

Portland  
by  
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*Scene 1.*

*A sparse studio apartment: a bed, a record player, a window. In the distance, rain falling, but no thunder. ED and LI, both 20 years old.*

ED

So this is the room.

LI

Yes, this is it.

ED

You say it always rains like this?

LI

Just about every day.

ED

You sure don't have much in the way of furniture.

LI

That's what I said. There was plenty of room for you.

ED

And that's your bed.

LI

Yes.

ED

And that's my bed, over there.

LI

Mmm-hmm.

ED

Or, that's where my bed will go. I have to fill it first. It's inflatable.

LI

Over there will be good, yes.

*(Pause)*

ED

You didn't have to invite me to live here. There are plenty of places for me to go. I don't have to be anywhere. That means I have an innumerable amount of places I could be. I have a little over a thousand dollars, which is more than enough to settle yourself just about anywhere in the country. Almost anywhere. I have a car which runs relatively well.

LI  
It can't make right turns.

ED  
At the moment, no. But all that means is that it'll take a little bit longer to get anywhere to the right. Four left turns, to be exact. Aside from that, I'm completely free. I have an entire system of highways at my disposal, which can connect me to any place in the country I choose.

(Pause)

This arrangement could be seen as rather unorthodox. Other people would see this as rather odd, don't you think?

LI  
I really don't care about other people.

ED  
Neither do I, neither do I. (Beat) I just want to be sure that you understand. It could be an uncomfortable arrangement for you.

LI  
It could be. But it doesn't have to be.

ED  
(Beat)  
So it rains like this every day?

LI  
Nearly every day.

*Fade out on rain sounds, end of scene.*

*Scene 2.*

*Fade up on sound of crickets. Night. ED is awake, in an inflatable bed on the floor. LI is sleeping alone in her bed.*

ED  
(Whispering)  
How different it is here. The rain. I can see a mountain outside my window. Mount St. Helens. It once erupted, when I was a child. I remember the pictures. It wasn't the explosion that killed so many, but the dust and the ash in the air. (Beat) She's asleep, over there. Just a few feet from me. I'm in my bed, over here. An inflatable bed. I filled it with a hair-dryer. It took almost an hour to fill it properly.

(Pause)

(MORE)

ED (cont'd)

Not long ago, I would be in bed with her.

(Pause)

How rigid she would make me. I would make her soft, and then rigid, for a moment or two. And then she would be soft again, and would fall asleep. (Beat) Sometimes I would stay rigid, for hours, awake at night, while she slept. Hard as a stone; you could've hung a flag on me.

(Pause)

I'm watching her now, as she sleeps.

*Fade out sound of crickets. End of scene.*

*Scene 3.*

*Fade-up on slight sound of muzak. A Hotel lobby, which need only be signified by a desk with a bell on it. ED approaches the desk, he hesitates, then rings it twice. Pause. He rings it again, two more times. The MANAGER appears.*

MANAGER

Can I help you?

ED

I'd like to inquire about the position of room service waiter.

MANAGER

Oh, yes. Well, we would like to have you fill out these application forms here, and a resume, two forms of identification and proof of...

ED

I can start Monday.

MANAGER

What's that?

ED

I said I can start Monday.

MANAGER

(After a pause:)

Um, alright. See you Monday then. Six-thirty a.m..

ED

Great.

*Fade-out muzak.*

*Scene 4.*

*LI's apartment. Fade-up sound of rain in the distance, then of a door opening, rain becomes louder, then is shut out again as the door closes.*

ED  
I got a job today. You're now looking at a room-service waiter.

LI  
That didn't take long.

ED  
No. In fact it was the shortest interview of my entire life.

LI  
That's great.

ED  
You weren't lying about the rain, where you?

LI  
No, I wasn't.

ED  
Did you sleep well last night?

LI  
Just fine. And you?

ED  
Just fine. Well, I did have some trouble falling asleep.

LI  
You did?

ED  
Yes. I think my bed's losing air.

LI  
Really.

ED  
I'm not for certain, but I think there's a leak somewhere.

LI  
That's too bad.

ED  
Yeah. Too bad.

*Fade-out sound of rain. End of scene.*

*Scene 5.*

*Restaurant kitchen, which can be established by a spotlight and the very busy sounds of plates clinking, fryers sizzling, random food orders being barked.*

ED

Where are my eggs? Has anyone seen my eggs? There was a side of bacon. Did anyone see my eggs?

(To himself:)

Or the pancakes.

(To others:)

I had a plate of pancakes. Short stack. Anyone? Hello?

*The COOK, a large man in a tall white hat, has been watching ED, finally:*

COOK

What are you doing here, blocking everybody's way like that?

ED

I have three orders that have completely disappeared. I'm backed-up nearly seven orders. The phone's ringing off the hook.

COOK

Where are you putting your orders?

ED

On the carousel.

COOK

The carousel?

ED

Yes, on the carousel.

COOK

Well, that's your first mistake. No one back here pays any mind to that thing. You have an order, you give it to me.

ED

Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't know.

COOK

What did you say?

ED  
I said I was sorry.

COOK  
Are you a sorry person?

ED  
Well, no.

COOK  
Then why do you say that you're sorry?

ED  
It's just a manner of...

COOK  
You shouldn't denigrate yourself like that. Don't ever say that you're sorry.

ED  
I apologize, then.

COOK  
No. You don't apologize. (Pause) Do you have any pride in yourself?

ED  
Sure, sure I do.

COOK  
You don't seem to be someone who has much pride in himself. That's the impression I get. I've seen you around here, working. You don't give me that impression at all. You should stop denigrating yourself. You understand?

ED  
I guess.

COOK  
You guess?

ED  
No, I mean, I understand.

COOK  
That's good. Now give me those orders. And stop blocking my kitchen. Move on.

ED  
Thank you.

*Fade-out kitchen sounds. End of scene.*

*Scene 6.*

*LI's apartment. Fade-in a dense thunderstorm, which can be heard from outside.*

ED

Hello.

LI

(Terse:)

Hello.

ED

How were classes?

LI

Classes were fine.

ED

What did you learn about today?

LI

Mushrooms. We're looking at fungus through the microscope. Analyzing.

ED

You're angry.

LI

That's right.

ED

At me?

LI

No.

ED

You were on the phone.

LI

Yes.

ED

You were talking to Lloyd.

LI

Yes.

ED

How is he?

LI  
Fine. He's doing fine.

ED  
But you're angry with him.

LI  
Yes. Very.

ED  
Why?

LI  
It's very hard. He's in California, I'm here. It's a hard thing to negotiate.

ED  
It's funny that I'm here with you, and he's in California.

LI  
I don't think it's very funny.

ED  
I don't mean it's funny, in the way that would make you laugh. I mean it's curious. It's odd. (Beat) Is he angry that I'm sharing the same room with you?

LI  
No. He completely trusts you. You're a completely trustworthy person.

ED  
I am?

LI  
Yes. That's not even a question.  
(Pause)

ED  
I guess of the three of us, I was the trustworthy one.

LI  
Yes. (Beat) You were. (Beat) But you somehow made it a vice.

ED  
I did.

LI  
Yes, you did.

ED

I didn't know that.

*Fade-out thunder. End of scene.*

*Scene 7.*

*A knock on a door. ED enters a HOTEL room, which can be signified by LI's bed.*

ED

Hello? Room service. Hello? I've got your breakfast. Is anyone here?

CLAIRE

(singsong)

I'm in the bathroom.

ED

I'll put it on the table, next to the bed.

CLAIRE

That's fine.

ED

I'll need you to sign.

*CLAIRE, a woman in her mid-thirties, enters wearing a bathrobe.*

CLAIRE

That was quick. You're getting much quicker.

ED

I'm new. I think I'm just starting to get the hang of it.

CLAIRE

I'm starting to get used to seeing your face in the morning.

ED

Yeah, well...

CLAIRE

Nothing like a nice shower to start off your day.

ED

No. There isn't.

CLAIRE

Nice shower and then breakfast.

ED  
I'll need you to sign.

CLAIRE  
Can't you sit and chat with me?

ED  
No, I really can't.

CLAIRE  
Well, why not? Just for a minute.

ED  
I've really got a lot of orders.

CLAIRE  
Are you afraid of me?

ED  
No.

CLAIRE  
Why don't you sit here, and chat with me for a while.  
Take a break.

ED  
On the bed?

CLAIRE  
Yes. Take a load off. You run around too much.

ED  
I really shouldn't.

CLAIRE  
You're afraid of me, aren't you?

ED  
Afraid?

CLAIRE  
You're afraid I'll take off this robe.

ED  
I am?

CLAIRE  
Yes, you're afraid I'll take off this robe and bite  
you.

*End of scene.*

*Scene 8.*

*LI's apartment. LI is on her bed reading a textbook. ED is staring out the window.*

ED

It's not raining.

LI

Nope.

ED

I think this is the first day it hasn't rained since I've been here.

LI

I think you're right.

ED

It's quiet. And clean. It's very clean here. From the rain. Keeps all the trash from forming.

LI

Yes.

ED

What are you reading?

LI

I'm reading about the Big Sur area in California.

ED

Big Sur?

LI

Yes, how it's very arid there. Dry and mountainous. No one around for miles.

ED

Desolate.

LI

Yes.

ED

So you're done with mushrooms.

LI

Yep. On to Big Sur.

ED

(Pause)

This woman tried to seduce me today.



ED I don't know. I never considered it, really.

LI That's not surprising.

ED It isn't?

LI You've always been strange that way.

ED I have?

LI Yes. You've always been strange that way.

(Pause)

ED You know, I was thinking. How it's funny that we sleep together now, but we don't sleep together.

LI What do you mean?

ED We're in the same room, sleeping. But we're not in the same bed.

LI

(Beat)

But we never really slept together, did we?

ED We didn't?

LI No. I mean, we never had...intercourse.

ED No. We didn't ever. That's right.

LI We did everything but.

ED Yes, we did, didn't we?

LI That was both our decision, at the time.

ED

It was mutual, yes.

LI

I liked that we didn't. I think it made everything more intense, somehow. More pure. I liked that you were always so evasive.

ED

Evasive?

LI

Yes. I've never been with anyone like you. You were always a bit reluctant, most of the time.

ED

Reluctant?

LI

Yes. Gentle. Like it was so new. It turned me on. That newness that I sensed in you.

ED

You liked that?

LI

Very much so.

*Sound of rain beginning to fall, rather rapidly.*

ED

It's coming down again. Look at it come down. In sheets. In buckets, really. Look at it come down.

*Increase the volume of rain-storm, then slowly fade-out. End of scene.*

*Scene 9.*

*Fade-in crickets. LI, asleep in her bed. ED, upright in his inflatable bed.*

ED

(Whispering)

There is definitely a leak in my bed. A slight leak of air. I cannot find the leak, it's too slight. The bed no longer supports my weight. It now barely meets the requirements and specifications necessary to be considered a bed. It's now more like a drooping bladder. A collapsed lung. Though it's a ridiculous thing, really no longer a bed as such; I continue to sleep on it.

(Pause)

Haven't been sleeping too well, though I am always completely exhausted. I work at least ten hours a day. Usually more. In the afternoons I go to the cineplex and watch movies. Luckily, it requires two left turns to get there, and two left turns to get back. I just walk into whatever movie happens to be playing. They are always changing, and they are all basically the same. I don't spend very much money, on the whole, since they are matinees. The matinees are cheaper. I have a jar of money. Of dollar bills, tens, twenties. A tip jar. It is bulging. I don't spend very much money.

(Pause)

The window is open, and the smell of gasoline seeps in through the window. There is a gas station down the street, and a huge truck is filling the thick pipes with gasoline.

(Beat)

She is sleeping very soundly. I am watching her.

*Fade-out crickets. End of scene.*

*Scene 10.*

*Sounds of kitchen, as before.*

ED

I've got a special order: she wants the eggs a bit runny, if you would. Got that?

COOK

Loud and clear.

ED

What do you call those?

ED

(Yelling:)

Thank you!

COOK

(Yelling back:)

You're the captain!

ED

What?

MANAGER

On your feet. What are those shoes?

ED

I don't understand?

MANAGER

Those are not the right shoes.

ED

For what?

MANAGER

For the job. You're wearing sneakers. I've told you, you need a pair of brown or black dress shoes for this job.

ED

When am I supposed to be buying these shoes?

MANAGER

Sorry?

ED

At what point in the day am I supposed to be gallivanting around shoe stores, on a quest for brown or black shoes?

MANAGER

I'm not sure I...

ED

I've worked here for five straight weeks now, without a day off. Ten, usually twelve hours a day. I work down here, alone, taking care of nearly one-hundred rooms...I come home I eat and I fall asleep. That's all I have energy for. I don't get it. When am I supposed to be shopping for brown and black shoes?

MANAGER

I...I don't know?

ED

Neither do I.

*Fade-out kitchen sounds. End of scene.*

*Scene 11.*

*LI's apartment. She sits alone by her record player, which is playing, crackling, atmospheric, Asian-influenced music. ED, behind her.*

LI

It's the working man.

ED

Yes.

LI

Did you bring home the bacon?

ED

I did, as a matter of fact.

LI

Long day?

ED

Yes.

(Beat)

You picked up some records.

LI

Yeah. Records are cheaper. CD's have no character. Records sound more honest to me, somehow.

ED

What is this music?

LI

I don't know.

ED

It's odd.

LI

I liked the picture on the cover. I don't know anything about music. So I pick them by the art work.

ED

Is that how you buy your books?

LI

How?

ED

By their covers?

(Pause)

LI

Do you ever think about what happened?

ED

When?

LI Between Lloyd and I.

ED Sometimes.

LI Does it anger you?

ED Not anymore.

LI We didn't treat you very well, did we?

ED I guess not.

LI What do you think of Lloyd?

ED I don't much, really.

LI He misses you.

ED Oh?

LI He misses being your friend. He often tells me that.

ED Oh.

LI Do you miss me?

ED I have, yes.

LI When?

ED There have been times...

LI Since you've moved here?

ED  
No. I think it's all settled by now.

LI  
It is?

ED  
Yes. There was a time, a rather long time, when I was in a lot of pain over the whole thing. I felt betrayed. I suffered insomnia. I would pace, and smoke like a chimney.

LI  
This was in Chicago.

ED  
Yes, Chicago.

LI  
Are you lonely?

ED  
What do you mean?

LI  
That's not a difficult question. Are you lonesome?

ED  
I suppose I am. But I'm used to it by now, aren't I?

LI  
I wouldn't know.

ED  
I would say I quite enjoy being alone. It affords me the space and time to think. I get a lot of thinking done these days. In Chicago, I was too much in pain to think. Now, I've come to terms with things, the way things are. And I can think again.

LI  
What do you think about?

ED  
A lot of things. There's a lot to think about, isn't there?

LI  
I suppose there is.

ED  
Any number of things. Sorting. I'm sorting things out. Putting things in their place. If you let things go,  
(MORE)

ED (cont'd)  
the way I have, you find that there are a lot of loose thoughts flying about your head, that need to be put in order.

*End of scene.*

*Scene 12.*

*The Kitchen. ED is running with a tray of food. The MANAGER, with TIFFANY, a young woman, try to stop him.*

MANAGER  
There you are. Wait a sec, will you? Hold on there.

ED  
Who, me?

MANAGER  
Yes. You're a hard one to track down. Always moving about.

ED  
That's what I'm paid to do, right?

MANAGER  
No, it's good. You're a hard worker. I realize that.  
(Pause)  
I thought about what you said the other day. So I want you to meet Tiffany. She's new. I hired her to help you.

TIFFANY  
Hello. Nice to meet you.

ED  
Yes, nice to meet you.

MANAGER  
I want you to train her today, just have her follow you around. Maybe take a couple of orders once she's used to it. Then take a few days off, alright? How does that sound?

ED  
Sounds fine.

MANAGER  
No problem. And don't forget to buy those shoes.

ED  
Right, shoes.

(Pause)

TIFFANY  
So where do we start?

ED  
It's simple, really. People call. You write down the order on these slips. Give it to the cook. You total up the order and add tax and gratuities. Fifteen percent. You pick up the order over there. You run the order to people's rooms. Run back. Start the whole thing over. Basically run yourself ragged. How does that sound?

TIFFANY  
It sounds dreadful.

ED  
You know why?

TIFFANY  
No.

ED  
Because, for the most part, it is, dreadful.

*TIFFANY laughs, ED smiles. Fade out kitchen sounds. End of scene.*

*Scene 13.*

*A knock on the door. Another hotel room, using LI's bed, as before. OLD MAN in bed with YOUNG WOMAN, both are barely dressed.*

ED  
Room service!

OLD MAN  
Come in.

ED  
Hello.

OLD MAN  
Don't be shy, come in, come in.

YOUNG WOMAN  
Hiya!

ED  
Hello. Would you like me to open the wine for you?

OLD MAN  
Unless you want to see me use my butt-cheeks. But that wouldn't be a pretty sight.

YOUNG WOMAN  
Now you leave him alone. He's just messing with you.

ED  
I'll open it, then.  
*(Slight pause)*

OLD MAN  
What's your problem, son?

ED  
Pardon?

OLD MAN  
You got a problem with me?

ED  
Uh, no sir, I don't.

YOUNG WOMAN  
He's pulling your leg.

OLD MAN  
You got a problem with an old coot like me, in a hotel room with a young, beautiful woman, don't you?

ED  
No, no, not at all.

OLD MAN  
You find it disgusting, don't you?

ED  
Really, I don't.

OLD MAN  
You're thinking it's perverted. Why she's less than half my age!  
*(Beat)*  
You probably think I paid for her, don't you?

ED  
Uh, not, no...

OLD MAN

Tell this young man, did I pay for you? Be honest, now...

YOUNG WOMAN

(Giggling)

No, he didn't pay for me.

OLD MAN

That's right. You wanna know why she's here? Why this beautiful young thang is in a hotel room, drinking fine wine with an old, wrinkly fart like me? Well, son, I'll give it to ya straight. The answer is very easy. (Beat) Cause' I know what I'm doing. I've been around the block a few dozen times, and I know how to please a woman. Plain and simple. And I never, ever, had a problem getting an erection. Never. Always rock solid hard, like concrete. At will. My ding-a-ling's like a trained dog. the damn thing can jump through hoops, or break a board in half.

(Pause)

You think I'm shittin' you, don't you? I'm telling you, I should join the circus with the ding-dong I've got.

(Beat)

It's a crazy life, my friend. And I'm a crazy son-of-a-bitch. You got a problem with that, partner?

*YOUNG WOMAN is laughing hysterically.*

ED

Not in the least.

*ED pops open the champagne.*

YOUNG WOMAN

You're terrible, you're just terrible...

*End of scene.*

*Scene 14.*

*LI's room. Fade-up sound of rain coming down, very hard, against the window. LI is trying to get the window shut. ED watches.*

ED

What are you doing?

LI

I left the damned window open.

ED  
Need some help?

LI  
No thanks, I'm just about done. What are you doing home so early?

ED  
I have the day off.

LI  
Really? How'd you manage that?

ED  
They hired someone to help me. She's there alone.

LI  
Good for you.  
(Beat)  
So, what's this woman like?

ED  
She's very nice. Grew up on a reservation.

LI  
Really?

ED  
Sounded terrible. Like living in a cage, the way she described it.

LI  
That is terrible.

ED  
Yes. Barbed wire everywhere, just like a cage.

LI  
Do you like her?

ED  
Yes. She's very easy to work with. Except she complains about her back a lot.

LI  
Her back?

ED  
Yes, her back is often, if not always, in pain.

LI  
That's strange.

*LI continues to re-arrange her records. Pause.*

ED

Li?

LI

Yes?

*(Beat)*

ED

Li, when did you know?

LI

*(Absently, still sorting)*  
When did I know what?

ED

When did you know you were in love with Lloyd?

LI

*(She stops. Looks up at him:)*  
I...I don't know. That's a complicated question.

ED

But there must've been a point. A time when you knew.

LI

You think it happened in a moment? Like that?

ED

No. But there must've been a time when you made your decision.

LI

I remember a night. All three of us were in a car...  
Are you sure you want me to...

ED

Yes. I want to know.

LI

It's...it's kind of...well, I think it will be painful...

ED

No. I can take it. I want to know. I do.

LI

We...all three of us. We were in a car. Lloyd was driving. You were sitting next to him...I was in the back seat, alone. I can't remember where we were going. But you were reaching back, holding my hand. The road

(MORE)

LI (cont'd)  
was dark, all there was to see were the yellow stripes,  
and two brown eyes. In the rear-view.

ED  
Lloyds.

LI  
Yes. The rest was black. You were holding my hand, and  
Lloyd was talking.

ED  
What were we talking about?

LI  
I don't know. I wasn't listening. You see...I decided  
to put your hand between my legs. I pressed your hand  
up against me. I don't know what came over me. I guess  
I was feeling playful. But you began to move your hand,  
nicely. Upwards, downwards, in circles.

ED  
(A terse smile) I remember.

LI  
For a long time your hand was there.

ED  
Yes.

LI  
And at first...at first, I did it because it felt,  
what? Naughty, I guess. Like we were getting away with  
something. It was fun because it was inappropriate. It  
felt good. There was the soft hum of the engine, and it  
felt like we were floating through nothingness. But at  
some point, somewhere in all that...your hand  
disappeared. I mean, your hand was actually still  
there, but it wasn't your hand any more. It  
became...disembodied. I began to imagine other people's  
hands in the place of yours. I imagined Lloyd's hand. I  
saw his eyes, in the rear-view. Just two eyes, as deep  
as night, only brown. I stopped imagining, and started  
to long. Or, rather, I realized I had been longing  
before this, but just never faced it. And he noticed,  
he saw the way I was looking at him. And I knew, just  
by his eyes, that he was having, and had, the same  
feelings as I.

(Pause)

ED

Did you imagine me vanishing along with my hand?

LI

(Re-entering the moment)

No. No, Ed. I never wanted you to vanish. You see...that's...that's what made all of this so difficult. I never, never, throughout all of this, wanted you to go. But I had to make a choice. I didn't want to have to make it, but it was only fair. You see? I had to make a choice.

ED

So you chose Lloyd.

LI

Yes. I chose Lloyd.

*Fade-out sound of rain. End of scene.*

*Scene 15.*

*Fade-in sound of crickets. Night. LI is asleep in her bed. ED is awake in his inflatable bed.*

ED

(Whispering)

The rain is beginning to get a bit thick. It is infringing on my thought processes. Maybe I should consider ear-plugs. The problem with ear-plugs is that the silence then becomes too loud. It is suffocating, worse really, than any noise you may have to contend with.

(Pause)

I've had two days off in a row, and I find that I now have an excess of energy. Sleep, is out of the question.

(Beat)

I have, though, managed to purchase a pair of brown leather dress shoes.

(Pause)

Went to the cineplex today, and realized I have seen every movie there.

(Beat)

My bed is now completely out of air. It has become something of a farce. Why I sleep on it still, is beyond me. For some reason, I insist on sleeping what has become a mere outline, the sorry, flaccid, remnants of what was once a bed. Stubbornness, I would guess.

*(Pause)*

She is, as usual, fast asleep.

*(Pause)*

I have become something of a machine. I am powered by rain, by gratuities, by mere inertia. Self-contained. Autonomous and automatic. I have no need for the cineplex, for movies, for days off, for her or her bed. The hardwood floors are good for one's back. I can feel my spine slowly edging itself back into re-alignment.

*Fade-out on crickets. End of scene.)*

*Scene 16.*

*ED knocks at the door of another hotel room, as before. An aged LAWYER is reading a book.*

ED

Room service.

LAWYER

Come in.

ED

Here you are, sir.

LAWYER

That was fast.

ED

Well, we've got it down to a science by now.

LAWYER

Well, I appreciate such efficient and friendly service.

ED

Well, I'm glad you do.

LAWYER

*(He looks ED over, considers him for a moment, then:)*

How would you like to make a little wager?

ED

A wager?

LAWYER

Yes. I'll ask you a question. If you get it right, I'll double your tip. Whaddya say?

ED

Oh, I don't know.

LAWYER

What have you got to lose?

ED

Nothing, I guess...

LAWYER

That's right. You got nothing to lose, and everything to gain.

ED

What's the question?

LAWYER

Well, you see, I'm a lawyer. So the question is related to law. You know much about law?

ED

No, I'm afraid not.

LAWYER

How about history? You know much about history?

ED

No. Not much.

LAWYER

Well, I'll have to say, I don't think the odds are looking very much in your favor, son. What do you know about?

ED

The rain. It's something you get to know real well in this area.

LAWYER

I see. Well, I'm afraid this question has nothing to do whatsoever with the rain. Here it goes. You ready?

ED

Yes.

LAWYER

Who was the greatest lawyer that ever lived?

ED

Uh, the greatest?

LAWYER

Yes. "Who was the greatest lawyer that ever lived?"

ED

So, we're talking someone from Ancient Greece, or Rome, right?

LAWYER

Well, you're kind of warm.

ED

Like Plato, or Aristotle? Did they practice law?

LAWYER

No, I think you're on the wrong track.

ED

Well then, I really couldn't tell you.

LAWYER

You give up.

ED

Yes. I'm afraid I have to give up.

LAWYER

(A beat:)

Jesus Christ.

ED

What?

LAWYER

Jesus Christ was the greatest lawyer that ever lived. Now, I'll bet that you'll want me to substantiate that statement? Is that right?

ED

I suppose...

LAWYER

Here, in Matthew 19, verse 21 it so sayeth that "Jesus was a counselor unto his people." You know what a counselor is?

ED

A synonym for lawyer.

LAWYER

That is exactly right, my son! You are one bright young man! Now, if Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was a counselor, which, as you said yourself, is the equivalent of a lawyer, then therefore, he must have

(MORE)

LAWYER (cont'd)  
been the greatest lawyer that ever lived. Do you see what I'm saying son?

ED  
I think so.

LAWYER  
Do you believe in God?

ED  
I don't know.

LAWYER  
Do you believe that God sent Jesus, the son of man, to die on the cross at Calvary, so that we may have life everlasting?

ED  
I'm not sure, really.

LAWYER  
Son, I'm about to give you some advice, advice that will be worth more to you than any tip that you could ever receive, worth more to you than all the riches in the world! I'm going to show you how to attain eternal life! Now I want you to get on your knees, right here, right now, and I want you to denounce Satan and all his demons. I want you to kneel down humbly before your Maker, and to admit your sins to him, so that the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ may enter your heart and save your stained and damned soul! Do you hear what I'm saying boy?

*End of scene.*

*Scene 16.*

*LI's apartment. Fade-up on sound of rain pouring through an open window. LI is sitting at the window. ED watches.*

ED  
What are you doing?

LI  
I'm feeling the rain on my face. It's nice. Come sit with me.

ED  
(After a bit:)  
You're all wet.

LI  
It's warm today. It feels very nice. Come here, you'll see.  
(Pause)  
Anything particularly exciting happen at work today?

ED  
Well, let's see.  
(Beat)  
I gave my life to Jesus Christ.

LI  
Again?

ED  
I did it for the sake of this man, a customer. It meant nothing.

LI  
You used to really religious, before I met you, weren't you?

ED  
Yeah. But that's why I did it. I understood what that man was going through. I knew what it meant to him. It was less embarrassing to do it, than to walk out on him.

LI  
What happened? Why don't you believe in it anymore?

ED  
I was very serious about it. I was just fourteen, fifteen years old. That's a devout time, I think. My parents thought I was going to become a minister, that's how serious I was. But I just lost touch. I never could give myself entirely to it. There was this small part of me, a seed of doubt. It just took root, I guess. Grew out of proportion.  
  
(A brief pause:)

LI  
So here you are now.

ED  
Here I am.  
  
(Brief pause:)

ED  
I found out why Tiffany's back is always hurting.

LI  
Oh yes? Why?

ED  
She just had a baby.

LI  
Really? A baby?

ED  
Yes. She had to give it up, for adoption.

LI  
That must be hard for her.

ED  
Yeah. She told me there isn't a day that goes by when she doesn't think about her baby.

LI  
That's sad.

ED  
Now someone else is feeding her baby. Someone else is holding it. Rearing it. Someone strange. With different blood. And every time her back hurts, she thinks of that child. Of someone else with that child. Loving it.

LI  
I can't imagine...

ED  
How would you raise a child? I couldn't do it. How can someone choose for someone else, what is right and what is wrong? How would you know which behaviors to reward and which to punish? How would one know? How could one distinguish? It's not like a dog, where if it pees on the rug, or barks at a thief, you can clearly make the distinction. But a human life? I can barely make those decisions for myself. How could one be so arrogant, to think they could know for certain, what is right and what is wrong?

(Pause)

LI  
Look at you. Now you're all wet.

ED  
The rain is on you, and on me.

LI  
We're both wet.

ED  
The rain is on both of us.

*Fade-out on the rain. End of scene.*

*Scene 17.*

*Kitchen sounds, as before.*

TIFFANY  
I'm really getting the hang of it now.

ED  
How's your back?

TIFFANY  
It's getting better. I can actually lift things again.

ED  
That's good.

TIFFANY  
The job isn't so bad, once you get into the rhythm of things.

ED  
That's what happens. It goes kind of automatically.

TIFFANY  
That's right.

ED  
Oh, by the way, you left a bunch of trays on the forth floor. I picked them up for you.

TIFFANY  
God, I'm sorry.

ED  
Don't be. I mean, don't say that. That you're sorry. You're not a sorry person. So don't be sorry.

TIFFANY  
I'm always apologizing to my boyfriend.

ED  
Well, you shouldn't. You shouldn't denigrate yourself to anyone. You're a strong person. You have no reason to apologize for anything.

*Fade-out on kitchen noises. End of scene.*

*Scene 18.*

*Fade-up on crickets. Night. LI is asleep in bed, ED, is awake.*

ED

(Whispering)

Saw a movie today at the cineplex. Fantasia. Couldn't enjoy or concentrate at all on the movie. There were two dozen children running about, screaming, tearing up the aisles. The parents did nothing to keep them in there seats. My blood was boiling. I sat in my seat with nothing but pure hatred for every child in that cinema.

(Pause)

The last scene of the movie is a vision of the end of the world. A small village is consumed by flames, the four horsemen of the apocalypse spreading death, famine, and disease. A towering Demon crushing tiny, thatch-roofed houses. Every child in the theater simultaneously became filled with horror. Most began to cry, others hid underneath their seats. a couple of parents quickly dragged their kids out of the cinema. My first reaction was to laugh, because it felt like some kind of justice was being served. But quickly, that feeling of satisfaction began to subside, as I started to notice the very real fear in those children's screams. To them, it was the end of the world. I became at once, both sympathetic, and envious of their horror. I was envious of their unwavering belief in the devil, and conversely, of Angels. God. Hell. Heaven. Such simplicity. Such faith, unlike that of the holiest men. The faith of Saints. they had more than rain, gratuities, brown leather shoes, beds. They had more.

*Fade-out sounds of crickets. End of scene.)*

*Scene 18.*

*LI's apartment. The next day. LI looks up from her book to see ED.*

LI

What are you doing here?

ED

Tiffany's got it under control. They don't need me for the rest of the day.



ED  
You've had enough?

LI  
Yes! I'm sorry!

ED  
For what?

LI  
For whatever it was I did! AHHHH!

ED  
Hmm...

LI  
Noooo!!!!

ED  
You love it, admit it.

LI  
No! Stop! I don't!

ED  
Admit it!

LI  
OKAY, OKAY! I admit it!

ED  
You love it?

LI  
(Sarchastic:)  
Yes, I love it, it's wonderful...please!

ED  
You like my hands on you...

LI  
Yes.  
  
(Pause)

ED  
You do? You like my hands on you?

LI  
(After a bit, earnest:)  
Yes.  
  
(He kisses her. Pause:)



LI

Can't.

*(Pause)*

LI

How do you sleep in that bed? There's no air in it anymore.

ED

I guess I got used to it.

*(Pause)*

LI

That must be uncomfortable. Why don't you sleep here?

ED

Over there?

LI

Yes. There's plenty of room. It's warm.

ED

Um...alright.

LI

How's that?

ED

It's nice. Warm.

*(Pause)*

LI

It's nice to be held by you again. I feel warm. Safe.

ED

*(Beat)*

I'm quitting my job. I'm going to leave tomorrow.

LI

Where are you going?

ED

I'm not sure. I think it's just the same.

LI

You know, you don't have to. If you don't want.

ED

I think it's best. I do.

*(Long pause)*

LI

We should probably get some sleep then.

ED

Yeah, probably.

*Cricket*s become louder, then fade. End of scene.

*Scene20.*

*ED in his car, signified by a chair. Sound of rain against windshield wipers, that squeak as they move back and forth.*

ED

I decided to drive East. To Rhode Island, I think. Rhode Island is practically the farthest point from Portland you can get. It's rainy there, but it's a different kind of rain. I have several jars full of money. Not even sure how much I have. I spent some of it on repairing my car. It now turns all the way left and all the way to the right. I have regained the full scale of directional options. I have resigned myself to sleep in beds, real ones, from this point on. I have resigned myself to sleep soundly, all through the night.

*Sound of motor, rain, windshield-wipers fade. End of play.*

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