up someplace, or you have a homestay, and whatever they fix is what you need to like, you know (eating) and sometimes it's so foul, you WISH something like this (the nachos) was your breakfast.

But there you go. You smile around the food and say thank you.

Want some?

CLAIRE

No thanks.

*She gets a burrito out of the freezer, takes off the plastic wrapper, and pops it in the microwave.*

I guess the thing is, I wanna know what people's lives are like. Like—really like—on a day-to-day basis. If I traveled, I'd have to go somewhere for at least six months, get to know the people there, have lots and lots and lots of CONVERSATIONS.

For me, that'd be the real adventure.

WAYNE

Boring. Get enmeshed in the same squabbles people have the world over?

CLAIRE

No, find out exactly what the specific concerns are of that community and help them talk through them together.

WAYNE

Talking is like—what kind of action? It's standing or sitting or maybe lying down. That's it. Pretty stationary life.

CLAIRE  
You're not listening.

WAYNE  
I am!

CLAIRE  
You're not. I'm saying there can be adventure in getting to know people. In DEPTH.

WAYNE  
Sounds like a trap.  
Total Death Sentence, if you ask me.

*The microwave bell goes off.*

CLAIRE  
Well, I didn't.

*They sit eating in silence.  
Claire sullenly, Wayne with energy.  
When they have finished eating, or almost, Customer enters; they throw away their containers  
and get behind the counter.*

CUSTOMER  
20 dollars on pump 9.

CLAIRE  
20 dollars on pump 9?

CUSTOMER  
Yeah.

*He hands over a twenty. Claire looks like they have just been caught in the act.*

CLAIRE  
Here's your receipt.

*Customer exits.  
Claire exhales.*

That was close.

WAYNE  
What, so a customer sees us having lunch. Happens all the time at other places. We're human.  
Humans gotta eat.

CLAIRE

Yeah but he doesn't see it or us that way. We're just the ones he pays to get what he wants.

WAYNE

It's a problem. Philosophically speaking—

CLAIRE

No, I mean like a real-time, hey it's Wednesday kind of problem. BEFORE break time. Besides, Jack could walk in at any moment to check on us.

WAYNE

What do I care about him?  
He's not the boss o' me.

CLAIRE

Actually—

WAYNE

No I mean on a GRANDER scale. Big picture, you know? What real power does that guy have in the universe?

CLAIRE

The power to hire and fire.

WAYNE

So what? I lose this job, I just get another one.

CLAIRE

That easy?

WAYNE

You bet.

CLAIRE

Well, I need this job./

WAYNE

/Do you?/

CLAIRE

/So don't muck it up for me.

WAYNE

You got something to eat, too.

CLAIRE

I know, but I feel bad about it. He's gonna charge us, you know. Or take it out of our paychecks.

WAYNE

If that TURD takes one CENT out of my paycheck, I'll—

CLAIRE

I once worked at this diner—the one down on Salisbury Road?—and our boss there—He insisted we got one main dish per shift but we had to pay for the sides. One dollar per. So one night I have this tuna melt—fries—cole slaw—and forget to drop my two bucks in the sides jar— that's what he called it, the SIDES JAR—like we'd been cussing and had to put a dollar in for every “shit” or “fuck” that came out of our mouths—so he issues me an INVOICE. No joke, it's back in the kitchen pinned to my apron the next day. For TWO DOLLARS. I thought, after all the money I've made this man in late-night shifts and overtime—at regular pay!—he wants to get particular about two dollars?

So I get Ernie in the kitchen to make me a tuna melt, and I lay out these two perfect crisp dollar bills on the plate like side dishes. I take the invoice and stick it into the sandwich with one of those toothpicks like a little flag, and serve it up to him with the biggest shit-eating grin I could muster. “Your two dollars, Sir” I say like we're in some fancy restaurant. Then I run back in the kitchen and 'bout split a gut laughin' with my pal Cindy.

He fired me that same shift.

When a boss has a rule like that, it's best we follow it.

WAYNE

No thank you. I'm not gonna bow before some imaginary god, just because he's holding my paycheck.

CLAIRE

So what've you been doing working here?

WAYNE

I told you. Paying for my next trip.

CLAIRE

That's all?

WAYNE

That's the NEXT BIG THING.

CLAIRE

I see. Well then. I guess you can do whatever you want.

## Scene 5

*Claire and Wayne behind the counter.*

CLAIRE

I think I'd like to take up painting.  
My aunt and I were in the Kansas City Art Museum once/

WAYNE

/So—you do travel.

CLAIRE

It was just once. A family trip. We drove.  
There were these huge paintings of everyday things in bright colors. So, it'd be like somebody's keys, but huge, and GREEN—like dark green and light green—or somebody's pencils—like this big (holds out her arms) and this yellow that like REDEFINES what yellow is. Like, everything you THOUGHT you knew about yellow, that wasn't it. It was there, in that painting.

WAYNE

So you must know about Warhol.

CLAIRE

No.

WAYNE

Klimt.

CLAIRE

Nope.

WAYNE

Kandinsky.

CLAIRE

No.

WAYNE

They all did really amazing things with color.  
You should look 'em up if you're gonna start painting.

CLAIRE

K. How do you spell--?

WAYNE

Here, let me—

*He writes their names for her.*

WAYNE (cont.)  
But that's cool.  
You got some paints?

CLAIRE  
Not really, no. It's just an idea right now. Something to think about.

WAYNE  
Well you know what they say. Carpe Diem.

CLAIRE  
(Not knowing what is meant by this) Yeah.

WAYNE  
Some paintings are so expressive. Passionate. Like the paint is just jumping off the canvas and into your eyeballs—Those are my favorites, actually, the ones with THICK PAINT. Like little sculptures, not 2-D at all. I once set off this alarm at the Philadelphia Art Museum for sticking my nose too close to a canvas, wanting to see what it was all about.

CLAIRE  
Nice!

*Beat.*

WAYNE  
So—

*Wayne jumps over the counter, goes to the Hot Wheels car with the blue flames painted on it and takes it off the rack.*

Did this like redefine what blue is for you?

CLAIRE  
Yeah. I guess it did.

*Wayne walks to the counter, carrying the Hot Wheels car.*

Welcome to Gas'N'Sip. How may I help you?

WAYNE  
Just this.

CLAIRE  
Anything else?

WAYNE  
(looking at her) Just. This.

CLAIRE  
Got it. Two-o-five.

*He pulls three bills out of his pocket and gives them to Claire.  
She gives him his change.  
He hands her the toy car.*

CLAIRE  
For me?

WAYNE  
Who else?

### **Scene 6**

*Claire, behind the counter, reading her Inquirer Now.  
Wayne, out in the store, mopping.  
He looks over to where she is reading.  
He puts down his mop and goes to get a U.S. road atlas from up by the counter.  
He puts the atlas on the counter.*

WAYNE  
Pick a place.

CLAIRE  
Hmm?

WAYNE  
This thing has got all fifty states, and Canada and Mexico, too. Pick a place.

CLAIRE  
I'm almost done/reading this.

WAYNE  
/No, come on. This thing is like a treasure box. Just, open it. Look.  
Where would you go, if you could go anywhere?

CLAIRE  
I don't know.

WAYNE

Uh—Florida, Idaho, Texas? I mean, there's gotta be someplace that you've wanted to visit.

CLAIRE

Well I got to see Kansas City/

WAYNE

/No, I mean like someplace you've never seen. Like, you've never even thought about maybe.

CLAIRE

Um—

*She puts down her magazine.*

*She opens the road atlas and looks through it.*

CLAIRE

Minnesota? No, that's cold.

Uh—what about—how do you say that? Saskatchewan? That's funny, that's like you're making fun of someone, or or you're talking about some problem you have like, "I'm in a real Saskatchewan right now."

*They laugh.*

How 'bout Utah?

WAYNE

Utah's great. There's this town called Moab where people are just outdoors constantly.

CLAIRE

(makes a face) I don't know about that.

*Wayne flips through the atlas.*

WAYNE

And back here, you can tell how many miles it is from what city to what city, like this one, this whole map, is about the distances between places. It's really cool.

*He continues flipping through.*

How 'bout New York? Would you wanna see New York?

CLAIRE

I don't know. I've heard it's pretty dangerous.

WAYNE

Yeah I guess in parts, but not like it used to be.



*Claire goes back to reading her magazine.  
Wayne flips through the road atlas.*

WAYNE (cont.)

Well, like okay. Let's look at the whole map. Of all the states. This one. Where would you go, if you could go anywhere in the country?

CLAIRE

Is this a real question?

WAYNE

Yeah it's a real question!

*Wayne regards the map of the United States.*

God! We're like in between these huge mountain ranges and we're just stuck. Here.

CLAIRE

I guess.

WAYNE

You never felt like going somewhere else?

CLAIRE

Um—maybe when I was a kid/but

WAYNE

/Well, I know where I would go. I would take this road all the way up. That cabin where I'm goin' is up here. Beautiful country.  
You really never wanted to go anywhere?

CLAIRE

Uh—I don't know. Someplace near water.

WAYNE

Really? Like California, or New Orleans, or the Outer Banks?

CLAIRE

It would kind of all be the same to me. I've never/really

WAYNE

/Come on.

CLAIRE

I mean, it's all really hypothetical, so it doesn't really matter where I'd like to go.

WAYNE

Everything starts as an idea. I mean you have ideas about other stuff. Why not about this?

CLAIRE

/Uh—okay. I would go, uh, I would go someplace, west.

WAYNE

Well, that's something.

*Wayne looks through the atlas again.*

This thing is like my Bible.

CLAIRE

That's not a Bible.

WAYNE

To me it is. It has sacred words in it like BASIN, and GREAT DIVIDE, and RIVER GORGE.

It's like, all the possibilities, all the places I could get lost in.

I feel little, like I'm walking around in something so huge and beautiful that I can't ever see enough of. When I was a kid I went for a hike with my parents, and at some point we got separated. For a while, I felt awful without them, but then, it was like I could see everything so much better on my own. It was so quiet, and peaceful. I never wanted to leave. When they found me, they were all relieved, but I cried all the way home.

*She is looking at him, utterly moved.*

*Customer enters.*

*He looks at the magazine rack, then approaches the counter.*

CUSTOMER

You're out of *Inquirer Now*?

CLAIRE

You can have mine.

CUSTOMER

Cool.

CLAIRE

Five thirty-seven.

CUSTOMER

Here ya go.

*He hands over a ten.*

*She gives him the magazine and his change.*

*Customer exits.*

CLAIRE

I know.

*She turns to the page where their town is.*

(pointing) How about here?

*He looks up.*

You could get lost here.

*He shrugs.*

WAYNE

So—nowhere?

CLAIRE

Here's fine.

## **Scene 7**

*Claire and Wayne behind the counter.*

CLAIRE

I'm going on break.

*She comes out from behind the counter, lingers.*

WAYNE

Yes?

CLAIRE

How 'bout a coffee break?

WAYNE

We could do Kawfee Tawk? Sure.

CLAIRE

Alright.

WAYNE

I take mine black.

*She goes and pours them two coffees from the “coffee station”.*

CLAIRE

Not me, I like these flavor cups. I know they’re totally bad for you, and like filled with sugar, but I love that they say things like “hazelnut” and “Irish crème” like we’re in some French café, but really, it’s just these tiny cups of sugar milk.

*She puts two flavored creamers in her coffee.*

WAYNE

Why do you use them then?

CLAIRE

I don’t know, it’s kinda fun. It spices it up or whatever. Besides, I can’t stand black coffee, it’s too bitter for me.

WAYNE

Gotcha.

*She brings the two cups of coffee to the counter and hands his to him.*

CLAIRE

You hungry?

WAYNE

I could eat.

*She goes and gets an iced “honey bun” in a plastic bag. She unwraps it and puts in the microwave.*

CLAIRE

Ten seconds is perfect for the icing to get all gooey.

WAYNE

Mmmm... Just like the French do it.

*They laugh.*

*The microwave timer goes off.*

CLAIRE

Your croissant, Sir.

*She hands him the honey bun.*

*She stands at the end of the counter, leaning on it from time to time while she drinks her coffee.*

CLAIRE

I'm uh—not just working here for that paint job. That car.

WAYNE

No?

CLAIRE

No, my mom, she—can't work. And I'm like her support system or whatever.

WAYNE

Wow. Uh—why can't she work? Or, can you talk about it?

CLAIRE

Yeah, I mean it's fine, it's not—it SEEMS like it's not major, but it's enough for her to be on disability, so they have rules and stuff.

WAYNE

Huh. I mean I guess. I've never really known anybody on disability. That seems kind of—like how old is she?

CLAIRE

Um, in her fifties.

WAYNE

That's young.

CLAIRE

Mm hmm. What're you gonna do?

WAYNE

How'd you get—I mean—why is that, on you?

CLAIRE

Uh, I mean, I have an older brother, but I'm more responsible than he is—he can't really hold down a job—so it's just something I started doing.

WAYNE

It's funny, right? How we get into these roles. If we were like in some medieval time, like birth order would determine everything, it wouldn't be our disposition, or our preferences, it would just be THE RULES, handed down by somebody. Probly some dead white guy, right? But now it's like, I don't know, we have some choice in the matter, so sometimes, we have like DUTIES. Like, I'm the mediator? Whenever I go home. I don't go home very often, but whenever I do, I'm the mediator. I'm the one who keeps things cool.

CLAIRE

They get heated?

WAYNE

Well, you know, enough where people need um—but I don't know, I haven't been there in a while. I don't know what it's like now.

CLAIRE

I think if I didn't do the caregiver thing, my brother would just put her in a home.

WAYNE

In her fifties?

CLAIRE

Yeah. I mean, it happens. Or she wouldn't be able to afford her rent, so she'd have to do some kind of section eight housing or whatever.

WAYNE

Huh.

*Dan enters.*

*Claire steps back from the counter, holding her coffee, self-conscious.*

WAYNE

Welcome to Gas'n'Sip. How may I help you?

CLAIRE

(laughs) No. That's my brother. Dan.

WAYNE

Oh hey. I'm/Wayne

*He holds out his hand to shake hands with him.*

DAN

/How late are you working?

CLAIRE

My shift ends at six.

DAN

Good. You can stop by the grocery on the way home.

CLAIRE

Why can't you do it?

DAN

With what funds? Besides, you know what kind of stuff Mom likes.

CLAIRE

So do you. She likes the same stuff she's liked for years.

DAN

Still.

Just do it, okay?

Unless you want us all to starve—

CLAIRE

No, I'll get it. It's no problem.

See you later tonight.

DAN

Later.

*Dan exits.*

*Wayne goes on the other side of the counter.*

WAYNE

(playing Dan) Hello Wayne, it's so good to make your acquaintance, Old Buddy!

*He comes back behind the counter.*

Oh, mister Dan! I'm positively thrilled to make yours!

CLAIRE

(laughs) Yeah, he can be...focused.

WAYNE

I'll say.

*Wayne picks up the Hot Wheels car with the blue flames, which has been behind the counter.*

You know—this could be your getaway car.

CLAIRE

But—I haven't committed any crimes.

WAYNE

That could be arranged.

*They laugh.*

*They drink their coffee as the lights fade.*

## Scene 8

WAYNE  
Didn't you ever want to go to college?

CLAIRE  
Never thought of it.

WAYNE  
I bet you'd be good at it.

CLAIRE  
Naw, I could never decide on a major.

WAYNE  
That's what undergrad's for. You can take two years if you want to decide on your major.

CLAIRE  
I'm not sure that'd be enough time. I'm interested in too many things.

WAYNE  
But you could explore knowledge/

CLAIRE  
/And Capital T Truth?

WAYNE  
That too, yeah.

CLAIRE  
No thanks. I'd have to leave my family and/

WAYNE  
/That might be good for you.  
In the big scheme of things.

CLAIRE  
And in the small?

WAYNE  
(shifting) I loved college.  
It was like one long Thoreau poem.

CLAIRE  
A thorough poem?

WAYNE



No like—Walden Pond? Come on.

CLAIRE  
Never heard of it.

WAYNE  
You have got to get out more.

CLAIRE  
With my mom, I can't really/

WAYNE  
/I know but, can't your brother take care of her when you just need a break?

CLAIRE  
A four-year break? No way.

WAYNE  
Well I still say you'd be great at it.

CLAIRE  
What did you like so well about it?

WAYNE  
I liked that I could go off for hours and study something, ponder the nature of the universe—and nobody questioned it. Hell, it was encouraged. I could walk along a country road for hours, find my own way to the bridge and back, take my time in the library, and NO ONE CARED. No one came and got me. No one told me not to. Probe, they said. Connect, they said. Come to your own conclusions. It was awesome.

CLAIRE  
And now?

WAYNE  
These days I feel like everybody wants me to ENGAGE—in society or whatever—and I'm just not sure I'm ready or able to do that yet.

CLAIRE  
How do you mean?

WAYNE  
It's just like you said. How many people have read Thoreau? Or Shakespeare? Or fallen in love with *The Prelude*?

CLAIRE

The what?

WAYNE

It's this long-winded poem Wordsworth wrote in 1805, trying to make himself immortal.

CLAIRE

(smiling) Did it work?

WAYNE

Course not. But—listen to this:

Those walks, well worthy to be prized and loved—  
Regretted! that word, too, was on my tongue,  
But they were richly laden with all good,  
And cannot be remembered but with thanks  
And gratitude, and perfect joy of heart—  
Those walks did now, like a returning spring,  
Come back on me again. When first I made  
Once more the circuit of our little Lake  
If ever happiness hath lodged with man,  
That day consummate happiness was mine,  
Wide-spreading, steady, calm, contemplative.<sup>1</sup>

CLAIRE

You memorized that?

WAYNE

Yeah, to bring it with me I guess.  
Wherever I go.

CLAIRE

Where did you come from?

WAYNE

I thought six hundred dollars was enough to get me across the country—if I camped out, ate light, visited friends where I could... I was wrong. I ran outta cash just east of here. So I pulled my motorbike off the highway in here, met Jack. He gave me a job on the spot.

CLAIRE

Oh yeah. Tracy'd just quit. Earl didn't want her workin' no more. Jack's been so desperate to get more male energy in here—you probly seemed like a Godsend to him.

WAYNE

---

<sup>1</sup> Wordsworth, William. *William Wordsworth: A Critical Edition of Major Works*. "The Prelude" (pages 424-425). Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1984. Print.

Aren't we all that, to each other?

CLAIRE

Not sure.

*Beat.*

Hey—Could this be like—our little lake?

*Claire goes and gets a Styrofoam cup, fills it with water, and sets it in the middle of the floor.*

We could go for walks around it.—

*Wayne hesitates but plays along.*

*After a couple of rounds, she takes his hand in hers.*

*He immediately backs away.*

WAYNE

I'm not—what did you think I—that wasn't what I was talking about—It's BIGGER than that. It's not just man and woman. It's man and ALL OF NATURE. You can't top that. And you can't *impersonate* that with this.

*He kicks over the Styrofoam cup. Water spills all over the floor.*

*Wayne moves about restlessly.*

I've gotta—I can't breathe—You're like stifling me with your assumptions—Not everything is PERSONAL, you know. Some things are UNIVERSAL. Some things are as big as the sky. My love of a poem, or of nature, or of anything, is not FOR you. It's not for anybody.

CLAIRE

Then what good is it?

WAYNE

What good is it? What good is it when an imam goes on a pilgrimage? What good is it when a monk meditates in a cave? What good did it do when Jesus spent forty days and nights in the desert?

CLAIRE

He came back.

WAYNE

But the retreat was the key part—

CLAIRE

You think so?

WAYNE

Enough! I'm done arguing this with you. I'm sick of defending myself to you.

CLAIRE

I know you've seen some great stuff. But this town is nice, too—

WAYNE

You can't keep me here, so don't try it!

*Wayne exits through the back door.*

*Claire silently goes and gets the mop from the storage closet.*

*She picks up the cup and starts mopping up the water.*

*Customer enters.*

*He picks out a couple things, goes to the counter.*

*Claire goes behind the counter to the cash register.*

CUSTOMER

And a pack of Marlboro Lights.

*She hands it over.*

CLAIRE

Eleven ninety-eight.

*Customer hands over the money. She puts his things in a bag.*

How are you today?

CUSTOMER

Fine.

*Beat.*

CLAIRE

Do you wanna know how I'm doin'?

*Silence in which it is clear he does not.*

*She gives him his change, the bag, his receipt.*

Here's your receipt.

*Customer exits in a hurry, dropping the receipt on the floor.*

**Scene 9**

*Claire alone behind the counter.*

*Wayne enters, sheepishly.  
He goes to get behind the counter.*

CLAIRE  
You can stock shelves today.  
Just got in a new shipment, so—

WAYNE  
Just that?

CLAIRE  
Yeah. Should take a while. Just there.

*She gestures to some boxes.  
Wayne goes and gets one and starts stocking shelves.*

WAYNE  
Claire, I—

CLAIRE  
No. You're not ready to engage in society yet.

*Wayne continues stocking shelves.*

WAYNE  
It might rain.

CLAIRE  
It might.

WAYNE  
It wouldn't be bad.

CLAIRE  
It'd be neither good nor bad. It'd just be.

*Customer enters.*

CUSTOMER  
Whooh!—Looks like rain out there.

CLAIRE

So I've heard.

CUSTOMER

The wind's picked up anyhow.

CLAIRE

Sure has.

CUSTOMER

Uh—

*He grabs something Wayne has just shelved.*

Just this.

Oh—and a couple Lotto tickets.

CLAIRE

Which ones you want?

CUSTOMER

How about—

*He weighs his choices carefully.*

a Wow Winnings and a Bunny Billions?

CLAIRE

Suit yourself.

Seven thirty-two.

*Customer hands over the money.*

*Claire gives him his change.*

*He uses it to scratch off his lotto tickets on the counter.*

CUSTOMER

Nothin'.

CLAIRE

Ah well. Better luck next time.

CUSTOMER

Guess so.

CLAIRE

Have a good one.

CUSTOMER

You too.

CLAIRE

(super excited) Thank you!

*Customer exits.*

WAYNE

Why do you do that?

CLAIRE

What?

WAYNE

Why do you thank every customer who wishes you a good day, or asks you how you are?

CLAIRE

Because they hardly ever do.

WAYNE

Yeah, but it's just common courtesy IF they do. It's nothing special.

CLAIRE

It is to me.

WAYNE

But it's not particular to you.

It's just people being kind. Or not.

CLAIRE

Well when they say it to me, it is particular to me. They're recognizing me as a fellow human.

WAYNE

Right, just that. Very broad. You could be anybody.

CLAIRE

It's better than not saying anything at all. I hate that.

"Have a good day!"

And silence.

Or worse: "How are you today?"

"I need 30 dollars on pump number 1, and a case of Coke."

Like that's some kinda answer.

WAYNE

Well I don't know why you get so giddy. Either way, they aren't speaking to YOU.

CLAIRE

Oh shut up about it!

Besides, I'm not speaking to YOU.

Very specifically YOU.

*Wayne goes back to stocking shelves.*

*Claire moves around behind the counter, pretending to clean back there.*

WAYNE

Well, it's stupid that he plays the Lotto anyhow.

CLAIRE

...

WAYNE

It's a fool's game.

CLAIRE

...

WAYNE

They shell out perfectly good money, when the chances of winning are slim to none.

CLAIRE

But the Powerball's up to 19 million.

WAYNE

Still—I bet you, if any one of those suckers left outta here and encountered a homeless person begging for change, they'd claim not to have a cent. This, after spending—no throwing away—at least a couple dollars!

CLAIRE

Whatever. Let them have their fun.

WAYNE

But that's just it—It isn't fun! It's cheap entertainment. They get to play the game. The anticipation, even the loss is part of it. It's very sad, really....

CLAIRE

It doesn't do anyone any harm.

WAYNE



Except the homeless guy. It's just one more thing that reinforces people's self-concepts, so it's a type of suffering, really.

CLAIRE

What are you even talking about?

WAYNE

Hello? You said it yourself; we're just the ones they pay to get what they want. What people buy—it's about them.

CLAIRE

Yeah, I guess that's true.

WAYNE

Doesn't sound like a huge philosophical problem?

CLAIRE

No, seems like a connection problem to me. People are so disconnected from each other these days. I try to do it differently—to connect in with people even while we exchange things. Doesn't always work, but like—the guy who does our plumbing, Ed, has been a friend of the family for years. My cousin Laurie makes dresses for me. The guy who delivers our sodas here—we went to high school together. So the thing—the service or thing you pay them for, or exchange something for—it becomes an extension of the relationship. It furthers the BOND.

*Beat.*

WAYNE

(moves away from her) I get what you're saying.

CLAIRE

Do you?

Doesn't sound like a trap?

WAYNE

No. It sounds... nice, actually. What you're describing, it's more like a gift economy, where people feel compelled to give, not just exchange things for money, money for things.

CLAIRE

Yeah, like that.

WAYNE

But like people are so selfish by nature, and they don't really change.

CLAIRE

I don't know, Wayne.

CLAIRE (cont.)

—with you here—

I feel some physical force pulling me away from here

it's ejecting fragments of me out into the sky

and I DON'T WANT THAT,

to not be complete,

to not grasp myself fully anymore as one continuous whole.

I feel compartmentalized now, and torn. I find myself thinking of you more than I think of my MOTHER, and I know that's wrong, I know it up here (gestures to her forehead), but in the rest of my body I just want to walk with you the rest of the days of my life.

So, you go figure.

I'm stumped.

Do people really never change?

WAYNE

(cool now) The Truth is, you've got your path, and I've got mine.

CLAIRE

Yeah? Then you keep on yours.

Don't let me interfere.

*Wayne goes back to stocking shelves.*

*Claire exits.*

*Wayne throws a can of something against the wall, bursting it open.*

## Scene 10

*Wayne is behind the counter.*

*Claire enters.*

*She avoids going behind the counter.*

*She gets the broom and starts sweeping.*

*After a moment:*

CLAIRE

(gesturing to her lipstick) Is there anything wrong with this color?

WAYNE

No.

CLAIRE

You sure?

WAYNE

It's fine.

CLAIRE

Tammy says it makes me look like a whore.

WAYNE

You're still listening to Tammy?

CLAIRE

She's been my friend for ages.

WAYNE

Whatever. What you're telling me about—it's so insignificant. Just—let it go.

CLAIRE

LET IT GO? She's supposed to be my best friend.

WAYNE

Well she's not. What difference does it make?

CLAIRE

What difference does it—look, I don't know if you're an alien spawn, or you were raised by wolves or whatever, but mostly it matters whether our friends are our friends or not. Or don't you have any?

*Pause. This stings.*

WAYNE

Claire, I want to leave.

CLAIRE

What?

WAYNE

Jack is furious with me. I—destroyed some merchandise yesterday. After you left.

CLAIRE

You did what?

WAYNE

I was angry, and then Jack came in, and he reamed me.

CLAIRE

Lemme talk to him.

WAYNE

He's furious—I don't think it'll do any good.

WAYNE (cont.)

God, I hate that shit. He treated the merchandise like it was more important than me.

CLAIRE  
He would.

WAYNE  
It's okay. It's time for me to head out anyhow.

CLAIRE  
Have you saved enough money for your trip?

WAYNE  
No, but enough to go down the road a bit. I'll find another job.

CLAIRE  
Just like that?

WAYNE  
Yeah. Listen—I want you to come with me.

CLAIRE  
What?

WAYNE  
Come on. Get on the back of my motorbike, and just ride outta here with me.

CLAIRE  
I can't do that.

WAYNE  
Things here will take care of themselves.

CLAIRE  
They never have before.

WAYNE  
Or your brother will step up his game. Let you have some time off for a change.

CLAIRE  
He has no interest in doing that.

WAYNE  
Or your mom—she's a grown woman—maybe she'll figure something out on her own?

CLAIRE

Don't talk about her like that.

WAYNE

Claire—do you want to come with me?

CLAIRE

I don't know.

WAYNE

Look, I—One time, I was in India—and it was train travel. The way I had chosen to see India was by train. So I get to my first train station over there. Calcutta. I get to the station, and my direct train to Delhi is a full fifteen hours delayed. And so I'm all like—this'll be fine. It's fine. Got another train heading—anywhere west of here? So, Benares. You know, Varanasi? It's a totally holy city. Only a three-hour wait for that one. So I'm like, yeah!

But there are no call boards, no nice boards where the letters and numbers click through until they read something nice and legible like

Edinburgh—Track 9

like they do in London—but more like this crackly-ass speaker system with some weak-voiced old Indian man who says “Mumbai” or wherever like five minutes before the train takes off and so all the people who've been waiting for at least three hours for this “announcement” just MOB the train, taking out any bystanders in their way. No assigned seats of course. So this guy, he couldn't get a seat—no one would let him in—so he pulls a knife, in the crowd, and starts threatening people, he'll cut them if they don't give him a seat. The whole crowd just backed away from him, like a heavy wave pushing everybody back. The station cops had to push their way through the crowd to arrest him.

It was really stressful, and it was—the first time

I ever wanted someone there with me on one of my travels.

Been on a few trips where you like NEED at least one other person there with you; it's like a matter of SURVIVAL or whatever.

But the next time I actually WANTED someone with me was you,

walking with me in circles

around that damn Styrofoam cup.

CLAIRE

My whole life goes in circles.

I wake up.

I come to work.

I go home.

I wake up.

I come to work.

I go home.

My brother pulls on me.

My mom pulls on me.

My boss pulls on me.

This town pulls on me.

WAYNE  
Then leave it.

CLAIRE  
It's not that easy.

WAYNE  
Sure it is.  
Just get on the back of my motorbike and leave this place behind.

CLAIRE  
I do—think I want to.

WAYNE  
Then do.

CLAIRE  
(timidly) ...alright.

*Wayne smiles.*  
*Claire puts the broom back.*  
*She takes Wayne's hand.*  
*He kisses her.*  
*They are about to exit when—*  
*Dan enters.*

DAN  
Hey, Claire. I need to you to stop by the drug store on your way home.

CLAIRE  
Dan/

DAN  
/Mom's out of one of her prescriptions. She wrote it down.

*Dan holds out a piece of paper to Claire. She does not take it.*

CLAIRE  
I don't know if I'm gonna be able to do that tonight.

DAN  
Why not? It's a 24-hour pharmacy. Even if you work late/

CLAIRE  
/It's not that. I might not—be in town.

DAN

Shut up. You've been in this town every day of your life.

CLAIRE

I'm thinking—I may wanna try someplace else for a while.

DAN

Where would you even go?

CLAIRE

Wayne's friend has a cabin—

DAN

(to Wayne) What's she talking about?

WAYNE

I've invited Claire to join me. On a canoeing trip up north.

DAN

(to Claire) Canoeing? You'll break your neck!

CLAIRE

I—don't know that. I can learn.

DAN

Right as some rock hits you in the face, you'll learn. I've seen it on Discovery/

CLAIRE

/We'll be in a group. Safe.

DAN

You know what else is safe? Keeping your ass at home.

CLAIRE

Yeah. I've been thinking—maybe it's a little too safe for me.

DAN

There's no such thing.

How'm I sposed to care for Mom while you're gone?

CLAIRE

I was thinking—I know you could do it/

DAN

/You know I can't/

CLAIRE

/If you could hold down a job.

DAN

Jesus, Claire, you say that like I WANT to be out of work. I told you, I'm trying to find something/

CLAIRE

/But you could take my job! Here. You could work in my place.

DAN

I'm not gonna/

CLAIRE

/You said you'd take anything.

DAN

Well, not ANYTHING. This is like the simplest job in the world. I'd be bored to death/

CLAIRE

/It won't be forever. Just a couple months.

WAYNE

Well, it might be more than that/

CLAIRE

/But I've earned a break. Don't you think?

DAN

This is insane. You're the caregiver. You give care; that's what you do.

CLAIRE

I don't get to do anything else?

DAN

You should WANT to do it. You should be doing it gladly. Nobody should have to convince you to take care of your own mother, for God's sake.

CLAIRE

I could say the same thing to you.

DAN

I do want to! I just can't!

CLAIRE



Are your arms broken? Your legs? Your mind? You can do it; you just don't want to.

DAN

That's not fair/

CLAIRE

/It's just been easier for me to do it while you hang out with your friends.

DAN

You can't leave town. You'd be ABANDONING me and Mom.

CLAIRE

Come on. Give me some time. At least a couple months.

WAYNE

At least—

DAN

But I'm not GOOD at it. I don't have the talent you do for it.

CLAIRE

It can be learned.

DAN

Even if I work here, I'll mess things up. I won't get her the right food, or I'll mess her meds up/

CLAIRE

/You'll figure it out.

*Claire gets money out of her purse and holds it out to Dan.*

Here's the money for the prescription—

DAN

(not taking it) Goddamn it, Claire, I FORBID you to go!

CLAIRE

(to Wayne) You see? Even if I want to come with you—it doesn't really matter.

WAYNE

Yes, it does.

CLAIRE

Since when? If we get a thousand miles away from this place, it'll still pull on me. I can't just cut ties and go.

WAYNE  
Why not?

CLAIRE  
Because too much is expected of me.  
Too much rests on me.

WAYNE  
Then take it off, if it weighs on you.

*He pulls her name tag off her uniform shirt.  
He takes the pins out of her hair.  
The lights change.  
He goes to the radio and turns it on—something like Nina Simone plays.  
Claire goes slowly over to the fridge filled with sodas, opens the door, and feels the cool breeze on her face and neck.  
She moves around the space, touching the items as if they are SACRED. She appreciates them.*

CLAIRE  
Even ordinary things—can be so beautiful.

*Slowly, slowly her dance builds, as the music does.  
She climbs atop the counter, moving gracefully, quickening.  
She is like a one-woman rodeo, bucking and wild.*

DAN  
Claire—get down from there.

*Dan pulls at his sister.  
She shakes him off.  
Claire is undone.  
She works herself into a frenzy and collapses on the countertop.  
Wayne brings her cold water in a Styrofoam cup.  
Dan turns off the music and gets between Wayne and Claire.*

Alright. If we're done with the little freak show, we can just go home now.

*Dan scoops Claire off the counter.*

(to Wayne) I don't know what crazy ideas you've put in her head, but I want it to stop.

*Dan carries her out of the Gas 'n' Sip, placing the written prescription in her hand as they exit.*

*End of Act.*

**Act II**

## Scene 1

*Start in darkness.*

WAYNE

What are you going to paint?

CLAIRE

I'm not sure.

WAYNE

What comes to mind?

CLAIRE

Maybe mountains? Or our lake?

WAYNE

But you've never even seen mountains, or a real lake.

CLAIRE

I can see them when I close my eyes.

WAYNE

Can you?

CLAIRE

Yeah, just behind the eyelids.

WAYNE

Snow-capped?

CLAIRE

Too cold.

WAYNE

With flowers?

CLAIRE

Right up front.

WAYNE

Sounds awesome.

CLAIRE

It is.

*Lights up on the Gas 'n' Sip. Wayne and Claire are both behind the counter.  
Claire has set up an easel by the counter.  
A blank canvas is leaning on the easel.*

CLAIRE  
Mom won't let me set it up at home.

WAYNE  
She won't?

CLAIRE  
Dan either.

WAYNE  
That guy.

CLAIRE  
He says it makes him angry.

WAYNE  
He needs so much therapy.

CLAIRE  
I guess we all do.

*They laugh.*

I'm glad you stayed.

WAYNE  
(suddenly uncomfortable) Yeah. I figure—if I'm not fired/

CLAIRE  
/yet/

WAYNE  
/I can check out this town a little more.

CLAIRE  
Cool.

WAYNE  
Yeah like—there's this dirt path running along the creek in town—it just veers off. Do you know where that goes?

CLAIRE  
Not sure.

WAYNE  
You've never taken it?

CLAIRE  
Why would I?

WAYNE  
'Cause it's right here!

CLAIRE  
Never thought about it.

WAYNE  
I'm going tomorrow.

CLAIRE  
Sounds like an adventure.

*She smiles, kisses him.*

WAYNE  
I thought you said—not at work—

CLAIRE  
Jack's out today.

*Smiling, he kisses her.  
Customer enters.  
Claire immediately backs away.*

Good afternoon!

CUSTOMER  
Afternoon.

CLAIRE  
Can we help you find anything?

CUSTOMER  
I got it. You look busy.

*Claire blushes deeply.  
Customer grabs some motor oil and brings it up to the counter.*

WAYNE  
Having car trouble?

CUSTOMER  
Just topping it off.

WAYNE  
Mmm.

*Wayne rings him up.*

Ten eighty-four.

*Customer hands him his credit card.  
Wayne swipes it.  
Wayne hands the customer the receipt to sign and a pen.  
Customer signs it.*

Do you want a copy of the receipt?

CUSTOMER  
No thanks.

*Customer exits with his motor oil.*

CLAIRE  
Oh. My. God. I am so mortified.

WAYNE  
(cracks a smile) We're humans. Humans gotta kiss.

*Claire shrinks back further behind the counter.*

CLAIRE  
That's worse than a customer catching us eating.

WAYNE  
Is it really?

CLAIRE  
Yeah.

WAYNE  
So lemme guess. No more kissing at work, period?

CLAIRE

It's probly better not to.

WAYNE

Can we have some kind of signal instead?

CLAIRE

Like what?

WAYNE

I don't know—a high five?

CLAIRE

A high five? That's so romantic.

WAYNE

So is kissing.

CLAIRE

How 'bout something random, like we hold up a piece of merchandise?

WAYNE

Seriously?

CLAIRE

No, as a joke. To express our affection, we hold up a can of beans, or whatever's near us.

WAYNE

Deal, my little materialist.

*He goes to kiss her.*

*She holds up a candy bar.*

## **Scene 2**

*Claire is alone behind the counter.*

*Wayne enters, excited.*

CLAIRE

Where've you been? Your shift started like fifteen minutes/ago.

WAYNE

/I got a gig!

CLAIRE  
If Jack finds out/

WAYNE  
/I got a construction gig!

CLAIRE  
You got a what?

WAYNE  
I took that path down beside the creek, and it veers all to hell, into the next county even. I'm walking along the water behind some houses, when this totally friendly guy's like, "You look tired. Would you like some water?" So we start talking, standing out at the edge of his property. And he's working on this addition to his house. I used to work in construction. So I'm like, I could totally help you with that. So he's gonna let me stay out there, in exchange for my work!

CLAIRE  
(half-heartedly) That's great.

WAYNE  
It's so cool.

CLAIRE  
You'll be spending a lot of time out there.

WAYNE  
Doing work that matters.

CLAIRE  
(cautious) Well, congratulations.

WAYNE  
Thanks!

CLAIRE  
Will you be—working here anymore?

WAYNE  
Yeah. Less, but yeah. It's mostly weekends when he needs the help.

CLAIRE  
Got it.

WAYNE  
What?



CLAIRE  
No, it's great.

WAYNE  
What's up?

CLAIRE  
I'm happy for you.

WAYNE  
Are you?

CLAIRE  
It's just—

WAYNE  
WHAT?

CLAIRE  
It's in the next county?

WAYNE  
It's like a STONE'S THROW from here, Claire.

CLAIRE  
Okay.

WAYNE  
You don't believe me?

CLAIRE  
It's fine.

WAYNE  
It's meaningful work.

CLAIRE  
Unlike some things.

WAYNE  
Come on.

CLAIRE  
...

WAYNE

And I'll save a ton on rent.

CLAIRE

Well that's good.

WAYNE

Be happy for me.

*He holds up a lighter by the counter.*

*She just stands there and stares at him.*

*Dan enters.*

DAN

Hey Claire.

CLAIRE

Hey Dan.

DAN

You got any ginger ale?

CLAIRE

The first fridge. Up by the door.

*Dan finds himself a ginger ale and grabs some beef jerky, too.*

*He takes them to the counter.*

*Claire rings him up.*

CLAIRE

Seven thirteen.

DAN

Can you spot me?

CLAIRE

Again?

DAN

I told you, you can keep track if you want.

CLAIRE

It's fine.

DAN

I'll pay you back.

CLAIRE  
It's not much.

WAYNE  
(under his breath) It adds up though.

CLAIRE  
(to Dan) Don't worry about it.

*Claire takes out a ten and puts it in the till, gives herself change, and hands Dan the ginger ale and jerky.*

DAN  
(to Wayne) You still here?

WAYNE  
Yeah.

*Dan gestures to the easel.*

DAN  
This was probly your idea.

WAYNE  
Actually—

DAN  
Well it's a dumb one.

*Dan knocks over the easel.*

Waste of time, if you ask me.

*Dan exits.*

WAYNE  
We didn't. Right?

CLAIRE  
Yeah no.

*Wayne helps Claire set up the easel and canvas again.*

### Scene 3

*Claire is working on her painting.  
It is slow going.  
She puts down the brush.  
She paces, nervous.  
She picks up the paintbrush, sets it back down.  
Wayne enters.*

WAYNE  
Hey Claire.

CLAIRE  
Don't "Hey Claire" me.

WAYNE  
Whoa, what got into you?

CLAIRE  
You missed an ENTIRE shift yesterday.

WAYNE  
Oh yeah. I meant/to

CLAIRE  
/You didn't call/

WAYNE  
/Jared and I had to get more/materials

CLAIRE  
/You couldn't call?

WAYNE  
There was no reception in that po-dunk town.

CLAIRE  
Not even when you got back?

WAYNE  
We were busy working on the roof.

CLAIRE  
Right.

WAYNE  
We were.

CLAIRE  
Do you even know what it's like, Wayne?

WAYNE  
What what's like?

CLAIRE  
This kind of worry? Like, I could just wake up one day, and you could be in some other town?  
Some town even further away.

WAYNE  
I'm not going to do that.

CLAIRE  
You might.

WAYNE  
Claire. I'm here. I'm working.

CLAIRE  
For now.

WAYNE  
I would let you know if anything changed.

CLAIRE  
How can I be sure of that?

WAYNE  
You can't be.

CLAIRE  
Well I/

WAYNE  
/But I'm telling you. You don't have to worry.

CLAIRE  
But I do. It's so unpredictable out there.

WAYNE  
That's half the fun.

CLAIRE  
And the other half?

WAYNE  
Knowing that, in here, it's just as random.

*She gives him a long look, trying to make sense of him.  
He holds up a bottle of 5-hour energy. Reluctantly, she holds one up, too.*

(smiling) How is the painting going?

CLAIRE  
Slowly.

WAYNE  
Have you thought of anything else you can take up? Hiking/or

CLAIRE  
/I don't know. I might take an online class or something.

WAYNE  
Hmm.

CLAIRE  
What?

WAYNE  
Nothin'. There's just all kinds of lessons—right outside that door.

CLAIRE  
I like it in here.

WAYNE  
I don't know why you don't wanna/

CLAIRE  
/DON'T TELL ME WHAT TO DO! I'm not like you.

WAYNE  
Yeah. I think we've established that.

*Wayne exits.  
Customer enters.*

*Claire takes a deep breath, then sighs it out.*

CLAIRE

Can I help you find anything?

CUSTOMER

Do you guys have headache medicine?

CLAIRE

Yeah.

*Claire comes out from behind the counter and goes to where the headache medicine is.*

They come in packs of two.

CUSTOMER

Thanks.

*Claire goes back behind the counter.*

*Customer gets a bottle of water and goes to the counter.*

*Claire rings him up.*

CLAIRE

Four fifty-seven.

*Customer hands over a five.*

*Claire gives him his change.*

*Customer takes the headache medicine with water.*

*Customer exits.*

*Claire goes to where the headache medicine is and takes a pack off the shelf for herself.*

#### **Scene 4**

*Claire is alone behind the counter.*

*She is reading a book about visual art.*

*Dan enters.*

*She hides the book behind the counter.*

CLAIRE

Hey Dan.

DAN

Hey.

*He goes and gets a root beer and a bag of pork rinds.*

*He goes to the counter.*

*She just pays for them.*

*Dan starts eating his pork rinds.*

DAN  
Where's Romeo?

CLAIRE  
He's out working again today.

DAN  
Is he ever here?

CLAIRE  
(defensive) He works when he can.

DAN  
Okay.

CLAIRE  
At least he has a job.

DAN  
Izat some kinda dig?

CLAIRE  
Two of them. How many you got?

DAN  
I told you, I'm looking.

CLAIRE  
Nothing's come up?

DAN  
Nothing I wanna do.

CLAIRE  
Beggars can't be choosers, Dan.

DAN  
I'm not a beggar.

CLAIRE  
You know what I mean.

DAN  
You talk down to me a lot—for somebody who works at a convenience store.



CLAIRE  
I might not always.

DAN  
You will though, that's the thing.

CLAIRE  
Are you sure?

DAN  
Yes.

CLAIRE  
How do you know?

DAN  
It's your sense of duty.

CLAIRE  
But I been thinking/

DAN  
/Always gets you into trouble./

CLAIRE  
/It'd be nice to study something.

DAN  
What the hell for?

CLAIRE  
To learn more. About the world. Get out more.

DAN  
You got everything you need to know right here.

CLAIRE  
There's this program over at State/

DAN  
/But if Mom didn't have you here to take care of her/

CLAIRE  
/You could take care of her.

DAN

If you left town, I'd check her into Feather Lake so fast her head'd spin.

CLAIRE

That place? She'd hate it in there!

DAN

It's the only place in town with the kinda care she needs.

CLAIRE

Couldn't you just—help me take care of her sometimes?

DAN

You know I can't/

CLAIRE

/Of course not. You do that, you'll probly miss some great party/

DAN

/That's not fair. I'm doing the best I can.

CLAIRE

Right.

DAN

Claire. She's not getting any better.

CLAIRE

That's not/

DAN

/She's not. You want to think she's going to be fine and dandy again—be able to care for herself and all—but the truth is, she's actually getting worse.

CLAIRE

She is not/

DAN

/Her doctor said that bout with pneumonia almost took her life.

CLAIRE

It wasn't that/serious

DAN

/And you're talking about leaving town?

CLAIRE

No, I guess not.

*Dan looks satisfied, drinks his root beer.*

*Wayne enters wearing a cast on his right foot and using crutches to walk.*

Oh my God, Wayne! What happened?

WAYNE

Fell off a stoop at Jared's.

DAN

You that dumb?

CLAIRE

Shut it—

WAYNE

There's no stairs off one part of his porch. I forgot and stepped right off a three foot landing.

CLAIRE

Ouch—

WAYNE

(gesturing to his right foot) I fell on this wrong.

CLAIRE

(not as impressed as she once was) Sounds like another adventure.

WAYNE

It's just a sprain.

CLAIRE

But still/

WAYNE

/It's not that bad.

CLAIRE

(to Dan) Are you gonna stay, or/

DAN

/I want to, but I've gotta get over to Rick's for a barbeque/

CLAIRE

/But/

DAN

/Don't wanna miss any great parties.

CLAIRE

...

DAN

See you later.

*Claire watches as Dan exits.*

*She turns to Wayne, who is using his crutches to get across the store.*

CLAIRE

I can't believe you got hurt out there.

WAYNE

...

CLAIRE

The closest hospital is like twenty miles away.

WAYNE

...

CLAIRE

It would've been so easy to avoid. Just watch where you're going/

WAYNE

/Yeah, but the work? It's really coming along. And we get to watch the sunset every evening from Jared's porch.

CLAIRE

What if you'd gotten hurt worse?

WAYNE

I didn't.

CLAIRE

But what if you had?

WAYNE

Claire. I didn't.

CLAIRE  
Still think you should be more careful/

WAYNE  
/It's not a problem.

*Beat.*

Can you get me some coffee, please?

*Wayne sits behind the counter.  
Claire goes and pours Wayne a coffee, brings it back over to him.  
He drinks it.*

That's great. Thank you.  
Can I have a snack, too?

*Claire brings him a snack.  
As Wayne enjoys his coffee and snack, Claire tries to hide her tears.*

## Scene 5

*Wayne and Claire are at the counter, playing a magnetic travel checkers game.  
His crutches are propped up behind the counter; he is sitting on stool back there.*

CLAIRE  
So, what's with that canoe trip?

WAYNE  
Oh yeah, that.

CLAIRE  
Have you saved enough money for it yet?

WAYNE  
I have.

CLAIRE  
And—?

WAYNE  
And with my foot like this, I'm not going anywhere.

CLAIRE  
I know, but when it's better—

WAYNE  
I don't know yet.

CLAIRE  
No?

WAYNE  
Why do you ask?

CLAIRE  
I'm just—getting kinda antsy.

WAYNE  
You're getting antsy?

CLAIRE  
Like I need to go someplace else.

WAYNE  
Where?

CLAIRE  
Did you want to go visit your family?

WAYNE  
I haven't been to visit my family in like five years.

CLAIRE  
Or I could head out to where State is/

WAYNE  
/Oh, that's what this is about.

CLAIRE  
No. Maybe. You don't have to come. I just/

WAYNE  
/Wait—You don't WANT me to come?

CLAIRE  
I didn't say that.  
I just mean—if you're not into it, and I am—

WAYNE  
Then—

CLAIRE

You could stay here and heal, and I could go check it out.

WAYNE

Uh huh. You're comfortable with that?

CLAIRE

I would be—if you weren't being so weird about it. What's up?

WAYNE

Nothing.

CLAIRE

It just—might be cool to see someplace else.

WAYNE

I thought you couldn't leave?

CLAIRE

It'd just be for a visit. You kept talking about art and travel and college—it all sounded so nice.

WAYNE

But Claire—I think I might want to stay here. For the long haul.

*Claire laughs.*

Jared's such a great guy, and I'm starting to feel like I belong here—

CLAIRE

Really? Because I'm starting to feel like crawling out of my FUCKING SKIN!

WAYNE

Are you serious?

CLAIRE

Yeah. But I already know it doesn't matter.

WAYNE

What doesn't?

CLAIRE

What I want!

WAYNE

Of course it does.

CLAIRE

It never has before. So let's just drop it.

WAYNE

No. You wanna talk about this, let's talk about it.

CLAIRE

I just, I was starting to want to leave, like you did, and now you want to stay, and ONCE AGAIN, I want something different from everyone else around me.

WAYNE

What is it? What do you want?

CLAIRE

I don't know. Not really. I just keep longing for something, but I don't know what it is.

WAYNE

What could it be?

CLAIRE

It's always something. When I was a kid, it was a horse. A pink horse I could swear I could see but nobody else could, so I figured I was making it up. Then it was all kinds of hobbies—ballet, tap dance, guitar, French horn, journalism, flag corps—I could never settle on anything.

WAYNE

(smiling) YOU could never settle?

CLAIRE

But seriously. I've never really known what I was called to do. I just sort of...did some stuff. I never stuck with anything.

Looking around, the one consistent thing, the thing I could always count on no matter what, was my mother's NEED. And the thing I could always do, when I had no idea what I was doing—which has been most of the time—was take care of her needs.

WAYNE

But—doesn't that make you more the mother and her the daughter?

CLAIRE

Probably. But I feel like I have to take care of her.

WAYNE

And—?

CLAIRE

And nothing.



WAYNE  
You're joking.

CLAIRE  
I'll just be here. Indefinitely. Doing whatever my family needs me to do.

WAYNE  
That's insane.

CLAIRE  
You got a better idea?

WAYNE  
Yeah—live your life!  
Find out what you love doing and pursue it with everything you've got!

CLAIRE  
Don't you think I've tried to figure out what that is?  
Looked into it—but I keep coming up EMPTY.  
(gesturing to her chest) There's nothing here.  
You showed up, and you had such passion and DIRECTION, it was energizing, I thought I'd just follow you. But now I feel stuck again. And confused.

WAYNE  
So take some time—on your own. Get down to the bottom of, what you want.  
Not what I want, or what your mom needs, but what you want.

CLAIRE  
That's selfish.

WAYNE  
It's never called selfish when a man does it.

CLAIRE  
Sometimes it is.

WAYNE  
But is it really? If something's True—

*She sighs, exasperated at having him say that word so often.*

No—not like undergrad angsty pseudo-intellectual bullshit “true”—  
Not like “Oh I'm seeking Truth and Beauty and have no idea what I'm talking about” kind of  
shit—I mean like search your heart, this is TRUE for you kind of thing—  
How can it be wrong to pursue that?

CLAIRE

Everything in my upbringing says it is.

WAYNE

Well—look. It's like—some people would call it God's will. If God's will is inside us, how can it be selfish to listen to it, to follow it?

CLAIRE

Yeah, but you don't even believe in God.

WAYNE

Call it whatever. Universal will. Or Spirit. That small, quiet voice inside. Intuition. I don't know, fuck. People've called it all kinds of things. Just—listen to it, okay?

CLAIRE

What do you care if I listen to that?

WAYNE

Because it's all I ever do—and it's very freeing.

What you're doing, your responsibilities to your family—I get it.

It's admirable.

It's probly something I could do more of.

But when you look at it, how do you feel about meeting your family's needs all the time and ignoring your own?

CLAIRE

That's not—

WAYNE

You need to—

CLAIRE

I'm not going to—

WAYNE

This isn't something you should keep ignoring—

*He has reached out to her and touched the center of her chest.*

What's it telling you—here?

*She stalls, sets her chin.*

*Then she closes her eyes and a sob breaks loose from her chest.*

CLAIRE

I—resent it.

I resent caring for other people all the time.

I want someone to care for me, to care about what I want, to meet my needs.

Everyone seems so ill-equipped to do that—so I just plod along, making the same choice again and again.

WAYNE

What else?

CLAIRE

That's pretty major.

WAYNE

No, I mean—What else could you choose for yourself?

CLAIRE

I—have no idea.

WAYNE

Come on, think. Like what KIND of action—What else could you do?

CLAIRE

I keep asking myself that.

WHAT ELSE?

There must be something else.

That canoe trip was something else, but it was your idea.

I was thinking about going to State, but my brother shot it down. There's no way—

I've been trying to pull on something else, some other experience, but all I've got is what I've been through, what I've been exposed to.

WAYNE

That's what a lot of people think. But you've got access to EVERYTHING, to every choice that could possibly be made, in here.

*He touches the middle of her chest.*

*She stands up, moves away from him, out of his reach.*

CLAIRE

I can't HEAR anything in here! There is NOTHING; there is no message. That 'small quiet voice' is not saying a goddamn thing! And meanwhile, everyone around me is saying they want something—a pack of gum, lotto tickets, a canoe trip down a river. It's easier to hear that.

WAYNE

Yeah but still—what do you want?

Listen for it. Try to hear it.

CLAIRE  
I—

WAYNE  
Come on, try.

*Claire closes her eyes.*

CLAIRE  
To paint.

WAYNE  
AND?

CLAIRE  
And I'm figuring the rest out.

WAYNE  
Well you'll have to do better than that.

CLAIRE  
(opening her eyes) So once again you have all the answers.

WAYNE  
I think I'm a few steps ahead of you, yeah.

CLAIRE  
Just because you're older/

WAYNE  
/No, because I've seen more of the world than you'll ever see!

*Claire is taken aback.*

CLAIRE  
And I supposed you've read more than I'll ever be able to look at, too?

WAYNE  
Maybe I have.

CLAIRE  
You've got some gall.

WAYNE  
Is that so?

CLAIRE  
You know what, Wayne? Don't worry about it.

*Customer enters.  
Claire shifts.*

How can I help you?

*Customer approaches the counter.*

CUSTOMER  
A pack of American Spirits.

CLAIRE  
Is that all?

CUSTOMER  
Yes.

CLAIRE  
Is that all you want out of life?

CUSTOMER  
Excuse me?

CLAIRE  
Don't you want anything more than that?

CUSTOMER  
(to Wayne) You wanna sell me the cigarettes, buddy?

CLAIRE  
I'm asking you a question.

CUSTOMER  
I can hear that.

CLAIRE  
Is this your big dream—just this?

CUSTOMER  
It's all I'd like for today.

CLAIRE  
And for tomorrow, and the day after that?

CUSTOMER  
This is uncalled for.

CLAIRE  
Just some endless string of meaningless fucking days—with your cigarettes?

*Wayne reaches out from his stool.*

WAYNE  
I'll ring you up.

CLAIRE  
Oh sure. We can pretend it doesn't matter.

*Wayne rings up the customer.*

WAYNE  
Five ninety-eight.

CLAIRE  
We can just keep doing what we're doing.

*Customer hands over a ten.*

But what would be the point?

*Wayne gives him his change.*

What are you really after in life? What are any of us after?  
Why the fuck do we do anything we do?  
Why don't we do the things we don't do?

*Wayne hands the customer his receipt.*

CUSTOMER  
I'm outta here.  
(to Wayne) You need to keep her on a leash.

*Customer exits.*

WAYNE  
Are you alright?

CLAIRE  
You were right, Wayne. It isn't enough. This petty bullshit.

WAYNE

Just—try to calm down.

CLAIRE

I don't know what I want—but it's got to be more than this.

## Scene 6

*Wayne is behind the counter. He still has the cast on his right foot.*

*Claire is standing in front of her canvas, paintbrush and paints at the ready.*

WAYNE

Okay. I'll lead you through it.

CLAIRE

Don't leave anything out.

WAYNE

I won't.

CLAIRE

'Cause I need it to be VIVID.

WAYNE

So we're in Zion National Park, and my parents are with me. But then I stop to look up at this huge rock face, and they keep walking along the path. I cross these round, wet rocks so I can get to this place where water is falling, but I don't say anything, so they just keep going without me. There are these huge black patches on the rock face, and these golden sections, too.

*Claire is painting the rocks.*

I'm about to call out for my mom and dad, when I see this little inlet, a spot between the rocks just off to the left. I can't help it. I have to go through it. See through it. There, around the corner, is this river snaking. The most brilliant blue. I have no idea where I am, but I don't care anymore. I just want to drink that whole river in through a straw.

CLAIRE

What kind of blue?

WAYNE

The kind of gray with blue mixed in, and flashes of turquoise.

CLAIRE

Wow.

WAYNE  
Yeah.

*She paints the river.*

CLAIRE  
How tall are the rocks?

WAYNE  
They hide the sky.

CLAIRE  
Really?

WAYNE  
Yeah. It's just this thin baby blue line across the top of anything I can see.

*She paints a thin line of baby blue sky at the top of the canvas.*

CLAIRE  
What's on the rocks, besides the black spots?

WAYNE  
Horizontal lines of light brown and red rock. Dotted with green patches.

CLAIRE  
What kind of green?

WAYNE  
That forest green.

CLAIRE  
I've got that one.

*She adds forest green to the rocks.*

WAYNE  
Mix the red for the rocks. It's orangey.

*Claire reads from a color guide in her art book.*

CLAIRE  
Like—what does that say?—ochre?



WAYNE  
Yeah. Like that.

CLAIRE  
What does it feel like?

WAYNE  
Are you going to paint the feeling?

CLAIRE  
I'm going to try.

WAYNE  
It feels like—freedom. Wide-armed. Loving, warm. Like the kind of hug that leaves you all kinds of room to breathe.

CLAIRE  
That's beautiful.

*Using his crutches, Wayne approaches Claire from behind, looking at the painting.*

WAYNE  
Yes, it is.

CLAIRE  
So, that's what it's like, to be lost?

*Wayne buries his face in her neck.*

WAYNE  
Mmmmm.

*Claire keeps her eyes on the painting.*

CLAIRE  
I want to climb inside that world. The one you've been in.

WAYNE  
You can.

*He leans in to kiss her.  
She makes some sound of disbelief, breaks the spell.*

CLAIRE  
I told you, not at work.

WAYNE

When are you gonna let go of the last little threads holding you to this place?

CLAIRE

More like thick, steel cord.

*Wayne laughs.*

CLAIRE

(breaking from him) No, it's true. Whether we like it or not, we are always tied to our family.

WAYNE

Not me. I cut that cord a long time ago.

CLAIRE

That's what you think.

WAYNE

I did.

CLAIRE

That's impossible.

WAYNE

Or it was cut for me.

CLAIRE

Parents don't do that kind of thing.

WAYNE

No? God, you've had it easy. The last time I was home, I got between my mom and dad. Trying to protect her. I beat the shit out of him. EMT's had to come, bandage his face up. Mom got all weepy. I thought, that's what I protected her for? So she could run to his side?

CLAIRE

But they didn't mean to distance you in the process.

WAYNE

Well, they did. I've been on the road since then.

CLAIRE

You can't keep running forever.

WAYNE

That's the thing. I have been running.

WAYNE (cont.)

But with you, I can feel myself slowing down. Coming to a complete stop. Inside, I'm still racing, like when you go from 80 down to 35 coming off the freeway. But outside, in my skin, I'm right here. You're showing me the value in staying put.

CLAIRE

Wayne, I—

WAYNE

You are.

CLAIRE

Don't let me—

WAYNE

And this work with Jared—

CLAIRE

I'm glad you have that.

WAYNE

Me too. Listen—

*Customer enters.*

*He points to the hot dogs on the heat rollers.*

CUSTOMER

These hot dogs fresh?

CLAIRE

We put them out fresh each day.

CUSTOMER

But at what time?

CLAIRE

I don't know. Earlier this morning.

CUSTOMER

You telling me they've been here for hours?

CLAIRE

They're still fresh.

CUSTOMER

Not in some hot red light.

CLAIRE  
If you want something fresh, might I suggest a salad?

CUSTOMER  
Ha ha.

CLAIRE  
Or cooking something yourself?

CUSTOMER  
Don't get smart.

WAYNE  
Uh—the doughnuts were brought in just an hour ago.

CUSTOMER  
That's good. Where they at?

WAYNE  
Over by the coffee.

*The customer goes to get himself a couple donuts.  
The following exchange is as an aside between Wayne and Claire.*

What are you doing?

CLAIRE  
Just telling him the truth.

WAYNE  
What happened to your stellar customer service?

CLAIRE  
I'm getting tired, Wayne.

*The customer returns to the counter with the donuts.  
Wayne rings him up.*

WAYNE  
Two eleven.

*The customer pays.  
Wayne gives him his change.  
The customer exits, eating his doughnuts from the bag as he does.*

## Scene 7

*Claire is alone behind the counter, reading her art book.*

*Dan enters; Claire hides the art book.*

*Dan sees the painting.*

DAN

What is that?

CLAIRE

It's a painting I did on my last shift.

DAN

You PAINT at work?

CLAIRE

I can't at home, so—

DAN

What's it of?

CLAIRE

Of rocks and a river.

DAN

It doesn't look like it.

CLAIRE

It's more supposed to represent the feeling of rocks and a river.

DAN

The feeling of rocks? What does that even mean?

CLAIRE

Um—nothing. Just forget it.

DAN

Well, I think I'm gonna take the feeling of orange juice.

*Dan goes and gets an orange juice out of the fridge and brings it to the counter.*

*Claire rings him up.*

CLAIRE

One eighty-nine.

DAN  
Can you—

CLAIRE  
Seriously?

*Claire sighs but spots him.*

DAN  
Just 'til I get a job.

CLAIRE  
So the interview didn't work out?

DAN  
They wanted me to work like evenings, and you know I can't do evenings.

CLAIRE  
Dan, you just need SOMETHING at this point. You just need to do—something.

DAN  
Why?

CLAIRE  
To do your part?

DAN  
All of our expenses are covered, right?

CLAIRE  
That's not the point.

DAN  
Look, I know you're getting a lot of bright ideas from your boyfriend,/but

CLAIRE  
/They're not all his ideas.

DAN  
Whatever. All I know is, before he showed up, there was never any problem.

CLAIRE  
Yes there was. I just never said anything about it.

DAN  
Same difference.

CLAIRE

Why can't we do this together? Why can't we go in half, or something?  
I don't feel comfortable shouldering all of this.

DAN

Well, you know, I WANT to, I want to go half, I just need to, you know, put things together.

CLAIRE

Right.

DAN

Are you gonna go visit her after this?

CLAIRE

Yeah. After I get off. I'm gonna take her dinner.

DAN

Cool.

CLAIRE

/Are YOU going to visit her later?

DAN

Uh—I have to meet some friends.

CLAIRE

Got it.

DAN

What?

CLAIRE

Nothing. It's—fine.

*Beat.*

You know—there's no reason why we have to live here.

DAN

What?

CLAIRE

We don't. We just happen to've been born here, but we don't have to stay here. We could move anywhere. At least someplace else in the state. That would work.

DAN

All my friends are here. I like it. You're the one who's got a wild hair up her ass.

CLAIRE

Shut up.

*Dan fake checks his watch.*

DAN

Would you look at that? It's time for me to go. Don't wait up.

*Dan exits.*

*Claire gets the art book out from under the counter.*

*She rediscovers the blue flames car from Act I behind there, too.*

*She drives the Hot Wheels car on the counter.*

*She opens the art book and starts flipping through it.*

CLAIRE

So that's Klimt.

## Scene 8

*Wayne alone behind the counter.*

*He is still wearing the cast on his right foot.*

*Dan enters.*

WAYNE

Hey, Darlin'—oh, you.

DAN

Yeah, me. Who'd you expect, the Easter Bunny?

WAYNE

Actually I was expecting Claire. Her shift started like an hour ago.

DAN

She's pretty exhausted after what happened.

WAYNE

After what?

*Dan laughs.*

DAN

You mean your dear sweetheart didn't tell you?



WAYNE  
Tell me what?

DAN  
That's rich.

WAYNE  
TELL ME WHAT.

DAN  
That she just had to scratch it.

WAYNE  
Scratch, wha—?

DAN  
That itch that's been in her ass to get the hell outta Dodge.

WAYNE  
Can you stop talking in fucking riddles, please.

DAN  
Oh you want clarity? How 'bout this? Your princess tried to leave town last night.

WAYNE  
You're making that up.

DAN  
Sure, like I made up how her car was packed to the ceiling, how she left a letter for me and Mom, how she would've gotten away and everything if she hadn't forgotten her keys on the kitchen table.

WAYNE  
There's no way—

DAN  
I came home at just the right time.

WAYNE  
But she never said anything to me.

DAN  
Join the damn club, studly.

WAYNE

You must've misunderstood—

DAN

She fucking WROTE IT DOWN. No way was she just headed to the corner store.

*Claire enters.*

*Dan laughs to himself, goes to the fridge to get a Coke.*

WAYNE

You're late.

CLAIRE

I know.

WAYNE

Like over an hour.

CLAIRE

I know.

WAYNE

Where've you been?

CLAIRE

At home.

*Dan comes up to the counter with his Coke.*

DAN

Tell him what you've been doin' at home, Claire.

CLAIRE

Resting.

DAN

And—?

CLAIRE

Just resting.

DAN

Yeah, it's tiring, unpacking all your shit, huh?

CLAIRE

/Shut up. Wayne, he doesn't know what he's talking about.

WAYNE

Claire, did you try to leave without telling me?

CLAIRE

I'm not—that isn't—

DAN

She sure as hell did. She wasn't gonna tell a goddamn one of us.

CLAIRE

There was nothing to tell.

DAN

Pssshhhh. (to Wayne) First time we're in the same boat, huh, Buddy? Weird bein' in the same boat with you.

CLAIRE

That's not—

DAN

Yes it is. Tell the truth, Claire.

*Claire spontaneously cries.*

CLAIRE

I was at home, and I was packing some things into the car, because I thought I might take a short trip for the weekend, maybe go up north a bit and just get a motel and think things through for a minute, try to get out of everyone else's head and into my own for a while, but then I went back in to get the keys, and when I came back out, Dan was there in the driveway and wanted to stop me from going anywhere for any length of time, 'cause he doesn't want me to think for myself—

WAYNE

(turning on Dan) What are you trying to pull?

DAN

I'm just telling you the truth.

*Wayne glares at him.*

That's what I thought.

You don't wanna hear it.

You just want her to be perfect.

Well, your perfect little wifey poo tried to skip town without a word.

Sucks to be you, right?

WAYNE

I've never cared about anyone this much before.

DAN

The fact is, she suckered you, just like she suckered us.

She wants you to stay, but she's gotta go.

Was it worth it, the sacrifice?

Is she really that good of a fuck?

WAYNE

Don't you EVER talk about her that way!

*Wayne lunges at Dan, falling onto the floor and crying out in pain as he hits his ankle.  
Claire goes to Wayne, getting between them.*

CLAIRE

Stop it!!

Wayne, I'm sorry!

I have no idea what I was—

I'm so sorry!

I didn't think I was gonna do that.

WAYNE

But you did?

CLAIRE

... Yes.

*Wayne takes this in.*

WAYNE

You're right, Claire.

I don't want the truth.

Not really.

CLAIRE

...

WAYNE

I told you I would let you know if anything changed!

CLAIRE

...

WAYNE

And you were just going to leave?!

CLAIRE

...I think I'll tell Joe I'm sick today. I'll be in tomorrow.

WAYNE

I might not be here.

CLAIRE

(sadly) No, I know.

*Claire exits toward the back.*

*Dan holds up the can of Coke.*

DAN

Can you—?

WAYNE

Get outta here!

*Dan exits, leaving the can of Coke unopened on the counter.*

## Scene 9

*Wayne is out sweeping.*

*His foot is no longer in the cast; it is in a splint.*

*He can hobble around now on the splint and without crutches.*

*Claire enters and gets behind the counter.*

CLAIRE

You're here early.

WAYNE

Yeah.

CLAIRE

What's the occasion?

WAYNE

Going to leave early today.

CLAIRE

But we don't have much overlap as it is.

WAYNE

Yeah no.

CLAIRE  
I see.

WAYNE  
Jared's wanting me to do some tile work, so—

CLAIRE  
Got it.

WAYNE  
He's been great about this. (gesturing to his foot)

CLAIRE  
Has he?

WAYNE  
Very supportive. Lets me sit and work on what I can reach.

CLAIRE  
Cool.

WAYNE  
Still gives me free rent, too.

CLAIRE  
What a guy.

WAYNE  
Yeah well it's better than some people.

CLAIRE  
What's that supposed to mean?

WAYNE  
It means I've been hobbling around on this damn thing for WEEKS, and all you've been thinking about is YOU!

CLAIRE  
Excuse me if I'm trying to figure out my own life. I thought that's what you wanted me to do?

WAYNE  
But—

CLAIRE  
Not if it took away from babying you.

WAYNE  
Oh come on—

CLAIRE  
The second you got hurt, it was bring me this, and get me that—

WAYNE  
That's not true—

CLAIRE  
Pretty much is. I'm not your maid, or your nurse, or your da—

WAYNE  
Your daughter? Jesus Christ, Claire. Not everyone is your helpless mother.

CLAIRE  
You take that back!

WAYNE  
No, you wanna make me into the bad guy, fine. I got hurt—

CLAIRE  
From your own carelessness—

WAYNE  
From whatever, it doesn't matter. And I would think, if you care for a person—

CLAIRE  
Here we go—

WAYNE  
If you CARE for a person, you would WANT to help take care of them when they're down—

CLAIRE  
You and everybody else on the fucking planet, college boy.

WAYNE  
Don't call me that. You don't wanna play nurse, fine. But don't blame me because you've never claimed a single thing in your life for yourself.

CLAIRE  
That's right! Not one single fucking thing! (gesturing to the canvas) Just this one little scrap of canvas, and I don't know, a diet Coke I had once. Those were for ME.

WAYNE

Whaaa whaaaa. Does baby need her diaper changed?

CLAIRE

Oh blow it out your ass, Wayne. I'm sick of this.

WAYNE

Sick of WHAT?

CLAIRE

I've told you! Of being in this town! Of caring for other people all the time!

*Customer enters.*

*He goes to the counter and throws a pack of gum up onto the counter.*

CLAIRE

Is that all?

CUSTOMER

Yeah.

*She rings him up.*

CLAIRE

Dollar ninety-five.

*He pays.*

*She gives him his change.*

Have a good one.

CUSTOMER

Yeah, you too.

*Customer exits.*

WAYNE

That's my fave flave. Just. Be. Cause.

*She glares at him.*

What? You have a problem with GUM? Who has a problem with gum?

*Dan enters, holding an envelope.*



DAN  
What the hell iz 'is, Claire?

CLAIRE  
I don't know.

DAN  
It's from State.

CLAIRE  
IT IS?

DAN  
Why are you getting mail from State?

CLAIRE  
Lemme see it.

*Claire comes out and tries to get the envelope, but Dan holds it up high, away from her.*

DAN  
Why you are getting mail from State, Claire?

CLAIRE  
Give it to me!

DAN  
Oh what this?

*He holds the envelope in front of her face.  
She grabs it.*

CLAIRE  
Ughhh!

*She opens it.*

Oh my God.

WAYNE  
What's going on?

CLAIRE  
I'm in.

WAYNE  
In what?

CLAIRE  
I applied to their College of Arts and Sciences.

DAN  
Of course you did.

CLAIRE  
I didn't think I was gonna get in.

DAN  
(to Wayne) Did you know about this?

WAYNE  
It's the first I'm hearing about it.

CLAIRE  
I can't believe it.

WAYNE  
Claire—?

CLAIRE  
You can come with me.

WAYNE  
Claire, I'm—

CLAIRE  
It's not very far from here, compared to the places you've/been.

WAYNE  
/Settling. Here.

CLAIRE  
Settling? Like a rock?

WAYNE  
Jared said when my foot heals, I can come work for him full-time.

CLAIRE  
In THAT town? You'd die there.

WAYNE

You mean YOU'D die there?

CLAIRE

Yeah, I guess I would.

WAYNE

You don't wanna stay here, for me?

CLAIRE

I feel like—I need to do this.

DAN

Hello? Aren't you forgetting something? Who's gonna take care of Mom?

CLAIRE

You can.

DAN

I told you, you leave town, I'll put her in Feather Lake.

CLAIRE

But I know you can do it!

DAN

I can't.

CLAIRE

It's not hard.

DAN

That's why you're leaving, 'cause it's NOT hard?

CLAIRE

I'm leaving 'cause I need to.

DAN

Well I need to say no.

CLAIRE

Dan, please—this would mean a lot to me.

DAN

You should've thought about this before you applied.

CLAIRE

I've been caring for her for years. Can't you just take over for a little while?

DAN

Sure, a year, and then a couple years, then forever. You leave, you won't come back.

CLAIRE

You don't know that.

DAN

You won't.

CLAIRE

I intend to come back.

DAN

Yeah well the road to hell is paved/with

WAYNE

/Claire, is this really what you want?

CLAIRE

It is.

WAYNE

But—I love you.

CLAIRE

Really?

WAYNE

And I want you. Very specifically YOU.

CLAIRE

Now?

WAYNE

This whole time.

DAN

We need you.

You have to stay.

CLAIRE

But—what about that hug that leaves all kinds of room for me to breathe? Why can't I—?

*Claire has trouble getting a full breath.  
Wayne goes toward her as she gasps for air.*

## **Scene 10**

*Claire is behind the counter reading a book of Rumi poems.  
Wayne enters from the back with a box of merchandise and begins stocking shelves.  
He is no longer wearing any kind of splint; his foot is healed.*

WAYNE  
Is it really your last shift?

CLAIRE  
Yeah.

WAYNE  
Humh.

CLAIRE  
What?

WAYNE  
It's going to be so weird, working here after you're gone.

CLAIRE  
But you won't have to do that for long.

WAYNE  
True.

*Dan enters.*

DAN  
(to Wayne) Hey.

WAYNE  
Hey.

*Claire busies herself needlessly behind the counter.*

DAN  
(to Claire) Claire, I'm gonna check Mom into Feather Lake.

CLAIRE  
I know.

DAN  
You don't have a problem with that?

CLAIRE  
It's not ideal, but/

DAN  
/I don't know what else to do.

CLAIRE  
I know.

DAN  
I just—I can't carry that kind of responsibility.

CLAIRE  
It's okay.

DAN  
Really? You're okay with that?

CLAIRE  
I need to be. They will give her the care she needs.

DAN  
But you said she'll hate it in there.

CLAIRE  
She will get used to it.

DAN  
(defensive) What else'm I supposed to do? Jesus, Claire, don't you ever think about how your actions will affect other people?

CLAIRE  
That's all I ever think about. And I'm tired. I'm exhausted. I need to stop doing the same job, the same kind of things I've always done.

DAN  
But—it's worked, hasn't it?

CLAIRE  
It used to, real well. Now I'm tired of it. I need to try something else.

DAN

What you're doing is selfish.

*Claire just smiles.*

Well can I at least get a snack?

CLAIRE

Sure. While the gettin's good.

*Dan goes and grabs a snack off the shelf, takes it to the counter.*

I'll get this.

DAN

You don't have to. I got a job/

CLAIRE

/I want to.

*Dan smiles.*

*Claire pays for the snack.*

*Dan opens it and starts eating.*

DAN

This place will be—quiet without you.

CLAIRE

What do you mean?

DAN

Just—less lively.

CLAIRE

Will it?

DAN

Totally.

CLAIRE

Well, I'm hanging up my caregiver hat for a while.

DAN

Yeah. I guess so.

*Beat.*

DAN

You know—whenever you come into the room, Mom stands up. She never does that for me. I know that—I can't do that intimate thing, washing her or combing her hair, or even just bringing her things that she likes. I can't do it like you, or with that kind of sincerity. When I'm with her, I just think about when I can go be with people who—get me. When I visit her, we just—sit there. I can't think of anything to say. You know? The weather or what's on TV, but I don't know what else to say to her. I can't even imagine, caring for her day in, day out, the way you have. That's why I haven't been much help to you. I'm sorry.

CLAIRE

It's okay. I admire it, actually.

DAN

What?

CLAIRE

The way men just claim what they want. Like it's the easiest thing in the world.

DAN

I've never thought about it before.

CLAIRE

You've never had to.

DAN

You really want to do this?

CLAIRE

More than I can say.

DAN

I'll make sure they take good care of her, Claire. You do what you need to do.

*She hugs Dan.*

*Moved, Dan needs to leave before he cries.*

Okay now, see you at home later on.

*Claire lets him go.*

*Dan exits.*

*Claire gets the Hot Wheels car out from under the counter.*

CLAIRE

I think I know now what crime I've committed.



WAYNE  
What's that?

CLAIRE  
Taking care of my own needs over everybody else's.

WAYNE  
That's not a crime. It'd just be nice if our needs met up more.

CLAIRE  
Yeah.

*He holds up a bag of peanuts.*

We don't need a code anymore.

*She kisses him.*

You know, I wouldn't be doin' this if it weren't for you.

WAYNE  
I figured yeah.

CLAIRE  
You've inspired me.

WAYNE  
I guess.

CLAIRE  
You have. I can hear pieces of what that small voice is trying to tell me now.

WAYNE  
Great. Shoulda thought that one out more.

CLAIRE  
(smiling) Seriously. Thank you.

WAYNE  
Thank you. It's been a good trade.

CLAIRE  
(laughs) Can I read you something?

WAYNE  
What?

CLAIRE

It's a Rumi poem I found.

WAYNE

You've discovered Rumi?

CLAIRE

It's required reading for a course next semester.

WAYNE

Alright.

*Claire gets the book of Rumi poems from the counter.*

CLAIRE

Okay, here it is:

(reading) My worst habit is I get so tired of winter  
I become a torture to those I'm with.

If you're not here, nothing grows.

I lack clarity. My words  
tangle and knot up.

How to cure bad water? Send it back to the river.  
How to cure bad habits? Send me back to you.

When water gets caught in habitual whirlpools,  
dig a way out through the bottom  
of the ocean. There is a secret medicine  
given only to those who hurt so hard  
they can't hope.

The hoppers would feel slighted if they knew.

Look as long as you can at the friend you love,  
no matter whether that friend is moving away from you  
or coming back toward you.

Don't let your throat tighten  
with fear. Take sips of breath  
all day and night, before death  
closes your mouth.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Rumi. *The Essential Rumi*. "My Worst Habit" (page 52). Translation by Coleman Barks. New York: HarperOne. Print.

WAYNE  
Huh.

CLAIRE  
It's weird. Makes me feel hopeful.

WAYNE  
Yeah, ironic.

CLAIRE  
You take care of yourself now.

*Claire starts to exit.*

WAYNE  
Claire—?

*He takes her hand.*

CLAIRE  
(gently) You've got your path, and I've got mine.  
(quickly) But I'm so glad they crossed for a while.

*He loses it, cries.*

WAYNE  
Fuck. I can't—  
    this isn't—  
    me too.

*Claire hangs up her work shirt.  
She touches the items in the Gas 'n 'Sip as if they are SACRED.  
She touches Wayne's face, trying to memorize what it looks like.  
Then she takes her Hot Wheels car, painting, and books and exits the Gas 'n 'Sip.*

## **Prologue**

*The Gas 'n 'Sip before the beginning of the play.  
Claire is training Wayne.  
Wayne is making faces.*

CLAIRE  
This here is the Slurpee machine.  
C'mon, this is serious.

WAYNE  
Is it? Is it really?

CLAIRE  
Yes.  
Now, first, you grab a cup and put it here.

*He makes a face.*

Then you pick what flavor you want.  
Root beer's my fave flave.

*He makes a different face.*

Then move the handle so the—so the, you know, the Slurpee fills the cup.

*Another face.*

You are not taking this seriously!  
You're not even taking notes.

WAYNE  
Gimme a break.  
A kid could figure this out.  
A MONKEY.

CLAIRE  
Anyways. Stop pouring when it gets full.

WAYNE  
Duh.

CLAIRE  
Then put a plastic lid on it—the right size one—like this.

WAYNE  
(not listening) Uh huh.

CLAIRE  
You're not listening.

WAYNE  
I am!

CLAIRE  
What was that last part of what I said?

WAYNE

You said, “Try not to be a doofus on a daily basis.” Duly noted.

CLAIRE

No, but really. Some of the elderly customers and the really young kids need help using this.

*Wayne laughs.*

They do!

WAYNE

Who—like—*needs* a SLURPEE?

CLAIRE

Well, lots of people *feel* like they need one.

So help ‘em out, if it comes to it.

Okay?

WAYNE

(rolling his eyes) Okay.

CLAIRE

Ok so then you grab a straw and enjoy.

WAYNE

What if I want to like suck it down in big gulps?

CLAIRE

No, sip it. In sips.

WAYNE

Why?

CLAIRE

‘Cause it’s better that way.

WAYNE

Oh really.

CLAIRE

Uh huh. In little bits.

Like life.

WAYNE

What?

CLAIRE  
Or whatever.

WAYNE  
Yeah.

CLAIRE  
Just—try to focus.

WAYNE  
On this particular thing?

CLAIRE  
On this particular thing.

WAYNE  
Or—?

CLAIRE  
Or you'll get lost. I'll have to train you like twice.

WAYNE  
We wouldn't want that.

CLAIRE  
No.

WAYNE  
I promise to learn.

CLAIRE  
Do you.

WAYNE  
Yeah, teach me, teach me!  
I'm dying to learn something with real-life application!

CLAIRE  
Okay. Last thing is—

WAYNE  
Last thing? Or the last part of the first thing you'll teach me?

CLAIRE  
Oh my God. Yeah so the last part of the first thing I'll teach you/

WAYNE  
/Is—?

CLAIRE  
Is—are you listening?

WAYNE  
Swear.

CLAIRE  
Clean out the Slurpee machine in between every use.

WAYNE  
Every one?

CLAIRE  
Yes.

WAYNE  
Got it. Mundane, useless facts duly noted.

CLAIRE  
You know—

WAYNE  
Mmm?

CLAIRE  
You don't know everything.

WAYNE  
No?

CLAIRE  
And you could learn something really important in the least expected place.

WAYNE  
Yeah?

CLAIRE  
Yeah. That's the truth.

**END PLAY**

