

ACT 1, Scene 2

(Dan and Beatrice sit in bed together, Dan is reading a well worn book, Beatrice is on her phone. They sit in silence for a brief time before Dan breaks the silence.)

DAN

Oh man, listen to this line!

(Beatrice does not look up from her phone.)

DAN

(With Passion)

“He no longer dreamed of storms, nor of women, nor of great occurrences, nor of great fish, nor fights, nor contests of strength, nor of his wife” — uh, ignore that bit — “He only dreamed of places now and of the lions on the beach. They played like young cats in the dusk and he loved them as he loved the boy. He never dreamed about the boy.” — God, isn’t that sad but beautiful? ... Bea?

(Bea only now looks up from her phone.)

BEATRICE

Oh sweetie, I’m sorry! I didn’t even realize you were talking to me! What were you saying?

DAN

Oh, it’s ok, it was just a line I hadn’t noticed before. It’s so strange how you can read a book over and over but just not notice a line. Was I just skipping over it? Do I only now truly understand it? Is it—

BEATRICE

(Teasing)

Is it the fact that you always fall asleep after ten pages and then never remember where you were?

DAN

Oh come on, it’s not that bad! I at least get through twenty!

BEATRICE

Twelve.

DAN

Eighteen.

BEATRICE

Fifteen, final offer!

DAN

Well Mrs. Grimshaw, you drive a hard bargain, I accept.

(Dan gingerly scoots closer to Beatrice. He lays his head on her shoulder and glances at her phone.)

DAN

Oooo, what's Shelly pissed about?

BEATRICE

Ugh ok, get ready for a story.

(Dan scoots away and leans his head on his left hand.)

DAN

Gimme that hot gossip!

BEATRICE

Ok, So I'm only just getting a handle of the situation, but from what I can understand it's all because of last night, remember how I was thinking about going out because Gina was in town?

DAN

(Teasingly)

Why, I remember like it was just yesterday!

BEATRICE

Ha. Ha. But anyway so I decided not to go because I was tried-

DAN

And because going out with Gina is kinda the worst-

BEATRICE

But you don't know the half of it yet! I was the only one who didn't go so it was Shelly, Gina, Maxine, Nell, and Audrey, and they all decided to go to Micro because they have the best snacks — have you tried their mozzarella sticks?

DAN

No, but-

BEATRICE

Oh we are going to change that as soon as-

DAN

Bea just get on with the story for God's sake!

BEATRICE

Ok, ok! So they went to Micro, and who did they see there but Shelly's ex — before you ask, yes, the one with the glasses — but he was way down on the other side of the bar so they decide to just play it cool, have their drinks, and no matter what, not acknowledge his existence!

DAN

Sounds like a flawless plan.

BEATRICE

Oh shut up, anyway, so they have a few drinks, and then Shelly has to go to the bathroom, so she takes Maxine and Nell with her. That leaves Gina and Audrey alone. So, and this is just what I've heard from Shelly who heard it from Audrey, Gina starts looking over at Shelly Ex.

DAN

No!

BEATRICE

Yes! Audrey says she stared at him for like half a minute then coughed really loud, cause he wasn't noticing, then when he turned to look at the noise she locked eyes with him and gave a flirtatious wave.

DAN

A flirtatious wave? What does a flirtatious wave look like? Is it something like this?

(Dan puckers his lips and flutters his fingers)

BEATRICE

I am going to make the active choice to ignore you and just finish the story ok?

(Dan nods with a dumb grin on his face)

Ok so Audrey says after that he waved back to her she stood up to go over to him! Apparently she tried to stop her, but I mean, come on, Audrey weighs like what, ten pounds? So obviously she was barely a speed bump. And so when Shelly came out of the bathroom she saw her Ex talking to Gina who was being WAY flirty. Needless to say Shelly called Gina a bitch, which lead to Maxine calling Gina a bitch, you know how she is, which then lead to a huuuge argument that got them all kicked out of the bar! — Damn, I wish I was there to see it!

DAN

Really? That sounds kinda stressful to be honest.

BEATRICE

Yeah it probably would've been, but how often does something like that happen? I missed out on a potential bar brawl!

DAN

Well hey, it's not like it was a waste of an evening, we had a nice dinner!

BEATRICE

Yeah, after I stepped in to avert disaster!

DAN

Ok well how was I supposed to know that meatloaf could burn?

BEATRICE

How does it make more sense for meatloaf to not burn?

DAN

I don't know, I thought because of the breadcrumbs- whatever it doesn't matter. The point is I tried, and that's worth something.

BEATRICE

Don't get me wrong, I really appreciate the effort, I do, but I'd also appreciate it if you could, you know, stay within your bounds a little bit more?

DAN

What do you mean?

BEATRICE

I just mean that, ya know, I would've appreciated it a little more if I didn't have to not only help put out a meatloaf fire as soon as I got home, but also then help with making a new meal after. If you just stuck to a salad or-

DAN

Just because I don't cook most of the time doesn't mean that I'm completely incompetent.

BEATRICE

I don't know Dan, almost burning down the kitchen strikes me as pretty incompetent.

DAN

Listen, I admit that I screwed up, but please explain to me how I'm supposed to get better at cooking without practice?

BEATRICE

Well if you want to practice, do it some other night please. Don't do it on a Friday night where all I want is to sit down and have a nice meal.

DAN

When did it become my job to make sure you have meals waiting for you?

BEATRICE

It became your job when I picked up the extra half shift in the morning-

DAN

Well that-

BEATRICE

Which may I remind you I only need to do because you aren't working-

DAN

Come on Bea, that's-

BEATRICE

Shut up Dan. So I think the least I could ask for is that when you "help" around the house, you could at least do something actually constructive. Oh, and if you really can't do something because it hurts too much, lets hear about that way ahead of time rather than halfway through the fucking foreplay.

DAN

Bea, I was trying to let you that I wasn't feeling up to it, but you wouldn't listen to me. I shouldn't have to literally start crying for you notice that I'm in pain.

BEATRICE

I don't remember you saying a word.

DAN

You know what? That really doesn't surprise me. Sometimes it's like you're not even in the same room as me. And I'm not saying this to try and start anything, but it just really is hard sometimes. Like just five minutes ago.

BEATRICE

You mean when you were quoting your book?

DAN

Exactly. Do you remember even a single word that I said?

(Dan moves his book out of Beatrice's line of sight)

Hell, do you even remember what book I'm reading?

(An uncomfortable silence as Bea clearly does not remember.)

Oh come on, I've talked to you about it so many times before.

BEATRICE

Well Dan, not knowing what book you're reading is hardly equal to ignoring you all the time. But I'm sorry that you feel like I am.

(They sit in silence for a moment, both looking dissatisfied and no longer meeting the others eyes.)

BEATRICE

I'm tired. We can talk about this in the morning.

(Bea rolls onto her side facing away from Dan)

BEATRICE

Goodnight Dan.

(Dan puts his book on the nightstand then looks at Bea. He reaches over to touch her shoulder, but at the last minute pulls away. He turns off lamp on the table next to him and the scene goes dark.)

ACT 1, Scene 3

(The lights come up on Dan and Beatrice facing away from each other in bed. Dan rolls over onto his back.)

DAN

Hey Bea, you awake?

(Beatrice rolls onto her back and looks at Dan)

BEATRICE

Yeah, I've been up for a little while now.

DAN

Ah. Well, I just wanted to say-

BEATRICE

Yeah. Me too.

DAN

I should've mentioned that I was feeling a little ignored when I first started to feel ignored and-

BEATRICE

And I should give you more time.

DAN

But I should remember that your days really are much busier than mine now and— and god Bea I really am sorry about that.

BEATRICE

Oh hush up, we've been over that a million times, recovering is a job in its own way. Plus it's not like you're actually doing nothing, you're the one who figured out the insurance with whats-his-face.

DAN

(As if in an infomercial)

John, from Insuricare!

BEATRICE

Yes exactly! But anyway, going back to the “fight” from last night, I’m sorry that I was so snappy, I just really had a long day and I really wasn’t feeling like myself.

DAN

Last night really wasn’t like either of us Bea. When I woke up this morning, I just felt so annoyed with myself for making a problem where there didn’t have to be one.

BEATRICE

Well the weather has just been so gloomy lately, how could either of us be feeling chipper when it feels like the whole state is covered in a grey fog?

DAN

Well yesterday the weather channel said that we’ll finally be getting some sun today!

BEATRICE

Oh good, It’s been a long time coming.

(The two sit together quietly until Dan scoots himself towards Beatrice. She notices his movement and also moves closer until they are snuggly cuddled in the middle of the bed. They cuddle for a few seconds, then Dan plants a kiss on Beatrice’s cheek.)

DAN

Well Mrs. Grimshaw, now that we are on good terms again, why don’t you help this feeble old man get some coffee?

BEATRICE

As long as this feeble old man is willing to make a double batch that works for me!

DAN

(With an old man voice)

Dang gonnit, fine! You young whippersnappers can’t do anything on your own!

(Bea laughs and they kiss briefly. She gets out of bed, stretches, and walks to Dan’s side where he has already moved to be sitting on the edge of the bed. Beatrice extends a hand which Dan uses to pull himself up as he stands slowly. After a moment of checking his balance they walk out of the bedroom and into the kitchen. Dan goes to the coffee machine while Bea heads towards the back door.)

BEATRICE

I'm going to check the mail, I don't think either of us remembered to get it yesterday.

(Dan gives a thumbs up while preparing the coffee maker and Beatrice exits stage left. The coffee machine whirs into action and Dan sits at the kitchen table facing the door that Bea walked out of. He picks up an old newspaper from the middle of the table and reads the front page. He puts it down as Beatrice enters with a handful of letters and sits down across from him)

DAN

Anything good today?

BEATRICE

Not sure yet, let's find out! Up first we have... oh! A letter from your cousin Tom!

DAN

(Sarcastically)

Two weeks late as usual, I can't believe it!

BEATRICE

At this point I honestly think he does it on purpose, how could someone actually be that behind the news? It's not like he lives in the sticks or anything.

DAN

With how much you complained about it last summer I honestly can't believe you don't think Maryland is the sticks.

BEATRICE

Well I'm sure that not all of the state is as crummy as Tom's "campground", but anyway, what did he say?

DAN

(Doing an extremely exaggerated southern accent when in quotation marks.)

"Dear cousin Daniel, I hope that your surgery will go well. Know that" - oh here we go - "The lord is with you always and especially now in this time of need. I, as well as Barbara-Jean and the kids, are praying every night for your safety. You should go to church more. Also you should visit more, we just got blah blah blah GOD. Blah blah blah Jesus! Blah blah blah" — new swimming pool? Maybe we should visit them Bea!

BEATRICE

Dan did you hear that?

DAN

What?

BEATRICE

I swear on my soul that I just now heard Cousin Tom in this very room!

DAN

Darn, I must've just missed him! I guess I'll just have to be content with this letter in place of his electrifying personality. Speaking of, any other good mail?

BEATRICE

Let's see, spam... spam... bill past due?

DAN

No way, from who?

BEATRICE

The gas company, did you-

DAN

No, there's no way it isn't paid, I did it at the same time as the water and electricity.

BEATRICE

Are you sure?

DAN

Well...

BEATRICE

Dan this is why I always do the bills.

DAN

I know, I know, I-

BEATRICE

And what did I say when you offered? I said, "Daniel, are you sure you know how to pay the bills?", to which you responded-

DAN

Bea I know I said I could do it, I'm sorry! I just wanted to be helpful while I was stuck here doing nothing.

BEATRICE

Come on, recovering isn't doing nothing.

DAN

It might as well be. I really don't think that stretching for 10 minutes in the morning and 10 more at night has been speeding anything up.

BEATRICE

Well, you'll keep doing them regardless. *(Beat)* Dan, so if you thought that you paid the bill last week, that means since then we've been budgeting as if we had paid it.

DAN

Yeah?

BEATRICE

So we— So I should still be able to pay it now without any problems right?

DAN

Yeah. Yeah! That makes sense to me!

BEATRICE

(Sighs)

Well that's a relief. I'll go back to doing the bills from now on ok?

DAN

Fiiiiine. They took forever anyway.

BEATRICE

(Teasing)

Now imagine actually doing all of them, that would really take forever.

DAN

Come on Bea, I said I was sorry!

BEATRICE

Okay, I'll let you off the hook for now, but only because this is a lot more understandable than the meatloaf!

DAN

Uugggghhh.

BEATRICE

Now, what else do we got here? Spam... A letter reminding us to resubscribe to National Geographic... Ah! This could be good, check for some deals.

(Tosses coupon insert to Dan and eyes last letter suspiciously reading it as he talks.)

DAN

Ahhh Big Y, how I love your silver card savings. Let's see here... no no we don't need any baby formula, don't need these diapers either! You almost needed 'em a minute ago huh Bea? HmMMM, Cheez-its are always good... and we haven't had spaghetti in a while. OH! Ribs half off! I can't even remember the last time I had ribs! It would've been at the Jenkins cookout probably. Remember that Bea? ... Bea?

BEATRICE

Oh, I'm sorry it's just... can you take a look at this? I can't possibly be reading it right.

DAN

Yeah sure... Dear Mr. and Mrs. Grimshaw, we regret to inform you that your-

BEATRICE

The little shit.

DAN

Insurance will not cover the surgery expenses as-

BEATRICE

That lying fuck.

DAN

It does not fall under your homeowners coverage. Your bill is as follows. *(Beat)* No, no that's not possible.

BEATRICE

He told us that it would be covered, he told us everything would be covered.

DAN

Twenty-six thousand, nine-hundred and twelve dollars ... just, how?

BEATRICE

(Standing)

I'm gunna go to the Insuricare office right now. This is unacceptable, we are getting our money.

DAN

Bea, if we didn't get the money, we didn't get the money, we can't just-

BEATRICE

Excuse me? Are you asking me not to fight this?

DAN

I just think you're a little worked up right-

BEATRICE

Yeah I'm worked up Dan.. John fucked us, that little weasel told us we'd be covered. He lied to us. He lied to your face.

DAN

Well maybe he just made a mistake.

BEATRICE

As if that makes a goddamn difference.

DAN

Bea just sit down and-

BEATRICE

Are you going to come with me?

DAN

Bea I-

BEATRICE

Yes or no.

(They hold eye contact for a few seconds, then Dan breaks and looks down.)

BEATRICE

That's what I thought.

(She begins to leave, but stops at the door and turns around)

Dan, you let people screw you over all the time because you aren't willing to fight for even one goddamn second. I hate to see it happen, but I stand aside because I know you don't want me to step in. But this Dan, this could screw me over too, and I'm not about to let that happen because I'm not you. *(She exits)*

(Dan tries to stand to go after her, but winces in pain and falls back into his chair)

DAN

Bea... I'm sorry.

(Dan stares at the door Beatrice left out of, lights out as Beatrice does not return)