

# **TEN MINUTES FROM CLEVELAND**

A Collection of 10 Ten-Minute Plays

by

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**TEN MINUTES FROM CLEVELAND**

**Place:**  
Cleveland, Ohio.

**Time:**  
April, 2005.  
6 A.M. to Midnight.

**Characters:**

**Detroit-Superior Bridge (a main connecting thoroughfare)**

JULIA: A Jogger Who Doesn't See It.  
SCOTT: A Man Who Does.

**West Side Market (a large ethnic market)**

PETE: The Heir to the Perogies.  
MOM: The Mother of the Heir.  
DAD: The Father of the Heir.  
SHOPPERS: Hungry People With Cash.

**RTA Train (the rapid transit)**

LILA: A Woman Trying To Leave.  
ANTHONY: A Man Trying to Arrive.

**Legacy Village (an upscale mall)**

LUCILLE: A Woman Who Has Shopped A Lot.  
DESMOND: A Man Who Has Stopped Shopping.  
ANNIE: A Woman Who Has Stopped Shopping.  
MARTINIQUE: Another Woman Who Has Stopped Shopping.  
MAN IN A SUIT: A Man Who Hasn't Even Started Shopping.

**Cleveland Clinic (a hospital)**

DASIA: A Doctor Trying to Make It Better.  
SORE THROAT WOMAN: A Patient With Too Many Symptoms.  
FRANK: A Nurse Trying to Juggle.  
CHOLESTEROL MAN: A Patient With Too Little Time.  
COUGHING MAN: A Patient With Too Much Phlegm.  
MS. ROBERTS: A Woman With Solutions.

**Tremont (a neighborhood in transition)**

DOUG: A Transplant.  
CHUCK: A Native.  
KATHY: A Transplant.

**Jacobs Field (a baseball field)**

JIM: Baseball Expert.  
ALBERTA: Baseball Machine.  
SANDY: Baseball Hater.  
CARLOS: Baseball Enthusiast.  
ROBBIE: Baseball Novice.  
KENNY: Baseball Drunken Idiot.

**Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame (a tourist trap)**

HERBERT: A Man With A Dream.  
DELLA: A Woman Who Used To Have A Reality.  
MFUNE: A Man On A Mission.  
DIANA: A Woman With A Dream And A Book Of Matches.

**Lakeview Cemetery (a graveyard)**

JAQUELINE: An Older Woman Who Wants to Remember.  
VANCE: A Young Man Who Wants to Be Remembered.

**The Flats (a nightclub district)**

SHANEEQUA: A Teller for Key Bank.  
ROSIE: A Relationship Manager for Key Bank.  
DEMETRIUS: An I/T Guy for Key Bank.  
ERNIE: A Relationship Manager for Key Bank.  
BETTY: A Project Supervisor for Key Bank.  
MR. OBERKIN: A Senior Executive for Key Bank.

"TEN MINUTES FROM CLEVELAND" premiered April 15, 2005 at Dobama Theatre (Joyce Casey, Artistic Director). The director was Eric Schmiedl; Scenic Design by Todd Krispinsky; Sound Design by Richard Ingraham; Costumes designed by Kimberly Castle; Lights designed by Andrew Kaletta.

**CAST:**

Kimberly Brown..Julia, Martinique, Dasia, Kathy, Robbie, Shaneequa  
Sadie Grossman..Lila, Annie, Sore Throat, Sandy, Diana, Rosie  
Nick Koesters..Pete, Desmond, Coughing, Doug, Kenny, Vance, Oberkin  
Marc Moritz..Scott, Dad, Frank, Chuck, Jim, Herbert, Ernie  
Jimmie Woody..Anthony, Cholesterol, Carlos, Mfune, Demetrius  
Nan Wray..Mom, Lucille, Roberts, Alberta, Della, Jaqueline, Betty

**DETROIT-SUPERIOR BRIDGE**

**6:10 A.M.**

Lights come up on a man, SCOTT, climbing up a girder -- trying to get a better view under the bridge. He clammers awkwardly for several moments, jotting notes in his notebook.

Then we hear gasping -- wild huffing and puffing... a voice from the distance... it's a jogger, JULIA, wearing a headset and i-pod, running onstage

She stops, heaving, trying to catch her breath. Scott watches her. She eventually looks around. Notices her surroundings -- the sunlight -- the view...

SCOTT

Beautiful, isn't it?

JULIA

(Jumps, turns to see him up on the girder)

Oh my god! -what are you doing?? What are you doing??  
Get off of there!

SCOTT

I wouldn't run across this bridge if I were you.

JULIA

(Rips off her earphones)

Whatever it is, it's not that bad, there's no reason to jump, it's a beautiful day, how can you jump on a beautiful day??

SCOTT

I wasn't jumping.

JULIA

It's April! We got sun! Look at the sun, it's gonna be 70 today, sunshine, happy, no more clouds-

SCOTT

It's Cleveland. We'll have two feet of snow by tonight.  
(He climbs off the girder)

JULIA

You really scared me. I thought -- I mean...

SCOTT

(Squints at the sun, gauges  
the temperature)

You could possibly make it across.

JULIA

What?

SCOTT

How fast can you run?

JULIA

I don't know. This is my first run. Kind of a New Year's Resolution.

(He looks at her)

I'm a little late. But it was the first really great day -  
- I was just gonna try to get over to West 25th and back.

SCOTT

Yeah, that's the problem. Okay. Here's my advice. Run right along this strip here -- this little column -- and run like your life depends on it.

JULIA

What are you talking about?

SCOTT

The Detroit-Superior Bridge is about to collapse.  
(Julia stops moving)

JULIA

What?

SCOTT

(Pointing to the ground)

You see those bolts there? Three of 'em are out -- the third fell out last Friday. And that crack running from the bolt holes to the third support beam has been widening millimeters everyday since Friday. My guess is that with the sudden warmth today, this fourth bolt -- the last bolt -- will go. And if this bolt goes, this whole concrete slab goes, it takes those perpendicular support struts out and the whole east side of the bridge goes into the river.

(Beat. Then Julia laughs and starts jogging in place)

JULIA

Right.

SCOTT

How much you want to jog over the bridge? How fast you can jog over the bridge?

(She hesitates... jogging in place)

JULIA

...That's crazy. A bridge can't collapse because of one bolt.

SCOTT

Unless it's the right bolt. Lookit.

(Pulls out a folded paper and shows her)

Lookit this. I worked out the physics. The weight of the bridge is spread between this axis and this axis with the greatest pressure down and out at these two points. If this point disappears, this point suddenly acts as a fulcrum and the metal twists here, here, and here and it's just steel, its tension index isn't anywhere near high enough. It snaps here, here, here, and here. End of bridge.

JULIA

You worked all this out?

SCOTT

I'm a physics professor at Case. Or was. Gotta keep my mind busy, you know. Unemployment's been a real bitch-

JULIA

Have you told anybody?

SCOTT

That I'm unemployed?

JULIA

About the bridge!

SCOTT

I've been writing letters and op-eds to the PD for months. Won't print a damn thing. The Free Times said they'd take a picture, but the bastards never did. And don't even get me started on Scene-

JULIA

But we gotta tell someone! We gotta block traffic -- it's Wednesday, this place is gonna be full of cars any-

SCOTT

Here comes one now.

JULIA  
Oh my god-

(Waving)  
Stop! STOP!!

SCOTT  
It won't matter.

JULIA  
NO!  
(Sound of a car passing)

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Is the bolt still there??

SCOTT  
Bolt's still there.

JULIA  
Did you feel it shake? The bridge really shook-

SCOTT  
It always shakes. Haven't you ever walked over this thing before?

JULIA  
No! Who walks over the Detroit-Superior Bridge??

SCOTT  
I've been out here every day for six months.

JULIA  
Well, that was just one car, what happens when rush hour-

SCOTT  
Lookit.  
(Shows her his paper again)  
It doesn't matter how much mass or force you have anywhere along the road. What matters is a small amount of weight straight down right... there.

(Points to a spot ahead of them)  
Like a jogger.

JULIA  
You're kidding me.

SCOTT  
It's physics.

JULIA  
Oh god. You saved my life.

SCOTT

It's physics.

JULIA

Well, I don't know physics. I work for American Greetings.

SCOTT

Oh yeah? I bought one of your cards a couple of years ago. It was one of the funny ones. It had a bear on it-

JULIA

I'm not in Creative. I'm Accounting.

SCOTT

Oh.

JULIA

I'll run home and call for help -- my apartment's right over there-

(Starts off)

You stay here and don't let anyone cross the bridge-

SCOTT

(Looking across the river)

You work on the West Side.

JULIA

Yeah, I'll be-

SCOTT

You ever hang out there?

JULIA

What? Listen, we don't have time-

SCOTT

You ever been to North Olmstead? Or Middleburg Heights? Or Linndale?

JULIA

No. Why should I?

SCOTT

Exactly. Everything you need is over here.

JULIA

...Not everything. I have friends in Ohio City. And there's a great Thai place on Lorain I want to get back to-

SCOTT

That's what I thought. Forget it.

(He stomps his foot toward the bolt)



JULIA

Oh my god! What are you doing??

SCOTT

I'm stomping.

JULIA

Ohmygod -- you're insane -- you're a terrorist!!

SCOTT

I am not. I'm a Case professor.

JULIA

This isn't some experiment -- people could get killed-

SCOTT

Hello? I waited 'til there's nobody on the bridge or under it-

JULIA

Is this like a cry for help? Hire you or you take out a bridge?

SCOTT

Oh please.

JULIA

Then what do you have against the Detroit Superior Bridge??

SCOTT

It's not me. It's you. It's nature.

JULIA

What?

SCOTT

Look around you. This is the East Side and West Side we're talking about. Have you ever seen two chunks of land trying harder to get away from each other? I mean maybe over four million years ago they were happy together, but the glaciers pretty much put an end to that, didn't they!

JULIA

What are you talking about?

SCOTT

God parting the land from the sea, Moses parting the waters, and now it's the water's turn to part us! The glaciers came barreling through two miles high, smashing down mountains, filling in valleys with the debris plowed up in their path -- you think a bridge going down is loud - - try standing next to an oncoming glacier -- the cracking of a thousand rocks, snapping of millions of trees, the

churning of the land itself, and when the sun finally melted the wall of ice, the water ripped out new valleys washing acres of ground-up boulders and sand and gravel over the scarred land and now people in Shaker Heights can't find Rocky River and people in Westlake can't pronounce Bratenahl! It's the old world from the new, the East Coast from the Midwest, it's the great divide, the GREATEST divide, and man now indulges the folly of thinking he can bridge the chasm, but earth will have none of it -- the land rebels, spitting the bolts out of our erector set spines to return the divided world to its disparate parts and I for one will shun the error of my puny race and finally, triumphantly, gloriously side with my Mother!!

(Beat. They stare at each other...)

JULIA

I should have run in the gym.

SCOTT

I tried to cross over, tried to bring them together -- "I want to live in Lakewood and drive to Case every day." But would they let me? Ha! They fired me!

JULIA

I don't think they fired you because you live in Lakewood.

SCOTT

Oh, open your eyes, Hallmark.

JULIA

American Greetings.

SCOTT

The East Side tolerates the West Side. The West Side puts up with the East Side, but you try moving the orchestra or the zoo or the museums or Memphis Kiddie Park and you'll see the two true faces of our fair city.

JULIA

Why would you move Memphis Kiddie Park?

SCOTT

In 1836 when those East and West-siders got out their knives and pitchforks and Frankenstein rake-thingies and were firing a cannon at each other over the Cuyahoga -- they knew what it meant to be separate-

(He jumps up and down)

JULIA

Ah!

(Beat. Nothing.)

JULIA (CONT'D)

Please don't do that again.

SCOTT

You said it yourself: "Why should I go over there?"

JULIA

Why don't you... walk with me... back down to the RTA park down there and-

(Scott stomps again and jumps back)

JULIA (CONT'D)

Will you please not do that??

SCOTT

You know what I think? I think our combined weight over here is holding that bolt over there in place.

JULIA

Oh, so first it was if I walked across it collapses, now it's if I walk away from it, it collapses.

SCOTT

Pretty much. Yeah.

JULIA

This is insane-  
(She turns to go)

SCOTT

Wait! Did you hear that?

JULIA

(Pauses)

What.

SCOTT

That...

JULIA

Creak?

SCOTT

Creak.

JULIA

...it was just the wind.

SCOTT

Have you ever heard a creak from the wind before?

JULIA

One person doesn't make a difference to a bridge -- before I lost all that weight maybe, but-

SCOTT

(Pushing her)

Then go! Yes! Walk away! Do it!

(Pause. They watch the bolt...)

JULIA

Someone's going to walk by today. A ton of cars will pass by -- you can't keep me here.

SCOTT

I'm not! In fact, I'd say the Bridge and I both want you to go home.

(Julia hesitates... Looks at Scott... They both look at the bolt...)

SCOTT (CONT'D)

So which is it, Accounting? Do you go over or do you go back?

(They both watch the bolt... Silence... They stare...)

(Blackout)

**WEST SIDE MARKET**

6:52 A.M.

(Sounds of the market. A counter with MOM preparing stuff behind it. A young man, Pete, walks in disheveled in hip clothes and sunglasses)

PETE

Hey, Ma.

MOM

Look at what the dog dragged out.

PETE

Hey, I made it, didn't I?

MOM

Smelling like a cat-house. Like the Flats. Dear God, my eyes are watering.

PETE

It's cologne. I put some on to spruce me up.

MOM

A bath spruces you up. That stuff kills insects.

PETE

All right.

MOM

I can smell you over the fish counter!

PETE

All right! Do you want me here or not?

MOM

I didn't call you. It was your father.

PETE

Where is Pop?

MOM

Bringing the stuff into the market from the car. The doors open any minute.

PETE

What stuff?

MOM

I noticed I didn't see you at church again.

PETE

Ma.

MOM

I can only tell the priest you have head lice so many times.

PETE

You don't-

MOM

I think he's getting suspicious. So I told him you had painful explosive diarrhea, and that quieted him down.

PETE

Jesus.

MOM

Language.

PETE

You don't gotta lie for me. I'll show up when I show up.

MOM

Maybe at our funeral.

PETE

I need some coffee.

MOM

(Moving behind the counter)

I'll get you some.

PETE

I'll get some at Big City.

MOM

We got coffee here.

PETE

I like theirs.

MOM

They got all those flavors. It's like Baskin Robbins, it's too confusing.

PETE

I like the flavors.

MOM

We got two flavors here: "Dad made it", "Mom made it". Today is "Mom made it". Good and thick. Like spackle.

PETE

I'll be back.

MOM

Why don't you just go to Johnny Hot Dog while you're at it, and get a beer for breakfast?

(DAD enters with a box, walking behind the counter)

DAD

Peter!

PETE

Hey, Pop.

DAD

(Sniffing)

Whooo, Dear God in Heaven, is that you?

MOM

It's him.

PETE

It's my cologne.

DAD

(Fishing in his pocket for cash)

Here. Go buy some pork jowls over at Janosz's. Rub'em around your neck, they'll get rid of the stench.

PETE

I don't want to get rid of the stench! I like it!

DAD

I knew a girl from Hrodna smelled like that, we all thought she was rotting from the inside. Turned out it was perfume. She was a hooker.

MOM

Is that the name of your cologne: "Rotting Whore"?

PETE

I don't need this. I get outta bed crack of dawn and drive over here 'cause you asked me to-

DAD

How was traffic?

PETE

It's 6 a.m, Dad, traffic's fine. Only human beings I saw were the crazy guy who's always on the Detroit bridge, and

some lady with him waving as I drove past -- let me give you a hand with that-

(He moves for the box Dad is unloading)

DAD

No, no, no. I can do it. I just wanted you to be here for the unveiling.

PETE

What. You're finally splurging for a new sign?

DAD

Fah. We don't need a new sign.

MOM

Your uncle got the Bruenmuellers to paint that sign in exchange for him doing their dental work. Your uncle was so goddam good with a hammer-

PETE

Are you expanding? Pierogis and Kielbasa not good enough anymore? You guys doing cheesecake now too?

MOM

Don't be stupid.

DAD

It's not expanding. It's updating.

PETE

How.

DAD

We are pummelling into the 21st Century, my boy.

(He puts out a plate of pierogies on the counter with a handmade sign: "TRY OUR NEW LO-CARB PIEROGIES!")

PETE

What?

MOM

Beautiful, isn't it?

DAD

The doors are opening. Get out of the way, boy.

PETE

What the hell is a "lo-carb pierogi"?



MOM

Your father didn't want to scare you, but our sales were slumping this last year.

DAD

Not slumping. Slipping. Just slipping.

MOM

Slipping and slumping. We need to get these skinny people back to our counter.

PETE

But you can't make a lo-carb pierogi. It's scientifically impossible!

MOM

I had my doubts, but papa convinced me.

DAD

I said, "If they can make a remote control T.V., I can make an Atkins pierogi."

MOM

And your father did.

(Pete picks one up with a plastic fork)

PETE

How?

DAD

No more potato and stuffing. It's all beef inside.

MOM

From Danny and Ella over there. It's fresh.

DAD

And no pasta outside. It's spelt.

PETE

It's not a pierogi anymore, Dad. It's some kind of Frankenstein's Undead Ravioli.

MOM

That's why your father didn't let you make the sign.

PETE

(Takes a bite)

Ugh. It tastes like paper.

MOM

Beefy paper.

DAD

Those have dried out. Here. Let me put more grease and butter on it-

PETE

Then it'll taste like buttery paper.

MOM

It's modern. It's not supposed to taste like food.

PETE

Do you think anyone's gonna actually want one of these things?

(A SLIM COUPLE walk up with cloth bags)

SHOPPER MAN

Hell-o! Are those truly low-carb pierogies?

SHOPPER WOMAN

May we sample some?

DAD

Absolutely.

(He makes two Styrofoam bowl-  
fulls)

MOM

It's 12.8 net carbs and 56 calories per serving.

SHOPPER WOMAN

We've been on Atkins for eight months now-

SHOPPER MAN

It's terrific to see the old world catching up to the new.

SHOPPER WOMAN

(Takes a bite)

MMM! This is super!

SHOPPER MAN

(Eating)

It's so light! Beefy and buttery-

SHOPPER WOMAN

But so delicate! Like paper!

SHOPPER MAN

We'll take another order, please.

DAD

With pleasure.

PETE

No, this is wrong. The words "delicate" and "pierogi" should never be in the same sentence-

MOM

Shut your mouth, Peter.

PETE

I won't shut my mouth. Pierogies are supposed to be heavy dumpy solid little chunks of fat and carbs. They're little coal furnaces of calories to make it bearable to go out into the Polish January and the Cleveland February and milk the damn cows and chop the firewood and walk from the parking lot by the lake and they are not a fad or a gimmick, they're squat food for squat people and there is no such thing as an Atkins Pierogi!!

(Beat. They look at him. The couple take their order)

SHOPPER MAN

I really like the low carb.

SHOPPER WOMAN

(Paying Dad)

Thank you. We need to get our sun-dried tomatoes now.

(And they hurry off)

PETE

(Calling after them)

Make sure you get the low-carb tomatoes!

MOM

(Bops him with the sign)

Shut your mouth.

DAD

You can't fight progress, Peter.

PETE

This isn't progress, this is Grandma Wyzniewski spinning in her grave. When she got here in 1920-

DAD

1918.

MOM

1917.

DAD

18.

MOM

17. It was the year after Riga, and she got here in '16.

PETE

When she got here she had one dream -- raise her family, keep'em strong and sturdy and warm and she had the best damn pierogi recipe in Cleveland to do it and our family's been sharing that recipe with the world for eighty years-

DAD

73 years.

MOM

74.

DAD

73.

MOM

74. She started selling them at the corner of Prospect first.

PETE

And why do you think she moved to the West Side Market? It called her here! It was waiting for her and for her sons to take over from her, and for you to take over from your brother, and me and Mary and Michael will take over from you and our kids will take over from us -- the same bricks the same windows, the same market -- and the thread that holds it all together is the flour and the dough and the potato and the sauerkraut and the love.

DAD

I was with you up to the love part.

MOM

We still have "Classic Wysnewskis" over here.

(Holds up a pierogi container)

We're just expanding into new territory. Grandma had to leave the old world to see Cleveland. We have to leave some of the old calories to see lower body-fat percentage consumers.

PETE

I'm telling you this is the road to ruin.

(A WOMAN walks up)

SHOPPER WOMAN #2

Ooo, new pierogies! I'll take two orders!

(The previous couple trot back on)

SHOPPER WOMAN

May I have three more orders of the Atkins pierogies to take home?

PETE

Oh god.

DAD

(Serving them up)

Absolutely.

SHOPPER WOMAN #2

(On her cell phone)

Yeah. Gina? You've gotta get down to the West Side Market-

DAD

(Hands her a brochure)

We also just inked a deal to serve these at all the fine restaurants in greater Cleveland-

SHOPPER WOMAN #2

(Into phone)

There's new low-carb pierogies. It's a godsend.

PETE

This is blasphemy. You know that. You're calling down the wrath of God on the whole family-

MOM

Oh, a minute ago we couldn't find you in church and now you're speaking for God-

PETE

Because we're talking about pierogies, Ma!

DAD

(To customers)

Would any of you be interested in our new organic soy kielbasa while you're here?

PETE

WHAT??

SHOPPER MAN

My cousin's a vegetarian!

SHOPPER WOMAN #2

So's my boss!

SHOPPER WOMAN

Why not?

PETE

I'm dreaming. Tell me I'm dreaming.

DAD

It's the future, sweetheart. Change is always difficult.

PETE

This has gotta stop-

SHOPPER WOMAN #2

(Leaving with her food)

Thank you!

SHOPPING COUPLE

(Leaving with their food)

We'll be back on Saturday!

(Pete leaps behind the counter  
and yells out)

PETE

Get your pierogies! Good old fashioned old world stuffed  
pierogies right here!

DAD

Hey, hey, hey! No yelling! You know the rules -- no  
selling by yelling-

PETE

Screw the rules. I'm not yelling for customers. I'm  
yelling for Grandma Wysnewski!

(Calling out)

Old style potato pierogies here -- get'em with extra  
potatoes, right here!

DAD

(Yelling out)

New low-carb Atkins pierogies -- the latest and greatest  
right here-

PETE

(Yelling)

Carbs carbs carbs, get'em while you still can-

DAD

(Yelling)

Most of the flavor, none of the carbs!

(They keep calling out as Mom  
beams)

MOM

It's so wonderful to see the family working together!  
(Blackout)

**RTA TRAIN****8:29 A.M.**

(Sound of a train leaving the station and cruising along. A man, ANTHONY, sits in a seat on the RTA in a nice shirt and slacks, eyes closed, resting his head on the seatback or window, listening to his ipod. A woman, LILA, in a nice suit, walks on with a large bag and rolling suitcase. She takes the seat behind Anthony, accidentally whacking him in the head with her bag as she settles in. He notices, doesn't say anything, and closes his eyes again.)

(The DRIVER'S VOICE crackles over the intercom)

DRIVER (V.O.)

Dokuzzzne Eewfnuruuh.

LILA

What? What did he say?

(Taps Anthony)

Did you understand what he said?

ANTHONY

I wasn't listening.

LILA

It sounded like he was speaking Turkish in the bottom of a well.

(Pause. Anthony retreats back into himself again. Lila taps him)

LILA (CONT'D)

This is the train to the airport, right?

ANTHONY

(Clicks off his ipod)

What?

LILA

This is the train to the airport?

ANTHONY

Mm-hm.

(He clicks back on his music)



LILA  
I hope I allowed enough time.  
(To Anthony)  
Do you know how long it takes to get to the airport?

ANTHONY  
(Clicks off his ipod)  
What?

LILA  
How long does it take to get to the airport?

ANTHONY  
I don't know. Never been.

LILA  
Where are you going?

ANTHONY  
Tower City.

LILA  
Shopping?

ANTHONY  
Working.

LILA  
Really? What store?

ANTHONY  
The food court.

LILA  
Oh. Well, that's okay. I've eaten there. Which place?

ANTHONY  
Auntie Anne's Pretzels.

LILA  
I've eaten there! I had the cinnamon sugar pretzel. Maybe we saw each other and didn't even know it!

ANTHONY  
Maybe.

LILA  
I was going to an Indians game. Me and two of my girlfriends from work. We stopped at the food court before we went over. Have you been to Jacob's Field?

ANTHONY  
Couple of times.

LILA

It's beautiful, isn't it? I think it's beautiful. Don't you think it's beautiful? It's so much fun.

ANTHONY

It's nice, yeah.

LILA

My father used to take me to the old stadium.

ANTHONY

I got patted on the head by Joe Charboneau there. Didn't wash my hair for a week.

LILA

Where did you used to sit?

ANTHONY

I don't know. Wherever we could. Mostly up high with our back to the lake.

LILA

Us too! Maybe we were sitting next to each other and didn't even know it!

ANTHONY

Could be.

(The DRIVER'S voice crackles again)

DRIVER (V.O.)

Eevvfnnrrrvh Kinndi.

(Lila stands)

LILA

What did he say? What stop is this?

ANTHONY

East 105th and Kinsman.

LILA

They should clear up that intercom. How am I supposed to recognize my stop?

ANTHONY

See that chart on the wall? We're the red line. You got one, two, three stops to Tower City, then another seven, eight, nine to the airport. You can count'em.

LILA

Three and nine. Great. Twelve to go. The first leg took  
and 1/2 minutes. 1 and 1/2 times 12-

ANTHONY

Not all the legs are equal.

LILA

Oh.

ANTHONY

But the big hint: The airport's the last stop. When the  
train completely quits moving and doesn't start up again?  
You should get off.

LILA

That'll be my hint. Thank you.

(Beat. Anthony clicks back on  
his music. She looks at her  
watch, out the window. At her  
watch)

LILA (CONT'D)

You're lucky.

ANTHONY

(Clicks off his music)

What.

LILA

You're lucky you can take the train to work.

(Anthony laughs)

LILA (CONT'D)

What.

ANTHONY

Yeah, I'm lucky. I also got no choice. I don't have a car  
right now.

LILA

Oh. I'm sorry.

ANTHONY

Not a big deal. I can walk to work at the Topps, go 'til  
the midnight shift, walk home, sleep a few hours and catch  
the train to Tower City.

LILA

Wow.

ANTHONY

What do you do?

LILA

I work at home. I'm a financial planner. Freelance.

ANTHONY

That's a beautiful word: Freelance.

LILA

It's got its ups and downs.

ANTHONY

You set your own hours?

LILA

More or less.

ANTHONY

Then "freelance" is a beautiful word. You count your blessings.

LILA

I started as a consultant at Ernst and Young and I split off to make my own company. No time clock, but no safety net either.

ANTHONY

Safety net? What's a safety net?

LILA

Exactly. Do you have a family?

ANTHONY

I got a little girl. She lives with her mom though. We're separated.

LILA

Oh.

(Pause.)

LILA (CONT'D)

You ever take your daughter to an Indians game?

ANTHONY

You know, I was just thinking that. I think I'm gonna do that.

LILA

I hear the team is on a good streak right now. Maybe she could get a pat on the head from Omar Vizquel.

ANTHONY

'Cept he's gone.

LILA

Well, from somebody. Somebody who's going to be famous maybe.

ANTHONY

Yeah, but now I'm a parent. I understand the value of washing hair.

LILA

I see your point.

ANTHONY

You got kids?

LILA

No. No, I'm still single. I mean single. Not "still", just single. I'm happily single.

(The Driver's voice again-)

DRIVER (V.O.)

Eefehfeh.

LILA

Eleven more stops?

ANTHONY

You see down 55th down there? That's where I grew up. Down off Central.

LILA

Nice neighborhood?

ANTHONY

All right. Great streets to play in. Us kids didn't know any better. How 'bout you?

LILA

We didn't play in the streets much. It was a major four-lane state route.

ANTHONY

I mean, where'd you grow up?

LILA

In Pepper Pike.

ANTHONY

Ah.

LILA

But I moved to Cleveland Heights because I wanted to live a little more "urban", you know?

ANTHONY

And is it?

LILA

What.

ANTHONY

More "urban".

LILA

Yes. More... electric. Jagged. Colorful.

(Anthony laughs)

LILA (CONT'D)

I didn't mean-

ANTHONY

No, you mean the housing stock's older, a lot of character, more "colorful".

LILA

Yes.

(Anthony laughs)

I'm sorry.

ANTHONY

For what?

DRIVER (V.O.)

Eefirruhforrr.

(Anthony laughs)

LILA

Ten more stops?

ANTHONY

I love old houses. Mine's 80 years old. You don't know trouble 'til you go messin' with 80-year-old plumbing.

LILA

I did my windows. I tried to re-string, reconnect, whatever -- resash mine.

ANTHONY

That's a job.

LILA

I couldn't do it. Holding the weight and the string and the frame -- I'm not strong enough.

ANTHONY

Sure you are.

LILA

I couldn't do it.

ANTHONY

Let me see your hands.

(Holds up his hand)

People think it's all in the biceps, but it's all in the hands -- most women got amazingly strong hands.

LILA

Not mine.

(She holds up her hand -- they touch palm to palm... Beat... they stare at their hands...)

ANTHONY

See? You got good strong working fingers.

LILA

You have beautiful hands...

BOTH

Piano-playing hands.

(They break the contact, laughing)

BOTH (CONT'D)

What made you say that?

LILA

I used to play.

ANTHONY

I used to play piano.

LILA

I was in a band.

ANTHONY

My mom used to make me practice every day.

LILA

Mine too. Then in high school I joined a garage band.

ANTHONY

I never played with anybody. Just concerts for my family. Sometimes neighbors.

LILA

We kept trying to sound like Nirvana and Green Day.

ANTHONY

Oh, man, my mother would have none of that. It was classical or it was silent. Mozart's Sonata in A Major. That was me, baby. By heart.

LILA

Do you still play?

ANTHONY

No. No piano. Just my headset. Keeps me sane.

LILA

Our band never made it out of the garage. Except to play at our drummer's cousin's wedding.

ANTHONY

A gig's a gig.

LILA

What we lacked in talent we made up for in volume.

ANTHONY

Actually I lied. I do still play. At my sister's house. She's got a piano in her parlor room, kind of off the living room. Sometimes when everyone's off watching T.V. after dinner, I'll go in there in the dark and sit down and play something. A little Bach or something. Just to feel my fingers talking.

LILA

I know.

ANTHONY

Sitting in the dark playing for nobody.

LILA

Not for nobody.

ANTHONY

For whoever's left in the room. The ones who've gone before, you know. That's what I love about these old houses is every room's got someone left in it, if you just get quiet, you know.

LILA

Or play them a concert.



ANTHONY

Yeah.

LILA

I bet you're really good.

ANTHONY

Nah. There's a reason no living folks stick around to hear me.

LILA

That's why I started. I thought if I could fill our house with music, fill our block, fill our city, fill our country, that there wouldn't be any room for the bad stuff. We'd all be full of beauty.

ANTHONY

So you played beautifully loud.

LILA

So I played loud.

(They smile, watching each other)

DRIVER (V.O.)

Toovsii.

ANTHONY

(Looks up)

Whoa. That's me.

LILA

How can you tell?

ANTHONY

Look out there. Tower City from underneath.

LILA

I like that. Being under the city.

(He stands to leave)

LILA (CONT'D)

(Holds out her hand)

I'm Lila.

ANTHONY

I'm Anthony. Pleased to meet you.

LILA

Likewise.

(They shake hands)

ANTHONY

See? Good strong grip. You'll get those sash cords changed.

LILA

Maybe I'll see you at Auntie Ann's?

ANTHONY

I'm there most afternoons.

LILA

Or at an Indians game. With your daughter.

ANTHONY

(Heading out)

And you should take up the piano. The world still needs to be filled.

LILA

I'll see you around, Anthony.

ANTHONY

I'd like that.

(He heads out -- steps back in)

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

Oh, hey, stay in that seat. When you leave here, you'll get this amazing view of the Detroit Superior Bridge. Best view in town.

LILA

Thank you.

(And he's gone)

(Sound of the train starting up. She settles into her seat. Looks at her hands. Out the window. Smiles. Pause...)

LILA (CONT'D)

Nine more stops.

(Blackout)

**LEGACY VILLAGE**  
**10:16 A.M.**

(A woman with two shopping bags sits on a bench outdoors. A young man sits next to her with a shopping bag. These are LUCILLE and DESMOND.)

Classic Top 40 music plays quietly in the background)

LUCILLE

90 seconds. I give myself 90 seconds to just sit here before I have to go get the damn barbecue sauce and tongs for Kathy and Doug's party this afternoon. Could they have given me a little more warning? And if I'm not out of here ASAP, I'll catch lunch hour traffic plus the road construction -- that's how I know it's Spring, it's not 70 degree weather, it's orange barrels-  
 (Her cell phone rings)  
 -and that'll be my boss wondering where I am -- or the workers replacing my windows asking where to sweep the broken glass- Why can't the world just let me enjoy my goddam shopping?!

DESMOND

Legacy Village is great, isn't it?

LUCILLE

Yes!! I love to shop! It's the one sliver of my life when I'm free to be me -- it's my imagination, my dreams, my plans... that beautiful expectation of carrying something new to the car -- you can't wait to get it home, to try it out -- I love that. It's the world that's insane.

(Desmond nods)

LUCILLE (CONT'D)

You know what I'm talking about, right? You're trying to do your shopping too, aren't you?

DESMOND

No.

LUCILLE

Oh. I just assumed because you were sitting here -- you're waiting on someone?

DESMOND

No.

LUCILLE

You work here?

DESMOND  
I live here.

LUCILLE  
In Lyndhurst.

DESMOND  
In Legacy Village.

(Pause. Lucille looks at him)

DESMOND (CONT'D)  
(Offers his hand)  
I'm Desmond.

LUCILLE  
Lucille. That's very good. Someone living in Legacy Village.

DESMOND  
I got a good laugh when the idea first occurred to me too. Then my credit card ran out.

LUCILLE  
You're serious.

DESMOND  
It was my fourth trip to the Village in one week. I was trying to buy place mats and a Kentwood frameless mirror at Z Gallerie when my credit card came up short. The cashier just looked at me with pity. Utter pity. And I wandered out in a daze and I staggered over to Claddagh Irish Pub to console myself and I realized my wallet was dead dry. And I just sat in this little plaza -- on this very bench -- staring. And this woman sat down next to me and we started talking and we kept talking-

LUCILLE  
And the stores began to close -- it's happened to me-

DESMOND  
-And I realized I had absolutely no desire whatsoever to go back to Parma. Everything I needed -- everything I could ever want -- was here in Legacy Village.

LUCILLE  
But at some point they kicked you out.

DESMOND  
"They" who? It's a big village, Lucille. You move from shop to shop, sleep in different stores, change your clothes occasionally, nobody ever really looks at you anyway.

LUCILLE

But that's insane. I mean, no disrespect, but if you actually lived in Legacy Village... you'd be bonkers.

(ANNIE, a woman in coat and jeans, walks up with a box of food)

ANNIE

Hi, Desmond. Cheesecake?

DESMOND

Lucille, I'd like you to meet Annie. Annie moved here from Euclid right after the Village opened. She was here months before me.

ANNIE

Oh. You told her?

DESMOND

She was having an outer world meltdown. I sensed a need for an intervention.

ANNIE

I feel you.

(To Lucille)

Cheesecake?

LUCILLE

You two are pulling my leg.

ANNIE

When Desmond and I first met here on this bench, we went over and had a little Haagen Daz ice cream, some Starbucks coffee, and I invited him back to my place. Which that night was Arhaus Furniture.

DESMOND

We've been going together for three months now.

ANNIE

I picked out his clothes at Talbots for Men.

(Offers the box of cake to  
Lucille)

You really should have a piece of cheesecake. It's still fresh.

(Lucille takes a plastic fork and is about to take a bite)

LUCILLE

Did you pay for this?

(Annie and Desmond laugh)

DESMOND

(To Annie)

We haven't used money since I got here, have we?

ANNIE

They have to throw out the unsold cheesecake after two days. Most places have to clear the kitchen every three hours.

DESMOND

Beautiful, isn't it? Like one long buffet.

ANNIE

But the fondue at Melting Pot begins to taste funny after about 40 minutes.

(Another woman, MARTINIQUE, walks up with a shopping bag and magazine)

MARTINIQUE

Hey, guys, what's the haps?

ANNIE

Hey, Martinique.

DESMOND

Martinique, this is Lucille. We were just telling her about our life here.

ANNIE

She needed a shopping intervention.

MARTINIQUE

I had my breakdown in Crate and Barrel. I had like three lamps and a dinette set and realized there'd never be room in my dink little University Heights apartment.

ANNIE

Never got back to that apartment, did you?

MARTINIQUE

Thank god. Any cheesecake left?

DESMOND

Not for a while. But Stir Crazy should have Moo Shu up soon.

(A man in a suit walks up with a shopping bag and take-out box with a plastic fork. He sits down on another bench. Nods to them and smiles. Holds up his box of food)

MAN IN SUIT

Atkins Pierogies. They're brand new at Brio Tuscan Grille.

LUCILLE

Is he one of your tribe too?

MAN IN SUIT

I beg your pardon?

DESMOND

Actually, no. He's not.

MAN IN SUIT

One of what tribe?

MARTINIQUE

Nothing. We were playing a little game.

MAN IN SUIT

Like a people-watching thing?

MARTINIQUE

Exactly.

(Beat. The man looks at them.  
Smiles. They look at him)

MARTINIQUE (CONT'D)

We're done playing it now.

(A moment more and he  
uncomfortably focuses on his  
pierogies)

LUCILLE

(To Desmond)

Sorry.

DESMOND

It's okay. You'll pick it up.

LUCILLE

I'm not going to be here long enough to pick it up. I  
couldn't live like this -- completely cut off from the  
world-

MARTINIQUE

How cut off? We have Joseph Beth!

DESMOND

We get eight major papers daily-

ANNIE

More books than you could ever read in a lifetime.

MARTINIQUE

Yeah, but if I see one more Chicken Soup for Anyone's Soul, I'm gonna hurl.

MAN IN SUIT

You can say that again. But I have to admit I do have a fondness for Danielle Steele books...

(Pause. The others stare patiently at him, smiling. He clears his throat and goes back to his pierogies)

LUCILLE

(Quietly, aware of the man)

But... living... the way you do... the same buildings day after day -- it'd be like a prison!

DESMOND

And how much of the world do you see, Lucille? I bet you go from your same house on the same roads to the same office and back, stopping at the same stores for the same supplies. Are you experiencing more of the world than we are?

LUCILLE

But what do you do? You have to do something.

DESMOND

Why?

LUCILLE

Because... you have to stay busy.

DESMOND

Why?

LUCILLE

Because the world needs to keep going, we have to keep doing things-

DESMOND

Are the things you're doing making you happy?

(Pause)

DESMOND (CONT'D)

Once you stop trying to live in both worlds, it frees up a huge amount of space in your life.



ANNIE

(Pointing)

Look. You can hardly see the outside world from here. There's a big stone wall between us and Cedar Road, inside the wall is a wrought-iron fence, inside the fence are two lanes of traffic like a moat -- and then more curbs and then the Village. Safe and secure.

MARTINIQUE

And music! Your whole life has a soundtrack here. If you don't like the music of one store, go to another.

DESMOND

It even follows you outside!

LUCILLE

I was noticing that -- where does the music come from? From the trees and flowers?

DESMOND

Who knows? It just is.

ANNIE

Like Eden.

MARTINIQUE

Everything is so clean. I can't tell you what a change that is from my old apartment!

DESMOND

The only smells are disinfectant and perfumes and new furniture-

MARTINIQUE

And the people are all clean too!

ANNIE

And you see such diversity here -- old and young, singles and families, upper class and upper middle class, people who want furniture and people who only want accessories.

DESMOND

Annie and I are actually going to have our children here.

ANNIE

Can't you just see their little faces when they get one of the demo rooms at Bombay Kids as their very own?

DESMOND

We could never afford that in the outside world -- but here we get the best of everything.

ANNIE

And they'll be dressed in the best from Osh Kosh and Talbots for Kids -- eating at Cookies By Design!

MARTINIQUE

It's like being the first people on Earth all over again!

MAN IN SUIT

What are you guys, on commission?

DESMOND

Nope. No soliciting allowed on the property, sir.

MAN IN SUIT

(Stands to leave)

I don't know if everyone in Lyndhurst is like you all, but I'll tell you one thing: I thank God I live in Wickliffe.

(And he leaves)

ANNIE

(Looks at Lucille)

Now's your chance. Your car is waiting.

(Lucille nods)

DESMOND

Your chance to go back to your village.

(Lucille pauses...)

MARTINIQUE

I'm going rock climbing at the Sports store and then I'm gonna design another kitchen on the Expo computers. See you guys tomorrow.

(To Lucille)

It was sweet meeting you.

(And she's gone)

LUCILLE

I parked over by Giant Eagle.

DESMOND

That's a nice parking lot. Nice view of the perimeter trees.

ANNIE

You want us to walk with you?

DESMOND

We don't have anywhere we have to be.

(Lucille takes her  
bags...hesitates...)

LUCILLE

If I don't leave, my car will probably get towed.

DESMOND

One less hassle.

ANNIE

It was really important for us to find a village we could  
walk in.

DESMOND

The important thing is for you to find a village you can live  
in.

(Lucille looks at Desmond and Annie...  
hesitates...)

DESMOND (CONT'D)

Once it stops being a lifestyle center...

DESMOND AND ANNIE

...It starts being a life center.

(Lucille pauses a moment more...)

LUCILLE

You get me a piece of cheesecake, I'll meet you at the Ann  
Taylor Loft.

(Blackout)

**CLEVELAND CLINIC****11:42 A.M**

(A smiling and calm doctor, DASIA, stands in her white coat facing a YOUNG WOMAN in jeans and a t-shirt who sits on a rolling stool)

DASIA

How long have you had the sore throat, Miss Jackson?

SORE THROAT

I don't know, man. On and off for a while. I been seen like three times already.

DASIA

And you tested negative for Strep?

SORE THROAT

I think so.

DASIA

Okay. This could just be post-nasal drip irritating the throat-

SORE THROAT

Right! That's what one of the doctors said!

DASIA

Do you remember the doctor's name?

SORE THROAT

...no.

DASIA

Do you remember if it was here at the Clinic?

SORE THROAT

...no.

DASIA

Did this other doctor at this possibly other place give you any kind of prescription?

SORE THROAT

Yeah!

DASIA

And did you get that filled?

SORE THROAT

No.

DASIA

Any idea what they prescribed?

SORE THROAT

I lost the paper.

DASIA

Okay. We're going to start over. We're going to do another throat culture...

(She looks around)

SORE THROAT

Is that where you put the stick in my mouth?

DASIA

The swab, yes.

SORE THROAT

The other doctor did that.

DASIA

...and I can't find the culture. Hold on.

(She steps away to the "door"  
as FRANK THE NURSE walks up  
with a clipboard)

DASIA (CONT'D)

Frank, I need a throat culture in here.

FRANK

I think there's too much culture in there already. If you get a minute-

SORE THROAT

And I've got this pounding headache on and off for like six months.

DASIA

(Flipping through her file)

That wasn't on your report...

FRANK

She didn't mention it.

SORE THROAT

Maybe it's because I haven't taken my blood pressure pills.

DASIA

Oh, well, see, that could be a problem. When did you last take them?

SORE THROAT

Maybe Christmas?

DASIA

Okay.

FRANK

(Looking at the chart)

Blood pressure was high, but not frightening-

DASIA

We're going to take a throat culture and talk about your blood pressure when I come back, okay?

(To Frank)

You'll do the culture?

FRANK

I'll see if Maya can.

(Hands her a file)

#4532996 in twelve is getting testy.

DASIA

Okay.

(She enters another "room" to face a MAN in expensive clothes on his rolling chair, looking at his watch as he talks into his earpiece phone)

CHOLESTEROL MAN

(Into phone)

I'm not going to some office party in the Flats -- if they want the Strongsville property they can meet me at the Tremont barbecue thing at four. Hang on, it looks like a nurse has deigned to see me.

DASIA

I'm Doctor Holloway. Sorry to keep you waiting.

CHOLESTEROL MAN

I don't know about you, but I work for a living.

DASIA

I'm sorry?

CHOLESTEROL MAN

I make \$45 an hour outside of this building. You have kept me waiting for 65 minutes and I have yet to be seen. Who's going to reimburse me for my time?

DASIA

(Looking through his file)

Well, I'm seeing you now.

CHOLESTEROL MAN

I made an appointment. I honor my appointments. You're a multi-million dollar institution. I don't see why you can't honor your appointments.

DASIA

Actually we were full before fit you in, Mr. LeCroix-

CHOLESTEROL MAN

And now you stand here making excuses instead of letting me see Dr. Satyarthi-

DASIA

Dr. Satyarthi isn't in today. You wanted to be seen today-

CHOLESTEROL MAN

Apparently my cholesterol is worrisome.

DASIA

I don't know if I'd say worrisome, but it's clearly something we need to-

CHOLESTEROL MAN

Just write me a prescription.

DASIA

Well, actually, you know, I need to check some facts first.

CHOLESTEROL MAN

It should all be in the file.

DASIA

But before we jump to medication we need to talk about diet and exercise.

CHOLESTEROL MAN

Oh good lord.

DASIA

I know. But your insurance may not cover prescriptions until we've tried lifestyle changes for six months.

CHOLESTEROL MAN

Six months? I could be dead in six months!

DASIA

Yes, you could be-

CHOLESTEROL MAN

What??

DASIA

-but so could I and everyone else! The point is-

CHOLESTEROL MAN

"Lifestyle changes" You make it sound like I should stop hanging around gay bars-

DASIA

If that's your connotation-

CHOLESTEROL MAN

I'm not gay! I'm using that as an absurd example!

DASIA

Sir, would you please lower your voice? Your cholesterol has nothing to do with your sexual preference-

(Frank sticks his head in)

FRANK

Dasia? Urgent patient call.

DASIA

Okay. I'm so sorry, sir, I'll be right back.

(She steps away)

FRANK

Why was he yelling about being gay?

DASIA

He's upset about his cholesterol-

(Looking in on Sore Throat)

Has anyone given you a throat culture yet?

SORE THROAT

Does the guy in the room next to me have a problem with being gay?

DASIA

I'll be right back.

FRANK

(Hands Dasia a telephone)

It's Mrs. Habiscus. Says she's called three times. Her fever's 108, she appears to be bleeding, and her heart may have stopped.



DASIA

Okay.

(Into phone)

Mrs. Habiscus? This is Dr. Holloway. It sounds like maybe you need an ambulance, Mrs. Habiscus ...Oh. You're already in the Clinic? Where are you? You don't know either? Is there a sign near you? --Yes, there are a lot of buildings. -No, I'd be happy to write another prescription, but you need to find me first. Especially if your heart has stopped. Frank will give you directions. Okay?

(She hands the phone to Frank)

FRANK

Can you hold please, thank you!

(He pushes a button and hangs up as a COUGHING MAN wheels in on a stool to sit beside Sore Throat and Cholesterol Man. He lets out a horrifying cough. Everyone jumps)

DASIA

Whoa.

FRANK

(Hands her a file)

Beautiful, isn't it? #3886223. Room eleven. Can you take a look at him?

DASIA

Can someone else?

FRANK

They're all with other patients or filling out reports.

DASIA

I'm with other patients. I should be filling out reports-

FRANK

You've got four more to do this hour to meet the quota.

(Hands her files)

Plus reports on #6700972, #4461129, and #5199833.

DASIA

Did any of those people have names?

FRANK

Not that I know of.

(Dasia walks in to see Coughing Man)

DASIA  
How are you doing today, sir?

(He tries to speak and lets out a huge hacking cough in her face, almost falling off his stool. The other patients jump)

DASIA (CONT'D)  
That sounds pretty nasty.

COUGHING MAN  
I think I need an antibiotic...

DASIA  
It says here you were already on some. This could be viral.

COUGHING MAN  
Exactly. I need more antibiotics.

DASIA  
If it's viral, the antibiotics won't help. It just takes time to go away-

(Another cough)

DASIA (CONT'D)  
Okay. Obviously staying calm is good. It could be any number of things. It could be post-nasal drip-

COUGHING MAN  
From what? I don't have a cold.

DASIA  
PND can come from a variety of sources: chronic sinusitis -  
- if it's that we can surgically drain it-

COUGHING MAN  
Surgically drain it?? Oh god oh god oh god-

(He starts coughing)

DASIA  
Please, sir. Stay calm. We don't know yet-

COUGHING MAN  
You're gonna have to go in with a knife or scalpel or something, aren't you?? It's in my nose, right next to my brain-

DASIA

We can treat you with a steroid spray instead-

COUGHING MAN

Steroids?? Oh god oh god oh god-  
(Starts coughing)

DASIA

I need... where's a tongue depressor?

COUGHING MAN

I don't want to bloat up like some Barry Bonds-

DASIA

Can you hang on just one moment, sir? I need a tongue depressor -- I'll be right back-

COUGHING MAN

I had some of those new Atkins pierogies this morning -- could that have something to do with it??

(She steps away as he tries to control his cough)

DASIA

(To Frank)

I need a tongue depressor.

FRANK

You need a TB ward. And you have a call from Danny Gerhard about his test results!

(He charges off)

DASIA

Okay.

(A well-dressed woman walks up with a folder and briefcase. This is MS. ROBERTS)

MS. ROBERTS

Excuse me, Dr. Holloway, can I just grab you for a minute?

DASIA

Okay. Ten seconds.

MS. ROBERTS

My name is Dierdre Roberts. I'm with Pharmacure.

DASIA

You're a drug rep?

MS. ROBERTS

I'm a pharmaceutical liaison. I can't help noticing you have your hands full-

(Coughing Man has a huge coughing fit)

MS. ROBERTS (CONT'D)

Obviously, I don't know the details of that patient's case, but from the tenor of his cough, it so happens that our new medication Placebacet could do wonders-

DASIA

I'm sorry, I really don't have time, if you want to leave some studies-

MS. ROBERTS

(Opening her charts and folders)

It so happens we've conducted seventeen independent studies that show-

(Cholesterol Man steps out to Dasia)

CHOLESTEROL MAN

How much longer do you plan on detaining me in this plague house?

DASIA

Please, sir, if you'll step back in your room-

CHOLESTEROL MAN

I am due in Willoughby in 39 minutes, I am not catching Whooping Cough-

MS. ROBERTS

It so happens that Placebacet has amazing effects on Whooping Cough-

FRANK

Dasia, Mrs. Habiscus is on the phone again. She thinks she's in the Cole Eye Institute and wants directions-

DASIA

Tell her to try to find a window. Locate the sun. That should be East.

MS. ROBERTS

(To Cholesterol Man)

How are you doing today, sir?

CHOLESTEROL MAN

I came in here with bad cholesterol and I'm going to leave with dyptheria.

MS. ROBERTS

Our new medication Placebecet can actually nullify high cholesterol and dyptheria-

(Dasia hands the phone to Frank and gently moves Cholesterol Man back into his room)

DASIA

Can you give me one more minute, sir?

CHOLESTEROL MAN

I-

DASIA

I know, that's like 75 cents in the outside world-

(Steps into Sore Throat)

Has anyone done that throat culture yet, Miss Roberts?

SORE THROAT

I don't think I'm Miss Roberts.

DASIA

Miss...

SORE THROAT

Jackson.

DASIA

Jackson. I'm so sorry.

SORE THROAT

I forgot to tell you I've been vomiting for six months.

DASIA

You've been vomiting for six months??

SORE THROAT

Not every day. Someone at Metrohealth gave me some pills.

DASIA

...do you have any idea what those pills might have been?

SORE THROAT

They were white. They were shaped like this.

DASIA

Okay. The stomach ache and sore throat could mean you have Gastro-Esophageal Reflux Disease. If it is, then your symptoms would be worsened by eating greasy fried food, chocolate, caffeine -- do you take a lot of caffeine?

SORE THROAT

Just a few pops a day. And it's only Mountain Dew.

DASIA

Jesus.

(Coughing Man lets out a huge  
hack)

SORE THROAT

Is the gay guy dying over there?

DASIA

I'll get right back to you.

(Steps out to run into Ms.  
Roberts)

MS. ROBERTS

If I could just get a minute, I couldn't help overhearing  
you mention reflux, which it so happens-

(Frank runs up with a phone)

FRANK

Dasia, it's Mrs. Habiscus. Somehow she ended up out on  
East 97th. She's looking for a door to get back in.

DASIA

Okay!

(Pushes into Coughing Man's  
room)

You know what else could be causing your coughing, sir?  
Reflux.

COUGHING MAN

How can we find out?

DASIA

I'm thinking rectal exam.

(A huge coughing fit)

DASIA (CONT'D)

To look for blood in the stool, sir.

COUGHING MAN

It's not reflux, it's not reflux-

DASIA

Then it maybe tuberculous or a tumor.

(Wild coughing fit)

DASIA (CONT'D)

Or maybe it's viral.

COUGHING MAN

Maybe it's just viral. It's probably viral-

(Dasia steps out to see Ms.  
Roberts pulling notepads and  
pens from her briefcase)

MS. ROBERTS

I brought Placebecet notepads, pens and letter openers for  
the staff.

DASIA

Okay.

(Cholesterol Man steps out)

CHOLESTEROL MAN

Why am I still here?? I thought this was the #1 hospital  
in the state!

DASIA

#1 in cardiac, sir. We're #13 in cholesterol and #99 on  
patience with impatient patients.

(Takes paper and pen from Ms.  
Roberts)

Give me one of those notepads.

(Sore Throat staggers out)

MS. ROBERTS

I also brought lunches for the entire staff!

(She pulls a fruit basket from  
her briefcase)

SORE THROAT

Is there any pop in there?

DASIA

(Scribbling)

No pop.

SORE THROAT

Hershey's bars?

DASIA

No chocolate.

SORE THROAT

Is there a McDonald's around here?

DASIA

Not anymore.

(Grabs an apple)

Have an apple. Keeps the doctor away.

FRANK

Pharmacy on line two, Dasia, insurance question!

DASIA

(Scribbling)

Okay!

MS. ROBERTS

I've got trips to Florida for the whole family-  
(Coughing Man staggers out)

COUGHING MAN

Would that help my cough?

MS. ROBERTS

And gift certificates to Ruth's Cris Steakhouse, Lola's-

CHOLESTEROL MAN

Give me those-

FRANK

Mrs. Habiscus on Line Five, Dasia!

DASIA

OKAY!!

(To Ms. Roberts)

You need to back off with your payola pills.

(Shoves a scrap of paper to  
Cholesterol Man)

You need to see a nutritionist, a fitness expert, and calm  
the hell down.

(Paper to Coughing Man)

You need to see an Ear, Nose, and Throat specialist and  
CHILL OUT.

(Paper to Sore Throat)

You need to see me and only me and get this to a pharmacy  
and take your damn blood pressure medication! OKAY??

ALL

(Mumbling)

...okay.

DASIA

And someone find Mrs. Habiscus. Because I... am going to lunch!

(Blackout)

**END OF ACT I**



**ACT II****TREMONT****1:04 P.M.**

(A man in a nice sweater and khakis, DOUG, steps up to a low chain link fence with a sign saying "No Trespassing". There may be a ton of clutter on the other side of the fence)

DOUG

(Calling over the fence)

Hello? Mr. McGinty? Hellooo! Mr. McGinty!

(A rough looking guy in a t-shirt and sweat pants steps into the other yard carrying a beer can. This is CHUCK)

DOUG (CONT'D)

Ah! Mr. McGinty! How are you doing today?

(Chuck looks at him)

DOUG (CONT'D)

You look... you look comfortable.

CHUCK

What happened. Someone break into your car again?

DOUG

No! No. Ha ha! No, that hasn't happened for a few weeks now.

CHUCK

I'm trying to watch the game. Why are you yelling?

DOUG

Well. I didn't want to just march up to your porch. Wanted to respect the "No Trespassing" sign. Good signage makes good neighbors, right?

CHUCK

Why are you yelling my name?

DOUG

Well. I was out cleaning up my yard -- it's a beautiful day, isn't it? Clear blue sky-

CHUCK

Snow by midnight. Watch.

DOUG

Yep. And I just noticed your yard and thought, "Hey! What a beautiful day to clean up! Maybe Mr. McGinty would like some help on his yard while I'm at it!"

CHUCK

I'm okay. Thanks.

(He starts in)

DOUG

It'd be no problem. I'm pretty much done with ours. I can just clear up some of the clutter.

CHUCK

I got everything where I want it. Thanks.

(He starts in)

DOUG

Yep. I know how that is. It's like my coffee mug at work. I know where I put it in the lounge, and I want it in the lounge the next time I look! You know.

CHUCK

We just use Styrofoam cups down at the plant. Once they get used, you know where they are.

DOUG

In the circular file, right?

CHUCK

No, the trash can.

DOUG

Right. Circular file. That's what we call it. In our office.

CHUCK

That's good. That's clever.  
(He starts in)

DOUG

So would it be okay with you if I just moved your stuff to the south side of your house?

CHUCK

What?

DOUG

See, here's kind of the big picture. This great weather -- first great day, I thought, let's go crazy and throw a barbecue -- kind of fun, kind of crazy this early in the year, you know-

CHUCK

It's gonna snow.

DOUG

And my boss is down with this, he's like, "What the hell, it's crazy, we'll punch out a little early". Everyone's coming to the house. My house. They've never been to my house before. I printed out maps to Tremont, you know, I want to make 'em feel welcome and show 'em the neighborhood at its best, you know, first impressions, and since our deck kind of looks out over your yard, I was wondering if I could scoot some of the debris around to the south side where they won't see it.

(Chuck stares at him)

DOUG (CONT'D)

For the afternoon. Then I'll help put it all back tonight.

CHUCK

You don't want 'em to see my yard?

DOUG

No. No, no, no. I want them to see your yard! That's just it -- I want them to see the grass, or what's left of it. Not the cans and hubcaps and bottles.

CHUCK

It's my yard. It's none of their business.

DOUG

I know-

CHUCK

It's none of your business.

DOUG

Absolutely. But since we're neighbors-

CHUCK

Did I complain when you moved in here and brought your riding mower for your four square feet of lawn?

DOUG

The mower was a gift from my dad.

CHUCK

You don't need no John Deere. You need a goat.

DOUG

Now, see, a goat might be perfect for your yard -- they eat tin cans, right?

CHUCK

You don't want 'em to see my yard? Keep 'em in your goddam house.

DOUG

Yeah, but they have to walk to the front door, Mr. McGinty, and that means seeing all of your... stuff.

CHUCK

Then why are you having a party at your house? Have it at Lola's or somewhere.

DOUG

See, that's just it, you people don't get it. In a factory it's networking schmetworking, you're stuck 'til they move your job to Bolivia. But it's different for me. If my boss thinks "good party", he thinks "Good Doug", he thinks "important accounts". He sees you, he thinks "crap neighborhood", "crap employee", "Doug who?" I need him to see that I live in a fun classy urban setting!

CHUCK

This is where you live! Look at my yard. I'm Tremont, buddy. You're slumming from Westlake.

(KATHY enters on Doug's side, wearing a nice sweater and skirt, carrying her cell phone)

KATHY

Dougie, honey, I can't reach Lucille to see if she got the basting sauces at Legacy, and now Sandy's not sure she can make it -- she's stuck at the Indians game with her fiancée-

DOUG

Kathy-

KATHY

Sandy was going to bring the baba ganoush. If she doesn't come, we have no baba ganoush.

CHUCK

My god! Let me get out the Bat Phone and see if we can get some flown in!

KATHY

Excuse me?

DOUG

Mr. McGinty is feeling a little belligerent about cleaning up his yard-

KATHY

Why? Didn't you offer to help him?

CHUCK

Okay. First. My name is not McGinty. It's McKinley. If you're gonna insult someone's yard, get their name right.

DOUG

Well, I'm sorry-

KATHY

I could have sworn our real estate agent said McGinty when we first met-

CHUCK

Maybe she did. She was an idiot.

DOUG

Okay, look, you can insult my dad's mower, but there's no reason to start name-calling the Smythe-Cramer staff-

KATHY

Mr. McKinsey-

CHUCK

McKinley!

KATHY

McKinley. We just want to help. We all want a beautiful neighborhood.

CHUCK

I want a neighborhood I can live in. If I wanted to measure the height of my lawn grass, I'd move to Shaker Heights.

KATHY

We're not talking about anything major -- we're not even talking about your paint job-

CHUCK

What's wrong with it?

KATHY

Well, I mean, the peeling and chipping and fading-

DOUG

You got one side painted blue halfway up, the rest is mustard yellow-

CHUCK

I'm gonna finish that this summer. I just need a taller ladder.

KATHY

But we're not even talking about that! We're just looking at the yard area.

CHUCK

I bet you don't like my van.

DOUG

Actually-

KATHY

I think it's great! And I totally understand how when your driveway is filled up and you still need to work on a vehicle, you need someplace to park it-

DOUG

Like his front lawn.

KATHY

Yes! But actually, it's kind of handy -- I've taken some landscaping courses in college? And if you want any help camouflaging the cinder blocks the van is up on-

CHUCK

I don't wanta camouflage anything. I wanta watch T.V. on my day off and have my damn yard left alone. You people move up here to live on the ridge-

DOUG

Bluff.

CHUCK

What?

DOUG

Tremont's not a ridge, it's on a bluff overlooking the Cuyahoga valley.

CHUCK

You move up here to our ridge, makin' everything expensive, tearing down perfectly good houses-

KATHY

We didn't tear down anything! We just gutted the kitchen and added a deck-

DOUG

And if we want to hold a party for our friends and co-workers, we ought to be able to walk out on our deck without being visually assaulted by your pile of white trash crap!

CHUCK

You're gonna be assaulted more than visually, asshole-

DOUG

You think I'm scared of a "No Trespassing" sign? Huh? You wanta take this outside?

CHUCK

Huh?

KATHY

We already have to look at the little old Mexican lady's yard-

CHUCK

She's from Puerto Rico!

KATHY

-with her saints and virgins and Chief Wahoos -- but at least that has some charm. She doesn't speak English, she's old-world -- that's the difference. Her yard is tacky and cute -- your yard is tacky and... tacky.

CHUCK

Look, the day I listen to cracks on Mrs. Rodriguez's lawn ornaments from Lucy the Lousy Landscaper-

DOUG

That's it. You can insult my dad's mower, you can insult our real estate agent, but you do not call my wife a lousy landscaper-

CHUCK

Why are you even here?? Why didn't you buy one of those pastel condos on the edge-

KATHY

Townhouses.

CHUCK

What?

KATHY

They're townhouses on the edge of the bluff.

CHUCK

You know the proper goddam names for everything but your

neighbors!

DOUG

We don't want to live in the townhouses! We want to live in the fun and funky neighborhood that's still unexplored! We're urban pioneers!

CHUCK

Well, you just ran into the urban Shoshone, asshole! Circle the wagons!

(Chuck throws his empty beer can over the fence into Kathy and Doug's yard)

KATHY

What are you doing??

CHUCK

Sharing the wealth, lady! Hope you like MGD!

(Doug throws the can back)

DOUG

You keep your damn recyclables on your side of the fence, buddy!

CHUCK

(Grabs a shovel)

You want my land? Hah? You want this land? I'll give it to you! A shovel-full at a time -- I'm gonna shovel my whole damn yard onto your property! You like that??

DOUG

(Grabs a weedwhacker)

Yes!! Anything you throw over here gets chopped into our compost pile, McChimpy! I'd just watch your fingers if I were you!

CHUCK

(Grabs up an old chainsaw)

You know what else is goin' in that compost pile? Your deck!

(Doug snarls and charges off)

KATHY

You start that thing up and I'm getting the cops all over you so fast for violating the noise ordinance-

CHUCK

Who cares?? I'm just doin' a little landscaping!



(Kathy lunges over the fence  
and grabs Chuck by the throat)

KATHY

Why can't you be a good neighbor?? Why. Can't. You. Be.  
A. Good. Neighbor?!?

(Chuck grabs her with one hand while  
holding the chainsaw)

CHUCK

Back to Westlake! Back to Westlake!

(Doug charges on with a can of  
gasoline and a lighter)

DOUG

I've got the final answer to your weed problem, Appalachian  
Boy! Hope you like the smell of napalm in the morning!!

(They're all over each other -- yelling  
-- then the sound of an engine driving  
by -- Doug looks up -- his eyes go  
huge)

DOUG (CONT'D)

Cheezit -- Stop! Stop!!

(Chuck and Kathy turn in mid-  
strangle)

CHUCK

Whozit? The cops?

DOUG

Worse.

KATHY

It's Lolly the Trolley.

(They all break apart as a  
man's voice calls over an  
loudspeaker)

TOUR GUIDE (V.O.)

On your left you'll see some other houses here in historic  
Tremont, as well as some neighbors out for some of the  
first conversations of the Spring. Hi, folks!

(Kathy, Doug, and Chuck wave)

## TOUR GUIDE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Truly it's that sense of community that makes Tremont one of the jewels of the West Side that it is. And as we round this corner, you'll see still yet another church-

(The engine fades away... Doug, Chuck, and Kathy stand there a moment longer... look at each other... And with warriors' YELLS they're back on one another, going for the kill)

(Blackout)

**JACOB'S FIELD**

**3:18 P.M.**

(The bleachers. FIVE FANS sit near one another though not together, an older man and woman, JIM and ALBERTA (who never takes her eyes off the game), a younger couple - arms folded SANDY and inebriated KENNY -- and CARLOS who strains for a better view)

JIM

This is the year. This is absolutely the year.

ALBERTA

We just gotta get Belliard home from second...

SANDY

Please let it just be over.

CARLOS

Whoo! Come on, Casey!! Hit it!

SANDY

Hit it so we can go home!

(ROBBIE, a young woman, walks up and sits beside Carlos with drinks and hot dogs)

ROBBIE

Did I miss anything?

CARLOS

Where you been? It's bottom of the frickin' ninth, woman!

ROBBIE

I was gettin' dogs and beers.

CARLOS

You left at the 7th inning stretch!

ROBBIE

I got all turned around. This place is worse than the Clinic. I was lookin' for 185 and I ended up way in 581 up there. I could see Tremont, I could see Canada, my nose started bleedin' -- but I found this place selling these new pierogies-

CARLOS

You got my change?

ROBBIE

What change.

CARLOS

I gave you a twenty for two hot dogs and two beers.

ROBBIE

Like I said, what change?

CARLOS

Damn. This better be some sweet-ass alcohol.

JIM

Would you mind holding it down?

CARLOS

What, you can't hear the third base coach? You can barely see back here, much less hear.

KENNY

WHOO! Knock it out, Thome!

JIM

Thome?

CARLOS

Jesus! This beer sucks.

ROBBIE

Yeah, but now you get to keep the cup.

KENNY

I'll take your beer if you don't want it.

ROBBIE

See? It's holistic. Or whatever you call it when it changes pictures. See? Batter ready. Batter swings. Batter ready. Batter swings-

CARLOS

Aah! Batter spills her damn beer on her damn husband!

ROBBIE

Sorry. They didn't give me no napkins, baby.

KENNY

If you soaked it up with napkins you could squeeze it into my cup.

ROBBIE

Excuse me?

KENNY

They don't sell beer after the 7th. I'm getting a little dry, maybe I got a napkin-

JIM

Will you please can it?

ALBERTA

We just gotta get Belliard home and we tie it up.

JIM

Yeah, but Blake is batting and we already got two outs.

ALBERTA

Yeah, but Blake batting against lefties with a man on is .329.

CARLOS

How do you know that?

SANDY

(Into her cell phone)

Yeah, Kathy? It's Sandy, I don't think I'm going to make it to the barbecue -- I'm still at the stupid baseball game.

KENNY

What are you doing?

SANDY

If I'm gonna be stuck here, I'm at least gonna entertain myself.

KENNY

It's the bottom of the ninth! How can you not be entertained?

SANDY

(Into phone)

I'm sorry, Kathy, I missed that, your neighbor did what with a chainsaw?

ROBBIE

Who's that down in front of us?

CARLOS

Read his shirt.

ROBBIE

I can't.

CARLOS

Looks like... Salmon.

ROBBIE  
 Salmon?

JIM  
 Sexson. He plays left for the Mariners.

ROBBIE  
 But he's not on our team?

CARLOS  
 'Course not. We're batting.

ROBBIE  
 (Yelling out)  
 Sexson! Seexx-son! ...You suck!

JIM AND CARLOS  
 What are you doing?

ROBBIE  
 Distracting him.

JIM  
 Don't be rude.

CARLOS  
 At least wait 'til the ball's comin' toward him.

ALBERTA  
 Sexson's already made three errors this season. He's  
 distracted because his wife filed for divorce and his  
 mother just went into rehab.

CARLOS  
 How do you know that?  
 (Alberta shrugs)

KENNY  
 (Yelling out)  
 Salmon! Saal-mon!!

ROBBIE  
 (Yelling out)  
 Buy your mom a drink for me!

KENNY  
 And me!

SANDY  
 (Into phone)  
 I can't hear you -- Kenny's yelling at the players. This  
 is why I don't go to sporting events-

JIM

Come on, Blake, come on...

ALBERTA

He knocks in Belliard, Sizemore comes to the plate, Sizemore knocks in Blake, our streak goes to five.

CARLOS

We've won four in a row?

ALBERTA

First time we've won five straight in April since games 2- of 2001. And first time against Seattle since 1982.

CARLOS

Damn, you're good!

JIM

She's got the facts, but I got the watch.

CARLOS

'Scuse me?

JIM

Last game of the playoffs in '95, I got so excited I put my watch on my right hand, upside-down, see, I'm right-handed, usually wear it on my left hand-

CARLOS

Yeah.

JIM

And I went to the game and we won.

CARLOS

Yeah.

JIM

Every home game I been to since then, I wear my watch upside-down on my right hand and we win.

ROBBIE

Yeah, so what time is it?

JIM

I have no idea. It looks like a quarter to ten.

(The beating tom-tom starts in the distance)

KENNY

Oh god. Is that me, or the guy with the drum?

ROBBIE

Drum man.

KENNY

Good. I thought I was having a stroke.

SANDY

(Into phone)

No, some bozo's beating a drum -- I don't know how he got it past security -- they make me dump my Chai tea, but they let Mr. Timpani carry in his heap big wampum-

ALBERTA

He beats it to rally the crowd in crunch time.

KENNY

I'm rallying! Whoo! WHOOO!

SANDY

Can we please leave now? This guy's the last out.

ALBERTA

You never leave. Not when the Tribe's got one swing left.

CARLOS

They can't lose. You got the watch thing.

ALBERTA

May not be enough to break the Curse of Colavito.

CARLOS

What curse?

JIM

We never should have traded Rocky Colavito in '60, now we'll never win a title, but listen, during the '97 World Series I realized I was wearing the same pair of underwear every time we won. The one time I changed to wash'em, Game Seven.

ALBERTA

Never again.

JIM

Not this season.

CARLOS

So what you're saying is you haven't washed your underwear since the season started?

JIM

...I don't gotta tell you that.



(Drumming starts again. Robbie stands and sits)

CARLOS

What are you doing?

ROBBIE

Starting the wave.

ALBERTA

You don't start the wave with two outs, two strikes and the tying run on second.

CARLOS

And you can't start the wave by yourself.

ROBBIE

Watch me.

(She stands and sits. Kenny staggers up too late... looks around... and sits back down)

(Drumming louder)

JIM

Here comes the pitch.

SANDY

Please, please, please, please, please-  
(CRACK! Huge crowd cheer!)

JIM, CARLOS, KENNY, ROBBIE

YEAH! Go! Go! Go! Go!

SANDY

(Yelling into her phone)

I think something's happening! Maybe the game is over!

JIM AND CARLOS

Home! Home! Home!

KENNY

Where's the ball? Where's the ball?

(Robbie is dancing)

JIM AND CARLOS

Tie Game!!

SANDY

So it's not over.

JIM

The batter drove in the run and got to second.

CARLOS  
We drive him home, we win!

JIM  
Lucky watch!

CARLOS  
Lucky underwear!

SANDY  
Oh for God's sake, Kenny, it sounds like Kathy and Doug aren't even having the barbecue -- something's happened in Tremont -- can we just get out of here and-

KENNY  
Hey, you wanta go, you can catch the RTA back to Brook Park.

SANDY  
Please. You know what kind of freaks you meet on the RTA?

KENNY  
(Calling out)  
Whoo-hoo! Go Thome!

JIM  
Thome hasn't played for us for three years, sir.

KENNY  
When did this happen?

CARLOS  
(To Alberta)  
What do we know about the batter?

ALBERTA  
Grady Sizemore. He's .263 against left-handed Seattle pitchers in the bottom of the ninth of home stands with two down and men in scoring position in April when the temperature is over 40 degrees but the wind is blowing in from the northwest.

CARLOS  
That's what I thought.

(Drumming starts)

SANDY  
Again with the drumming!

JIM  
One swing of the bat...

ALBERTA  
One swing of the bat...

CARLOS  
Come on, Grady!

ROBBIE  
(Dancing and singing)  
Go, go, Grady! Go, go, Grady!

SANDY  
Kathy, are you there? I can't hear you with the idiots shouting-

ROBBIE  
Who you callin' an idiot?

SANDY  
You're the only one doing the Grady Hustle.

(Kenny staggers to his feet and attempts to dance)

KENNY  
No we're not! Look! Slider's dancing!

ROBBIE  
The big purple thing with the squash on his face?

KENNY  
He's the mascot. That's his nose.

ROBBIE  
He's like a Dr. Seuss fever dream.

JIM  
Will you hold it down?

SANDY  
I think Kathy's in jail for assault, Kenny!

JIM  
(To Sandy)  
And you get off the phone!

ROBBIE AND KENNY  
Go, Grady!

KENNY  
And Thome!

ROBBIE  
And Slider!

JIM

PLEASE SHUT UP!

(They all do, shocked.  
Drumming continues...)

JIM (CONT'D)

This is the moment. These are the seconds that make baseball the greatest game in all of pro-sports. Look at 'em... Look at 'em! The pitcher and the batter staring each other down -- each one knows exactly what he can do, what the other guy can do -- two men on the edge of a precipice waiting for the move, the look, the microsecond that demands reaction -- it all comes down to this, no armor, no coaches, only their minds and muscles in the split-second... eight men will explode into motion in one breath... and it's this breath. This is the moment. This is why we're here.

(Beat. Drumming continues)

ROBBIE

I'm just here to get out of the house.

CARLOS

I'm here to watch us win.

KENNY

We are gonna win. We deserve to win!

SANDY

No, here's the problem-

(Pokes Kenny and Carlos)

This is you.

(Points out)

That's them. See the great distance between us? The fact that they have a body and you have a body? We are not winning or losing. We are watching. Psychiatrists have a name for when you think you're someone else.

ROBBIE

Yeah, but we're gonna win.

KENNY AND ROBBIE

Go, Grady! Go go, go Grady!

SANDY

Arrgh!

ALBERTA

(To Jim)

You want to break the Curse of Colavito?

JIM

We have to!

ALBERTA

You know how the Boston Red Sox broke their curse and won the World Series in 2004?

JIM

How?

ALBERTA

Human sacrifice.

JIM

No way.

ALBERTA

Top of the season. Real quiet. Desperate curses call for desperate measures.

JIM

It worked?

ALBERTA

Who won the title?

JIM

(Looks around)

But how... who would...

SANDY

(Yelling out)

Come on and strike out so we can go home!!

(Alberta and Jim look at each other)

ALBERTA

We're thirty feet off the ground. A little push over the railing...

JIM

It'd stop the game. We'd never win.

ALBERTA

You'd have to time it right at the last out.

(Jim looks at Sandy... back at Alberta)

ALBERTA (CONT'D

How much do we want to win?

(CRACK! The ball is hit --  
they all look up...)

ROBBIE

It's coming toward us!

CARLOS

It's gonna be a home run!!

KENNY

It's gonna hit us!  
(Sandy ducks)

SANDY

Don't let it hit me I don't wanta get hit-

JIM

(To Alberta)

We didn't have to do it! We just had to threaten human  
sacrifice!

ROBBIE

Here it comes here it comes-

(They all reach -- duck-- and  
watch the ball fall below  
them. Collective "Ohhhh")

KENNY

What happened?

CARLOS

It didn't clear the field, that's what happened.

KENNY

Salmonella caught it?

CARLOS

He caught it.

ROBBIE

(Calling out)

Sexson-!

CARLOS

You suck!

ROBBIE

And your ex-wife's got pain killers for your mom!

KENNY

And me!

(They all look at him)

KENNY (CONT'D)

What? You know whose fault this is? It's Slider's! He was over there dancing and distracting Grady. Sonofabitch mascot!

SANDY

So... it's over?

ALBERTA

It's not over. It's a tie.

JIM

Extra innings.

SANDY

(Sinks into her chair)

Oh god.

ALBERTA

This is the tribe. You get used to waiting.

JIM

(To Alberta)

What you said. About Boston...

ALBERTA

How long do you want to wait to break the curse of Colavito?

(They both look at the furious Sandy)

KENNY

Ninth inning stretch! Who's comin' with me to kick Slider's ass?

(Blackout)

**ROCK AND ROLL HALL OF FAME****5:44 P.M.**

(A middle-aged man in a sweater and coat, HERBERT and a woman DELLA, in a skirt and coat stand looking at something O.S. Rock music plays)

DELLA

(Staring)

Yep. There it is.

HERBERT

(Staring)

I can't believe I'm standing next to it...

DELLA

It's a little smaller than I thought.

HERBERT

She was a small woman, Della. I mean, she was huge, but she was small. You know.

DELLA

But the car is just small.

HERBERT

But it's her car. The Janis Joplin Porsche.

DELLA

I can kind of see her driving up and down from L.A. to San Francisco in it.

HERBERT

(Singing)

"Come On! Take another little piece of my heart now, Baby!"

DELLA

Herbert.

HERBERT

You know she was wailing with the windows down and her hair whipping her sunglasses flying down the California interstate. Oh man.

DELLA

It's a good song.



HERBERT

(Singing)

"You'll know you got it... when it makes you feel good!"

DELLA

People are looking at us.

HERBERT

Let'em! This is rock and roll, Della! We all been there.  
We all felt it.

(Calling out)

Am I right? I mean, this is Janis Joplin's car, baby!

DELLA

Should we go into the rest of the museum? I've got our  
tickets.

HERBERT

The paint job is even more psychedelic in person. Can you  
imagine staring at this car on acid?

DELLA

I can't imagine staring at it on three cups of coffee  
anymore, let alone acid.

HERBERT

Oh, this is so awesome. This is so cool. This is so worth  
the drive from Jersey City.

DELLA

Cleveland in April looks like Trenton in April, don't you  
think?

HERBERT

Let's do it in the car.

DELLA

What??

HERBERT

I want to make love to you in the backseat of Janis  
Joplin's Porsche.

DELLA

Herbert. I think you need to sit down. I'll get you some  
water-

HERBERT

I'm serious, Della. The guard's not looking, we jump in,  
we make out-

DELLA

Herbert Jackson Willis, that is the most lame-brained suggestion-

HERBERT

You didn't think it was lame-brained at the Allman Brothers concert in Philly.

DELLA

That was thirty years ago.

HERBERT

And as I recall I'm not the one thought of a quickie in the porta-pottie at the Stones concert.

DELLA

Oh my god. I hadn't thought of that in years...

HERBERT

Are you kidding? I think about it every day!

DELLA

Every day?

HERBERT

Well, not every day. But I think about it.

DELLA

I was a young woman then, Herbie. I was crazy, I was daring-

HERBERT

So was I.

DELLA

I didn't have arthritis.

HERBERT

That's Janis' car, Della, you touch it, your arthritis will probably disappear, it's like the Waters at Lourdes-

DELLA

What's gotten into you?

HERBERT

It's what's gotten out of me, Della! When was the last time we pulled an all-nighter to figure out the meaning of life? When was the last time we just took off and drove for three days for a concert we didn't even have tickets for? When was the last time we rocked, Della? There's only so many years a man can teach Renaissance Literature before he has to get back to his honest-to-God wild roots!

DELLA

Oh god. You would have your mid-life crisis in Cleveland.

HERBERT

Do you see me chasing younger women? Am I trading in our Corolla for a Ferrari? I want my job, I want my house, I want my wife -- and I want to give it to you in the back of Janis' car!

DELLA

This building is a museum, Herbie. Not a rock concert. A museum. With a gift shop and a cafeteria.

HERBERT

It'd be like making love to HER. Both of us! To the music! It's our last chance to BE rock and roll!

(A young man bursts in and falls to his knees in front of the car, bowing his head, mumbling a prayer under his breath. This is MFUNE. Herbert and Della look at each other)

DELLA

I can't have sex when someone's praying near me. You know that.

HERBERT

(To Mfune)

Beautiful car, isn't it?

MFUNE

In the Second Age of Rock and Roll, the world of men divided into three: Acid, Bubblegum and Soul. And from the land of Port Arthur, Texas in the year One-Thousand-Nine-Hundred-And-Forty-Three A.D. there rose One Woman to Rule Them All.

HERBERT

Wow. You know your stuff.

MFUNE

And in the year One-Thousand-Nine-Hundred-and-Seventy, in the land of Hollywood, a hotel handmaiden of the name of Betsy Harris, was called upon to service a room rented to the One Who Ruled Them All-

DELLA

Ohmygod -- did she find Joplin's body?

MFUNE

No one was there. But in the chamber Betsy Harris found a small bag of plastic containing the elixirs necessary for a

fix of heroin. And thinking that the articles in the bag of plastic could ultimately prove fatal to the One Who Ruled Them All, Betsy Harris removed one item. The One Needle there could be no doubt had recently been in the arm of the One Who Ruled Them All.

HERBERT

Oh my god.

MFUNE

And Betsy Harris completed her work of stripping the sheets and she fled as chambermaids are wont to do. And it was not two days hence that the One Who Ruled Them All discovered another needle and completed her task of self-annihilation irregardless.

HERBERT

God rest her soul.

DELLA

What happened to the maid?

MFUNE

Betsy Harris was at the time co-renting her apartment with a sister, Rita Harris, while she attempted to create a band of funk known as "The Queens of Sheba"

DELLA

I never heard of them.

MFUNE

They never recorded. But as time passed it was ultimately realized that merely possessing the Needle of the One to Rule Them All was creating disruption and violence in the band -- a seriously bad mojo. And as the band began to disintegrate, the sister took the Needle from the apartment and delivered it unto a brother in Detroit. And things that should have been remembered... were forgotten. And that brother had a son, Mfune Harris, son of Walter, who in the Fifth Age of Rock and Roll attempted to create a ska band by the name of "Horns Aplenty". But as was the way of the One Needle, strife and discord began to rend the band asunder. And Mfune Harris discovered the Needle's unearthly will to destroy the Music of Men. And in that instant the quest of an age was undertaken -- facing the very depths of his own anguished soul and braving the construction on I-71, Mfune must return the Needle from whence it had come. Hour after hour, day after day, Mfune's resistance to the siren call of the Needle would be sorely tested, until at last Mfune reached the shrine of The One Who Ruled Them All. And he delivered the One Needle.

(He pulls out a plastic bag with a syringe needle in it)

DELLA

Oh my god.

HERBERT

So that's the needle Janis used to O.D.??

DELLA

It's the second-to-last needle. Didn't you listen to the story?

HERBERT

Still, that could be worth a ton on e-bay-

MFUNE

You mustn't touch it! I alone have been entrusted with the One Needle, and I alone must see it to its conclusion. You know not what you do.

DELLA

But why don't you take it to her grave?

MFUNE

Because this is where her music still lives. And where her car is.

HERBERT

See? He knows. My wife and I were just discussing getting it on in the backseat of her car.

DELLA

Herbert!

MFUNE

I understand that. It would be like making love to The One. To the music itself.

HERBERT

See? He knows.

MFUNE

And now, after all the perils and heartbreaks of this quest, at last I repair the One Needle to its rightful owner-

HERBERT

Wait. Can you wait 'til my wife and I are done? I don't wanta get a syringe in the tuckus in the middle of cookin', you know what I mean? Not even her syringe.

MFUNE

But I must return the needle!

HERBERT

Gimme ten minutes!

DELLA

It's been taking more than ten minutes lately, Herbie.

HERBERT

Janis's car, Della, Water of Lourdes.

(To Mfune)

Look, there's a great gift shop and cafeteria -- you can go pick up some Earth, Wind, and Fire refrigerator magnets or something-

(A young woman in wild attire and sunglasses enters, staring at the car. This is DIANA. The other three look at her)

DIANA

Whoa. So this is the car.

DELLA

Yes.

HERBERT

A car. One of many cars here. Maybe you want to go check out John Lennon's car.

DIANA

No. I want Janis' car.

MFUNE

As do we all.

DIANA

I want to destroy it.

HERBERT, DELLA, MFUNE

What?

DIANA

It's gotta go so that she can live, man.

DELLA

Oh my god. What is it about this car??

DIANA

It's not the car. It's the music.

## HERBERT AND MFUNE

Yes.

## DIANA

And the music can't breathe in this building, man. They had to build glass pyramids and domes of white steel and load it with as many talismans as they could dig up just to make a strong enough vault to hold the soul. But they did it. They trapped Janis and John Lee and Bessie and Elvis and Alan Freed and all of them in this tomb.

(Touching Della's chest)

But they're still trying to get out in here.

(Beating a heartbeat lightly)

In here. In here. Telling you what it always told you to do. If we want to let the music do it's thing -- to change the world -- we gotta set it free again.

(She takes out a book of matches and a can of lighter fluid)

## HERBERT

What are you doing?

## DIANA

I'm gonna burn this mother down with the exact replica of the matches and lighter fluid Jimi Hendrix used to set his Fender Stratocaster on fire at Monterey. I bought 'em in the gift shop.

## DELLA

Whoa whoa whoa-

## MFUNE

I must place the One Needle first-

## HERBERT

I must boink my wife first-

## DIANA

Yes! Destruction and Creation! The true meaning of Rock And Roll!

## HERBERT

So let us do our little Creation/Destruction thing, and then you can do your Destruction/Creation thing-

## DELLA

(To Herbert)

You really think the guards won't notice?

HERBERT

Screw'em if they notice. You think it's a coincidence all of us are here at the exact same place at the exact same time? It's meant to be, Della!

MFUNE

The One would never have cared if people noticed.

DIANA

Rock wants people to notice. It's all about turning up the volume.

MFUNE

I'm going to distract them. The security.

HERBERT

How?

DIANA

Dude. I am so ready to start singing all "500 Songs That Shaped Rock and Roll" at the top of my lungs.

MFUNE

I'll join you. And then I'll hurl the Needle into the car-

DIANA

And this whole place will go up like a bonfire at Woodstock!

HERBERT

(Singing)

"Freedom's just another word--"

DELLA AND HERBERT

"For nothing left to lose--"

ALL

"And nothing don't mean nothing if it ain't free!

(Holding each other, singing)

"Feeling good was easy, Lord, when he sang the blues--"

DELLA

"-- feeling good was good enough for meeee--"

ALL

"--good enough for me and my Bobby McGee!"

(It's a beautiful tableau -- we  
hear sirens -- security  
guards... and...)

(Blackout)



## LAKEVIEW CEMETERY

7:37 P.M.

(A young man in jeans and army jacket, VANCE, stands facing an unseen tombstone D.S., shaking a can of spray paint, preparing to spray. A woman walks up behind him in an overcoat, carrying flowers. This is JAQUELINE)

JAQUELINE

Oh, excuse me.

(Vance quickly looks around --  
sees no one but the woman)

VANCE

What.

JAQUELINE

I didn't see you there. It's getting dark so fast. I'm just passing through. Going over there.

VANCE

Okay.

(Stops to squint at the "tombstone")

JAQUELINE

He was a great man.

VANCE

Who.

JAQUELINE

(Gestures)

Rockefeller. Did a lot for this city.

VANCE

Yeah.

JAQUELINE

The parks, the gardens, money to the museums and orchestra and things.

VANCE

Yeah.

JAQUELINE

Why were you going to spray paint his tombstone?

VANCE

'Cause I can.

JAQUELINE

Ah.

(Beat.)

I heard on the radio coming in about a big fight in Tremont and some people attacking Janis Joplin's car at the Rock Hall. There's something about this city makes people want to tear stuff down.

VANCE

I don't want to destroy it. I just wanta add to it.

JAQUELINE

What are you gonna add?

VANCE

My name.

JAQUELINE

You got a really special name?

VANCE

Vance.

JAQUELINE

That's okay. Doesn't scream out to painted on Rockefeller's grave.

VANCE

Rockefeller's grave don't scream out the need to jut fifteen feet in the air givin' the finger to heaven, either.

JAQUELINE

He was a great man.

VANCE

And when someone stops to think about him, I want'em to think about Vance Kramer too.

JAQUELINE

They'll probably think "Vance Kramer was a hoodlum".

VANCE

That's fine. Long as they think about me.

JAQUELINE

They'll clean off your name, you know. It won't last.

VANCE

I'll put it on again. Or on Garfield's monument. I'm not done yet.

JAQUELINE

That would be good on a headstone. "I'm not done yet".

VANCE

I'm not gettin' a headstone. That's why I got spray paint.

JAQUELINE

Headstones aren't that expensive. Your family chips in-

VANCE

Which is good for people who got families.

JAQUELINE

Ah. Well, you won't be needing one for a long time anyway.

(Beat.)

Right? You look pretty young. Pretty strong and healthy-

VANCE

Ain't you got someplace to put those flowers?

JAQUELINE

My mother's grave. It's right over there. She died eight years ago. It's her birthday today. Carnations were her favorite -- beautiful, aren't they? My father always wanted her to have more expensive taste in flowers. But she loved carnations. I started getting them for her when I was five. Every birthday.

VANCE

I hate to break it to you, but I don't think she cares much anymore.

JAQUELINE

I do. Every birthday I finish my work, drive to Li Wah's for dinner, then over to Brunswick Florist to get carnations, and come to Lakeview to say hello. It's always so gorgeous at sunset. But usually it's snowing. We got lucky tonight.

VANCE

Your mom's lucky you're still around.

JAQUELINE

When I'm gone, it's gone. I'm the only one left.

VANCE

Then it all just disappears and in a hundred years it won't mean nothin'.

JAQUELINE

What about today?

VANCE

What.

JAQUELINE

Today I'm giving my mother flowers.

VANCE

Great.

JAQUELINE

And you're defacing another man's grave.

VANCE

Only the Rockefellers. I promise not to mess with your mom's grave, okay?

JAQUELINE

And my father.

VANCE

And your father.

JAQUELINE

And my aunts and uncles. And grandparents.

VANCE

The whole bunch. All the non-Rockefellers. Fine.

JAQUELINE

I have a plot there. Waiting for me. You won't deface that, will you?

VANCE

I promise. Now can you move it along? It's gettiin' dark.

(She stands there with her flowers)

VANCE (CONT'D)

I'm serious. Can you just... go lay your flowers.

JAQUELINE

Is this a political thing? Like you're sticking it to the Man?

VANCE

The only thing I got against Rockefeller is that we're standin' here talking about him seventy years after he died, and nobody's gonna be talking about us seven days after we're gone.

JAQUELINE

So what's the problem?

VANCE

Don't you wanta be remembered? Don't you want'em to think about you when you walk outta the room?

JAQUELINE

So do something memorable.

VANCE

I'm trying!

JAQUELINE

Oh please. This isn't memorable, it's a nuisance. You need to do something solid. Work on a skyscraper or something. Something you can look at and say "That's mine. I did that and it'll last."

VANCE

Have you done that?

JAQUELINE

No. I'm a teller at Key Bank.

VANCE

That's gonna go down in history.

JAQUELINE

All right. It's bullshit. The Rockies will tumble, Gibraltar will crumble -- the Detroit-Superior Bridge is gonna come down some day. Rockefeller's big finger here is gonna be as dusty as he is soon enough.

VANCE

But that don't make no sense. Why are we even here if nothin' we do is gonna matter?

JAQUELINE

I said it wouldn't last. I didn't say it wouldn't matter.

VANCE

Yeah, that was the problem with the dams too.

JAQUELINE

What dams?

VANCE

These dams we'd build when I was a kid, in the gutters by the curb. Just mud and leaves and sticks, and then my pops would turn on the hose and run water down the gutter to test us, to test what we made, and we'd try to save it, keep adding dams, encirclin' the water, whatever it took.

But eventually the water always broke through and ran down the storm drain back to the lake. Then the other kids would go play football or watch T.V., and I'd still be there, working on that dam. Cause it did matter and it should have lasted.

JAQUELINE

You ever see the sand painting?

VANCE

The what?

JAQUELINE

The Tibetans. They came to the Art Museum a while back. A group of Buddhist monks brought all this colored sand, reds and blues and golds and everything. And they made this huge glorious painting on this big low table in the armor court. A few grains at a time, praying and working for hours everyday for weeks. Heaven and Earth and the Afterlife and karmic journeys and it was all perfectly symmetrical, one grain after one grain after one grain. It was the one perfect thing I ever saw in my whole life.

VANCE

Is it still there?

JAQUELINE

When they finally got it done all those weeks later, they had a big ceremony -- it felt like the whole city of Cleveland was there -- and they took the painting, carried it down to the lagoon by the museum... and they chanted and prayed... and then they blew the sand into the water. Whoosh. Nothing. No trace it had ever existed. Only in our memories. And in God's memory, I guess.

VANCE

Did they make a lot of money?

JAQUELINE

Just enough to live on. And some to take back to their home temple or wherever, I guess.

VANCE

Sounds like a pretty cheap stunt to screw up something beautiful just because you can.

(Jaqueline looks at him. At the spray paint can in his hand. He looks at it too)

VANCE (CONT'D)

This is different. I'm trying to mark somethin', not erase nothin'.

JAQUELINE

I think their point was that even the most gorgeous marks have to be erased.

VANCE

Then why do anything??

JAQUELINE

I don't know. To create memories?

VANCE

Memories are the first to go. Ask my pops.

JAQUELINE

I'm not sure about that. If all of my memories add up to one tiny grain of sand. And all yours add up to another. And someone else's another and another, different colored sand flowing out into patterns we can't even see, making new valleys and hills and expanses to the horizon, shaping the landscape for all the other grains of sand to follow long after we're gone... We're making homes for the memories of children not even born yet. Right now, I think you and I are leaving something because we'll remember meeting each other.

VANCE

You're gonna remember me?

JAQUELINE

I've been coming to Lakeview since I was a little girl. I never met a man about to deface Rockefeller's grave before. I'll remember you.

VANCE

Thanks...

JAQUELINE

(Holds out her hand)

Come here.

(Vance pauses...)

JAQUELINE (CONT'D)

I want you to come meet my mother. I'll give you some memories about her and you can give me some memories about someone. We'll mix our colors up a little.  
(She holds out her hand. Beat. He takes it. She hands him the flowers in the same hand as the spray paint)

JAQUELINE (CONT'D)

Come on.

(They exit.)

(Blackout)



**THE FLATS**

**11:54 P.M.**

(Thumping rock music from indoors. Two women stumble out of a club in the night air in nice party clothes, SHANEEQUA, sober, and ROSIE, not.)

SHANEEQUA

-it's freezing out here!

ROSIE

April in Cleveland. Let's go back in.

SHANEEQUA

Not 'til you tell me what he said.

ROSIE

He was looking at you down the bar and he leaned over and said, "That woman is the angel I'm going to marry." And he got tears in his eyes and stuffed another handful of party mix in his mouth.

SHANEEQUA

See, this is why this is a bad idea. Work parties in the Flats always go like this. It always ends up with someone proposing or getting pregnant or getting fired or moving to Columbus.

ROSIE

Which one's the worst?

SHANEEQUA

I'm not marrying him. I don't even know his name. He's just the I/T guy.

ROSIE

It's okay. I don't think he knows your name either. That's what the wedding is for.

SHANEEQUA

Please, let's just go before he comes out here after us-

(Demetrius, in party clothes,  
stumbles out, smashed)

DEMETRIUS

Ladies!!

SHANEEQUA

Oh god.

ROSIE

Hey, I/T Guy!

DEMETRIUS

Demetrius. My name's Demetrius.

ROSIE

(To Shaneequa)

See? There's one bridge crossed.

SHANEEQUA

Burn it. Just burn the bridge now.

ROSIE

I'm Rosie and this is Shaneequa.

DEMETRIUS

Those are the most beautiful names I have ever heard in my entire life. Would you ladies like to come back in out of the cold and I'll buy you a drink and we can maybe shake it out on the dance floor a little?

SHANEEQUA

See, if we shake you, I'm afraid of what'll come out.

(Demetrius busts out laughing.  
Rosie joins him)

SHANEEQUA (CONT'D)

The only thing worse than after-hour Flats parties are after-hour Flats parties with employees of Key Bank.

DEMETRIUS

That is so true. You are so right. See, that's what I dig about women is there's this ancient wisdom...

SHANEEQUA

Get your ancient breath out of my face.

(Rosie and Demetrius bust out laughing again. A slightly tipsy man walks out in a suit, ERNIE)

ERNIE

Hola, compadres -- Whoo! Chilly! Party's moving outside, huh?

ROSIE

Absolutely! We got the river, we got the night, we got the bridge arcing over our heads like an arm of the Earth Goddess reaching across space to grab the opposite shore!

DEMETRIUS

The bridge Bob Hope built!

ERNIE

Actually, it's the Detroit Superior. Hope Memorial is over there.

ROSIE

It's Cleveland, it's the little shed over there where Moses Cleveland first set foot and said, "By God, there may be bugs and sweltering heat and hostile natives and lousy planting soil and freezing cold and storms off the lake that'll rip your frickin' lungs out -- but by God people can live here!!"

DEMETRIUS AND ROSIE

YEAAHHH!!

ERNIE

Actually, that's not Settler's Landing, that's just Heritage Park One. It's just a little shed.

DEMETRIUS

Damn, man, who are you?

ERNIE

I'm Ernie Bernicello from Brecksville. I'm the Relationship Manager for the Serpentine Chevrolet account. I conduct targeted sales and business development activities to expand their commercial finance portfolio and promote the Key Difference in commitment.

(Handing a card to Demetrius)

I'd be interested in knowing what you do and would love to meet with you sometime to exchange information.

DEMETRIUS

I'm just the systems guy. What we got to talk about?

ROSIE

Ernie. Ernie. You don't come to the Flats to network. You come here to blow out the night and knock this city on its obese ass.

ERNIE

Ah. Well. I figured I could do both. A little networking. A little knocking obese asses.

(Handing her a card)

I'd be interested in knowing what you do and would love to meet with you sometime to exchange information.

ROSIE

I'm Rosie. That's all you need to know.

SHANEEQUA

And I'm cold. If we're not leaving, I'm gonna go in and at least check out the stupid Indians game or something-

ERNIE

Actually it's over. The Indians won.

ROSIE

Really?

DEMETRIUS

Go Tribe!!

ERNIE

I just saw it on the T.V. Bottom of the 17th inning, Belliard hit it to left field and I guess some lady fell out of the bleachers over the field just as the ball hit the home run porch.

DEMETRIUS AND ROSIE

WHOO! Go Tribe!

ROSIE

First the Cavs, then the Tribe, then the Browns and the Barons and the Force and everyone-

DEMETRIUS

This is the year we take it all...

SHANEEQUA

We take it home. Rosie. Rosie, look at me. Give me your keys so I can do my job.

ERNIE

(To Shaneequa, getting out a card)

Before you go in, here's my card, I'd be interested in knowing what you do and would love to meet with you sometime-

(A woman steps out in nice clothes and a coat, a little drunk. This is BETTY)

BETTY

Oh, hi. Hi, everyone. Whoo, chilly, isn't it?

(To Shaneequa)

Hi, I'm Betty. I'm a Project Manager.

SHANEEQUA

I'm Shaneequa. I'm a teller-

BETTY

Oh, that's so wonderful. I thought about becoming a teller. I'm a people person.

SHANEEQUA

I was too 'til tonight.

DEMETRIUS

Why you gotta be so sour, woman?

ROSIE

She doesn't drink.

DEMETRIUS, ERNIE, AND BETTY

Ahh.

SHANEEQUA

I do too! I'm just the designated driver!

BETTY

I don't like to drink either. I'm just being social. I like friends.

ERNIE

(To Betty)

So do I. I'm Ernie Bernicello.

(Hands her a card)

I'd be interested in knowing what you do and would love to meet with you sometime to exchange information.

BETTY

I would love that.

(A man in a nice suit and slacks walks out. This is MR. OBERKIN.)

MR. OBERKIN

Ah, hello, everybody!

SHANEEQUA, BETTY, AND ERNIE

Mr. Oberkin!

MR. OBERKIN

Relax! Relax, people. It's Skip. For tonight, it's not Mr. Oberkin. It's Skip. Okay?

ALL

Okay.

MR. OBERKIN

Getting some fresh air, eh?

ALL

Yes. Yeah. Yeah.

MR. OBERKIN

A little on the chilled side, isn't it?

ALL

Yes. Yeah. It certainly is. Yes.

(Pause. Silence. The all  
stand... waiting...)

MR. OBERKIN

I suppose we'd all be a little warmer if the river caught  
fire again, eh?

(They all laugh appreciatively. It  
dies out. Pause. They wait...  
tipsy...)

BETTY

I was just saying how pretty the river is, Mr. Oberkin.

MR. OBERKIN

Skip.

BETTY

Skip. I'm Betty Lammens. I'm the Project Manager for the  
Partnership Enhancement between Key Center and  
TransNational.

MR. OBERKIN

Super. How's that going?

BETTY

For shit.

(They stare at her)

I mean super! We're overcoming human capital issues and  
functionality models that have their challenges. I just  
don't know if anyone likes me, sir. I mean, that's the  
God's Honest Truth, I've never been popular and here I am  
in charge and I mean, they respect me, but there's no love,  
you know? I mean, if I died tonight, they wouldn't -- I  
mean, I don't have anyone, sir. It's just me and the cats  
out in Avon Lake, and God's Honest Truth, if I died tonight  
those ungrateful sons-of-bitch cats would just as soon eat  
me as mourn me, sir. Do you know what that's like, sir?  
To be so lonely that the cats are going to eat you in the  
dead of night? Jesus, oh, Jesus-

(She breaks down, sobbing into his  
suit)

MR. OBERKIN

I, ah, that sounds rough, Ms. Labbison-

BETTY

It's Lammens! You don't even know my goddam name!!

DEMETRIUS

(Steps to Betty)

I feel you, sister. I feel you. I'm in there implementing authentication infrastructure day in day out, and do you think anyone gives a good rat's ass?

BETTY

No!

DEMETRIUS

No. We're all alone in this world. It's only people like you and me that realize that all the Key Difference on Earth don't mean nothing without Love!

BETTY

Yes!

(They hold each other)

ROSIE

Whoo-hooo!

(She starts dancing)

Do you like dancing, Skip?

MR. OBERKIN

Um-

SHANEEQUA

Rosie, please, I don't think-

ROSIE

I'm just dancing. Nothing wrong with dancing at a company party, is there, Skip?

MR. OBERKIN

No! It's a chance to let our hair down and facilitate the two-way communication process! I'm sure that includes dancing!

(He tries a few awkward steps)

ERNIE

Mr. Oberkin. Skip. I'm Ernie Bernicello. Relationship Manager for the Serpentini Chevrolet portfolio. We met at the Christmas party.

MR. OBERKIN

(Still dancing)

Of course. Ernie.

SHANEEQUA

Please, Rosie, let's go -- I really don't feel good-

(Rosie takes Shaneequa's hands and starts slow dancing with her. Demetrius and Betty awkwardly slow-dance as well. Everybody is now moving to the thump of the music from inside. Several moments pass. It's beautiful. Weird.)

ERNIE

(Dancing next to Mr. Oberkin)

I'd love to meet with you and discuss how we're building the Key Center clientele referral pipeline.

MR. OBERKIN

I'd like that.

ROSIE

Skip, you know Shaneequa, don't you?

MR. OBERKIN

I, ah, I don't I believe I do.

ROSIE

No, you guys were getting it on at the Christmas party down here -- remember you dancing to that Michael Stanley song?

SHANEEQUA

I gotta go.

MR. OBERKIN

Well, of course I remember! How are you doing, Shaneequa?

SHANEEQUA

Oh now you want to know? Twelve voice-mails and ten e-mails later and now you want to talk?

ERNIE

She's a teller, Mr. Oberkin. One of our chief assets in maintaining our Key Corp commitment.

MR. OBERKIN

And when our tellers want to go home we certainly let them-

SHANEEQUA

You want to know how I'm doing? I'm pregnant, you asshole!



(Beat. They all stop dancing  
and stare at Shaneequa and Mr.  
Oberkin)

MR. OBERKIN

See? Two-way communication! The company party's working!

ROSIE

He got you pregnant??

BETTY

Demetrius, will you marry me?

DEMETRIUS

(To Shaneequa)

You won't give a black man the time of day, but you let  
this white dickwad knock you up?

SHANEEQUA

Is it any of your business-

MR. OBERKIN

I don't think there's any call for verbal abuse, Mr....

DEMETRIUS

Demetrius Blanchard, you sonofabitch.

ERNIE

One of the I/T guys, sir.

BETTY

I'm just so tired of being alone, Demetrius-

DEMETRIUS

(To Mr. Oberkin)

This your way of expanding her portfolio, Skippie?

MR. OBERKIN

Listen, this may be a fun informal way to establish a team  
environment-

DEMETRIUS

(Moving for Mr. Oberkin)

I ain't workin' for no sexual harassing Area Retail Leader-

MR. OBERKIN

Unsafe environment! He's creating an unsafe environment!

DEMETRIUS

This is the Flats, you mother. You want safe, go back to  
Mentor.

MR. OBERKIN

That's it! You're fired!

BETTY

Aahh!

DEMETRIUS

You can't fire me! I'm moving to Columbus!

(He charges Mr. Oberkin -- Betty, Ernie and Rosie keep them apart-)

SHANEEQUA

I think I'm gonna throw up...

ERNIE

(To Demetrius)

If you're in Columbus, will you give my card to Gina in HR? They're looking for Key Center Relationship Managers-

MR. OBERKIN

Key Difference! Key Difference! Key Difference!!

(And a light snow begins to fall over them...)

(They pause...)

DEMETRIUS

What the...

ROSE

Snow! It's snowing!

SHANEEQUA

Of course it's snowing. It's April in Cleveland.

(CLUNK. A large bolt falls from the sky, landing in front of them. They yell and jump back)

BETTY

Oh my god!

MR. OBERKIN

Where'd that come from?

ERNIE

That's not snow.

ROSIE

It's Cleveland snow! It's Rust Belt Factory Snow from Heaven!

SHANEEQUA

It came from the bridge.

BETTY

The Detroit Superior Bridge is falling apart?

(They all look up...)

ERNIE

It seems to be holding...

SHANEEQUA

There's two people up there... a man and a woman looking down at us...

MR. OBERKIN

...and waving.

(They all vaguely wave back)

DEMETRIUS

Jesus. Look at that bridge. Ain't nothing could tear that down.

BETTY

Not even a midnight snow in Cleveland.

(Pause. They all stand in the dark looking up at the snow. Distant sound of traffic...)

ROSIE

Beautiful, isn't it?

(Blackout.)

**END OF PLAY**