

Home

by

Lynn Niederman Silver

HOME

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HOME

*for Nicole, David, that one room schoolhouse and all my friends in
Independence, KS*

HOME

Home was originally developed during the William Inge writing residency and produced at the William Inge theater in Independence, Kansas directed by Karen Carpenter and featuring the following cast:

Lana.....Antoinette LaVecchio

Richard.....Joseph Gomez

CAST: 1 male, 1 female

Richard-late fifties-seventies. Mid-western. Speaks with a twang. Calm, spiritual, ex-con, ex-drinker. Been married to Faylene for forty years.

Lana-late forties-early sixties. New Yorker. Neurotic, fearful, no spirituality, drinks to cover feelings.

TIME: Now

PLACE: A small town in Kansas

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SCENE 1

LANA, anywhere from late forties to early sixties sits on a porch which wraps around an old large Mid-western home. Her feet are up on the railing, eyes closed soaking in the late afternoon sun. There's the sound of a dog barking and every so often we hear a far-off train whistle.

RICHARD approaches. He is wearing jeans, sneakers and a sweatshirt. On his head he wears a baseball cap.

RICHARD. Howdy.

LANA. *(She is startled and jumps up.)* OH MY GOD!

RICHARD. Din't mean ta scare ya none.

LANA. What do you want?

RICHARD. Nothin'.

LANA. What are you doing here?

RICHARD. *(He takes a step forward.)* Jus' wanna-

LANA. -Look, I don't have any money.

RICHARD. Okay.

LANA. *(she picks up cell phone.)* I have a cell phone.

RICHARD. Okay.

LANA. The police are on speed dial.

RICHARD. Okay. *(He takes a step forward.)*

LANA. Don't make me use it.

RICHARD. I'm not here ta rob ya.

LANA. Then what do you want?!

RICHARD. Why don't ya put that thang down?

LANA. Not until you tell me who you are and what you're doing on my front lawn.

RICHARD. I jus' came by ta welcome ya ta the neighborhood.

LANA. You're my neighbor?

RICHARD. Yup.

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LANA. (*cautious.*) Where do you live?

RICHARD. Jus' right up the road there. If ya look, (*he points.*) ya can see a house painted green with a rust border.

LANA. (*Lana looks.*) That one on the corner?

RICHARD. Yup.

LANA. (*holding up cell phone again.*) How do I know you really live there?

RICHARD. Guess ya jus' gonna have ta trust me. (*holds up a bag.*) I got ya some pecan tarts. (*he opens the bag.*) They're real good. (*takes one out.*) Ya want one?

LANA. No, no thank you. (*She waves at him.*) Bye. (*She turns to leave.*)

RICHARD. I'm jus' gonna set this bag right on down here.

LANA. Look, I don't want to be rude, but I'm really not comfortable talking to strangers.

RICHARD. (*he steps onto porch.*) Where are my manners? I clean forgot to introduce myself. Between seein' such a beautiful woman settin' on the porch an' scarin' her half ta death I plum forgot all 'bout introducin' myself. No wonder you were jumpin' out of yer skivvies. (*extends his hand.*) Richard, but folks around here call me Rich. And what's yer name darlin'?

LANA. I really really don't-

RICHARD. -it's just yer name darlin'. I swear I ain't gonna hurt ya none.

LANA. Lana.

RICHARD. Pleased ta meet ya Lana. Sorry 'bout scarin' ya. Around here, we're real neighborly an' we jus' kinda approach ya.

LANA. Yeah, well, in New York that's a mugger.

RICHARD. That's where yer from?

LANA. Yeah.

RICHARD. Which part?

LANA. New York City.

RICHARD. Never been there myself. Wish I had been; always wanted ta see Times Square. Do ya go see the ball drop on New Year's?

LANA. No.

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RICHARD. I'd love ta see that. Must be real excitin'. (*holds up pecan tart.*) You should try one of these. They're real tasty.

LANA. Look, I-

RICHARD. -Look at that!

LANA. (*she jumps.*) What?!!

RICHARD. (*points to someone across the street.*) Over there across the street; that there's Mary Lee gittin' in her car. (*calls to her.*) Hey they're girl! How ya doin'? (*He waves to Mary Lee.*) See. If I wasn't yer neighbor, she wouldn't have waved back, now would she?

LANA. I guess not. You can't be too careful these days. You never know.

RICHARD. I understand.

LANA. Cars drive by here with the Confederate flag flying out their window. They look like they're straight out of the movie 'Deliverance.'

RICHARD. Yup.

LANA. And in the paper today, some woman was found dead after a date with some guy she met online.

RICHARD. I read that.

LANA. Then, of course, there's terrorism. Don't even get me started on that; it's a scary fucking world.

RICHARD. Yup.

LANA. Also, I wasn't expecting somebody to, you know, just walk up and say hello like that.

RICHARD. I would've come by earlier, but jus' found out ya was here. It's real nice ta have someone new in town. We're real glad to have ya here. (*he sits.*)

LANA. What are you doing?

RICHARD. My legs git real tired when I stand too much. I ain't as young as I use ta be.

LANA. I really-

RICHARD. -kin I trouble yer fer some pop?

LANA. Look, I have to-

RICHARD. -I promise not ta stay long.

LANA. It's not that. I was just-

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RICHARD. -water's fine too. (*Lana exits into house and returns with a bottle of water and a bottle of wine. She pours herself a glass. No one speaks for a moment. Lana is a bit uncomfortable.*) So, did ya move here?

LANA. No.

RICHARD. Jus' rentin'?

LANA. Yeah.

RICHARD. (*laughs.*) Well, that's good.

LANA. What?

RICHARD. That ya din't move here.

LANA. Ah, you're the second person that said that to me.

RICHARD. Guess it's cause there's only bout eight thousand people livin' here an' most of 'em dream of gittin' out; bein' such a small town an' all. I came here when I was 'bout fifteen an' never left. It's a real peaceful way ta live an' the people are real friendly. Everybody knows everybody an' everything. Hell, ya can't walk down the street without somebody seein' ya an' callin' out yer name. From what I've seen on the television, I'm guessin', it's not like that there in New York.

LANA. We have eight thousand people in three blocks. If someone called out my name, I'd run.

RICHARD. I don't know how ya do it.

LANA. I like the anonymity.

RICHARD. Ah.

LANA. Don't get me wrong, New York kicks your ass, but then you turn the corner and bam, it's the greatest place on earth.

RICHARD. Well, I couldn't live there. That's fer sure.

LANA. (*Lana looks at her cell phone.*) To tell you the truth, I'm really happy to be away for awhile.

RICHARD. (*An uncomfortable silence until...*) Real nice day we're havin'.

LANA. (*another awkward pause.*) Your house; it's beautiful.

RICHARD. Yup. I like it.

LANA. Have you lived there a long time?

RICHARD. Forty years.

LANA. Wow.

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RICHARD. Yup. It's important to have a place ya kin call home.
(another awkward pause.) So, what ya here fer?

LANA. I'm a visiting professor.

RICHARD. Yer over at the college?

LANA. Yeah.

RICHARD. I never liked school very much.

LANA. Why not?

RICHARD. My favorite subject was recess an' that din't last very long.
(beat.) I wasn't a very good student. Hell, I flunked driver's ed.

LANA. How did you do that?!

RICHARD. Teacher tol' me ta copy ten dictionary pages. I went ta the library an' copied' em on that there Xerox machine. When I handed 'em in, he said I was cheatin'. Hell, he tol' me ta copy 'em. Wasn't my fault he din't say how.

LANA. *(Lana laughs.)* I would've flunked you too.

RICHARD. Yup, well...*(beat.)* So, how ya findin' bein' here so far?

LANA. It's quiet; very quiet.

RICHARD. *(he laughs.)* That's fer damn sure. There's nothin' to do here; 'cept drink an' I gave that up some thirty years ago. I was like the tomcat screwin' the skunk. I din't get alls I wants, but I sure got alls I can stands. *(he laughs again. Lana is confused, but doesn't say anything. beat.)* We don't even have a hospital here.

LANA. No hospital?!

RICHARD. Closest one is fifty miles away.

LANA. What if I get sick?

RICHARD. Guess ya call 911 an' they'll haul yer ass on out of here, but that's 'bout it.

LANA. *(shocked.)* Oh my god.

RICHARD. There's St. John's over on Myrtle Street.

LANA. St. John's?

RICHARD. It's a clinic.

LANA. What happened to the hospital?

RICHARD. Closed back in October. Jus' tore it down the other day.

LANA. Wow. That's pretty scary.

RICHARD. Yup. *(another awkward pause.)*

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LANA. *(starts to stand.)* Well, it was really nice of you to-

RICHARD. -So, what do ya teach?

LANA. *(slowly sits.)* History.

RICHARD. Now, that there was the only subject I liked; lots of bad guys.

LANA. And good guys; don't forget them.

RICHARD. My Momma use ta say, "if ya din't know the past, ya din't know nothing."

LANA. Ah, that's very wise.

RICHARD. Yup.

LANA. But, unfortunately, knowing the past isn't enough. If it was, things would be way different.

RICHARD. Bet you're a real good teacher.

LANA. I'm okay. Actually, I am pretty good.

RICHARD. Of course ya are. That's why they shipped ya here.

LANA. I guess so. *(awkward pause. Lana checks her cell phone.)*

RICHARD. Heard it was real cold back there in New York.

LANA. There was a blizzard last Saturday.

RICHARD. Heard 'bout that. Ya got somethin' like twenty inches.

LANA. *(Cell phone text message; a ding sound.)* Twenty eight.

(She types a text message; multitasking.) Strange for March. *(texting.)*

Sorry. *(still texting.)* I was supposed to be here Sunday, *(looks up.)* but all the airports were closed. *(ding of phone.)* Sorry. *(talks while texting.)* I arrived yesterday. *(looks up.)* Very stressful.

RICHARD. Well, ya got here when ya was suppose ta git here. Jus' like we hav'ta go through what we hav'ta go through ta get where we're goin'. *(Silence, awkward again.)*

LANA. *(Lana looks at her cell, the time, and starts to stand.)* Well, I have to -

RICHARD. -I've been married forty two years. *(Lana slowly sits again.)* Have two daughters; one forty, the other thirty seven. They live 'bout two hours north of here; don't git ta see 'em much. Kinda miss the gran' kids and all. Ya have any?

LANA. Grandchildren?

RICHARD. Both.

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LANA. Just a daughter. Twenty two. Single.

RICHARD. Jus' one?

LANA. Just one.

RICHARD. That's purty unheard of in these parts.

LANA. It's expensive, in New York, to have a lot of kids.

RICHARD. Girls git married round here purty much after high school. Ya gotta git a fella real quick 'cause them boys kin go through girls like cold water on a summer day. *(beat.)* Yer husband don't mind ya comin' here?

LANA. I'm divorced.

RICHARD. Sorry to hear.

LANA. Don't be.

RICHARD. How long ya all married?

LANA. Together for sixteen years; married for thirteen.

RICHARD. That's a bit of time. Ya don't just throw that away. Must have been purty unhappy.

LANA. Yeah, well. *(beat.)* It seems like marriage is a long time thing around here.

RICHARD. Ain't that what it's supposed to be?

LANA. Not back east.

RICHARD. Ya gotta learn ta love someone when it's difficult. My wife, Faylene, is hooked up to a damn oxygen machine. She has what they call COPD. She can't really git out much, not that there's much to git out fer nowadays. In the ol' days, we use ta go ta church functions, but it's too much for her ta git around. She don't like carryin' that tank thang. I don't much blame 'er. As a matter of fact, there's some kind of dinner theater thang at the church tonight. You should go.

LANA. Maybe I will. What church?

RICHARD. The Baptist one right up the road a bit on Main Street. The vice president of the bank plays the sheriff. Now, if ya do go, make sure it's the Baptist one. There's forty four churches in this town.

LANA. Wow.

RICHARD. Yup. We got the Baptist, the Methodist, the Presbyterian, the Lutheran, the Pentecostal Holiness, one Catholic church, hell we got 'em all. *(laughs.)* 'Cept we don't have a Jewish church. We don't have

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too many of them folks round here. We use ta have a department store on Main Street run by one of them Jewish men. *(beat.)* Ya need a church while yer here?

LANA. No thank you.

RICHARD. Ya don't go to church Lana?

LANA. *(she's uncomfortable.)* No.

RICHARD. I'm not a religious man myself, but I am what ya might call spiritual. I don't know what God looks like, how tall he is or what race he is, an' I really don't give a damn. What I do know is when that breeze crosses my lips I know there's a God an' he's with me. Want a piece of candy? These are real good, but I warn ya, they can rip yer teeth out; fake or real.

LANA. No, thank you. *(looks at cell.)* Oh, wow, it's one o'clock. I have a class at four. I really need to-

RICHARD. -my legs jus' need a little more restin' if that's alright with ya; arthritis an' all.

LANA. *(checks cell again.)* Well, alright. I guess a few more minutes is okay. *(pause.)*

RICHARD. Why don't ya go ahead an' try one of them pecan tarts?

LANA. I'm watching what I eat.

RICHARD. Why would ya do that?

LANA. I don't want to gain weight.

RICHARD. Ya look purty good ta me.

LANA. *(cell phone ding. she picks up cell, reads the text. She starts to type.)* Sorry.

RICHARD. *(he nods. beat.)* How long ya here fer?

LANA. *(She's not listening, texting.)* Excuse me?

RICHARD. How long ya here fer?

LANA. Sorry. *(texting.)* Just a sec. *(puts down cell.)* What did you say?

RICHARD. How long ya gonna be here?

LANA. *(she pours a glass of wine.)* Until the end of May.

RICHARD. It'll be real nice an' green by then.

LANA. *(she puts down the phone. They sit quietly again. She drinks.)* So, you believe there's a God?

RICHARD. You a doubter?

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LANA. I'm pragmatic.

RICHARD. Meanin'?

LANA. If I can't see it, or touch it...

RICHARD. Than *that* there's the problem. Yer never goin' be able to do that.

LANA. I envy people who believe there's something.

RICHARD. Jus' look up an' see the beauty.

LANA. (*Lana looks up, sees what she thinks is a flying ant.*) What is it with these flying ants? They're all over the place. I killed one in the kitchen this morning.

RICHARD. That there's a wasp.

LANA. (*Lana jumps up.*) Oh shit! What do I do?!

RICHARD. Git some spray, aim, an' run.

LANA. I'm serious!

RICHARD. Go on in an' check under the kitchen sink. Bet there's some spray there.

LANA. (*she exits and returns with a spray can. Hands it to him.*) You do it. Please. I only kill New York roaches.

RICHARD. (*he sprays at the wasps.*) They're probably gittin' in the house through them there windows where the mouldin' is rotted. I got a friend who's an exterminator. I kin ask im' ta come on over an' spray the house fer ya, if ya want. He owes me a favor.

LANA. Oh, okay, thanks. That's really nice of you, but I'll just call the landlord.

RICHARD. Ya sure?

LANA. I appreciate the offer though.

RICHARD. Okay then. (*Richard sits again.*)

LANA. (*text alert.*) Excuse me.

RICHARD. Go right ahead.

LANA. Oh, no.

RICHARD. Is somethin' wrong?

LANA. It's my best friend from high school. Her father's dying.

RICHARD. Oh my.

LANA. I hate this! (*Another text alert. Lana reads it.*)

RICHARD. Can I-

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LANA. -Shit! He stopped dialysis. Why the hell would he do that?

RICHARD. Guess it's his choice.

LANA. *(getting upset.)* It's suicide.

RICHARD. Guess he figured he had enough.

LANA. What about his children?

RICHARD. What bout 'em?

LANA. They're losing their father!

RICHARD. Sometimes bein' here jus' isn't worth the pain. Not that I'm agreein' -

LANA. -it's selfish.

RICHARD. Maybe, maybe not.

LANA. You just can't give up like that.

RICHARD. Well, we all die. That's just a plain fact 'an when yer sick maybe choosin' when ta go ain't that bad.

LANA. *(upset.)* I hate this! I really hate this.

RICHARD. That he's makin' the choice?

LANA. No, that everyone around me is dying! It scares me.

RICHARD. *(he stands.)* Well, I guess I'll be goin'.

LANA. Oh no! Don't leave.

RICHARD. I don't wanna intrude.

LANA. You're not.

RICHARD. I'll come back another time.

LANA. No, stay, please.

RICHARD. You don't need me to be-

LANA. -I'm glad you're here.

RICHARD. Well, I-

LANA. -I don't want to be alone right now.

RICHARD. Maybe it's best if-

LANA. -Please. I mean, it. I was just planning on taking a walk. It can wait. *(She pours herself another glass of wine. Beat.)*

RICHARD. *(he's uncomfortable, but sits down anyway.)* Alright *(uncomfortable pause.)*

LANA. Do you think something exists after we die?

RICHARD. Ya doubt that too?

LANA. You don't?

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RICHARD. Nope.

LANA. How can you be so sure?

RICHARD. You're here now, aren't ya?

LANA. Yeah, so?

RICHARD. Well, that energy don't jus' go away.

LANA. Where's it go?

RICHARD. Where's the electricity go when ya turn off a light bulb?

Every time ya turn it back on, it's there, isn't it?

LANA. So you think our energy exists in another form?

RICHARD. Yes, ma'am, I do.

LANA. What about consciousness? Is there some sort of consciousness after? I mean, I don't have memories of a past life.

RICHARD. That's because God touched you right here. *(he points to upper lip.)* May I? *(she nods yes.)* This piece of skin right here, under yer nose, that indentation, no need for it, but God placed his thumb there, when you was born, an' wiped away any memory of yer past life. By doin' that, ya kin start a fresh.

LANA. That's good. I like that.

RICHARD. Ya always been like this?

LANA. Like what?

RICHARD. Questionin' things.

LANA. I'm curious.

RICHARD. Well, ya kin over think somethin' too much. I know my mind is like a bad neighborhood. If I stay in it too long, I kin git mugged.

LANA. You want to know a secret?

RICHARD. If ya wanna tell me.

LANA. When I was a kid, after my mother said goodnight and turned off the lights, I'd jump out of bed, run into her room and beg her not to die. That's not normal.

RICHARD. Suppose it ain't.

LANA. Not quite sure why I did that...I'm sorry. I have no idea why I'm telling you this. I don't even know you.

RICHARD. I have that affect on people. It's a good thang.

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LANA. Every time someone dies, I face mortality. It scares the shit out of me. *(She pours herself another glass of wine. beat.)*

RICHARD. I suppose from the minute we know death, we start runnin' from it, but it's gonna catch ya one way or another. A teacher, fifty, up and died here the other day, unexpectedly; taught third grade. Heard all those little kids was bawlin' their eyes out. What ya goin' do 'cept bawl yer eyes out with 'em? How kin ya explain somethin' like that to 'em? What ya gonna say? It's goin' be alright? It ain't goin' be alright. Maybe down the road some, but...it's jus' a damn shame. And darlin' there's not one god darn thing any of us can do about it. I mean, if your Aunt had balls, she'd be your uncle. It's as simple as that.

LANA. What's that mean?

RICHARD. *(laughs.)* You gotta accept things the way they are.

LANA. *(she gulps her wine, text ding.)* Excuse me. I'm sorry.

RICHARD. That's alright. Go ahead.

LANA. Fuck.

RICHARD. Yer friend agin?

LANA. *(she's clearly bothered.)* No. Someone else.

RICHARD. Yer sure are busy with that thang.

LANA. *(types a text, then stands.)* I'm going for that walk.

RICHARD. Oh, we don't walk much around here.

LANA. Walking is good for you.

RICHARD. Suppose it is.

LANA. Actually, this would be a great place to ride a bike.

RICHARD. *(He stands.)* There's a bike shop on Main Street. I can show ya where, if you'd like.

LANA. Oh, no, that's really sweet, but no thanks. The realtor said there was a bike in the garage; except I don't know how to open it.

RICHARD. *(he laughs.)* Ya usually jus turn the handle.

LANA. I know that. I'm not that citified. It's locked.

RICHARD. Want me to break in? I'm purty good at that kinda thang.

LANA. What?

RICHARD. I kin figure out how ta git in there if ya want.

LANA. What do you mean you're pretty good at that kind of thing?

RICHARD. Well, I'm an ex con.

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LANA. (*scared.*) You're an ex con?!

RICHARD. I did time in the state penitentiary for breakin' and enterin'. That's was the first time my drinkin' got me in trouble.

LANA. How old were you?

RICHARD. Eighteen and purty stupid, but that din't stop me none; din't learn my lesson. Had ta do some more research. Kept drinkin' a few more years. Real glad I don't need ta do that anymore.

LANA. Oh my god!

RICHARD. Now, I hope I din't scare ya.

LANA. (*lying.*) No, no no. I'm fine.

RICHARD. Like I said I ain't that person no more.

LANA. Good to know. (*She finishes the glass of wine, steps off the porch onto lawn.*)

RICHARD. (*he follows her.*) Watch out for the buffalo.

LANA. Buffalo??!!

RICHARD. (*he laughs.*) If ya take a right down there on that street, Westminster, an' walk bout half a mile south yer come to a dead end. Jus' beyond that is a road. That's where the buffalo an' antelopes, a few llamas and a big ol cougar live. There are 'bout four buffalo. One is a big fella; yer can't miss 'im.

LANA. They just walk around?

RICHARD. (*laughs, loves teasing her.*) There's a fence.

LANA. Ah, okay. Is the fence electrified?

RICHARD. Fer what?

LANA. I mean, they can't get out, right?

RICHARD. Not that I know of.

LANA. Shit.

RICHARD. Yer really a purty scared little thang, aren't ya?

LANA. Well, cougars and buffalos aren't exactly house pets.

RICHARD. (*laughs.*) Guess not. (*beat.*) The coyotes roam free.

LANA. There's coyotes?

RICHARD. Yup, they're mostly in the woods, but with all this warm weather they'll be comin' in closer to town. You'll hear 'em in the middle of the night. There's nothin' like settin' on the porch on a cold night listenin' to coyotes.

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LANA. The only thing I hear is a train and a dog in the distance. It reminds me of that movie “Splendor in the Grass” with Natalie Wood and Warren Beatty. Shit. Coyotes?

RICHARD. They don’t bother ya none, if ya don’t bother them. You’ll definitely hear an owl in the mornins’.

LANA. That sounds nice. Okay. Well. Thanks. *(she starts to leave.)*

RICHARD. *(calls out to her.)* Oh, an’ watch out. There’s a wind advisory today.

LANA. *(stops.)* Okay. What’s that mean?

RICHARD. *(laughs.)* Means its gonna be purty windy.

LANA. Now, you’re making fun of me.

RICHARD. *(laughs.)* It’s a warnin’ not ta light a fire. The farmers here burn off their grass; makes it better for the cattle ta feed. You’ll be jus’ fine.

LANA. Well, it was really nice meeting you and...thanks. *(she starts to leave.)*

RICHARD *(calls out to her.)* Check out the cellar. Jus’ in case.

LANA. Someone said there hasn’t been a tornado here in a hundred years.

RICHARD. Yup, that’s true, but if ya hear a siren, head on down there. ‘Cept on Saturdays.

LANA. What happens Saturdays?

RICHARD. They test it.

LANA. Every Saturday?

RICHARD. Yup.

LANA. I’ll make sure to listen for that. *(turns to leave, then stops.)* Thanks for ...you know...staying...sitting on the porch with me.

RICHARD. My pleasure. Kin ya jus’ imagine the stories this porch holds?

LANA. I was just thinking that exact same thing!

RICHARD. Ya know that this here house is over a hundred years old. They say it’s haunted.

LANA. Haunted?!!

RICHARD. Yup.

LANA. Ghosts?

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RICHARD. *(laughs.)* Jus' some good ol' stories 'bout strange noises, lights goin' off an' on; an' doors closin' an' openin'.

LANA. If I can't sleep tonight, I'm knocking on your door.

RICHARD. *(laughs.)* Ya know what ya need girl? Some good ol' fashioned faith.

LANA. What I need is a good brisk walk.

RICHARD. Well, ya be lettin' me know if ya be needin' anythin', ok?

LANA. Absolutely. You're in the green house with the rust borders.

RICHARD. That's right. I'll come by agin' an' check on ya, if that's alright

LANA. Oh. Okay. Sure. Maybe I can meet your wife sometime.

RICHARD. She don't take no visitors. She's don't like 'em to see her with that tank an' all.

LANA. Oh, okay.

RICHARD. It was real nice meetin' ya.

LANA. Same here.

RICHARD. Remember we all need ta take a break every once in awhile; slow down.

LANA. Right.

RICHARD. And remember ta look up.

LANA. *(she looks up, exhales a sigh.)* Ahhh.

RICHARD. That's the idea.

LANA. I hate to admit this, but...you made feel better.

RICHARD. Glad ta hear it.

LANA. I just can't get over how quiet it is here. I really need that.

RICHARD. It's not as quiet as you think it is. We all have the same problems you do darlin'. *(lights fade to a sunset of pinks and purples.)*

SCENE 2

Mid-day; a month later. Richard and Lana are having a picnic on the porch. There's a familiarity now that didn't exist in the first scene. Lana is in a spring dress with a hoodie sweatshirt. Richard is dressed in jeans with a different sweatshirt and a different baseball hat. There is a bottle of wine which Lana drinks throughout the scene. She's already had a

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glass or two when the scene begins and is a little tipsy, but not drunk. She is in the middle of sending a text message.

RICHARD. Why don't ya jus' pick up the phone an' call each other

LANA. Texting is easier.

RICHARD. Don't seem like it to me.

LANA. It's what answering machines used to be.

RICHARD. What do ya mean?

LANA. With answering machines, you could leave a message. You didn't need to talk to someone. I don't know about you, but I was relieved when the answering machine picked up. I used to have such an adorable message on my machine. It went like this. *(in a L.A. girl voice.)* "Like totally, like wow. Like we're not here, right now. So leave a message at the tone. We'll call you back when we get home. Like bye." *(She laughs, but sees he's not laughing.)* That's how they talk in L.A.

RICHARD. They use all them 'likes'?

LANA. That's how they talk in the valley. They're called valley girls.

RICHARD. Ya ever live there?

LANA. I went there for a job interview *before* I got married, got the job, then lived out there, for a year, *after* I got married.

RICHARD. What did yer husband say bout that?

LANA. I asked him before I took the job if he'd move out there and he said, "When do I pack?" Then when it came time to go, he asked, "How am I supposed to make a living out there?" So, I went without him.

RICHARD. Ya went without 'im?!

LANA. *(she finishes her wine, pours more.)* Why wouldn't I?

RICHARD. Cause ya was married.

LANA. Being married doesn't mean giving up what you want.

RICHARD. When I got married I sure din't think that way. Course, I was drinkin' an' all. I wasn't very nice to my wife. I was the fear her Mama forgot ta tell 'er 'bout. One time we was havin' a fight an' she left the house an' I went right after her. Had my shotgun over one shoulder an' when I caught her, I picked her up an' threw her over the other shoulder. I told her, "Yer stayin' home with those kids an' I'm comin'

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back when I wanna come back.” *(beat.)* I made my amends to her an’ I’ve been a good husband. *(pause)*

LANA. Hey, did you ever hear that joke about L.A.?

RICHARD. Nope, can’t say that I have.

LANA. How do you say, “Fuck you”, in Los Angeles? Trust me.” *(She laughs.)* You’re not laughing.

RICHARD. I got a better one. There’s this cowboy settin’ at the bar. This real attractive woman comes in an’ sets right down next to him, so he starts hittin’ on her. She says to him, “I’m a lesbian.” He asks, “What’s that?” She says, “I like a woman with a real nice ass and a pair of firm tits. So, tell me. What’s your story?” He says, “I used ta think I was a cowboy, but now, I think I’m a lesbian.” *(They laugh.)*

LANA. *(text message ding.)* Shit.

RICHARD. Everythin’ okay?

LANA. It’s my ex-boyfriend. He doesn’t understand the word stop.

RICHARD. I have some good ol’ boys in Dallas that kin take care of him.

LANA. No thank you.

RICHARD. I’m sure glad I don’t have no cell phone.

LANA. I don’t know how anyone survives without one.

RICHARD. What do ya mean? Ya did jus’ fine before they were invented, dincha?

LANA. That was then. This is now. Right before I came here I had a business meeting in the west village. For some reason I couldn’t find the place. Don’t ask. I’ve lived in New York City for over thirty years, and still get lost. Anyway, I took out my phone and started texting them to say I’d be late and it turned off. *(snaps her fingers.)* Just like that. I had no idea what to do so I ran into some building hoping someone somewhere had a charger. Thank goodness the security guard did. Anyway, the point is, I had no way of getting a hold of anyone without my cell. I mean, there aren’t even pay phones anymore. I was totally isolated. *(They eat, beat.)*

RICHARD. This barbecue brisket is real good.

LANA. So are the baked beans. And the biscuits are to die for.

RICHARD. Ya din’t have a fried pickle yet.

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LANA. Yeah, I'm not so sure I want one. I've never had one.

RICHARD. Ya never had a fried pickle? Well, git ready. They're delicious. Jus' put some of this ranch dressin' on it.

LANA. But I'm not a big fan of dill.

RICHARD. Jus' try one.

LANA. *(she tastes it.)* Mmmmm. Oh, wow. That's great.

RICHARD. Have some more. *(beat.)* I also brought some homemade Italian crème cake. My neighbor made it jus' yesterday mornin'. An' I went down ta the Rexall store on Main Street ta git a couple pieces of their homemade pies; got a slice of coconut crème, lemon meringue an' a peanut butter; light as a feather with jus' a little hot fudge on top. Had ta git there real early cause they kin sell out purty quick. Now, I want ya ta try each one.

LANA. I'm definitely going to gain weight while I'm here.

RICHARD. A woman's sexy with some meat ta hold on ta.

LANA. There's a limit.

RICHARD. If yer too skinni', the poundin' might break ya.

LANA. That's an image I can do without. Thank you very much.

RICHARD. Ya know that Rexall is over hundred years old. Still has the original counter an' all.

LANA. It's like the clock has been turned back fifty years.

RICHARD. Yup. That's 'bout right.

LANA. *(picks up a tin.)* Oh, look at this. I got it in one of those antiques stores on Main street. It's an antique Hershey's chocolate tin. It's so cool. I love it. *(shows him.)* I wish I knew how old it was.

RICHARD. Let me see. This here is no antique.

LANA. What? How do you know?

RICHARD. *(turns it over.)* Well, there's bar code. That right there tells ya it ain't old. *(looks closer.)* Yup. 1992.

LANA. Oh. No!

RICHARD. Hope ya din't go an' pay a lot fer it.

LANA. *(disappointed.)* She wanted two dollars. Good thing I only gave her one.

RICHARD. *(he laughs, offers her brisket.)* What am I gonna do with ya? *(beat.)* Yer want some more of this brisket, baby?

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LANA. *(the word “baby” makes her uncomfortable.)* How’s your wife doing in that place?

RICHARD. Oh, she’s alright, I guess.

LANA. She’s getting the care she needs, right?

RICHARD. Oh, I suppose so.

LANA. My Mom had to be in one of those places. It broke my heart. It’s not an easy thing to do.

RICHARD. Nope. It sure ain’t.

LANA. Was she upset?

RICHARD. She knew it had to be done. Bless her heart. *(beat.)* Faylene an’ I met right after I moved here. First time I laid eyes on ‘er, she was walkin’ down the street like her hair was on fire an’ I jus’ knew that girl was fer me. *(he laughs.)* We sure used ta fight a lot, an’ make love a lot. Why hell, that was the best part. It kinda went hand in hand. Not quite sure why that is, but... after awhile, the fightin’ got less, an’ the lovin’ got less. *(beat.)* Suppose ya gotta pick the ditch yer gonna die in. *(beat.)* She started smokin’ them darn cigarettes when she was ten. Now, she kin hardly catch a breath. It kicked her ass. *(beat.)* It sure is hard ta see her without all that piss an’ vinegar.

LANA. What’s the point?

RICHARD. What do ya mean?

LANA. We go through all this shit and then end up like that?! For what?!

RICHARD. I sure don’t have the answers.

LANA. My mother, may she rest in peace, broke her hip and never walked again. She was in diapers the last eighteen months of her life. I mean, what the fuck? If I believed in God, I’d tell him exactly what I thought about that.

RICHARD. The only thang we know fer sure, is we don’t know where we’re goin’ end up or how we’re gonna get there. That’s why it’s a day at a time.

LANA. Oh, that’s so twelve step! *(A cat screaming loudly.)* What the hell is that?!!

RICHARD. A cat.

LANA. Where is it?

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RICHARD. Probably under the porch.

LANA. What do we do?

RICHARD. Nothin’

LANA. What do you mean nothing?

RICHARD. It’s okay.

LANA. It’s being attacked!

RICHARD. She’s not bein’ attacked.

LANA. *(Cat screams louder.)* Listen to that!!! It’s horrifying!

RICHARD. It’s natural.

LANA. Maybe a coyote is-

RICHARD. -It’s not a-

LANA. *(She stomps on the porch.)* -Stop it! Go away!

RICHARD. That ain’t gonna help none.

LANA. Go away!!! *(Cat stops screaming.)* It stopped. Is it dead?

RICHARD. It was jus’ bein’ horny.

LANA. Horny? If I heard that, I’d run the other way.

RICHARD. *(he laughs.)* I mean it was matin’.

LANA. That was having sex?!

RICHARD. Well, it kin be purty painful. Their male parts swell up an’ lock in ta the female. After he finishes his business, it’s painful for her when he disconnects.

LANA. Sounds like my relationships. *(Text message ding. Lana ignores it.)*

RICHARD. Go ahead. Look at it.

LANA. I’ll look later. We’re eating.

RICHARD. Yesterday, I seen these two girls, at Mary Jane’s luncheonette, eatin’ lunch jus’ sittin’ there textin’ an’ eatin’; never said one word ta the other.

LANA. I know.

RICHARD. Don’t know if this generation is goin’ know how to have a conversation.

LANA. *(Text ding.)* I’ll put it on silent.

RICHARD. Doncha need ta see who it is?

LANA. I know who it is.

RICHARD. How do ya know who it is if ya don’t look?

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LANA. Because I know.

RICHARD. But how do ya know without lookin'?

LANA. Believe me, I know.

RICHARD. So, when someone sends one of those thangs, ya don't need ta answer right away?

LANA. Not necessarily.

RICHARD. Why not?

LANA. Because it starts to feel like you're on 'call' twenty-four seven. Personally, I rank texts in order of importance; daughter, work, then friends. To tell you the truth, sometimes, I don't even answer.

RICHARD. That's impolite. It must feel purty awful when someone doesn't respond.

LANA. You're right. It does. I think they don't like me.

RICHARD. Then why aren't ya answerin' that one?

LANA. Because, one, we're eating and two, it's my ex boyfriend.

RICHARD. Yer sure it ain't yer daughter?

LANA. (*Lana considers that and looks.*) It's the ex. I told ya.

RICHARD. (*beat.*) What's with this guy?

LANA. What do you mean?

RICHARD. Why's he your ex?

LANA. There were problems.

RICHARD. Every relationship has problems.

LANA. Nothing was changing.

RICHARD. How long did ya go with 'im fer?

LANA. (*hard to admit.*) Years.

RICHARD. How many years?

LANA. Too many.

RICHARD. There must have been somethin' there.

LANA. He was right for my bed, wrong for my life.

RICHARD. If it wasn't makin' ya happy, why did ya stay so long?

LANA. Good question.

RICHARD. Ya don't know the answer?

LANA. Actually, no, I don't.

RICHARD. Well, maybe it was a little like the answering machine. All ya had ta do was jus' leave a message.

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LANA. *(feeling tipsy she finishes her drink.)* That was profound. Not quite sure why, but I know it was profound.

RICHARD. Maybe ya should slow down on that there alcohol.

LANA. I'm fine. *(a text ding.)*

RICHARD. Why doncha jus' answer 'im?

LANA. Because ignoring him will make him stop. If it doesn't, I'll block him.

RICHARD. If he's sendin' ya all them messages, he must love ya.

LANA. *(text ding again.)* Ugh. *(text ding, she looks at it.)* Listen to this. "Romeo and Juliet have nothing on us. They loved each other. Their families hated each other. *We* have something different. Not only do our families hate each other, *we* hate each other, but we still need to connect. Staying with someone you love means nothing. Staying with someone you hate, that's Amore."

RICHARD. He's got a point.

LANA. He's trying to be funny.

RICHARD. Laughter heals.

LANA. It doesn't heal everything. This is a pattern. I walk away. He sends a text to test the waters, I answer him and then it opens the door for more. But this time I'm done. *(beat.)* I haven't spoken to him in almost a year. Thank god.

RICHARD. There must be a purty good reason why not.

LANA. There is. Now, how about a piece of that cake?

RICHARD. Sounds good to me. *(beat.)* Well, I kin certainly see why he's attracted ta ya. *(pause.)* Will ya excuse me a minute?

LANA. Where are you going?

RICHARD. *(points.)* That there's my grandson across the street.

LANA. *(she looks.)* Invite him over.

RICHARD. *(waves him over.)* He's shy. I'll be right back. *(he moves offstage after a minute we hear Richard yellin'.)* You want me ta dot yer "I's" fer ya? Din't ya learn nothin' from me? Ya don't want me goin' down there boy. I'll give 'em a good ass whippin'. It's been awhile, but I kin still git inta some shit. Now, ya go down there an' make good. *(he comes back pacing, angry.)*

LANA. What's wrong?

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RICHARD. Motherfuckers!!

LANA. What happened?

RICHARD. He ran!! Chicken shit ran!!

LANA. From what?

RICHARD. He was settin' by the lake gittin' high! Some boys came up and robbed 'em! He knows 'em too!

LANA. So, you sent him back there?

RICHARD. Yup!

LANA. To do what?

RICHARD. Ta kick their ass!

LANA. That's a bit primitive.

RICHARD. Ya either runnin' with the big dogs or settin' on the porch!!

LANA. Why doesn't he go to the police?

RICHARD. Cause he was gittin' high! Besides, he has ta learn how ta defend himself!

LANA. Defending yourself doesn't necessarily mean violence.

RICHARD. I oughta go down there!

LANA. You're not going anywhere. That's ridiculous.

RICHARD. I should load up my shotgun an' go on down there!!

LANA. You have a shot gun?

RICHARD. I use ta have brass knuckles in my pocket, a thirty eight in my pants and a baseball bat behind the seat of my pick up. If I had ta, I'd use all three on ya at the same time.

LANA. (*concerned.*) Oh, wow. Okay, then. I didn't know that.

RICHARD. Well, now ya know!

LANA. That's pretty scary.

RICHARD. Yep, I wasn't someone ya wanted to mess with.

LANA. So... you're a... criminal?

RICHARD. I told ya the first day I met ya I was an ex con.

LANA. For breaking and entering when you were eighteen; not assault and battery.

RICHARD. When I put alcohol in me, I got crazier than hell an' did crazy things.

LANA. You're talking about doing crazy things right now and you're sober!

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RICHARD. *(takes a beat, realizes.)* Yer right.

LANA. Damn straight I'm right.

RICHARD. I was jus' shootin' my mouth off. Lettin' off some steam.

LANA. So, you're not going to do anything crazy?

RICHARD. Nope. I'm gonna set right down an' eat that piece of cake. *(he sits.)* I'm not runnin' with them big dogs no more. Today, I'm jus' settin' on the porch. Now, purty woman I'll have that piece of cake. *(she hands him the cake. They sit quietly.)*

LANA. Do you think your grandson went back?

RICHARD. He went home.

LANA. How do you know?

RICHARD. I know.

LANA. How?

RICHARD. The same way ya know who sent ya that there text message. *(long awkward pause.)*

LANA. Where I come from people don't carry those things.

RICHARD. Hell, yer from a big city darlin'. What do ya think they carryin'? Water guns?

LANA. I meant where I grew up; not where I live now. *(carefully.)* So, you've been in prison more than once?

RICHARD. Yup.

LANA. *(carefully.)* How many times?

RICHARD. I was in the state penitentiary three times.

LANA. For what?!!!

RICHARD. It don't matter.

LANA. *(still careful.)* Have you ever...murdered anybody?

RICHARD. Not that I know of.

LANA. What does that mean??!

RICHARD. *(laughs.)* I was pullin' yer leg.

LANA. No, you weren't.

RICHARD. I sure was.

LANA. Then why did you-

RICHARD. -I never murdered anyone! *(another awkward pause.)*

LANA. What were you in prison for?

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RICHARD. First time, breakin an' enterin', second time fer writin' bad checks an' the third time fer shootin' at this guy in his boat.

LANA. Why did you do that?!!

RICHARD. I was havin' a bad day. *(beat.)* I was fishin' an' he bumped into my pole. So I shot at 'im.

LANA. For bumping into you?

RICHARD. He said I was crazy an' I yelled back I'll show ya how crazy. I shot off nine rounds. *(laughs.)* He looked like one of those boats, in the carnival, goin' by.

LANA. Oh my god! Did you hit him?

RICHARD. If I had hit him darlin', I'd be doin' life.

LANA. You did that just because he said you were crazy?

RICHARD. I had a fight with Faylene.

LANA. *(sarcastic.)* Oh, that makes sense.

RICHARD. I drank a fifth of whiskey, had an ice chest full of beer, four fingers of marijuana an' two hundred rounds of ammunition. *(beat.)* Look, I don't have a purty story an' I'm not particularly proud of it. There's only two things I know fer sure. I never molested a child an' I never fell in love with a man. The rest is debatable.

LANA. Well, you certainly are ...colorful.

RICHARD. Well, ya can't change what was, ya kin only live differently today an' that's what I'm doin'. *(beat.)* Look, if yer scared, an ya wanna run away, g'ahead. I ain't stoppin' ya.

LANA. I'm not scared.

RICHARD. Yer sure now?

LANA. I'm sure. I'm not exactly sure why I'm sure, but-

RICHARD. -I promise ya, there's absolutely nothing to be afraid of. I'm not gonna hurt ya none. *(pause.)*

LANA. Okay. I believe you.

RICHARD. Good. Now, eat yer cake. *(pause.)*

LANA. *(eats a bite of cake.)* This is really over the top delicious.

RICHARD. My neighbor, Velma Mae, made it; homemade. *(pause.)*

LANA. The wind died down.

RICHARD. Yup, it's purty still. Kinda nice.

LANA. *(A siren blares.)* Why are they testing the siren today?

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RICHARD. That there's a tornado warning.

LANA. I know, but it's not Saturday.

RICHARD. Nope. It's the real thang. Notice it ain't stoppin'? *(he looks up at the sky.)*

LANA. Shit! Are you kidding me?

RICHARD. *(He walks onto the lawn.)* Ya see the color of the sky?

LANA. Oh wow. It's like dirty chartreuse.

RICHARD. More like pus green. That means ones comin'. Look over there. Ya kin see the clouds an' wind whippin' up.

LANA. *(she walks onto the lawn.)* That's incredible. I've never seen such dark clouds.

RICHARD. It's quite somethin' to watch.

LANA. Look how it's forming at the bottom.

RICHARD. See the top twirl?

LANA. That's amazing.

RICHARD. Do you have any candles inside?

LANA. I think so.

RICHARD. Go git em'. Quick.

LANA. *(she runs inside and back out, looks at tornado.)* It's mesmerizing.

RICHARD. *(moves to basement door.)* Let's go.

LANA. But it's so far away.

RICHARD. Ya see how fast it's whirlin'?

LANA. Yeah.

RICHARD. There's no tellin' where or when it'll touch down.

LANA. I want to watch.

RICHARD. This ain't a movie.

LANA. *(Takes out cell.)* Wait. *(she takes a photo.)*

RICHARD. What are ya doin'?

LANA. Taking a photo so I can post it on Facebook.

RICHARD. Hear that?

LANA. Sounds like a freight train.

RICHARD. We best git down in ta the cellar. Now. *(he opens the cellar door like Auntie Em's cellar door.)*

LANA. Wait. I need to call my daughter.

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RICHARD. Yer sure pick a funny time to finally pick up that phone, doncha?

LANA. It'll just take a minute.

RICHARD. Yer kin call from downstairs. (*warns her.*) Don't make me come git ya.

LANA. Okay, okay. (*enter cellar, dark except for one hanging light bulb. Lana holding a wine bottle, siren blares in the background.*) It's like a horror film down here.

RICHARD. I've seen worse. Watch your head.

LANA. Are you sure we're safe down here?

RICHARD. Safest place to be is underground.

LANA. Does everyone have a basement?

RICHARD. Don't think so. Ya think they would, wouldn't ya? They have a deep bathtub.

LANA. A deep bathtub?

RICHARD. They jus' git in there, put a mattress over 'em, an' hold on fer dear life.

LANA. All of a sudden, New York seems safe. How long does it take to blow over?

RICHARD. All depends.

LANA. On what?

RICHARD. How fast the storm moves. When the siren stops, we kin come out.

LANA. How long is that?

RICHARD. Don't know. One night I was at the Presbyterian Church, in their basement, nine times.

LANA. Why?

RICHARD. Guess it kept changin' direction. Kept stoppin' the siren, an' startin' it agin. It never hit us though. The closest one ta here was a tornado, a few years back, in Joplin, Missouri. It touched down 'bout five thirteen on a Sunday an' lifted 'bout six fifteen.

LANA. I remember that.

RICHARD. It was a F-five.

LANA. A F-five?

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RICHARD. A category five; the worst ya kin have. Joplin looked like an A bomb hit. They were lucky it wasn't a Saturday. Would've killed thousands. The manager in the Pizza Hut over there got fourteen people in the freezer, tried to hold the door closed with a bungee cord, but damn thing sucked him right out an' killed him. Destroyed the hospital too.

LANA. How close is Joplin?

RICHARD. Oh, 'bout an hour east of here.

LANA. Shit! That's really close.

RICHARD. We're gonna be jus' fine.

LANA. I bet that's what you tell all the girls.

RICHARD. Well, ya know what they say, don't ya?

LANA. No, but I'm sure you're going to tell me.

RICHARD. If ya can't dazzle 'em with brilliance, baffle 'em with bullshit. *(The light flickers.)*

LANA. Shit! Shit! Shit! *(she drinks from the bottle.)*

RICHARD. That ain't gonna help ya none.

LANA. I'm in the middle of nowhere, in a dark dank cellar, with some ex con cowboy and a tornado outside. Drinking is totally acceptable. *(Wind gets louder. Richard attempts to distract Lana.)*

RICHARD. Tell me 'bout yer teachin'

LANA. There's nothing to tell.

RICHARD. Do ya like them kids?

LANA. Yeah, yeah, yeah. They're really sweet.

RICHARD. Must be different from them New York City kids.

LANA. Shit. Listen to that wind.

RICHARD. *(Richard changes the subject.)* I never did tell ya what I do fer a livin'.

LANA. You're retired. *(loud crack of lighting. she jumps and yells.)*
AHHH!!

RICHARD. Yup, but I got myself a part time job workin' with these fellas on probation. Workin' with them sure makes me feel real grateful. *(Another crack of lighting.)*

LANA. I know you're talking, but I'm not listening. *(She drinks from the bottle.)*

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RICHARD. *(trying to distract her.)* Look. There's a radio over there; must be from the nineteen fifties. Now, let's see if there's a plug? Kin ya see if there's a plug?

LANA. I can't even see you.

RICHARD. *(he uses flashlight connected to his keys.)* There we go.

LANA. *(a loud crack of thunder.)* Oh my God! I'm going to die. In the Midwest, of all places.

RICHARD. No one is dyin' here.

LANA. This whole house is going to crash down on us!

RICHARD. *(he turns on the radio.)* Well, will ya look at that? It works. And they're playin' my favorite; Willie Nelson.

LANA. We're about to be blown away. Screw Willie Nelson!

RICHARD. Bet ya he'd like that a whole lot. Heard he was a real whore dog.

LANA. What's that?!

RICHARD. Like a hound dog.

LANA. Don't you ever get scared?

RICHARD. We all git scared darlin' an' if ya can't admit that, than yer full of sheeit. *(he turns up the volume to drown out the siren.)* This here is my favorite song, "Always On My Mind." Kin ya dance?

LANA. You want to dance? I'm about to become Dorothy and land on the wicked witch of the East and you want to dance?

RICHARD. See, that's what's wrong with ya. If ya was a positive person, you'd be thinkin' of meetin' Glinda, the good witch. *(He takes her in his arms. They dance slowly. The noise outside is loud. She holds on to him tighter. A loud crack of thunder. She digs her head into his chest. He lifts her head, strokes her cheek. She pulls away quickly.)*

LANA. Uh-uh. We're not doing a Bridges over Madison County.

RICHARD. What's that?

LANA. You never heard of *The Bridges of Madison County*? It was a best-selling novel about a married woman, who's lonely, living in Iowa. She has an affair with some guy passing through.

RICHARD. Ah, I see.

LANA. Look we're just friends.

RICHARD. Never said any different.

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LANA. Then why did you do that?

RICHARD. Do what?

LANA. I hate that.

RICHARD. Do what?

LANA. I hate when men come on to me and then deny it.

RICHARD. Hold on there-

LANA. -When I lived in L.A., the dean of the university did that. He invited me to lunch and then afterwards, he drove me around, in his little golf cart, to show me the campus; the whole time making comments about my body. Finally, I got up the nerve to say something. He laughed and said, "What are you talking about? I was joking." *(beat.)* Why did you touch my cheek-

RICHARD. -now jus' hold on there-

LANA. -just because we were dancing close it doesn't mean anything.

RICHARD. Didcha ever think I was jus' tryin' to relax ya? *(a loud thud.)*

LANA. Shit! What was that?!

RICHARD. Sounds like hail. Last April, we had hail as big as tennis balls.

LANA. Shit.

RICHARD. *(a series of loud bangs.)* Yup. Hail. Probably'll hurt the roof some, but we're fine.

LANA. *(she sings to cover fear.)* New York, New York, what a beautiful town. The Bronx is up-

RICHARD. -Instead of singin', try prayin'.

LANA. To what?

RICHARD. Well, no man walkin' made that wind or that hail.

LANA. We aren't in church!

RICHARD. My God is portable. I take him where ever I go.

LANA. Good for you. *(a crack of thunder, a loud bang on the roof.)*
Ah!!

RICHARD. Come on over here. *(he moves toward her.)*

LANA. What are you doing?

RICHARD. I'm goin' give ya hug.

LANA. *(she moves away.)* I don't want a hug.

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RICHARD. Why not?

LANA. Because I don't.

RICHARD. But you're upset.

LANA. I'm fine.

RICHARD. Sure don't seem like it.

LANA. Look, I didn't ask you for a hug.

RICHARD. But ya sure do need one.

LANA. I don't *need* anything from you!

RICHARD. My oh my. Yer sure don't trust anyone, do ya?

LANA. Oh, please.

RICHARD. Not everyone is-

LANA. -Look, I've been around the block a few times.

RICHARD. I'm sure ya have.

LANA. I'm not interested in what you're selling.

RICHARD. All I wanna do is give ya hug. You're gitten yerself all fired up agin.

LANA. Yeah, right.

RICHARD. You're makin' this inta somethin' it's not.

LANA. Don't flip the script. That's exactly what he did!

RICHARD. Who?

LANA. My ex boyfriend. He twisted reality. Don't you dare make this about me!

RICHARD. All I'm tryin' ta do is comfort you.

LANA. You're trying to do a lot more than that.

RICHARD. I asked ya ta dance. I din't ask ya ta have sex!

LANA. It was coming. No pun intended.

RICHARD. I've been married ta the same woman now fer forty two years an' I've never chosen to have an affair since I put a weddin' ring on that woman's hand.

LANA. All that drinking and you never had sex with anyone else? Bullshit.

RICHARD. I never had an affair!

LANA. You think there's a difference between having an affair and a one night stand?

HOME

RICHARD. One is cheatin' an' the other is jus' a game. It was all 'bout the catchin'; not the doin'.

LANA. I know, I know. You couldn't wait until she came, so you could go.

RICHARD. It never meant a thang. I never told another woman I loved her.

LANA. Oh, boy. You are just like him.

RICHARD. What did this guy do ta ya?

LANA. Oh, please.

RICHARD. Must have been purty bad. Tell me.

LANA. It's really none of your business.

RICHARD. Ya got somethin' better ta do? Somewhere else ta go?

(beat.) What did he do ta ya?

LANA. You name it. He did it. Lied, cheated, manipulated, threw things at me, called me names; all of it. I should've left, but the sex was just that good. Actually, come to think of it, that was the only time he really cared about making me happy, but even that was about him; his ego! I am embarrassed to even admit that. I'm embarrassed to admit I stayed with someone like that. "I love you baby, it's never felt so good, I've never loved someone like I love you." I believed all of it because I wanted to believe it. Some therapist somewhere would probably say it was some need that wasn't filled when I was baby. I don't know! But...what's horrifying... is on some level...I enjoyed it. Why else would I stay?

RICHARD. An' I remind ya of this guy?

LANA. You're dangerous. *This* is dangerous.

RICHARD. I have no idea what yer talkin' 'bout.

LANA. I'm no longer interested in one night stands. The last one, lasted ten years. Oh, no. I forgot to call my daughter. Why didn't you remind me? *(looks at phone.)* I don't believe this! There's no service. There's no fucking service!

RICHARD. You'll be able ta talk to her after.

LANA. What if something happens?

RICHARD. Nothins' gonna happen.

LANA. I need to speak to her.

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RICHARD. We're gonna be fine.

LANA. I should've called when we were upstairs. I shouldn't have listened to you! Why the hell did I listen to you?! I fucking always do that! I never listen to myself! *(a part of a tree crashes onto the door.)* What the hell was that?!!

RICHARD. Now calm down-

LANA. -don't tell me to fucking calm down! And don't give me your fucking faith bullshit either! Everything is random! Do you hear me?! There's no fucking plan! We're in the middle of a tornado because we're in the middle of a tornado, not because G-d willed it! I need to talk to my daughter! I need to tell her I love her! If I die, she has no one! I need to tell her she'll be okay without me. When people die, you're alone! I don't want her to be alone! *(she lies on the floor, crying or hyperventilating. Richard moves to her, sits next to her, takes her hand. Long pause.)*

RICHARD. Ya know how ta two step?

LANA. No.

RICHARD. Wanna learn?

LANA. Not particularly. *(she moves away while drinking wine from the bottle.)*

RICHARD. Ya feel any better?

LANA. Not really.

RICHARD. My, oh my. Yer sure got yerself some temper.

LANA. I'm sorry.

RICHARD. I always thought a woman with fire was like a bronco needin' to be wrestled. Kinda sexy.

LANA. Look,-

RICHARD. -Not everythin' is 'bout you. I was thinkin' 'bout Faylene.

LANA. Oh, okay. *(beat.)* I guess I shouldn't have said some of that.

RICHARD. Nope, ya probably shouldn't of.

LANA. I'm...I'm sorry. *(she takes another drink.)*

RICHARD. Ya know, jus' the other day, I sat in court with this fella fer three hours. He was suppose ta git ten years for somethin' he did an' I spoke up for 'im. He ended up only gittin' three years probation. Now, I'm not sayin' what I said changed the judge's mind, but ya see, I said

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what I said 'cause I believed it. Now, darlin' here's the point. I don't jus' speak from my head today 'cause that use ta git me in a lot of trouble. I speak from my heart an' my head.

LANA. Okay. I get the point.

RICHARD. Do ya? Cause I'm not some small town hick ya kin look down on.

LANA. I never said you were.

RICHARD. I may not be as sophisticated as yer New York friends, but I jus' may have somethin' better I kin teach ya.

LANA. I said I was sorry.

RICHARD. An' all that drinkin' don't help ya none.

LANA. (*sarcastic.*) Seriously? Now, you're going to lecture me?

RICHARD. Jus' tellin' ya what I see.

LANA. Maybe I had one too many, okay? I'm nervous.

RICHARD. When I was settin' in that courtroom with that feller-

LANA. -oh, please stop-

RICHARD. -I din't like it; not one bit. I don't like settin' in court rooms jus' like I don't like settin' in hospitals or funeral homes; makes me feel like a long tail cat in a room full of rockin' chairs.

LANA. I don't know what that means.

RICHARD. It would've been nice to have some kind of relief from what I was feelin', but I din't pick up a bottle of wine an' chug it down.

LANA. There wasn't a damn siren blaring outside and hail smashing into the courthouse either.

RICHARD. Don't matter none.

LANA. Okay. So, you're stronger than I am.

RICHARD. Nope, that's not it.

LANA. Okay, then, more courageous.

RICHARD. Not that neither. It's 'bout surrender.

LANA. What the hell does *that* mean?!

RICHARD. If ya can't change it, ya can't change it. Drinkin' all that wine ain't gonna make it any better. (*the hail has stopped.*)

LANA. Are you telling me I'm an alcoholic?

RICHARD. What do ya think?

LANA. I don't have a problem.

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RICHARD. Yup, that's what most people say when they have a problem.

LANA. I don't hang out in bars or live on the street in a refrigerator box.

RICHARD. That don't matter none.

LANA. I have a job, a child, a reputation. I don't wake up in the morning and need a drink.

RICHARD. Yer still runnin'.

LANA. From what?

RICHARD. Yerself.

LANA. Right now I wish I could run from you.

RICHARD. Isn't it possible you're the problem darlin'?

LANA. What are you talking about?!!

RICHARD. Wherever I go, I hav' ta take *me*. If I could go somewhere, an' *not* show up, I'd be thrilled, but that don't happen.

LANA. Not everyone who drinks is an alcoholic.

RICHARD. When ya kin git honest with yerself, then yer kin git right with yerself.

LANA. Okay, enough.

RICHARD. Ya think I'm wrong?

LANA. I said enough!

RICHARD. It's in yer eyes.

LANA. What is?

RICHARD. Fear.

LANA. I don't want to hear anymore!

RICHARD. (*referring to when dancing.*) One person can't feel somethin' an' the other person not feel it. Yer pulled away like ya touched a hot stove.

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