

# **MOON CAVE**

Douglas Williams

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## CHARACTERS

RICHARD  
RACHEL

Dialogue in [brackets] is not spoken.

Dialogue that ends without punctuation indicates an unfinished thought.

A '/' indicates the start of the next line.

This play was developed with the support of PlayPenn, Paul Meshejian, Artistic Director

"We all have our dark nights. We're probably never as alone as we think."  
- *Middleton* Will Eno

*The pre-show speech is delivered (Welcome to our play, please silence your cell phones, exits are located here, etc.) and lights dim.*

*When the lights are brought down to complete darkness, there is a long period of silence. The audience might even start to think that something has gone wrong. A missed cue.*

*Then the whispering starts. It's inaudible, sporadic and very quiet. It continues and grows until it is almost chant-like.*

*The chant reaches its climax and suddenly all voices stop.*

*Again we are sitting in the silent darkness.*

*Lights.*

*A tiny studio apartment in North Philadelphia. It looks like it's being rented by a college student. At right is a ruffled bed that might have an occupant but it's hard to tell under the mountain of covers.*

*RACHEL looks like she only just woke up a half hour ago. She on her floor with headphones on, silently jamming to whatever music she's listening to through her computer.*

*She dances in silence for a moment. Getting more and more into the music as she goes. As she snaps her fingers and kicks her feet to the music she suddenly stubs her toe.*

RACHEL  
*(whisper)*

AGH!

*As she reaches down to grab her foot her headphone jack ejects from her computer. Suddenly the room is filled with the music she was listening to. It is LOUD.*

*RICHARD juts his head out from under the covers having just woken up.*

RACHEL  
*(scrambling to turn the music off)*

Shit! Sorry Derek! I didn't mean to

*(she shuts it off)*

Sorry...

*Richard sits himself up. Looks around at his surroundings.*

RICHARD

It's okay. I was--

*(suddenly grabbing his head)*

Ugh...

RACHEL

That bad, huh? Coffee?

RICHARD

Hm? Oh. Sure.

*Rachel pours him a cup.*

RACHEL  
How do you take it?

RICHARD  
Black is fine.  
You're having some?

RACHEL  
I'm on my third cup already.  
*(handing it to him)*  
I like my men like I like my coffee.  
Ground up and in my freezer.

*She laughs.*

*He looks at her.*

RACHEL  
Just kidding...

*He drinks.*

*She grabs her computer and brings it over to her desk. Pulls out a DVD and puts it in her computer. She tries to watch it over the following.*

*Richard watches her. Sits there for a moment. He sighs kind of loudly, trying to get her attention.*

*She doesn't move.*

*He finally gets out of bed and starts putting on his pants.*

RICHARD  
Sorry about last night.

RACHEL  
What about it?

RICHARD  
If I was  
If anything I said was sorta  
I dunno, strange?

RACHEL  
What?  
Like what.

Like  
I dunno. Just anything.

RICHARD

...

I actually don't totally remember coming back here so

RACHEL

RICHARD

*Really?*

RACHEL

...

What's the last thing you remember?

RICHARD

RACHEL

I mean it's not like I don't / remember *anything*--

RICHARD

What was I drinking when you came up to me?

RACHEL

Oh. It was...

RICHARD

What bar were we at?

RACHEL

Um...

RICHARD

*Really?*

RACHEL

*He shrugs.*

What's my *name*.

RACHEL

...

RICHARD

Wow.

RACHEL

Sorry.

RICHARD

*Rachel turns to her computer.*

It's whatever.

RACHEL

*Richard starts buttoning up his shirt.*

So...sorry if I said anything strange.

RICHARD

*Rachel keeps watching.*

*Richard coughs.*

*He gets a bit of courage. Walks over to where Rachel is sitting and looks over her shoulder.*

What are you uh  
Watching?

RICHARD

*Out of the Past. Jacques Tourneur. 1947.*

RACHEL

Looks...old.

RICHARD

*Rachel plugs in her her headphones, puts them on.*

*Focuses on her movie.*

*Richard backs up and accidently bumps a bottle of whiskey.*

*It almost falls onto the floor.*

Oh shit!

RICHARD

*He catches it. Looks at it.*

*Thinks about pouring himself a drink.*

*Rachel spots him, takes out a headphone.*

Take it with you. RACHEL

Yeah? RICHARD

You were the only one who had any. RACHEL

*She turns back to her movie.*

*He holds it up. There's basically nothing left.*

Yikes. RICHARD

*He goes to throw it into her waste basket.*

*Thinks twice. Sees that Rachel isn't paying attention.*

*So he stuffs it into his backpack.*

*He wanders back over to where Rachel is watching her movie.*

You know, we could always  
Um RICHARD

*He taps her lightly on her shoulder.*

*She takes out a head phone.*

What. RACHEL

I was just gonna say  
If you like movies  
We could  
Like  
Go to one.  
Together. RICHARD

This is homework. RACHEL

Um... RICHARD

FMA. RACHEL

... RICHARD

Film and Media Arts. It's my major.  
I'm a filmmaker. RACHEL

Oh. Okay. That's  
So what kind of-- RICHARD

Docs. RACHEL

Oh. RICHARD

That's what you were gonna ask, right? What kind of films I make? RACHEL

Yeah. RICHARD

I make *fucked* up documentaries about the guys I sleep with and all the awkward shit they say the next morning. RACHEL

Oh. Cool. RICHARD

And you will be my masterpiece! RACHEL

... RICHARD  
(*looking at his watch*)

So I have class in, like RICHARD

Yeah. RICHARD

I'm gonna have to RICHARD

It's fine Derek.

RACHEL

Sorry.

RICHARD

You can stop apologizing.. This doesn't have to be weird.

RACHEL

Okay.

RICHARD

You don't have to make stuff up either.

RACHEL

*Pause.*

I'm not making--  
What?

RICHARD

I know you don't have class.  
Last night you told me you don't go to school here.

RACHEL

That's--  
Okay so actually...

RICHARD

...

RICHARD

I said that?

RACHEL

Yes.

*He looks down, desperately trying to remember.*

*Nothing.*

RICHARD

Well I do have class actually.  
I don't know why I said that because I really do have class.

RACHEL

Fine. Fine.

...  
RICHARD

What class.  
RACHEL

Um.  
F-M-A. class.  
RICHARD

Oh you too?  
RACHEL

Yeah. So...  
RICHARD

What are you working on?  
RACHEL

...  
RICHARD

You told me some other stuff too.  
RACHEL

Like what.  
RICHARD

Like you told me your name isn't really Derek.  
RACHEL

*Richard freezes a little. He slowly sits on the bed.*

So actually you *did* say some strange shit last night.  
RACHEL

I don't really  
I don't know why I said all that  
Because it's not true.  
RICHARD

It's not?  
RACHEL

No.  
RICHARD

RACHEL

Because last night you made it like this *huge* deal that you were telling me.  
You were like

*(a pretty great impression of drunk Richard)*

*I never told this to ANYONE!*

*You're different you're different I like you blab blab blab*

RICHARD

*(more to himself than anyone)*

...shit...

RACHEL

So what the hell.  
So why do you lie about basically everything.

RICHARD

They're not lies. I really do have class.  
I have to go.

*She turns back to her movie.*

*Richard reaches the door.*

RACHEL

It's Rachel.

*He stops.*

RICHARD

Nice to meet you Rachel.

RACHEL

...

RICHARD

Sorry I've been weird this morning. I don't usually do this / kind of thing.

RACHEL

You can go.

RICHARD

Okay.  
Okay.

*Richard starts for the door. Then stops.*

RICHARD

Can I get your phone number?

*Rachel, shocked and maybe even a little impressed, turns to him.*

RICHARD

Has that time like passed? The time when it's okay to ask for your phone number?

*She looks at him.*

RICHARD

Yeah. It's passed. It's definitely passed. Shit.

RACHEL

You're halfway out the door.

RICHARD

I know. Sorry.  
But I'd really like to, just  
See you.

*She sits back. Considers.*

RACHEL

You already have my number. I gave it to you last night.

RICHARD

Oh.

RACHEL

I wrote it on a napkin. I dunno where you put it.

*Richard reaches into his pocket: a few stray dollars, receipts, keys,  
and then the napkin.*

RACHEL

That it?

RICHARD

"Rachel." Yeah. I don't have a phone so

RACHEL

You take that bottle of whisky?

RICHARD

Nah.

*She glances over to where the bottle was. Sees it's gone.*

*She looks at him. Stands. Walks up to him.*

RACHEL  
You're ridiculous. I've never--  
Like, who *are* you?

RICHARD  
Um...

RACHEL  
You're a liar. It's like *ingrained* in you.

RICHARD  
Sorry.

...

RACHEL  
I want you to call me.

RICHARD  
Okay.

RACHEL  
But only if you confess.

RICHARD  
What?

RACHEL  
To everything.  
I know we all have secrets. I like being around people with secrets.  
But I'm not calling you Derek. You're not a Derek.

RICHARD  
Oh.

RACHEL  
So don't call that number unless you're ready...

RICHARD  
Okay.

RACHEL  
*(she pats him on the shoulder)*  
Great. Good talk. You better get to class.

*Lights.*

*A cold night.*

*Richard stands on a dingy sidewalk outside The Republican. The Republican is a homemade, shady topless bar in South Philly. He stands very still with his hands in the pockets of a light jacket.*

*After a long time Rachel enters, walking briskly. She has headphones in and is staring at the ground. Richard sees her, silently grapples with whether or not he should say hello. He decides not to or doesn't have enough time to come to a decision.*

*She walks by and exits without noticing him.*

*Richard is alone again. He settles after the Rachel sighting and stands still.*

*Long pause.*

*Rachel enters again taking out her headphones.*

RACHEL

*Derek!*

*Richard is startled. Turns.*

RICHARD

Hi Rachel. I thought maybe that / was you--

RACHEL

Are you like *lurking* out here?

RICHARD

What?

RACHEL

It's freezing outside.

RICHARD

I work here.

RACHEL

You work at the Republican?

RICHARD

Yeah.

RACHEL

You're *outside*.

RICHARD

Well yeah.  
I check ID's.

RACHEL

Oh. Damn.  
They should let you do that inside. It's like 20 below or something. Look at my breath.

*She breathes.*

RICHARD

Yeah. They want me to  
I have to do it out here, so no underage, um

RACHEL

Rightright. Can't let 'em get scarred by the

*She motions 'boobs' or acts out some kind of move she thinks a dancer at the Republican might utilize.*

RICHARD

*(re: her accurate representation of the dance move)*

Have you been here before?

RACHEL

*Oh* yeah. I used to date this guy who was obsessed with this place. He'd always wanna see some girl Rilo dance.

RICHARD

Yeah she's dancing tonight.

RACHEL

Oh right on.

...

*It's awkward but Rachel stays for some reason.*

RACHEL

I was just at my friend's. Margarita Monday.

RICHARD

What?

RACHEL

Never mind.  
They let you take a break here?

RICHARD

Yeah. Um. Yeah.  
But I already went on break.

RACHEL

Oh. Bummer.

RICHARD

And I only get one.

RACHEL

Well yeah.

...

RACHEL

Oh my god! You know what? You totally just reminded me of this fucked up dream I had like *right* after we hung out. You wanna hear it?

RICHARD

Um--

RACHEL

So I was in this forest? But one that is like *clearly* in a dream? Everything's got that foggy cinematic *glow* even though it was the middle of the night? You know what I'm talking about?

*Richard kind of nods.*

RACHEL

And I kissed *Castro!*

...

RICHARD

What?

RACHEL

Yeah. Fidel Castro was there and he asked me to kiss him and I *did!* Isn't that fucked up?

RICHARD

Um...

RACHEL

Which is like *so* strange that I even knew it was Castro because I hardly even know what he looks like. I have a vague idea because he's--like--*Castro*. Cigar, beard or whatever but usually that stuff just *doesn't* stick in my head. The most basic stuff. I'm cursed you know?

RICHARD

Okay.

RACHEL

Anyways I freaked out and like *knew* I'd just done something that I completely should *not* have done. And then *you* came out of nowhere and just stood there with me. You, me, and Fidel Castro. And you look at me and go like "Hey. Let's get some pizza." And so we left. Yeah I dunno. So what's up you didn't call me.

RICHARD

I know. Sorry.

RACHEL

Too scared.

RICHARD

What?

RACHEL

Well I'm here now so just get it over with.

RICHARD

I can't...

RACHEL

Come on! I'm not asking for deep shit, I'm asking for like basic human to human like you-slept-in-my-bed like we've-seen-each-other-naked kind of stuff! I don't even know your name!

RICHARD

Well no one does.

RACHEL

Yeah but I'm different.

RICHARD

...

RACHEL

Didn't you say I was different?

*Richard shrugs, then nods slowly.*

RACHEL

Okay so?

RICHARD

...

RACHEL

Listen.  
Start with the stuff I already know.  
The stuff you told me when you were drunk.

RICHARD

Um. So okay.  
I'm not actually a student at Temple.

RACHEL

And?

RICHARD

I work here. At the Republican.

RACHEL

...

RICHARD

And my name isn't Derek.  
It's  
Um  
It's Richard.

RACHEL

Richard. Ah.

RICHARD

Yeah.

RACHEL

Last name?

RICHARD

...

RACHEL

That's all I get?

RICHARD

The rule was I tell you my first name.

RACHEL

The rule was that you tell me everything. All of it.

RICHARD

...

RACHEL

What is your *deal* man?! I can't get over this.  
You really just can't--  
I'm gonna go.

RICHARD

Rachel--

RACHEL

Nah this is a bad idea. I'm not gonna push if you're not--

RICHARD

No no. This isn't  
I'm sorry. I wanted to call you. I didn't think I could.

RACHEL

Ehh

RICHARD

I'm not--  
I know I come off as

RACHEL

Weird.

RICHARD

Yeah.

RACHEL

So what were you gonna say.

RICHARD

What do you mean?

RACHEL

On the phone. If you called. Say what you were gonna say.

RICHARD

Um. Okay. I was gonna say: Hi Rachel.

RACHEL

Hi.

RICHARD

It's me Derek.

*She gives him a look.*

RICHARD

Er  
Richard.  
And I probably would have apologized for waiting so long to call.

RACHEL

Nice start.

RICHARD

Thanks. But I'm not all that good on the phone.

RACHEL

So try to make me laugh or something. *Ease* the tension.

RICHARD

Okay. How?

RACHEL

I dunno! *You* called *me*.

RICHARD

Okay. Um. Maybe I'd say something like  
Maybe I'd tell you the story of how I lost the napkin with your number on it.

RACHEL

You lost it! How is that supposed to make me laugh?

RICHARD

Just that I was an idiot and left it on the subway.

RACHEL

What!

RICHARD

And I'd tell you how I spent the entire day and night searching every last subway car in Philly.

RACHEL

Why'd you do that.

RICHARD

Because.  
I can't stop thinking about you and I want to know more about you.

RACHEL

Nice.

RICHARD

And then I would probably leave the number for The Republican and ask you to call / me here--

RACHEL

Oh you're leaving a message?

RICHARD

Um

RACHEL

I'd pick up.

RICHARD

So we're talking to each other right now?

RACHEL

Yeah.

So what do you wanna know. You wanna know more about me, here I am.

RICHARD

Okay. Um. Tell me about your films.

RACHEL

What about them.

RICHARD

What are they about?

RACHEL

Well they're all about different shit.

RICHARD

What's your newest one about.

*She looks at him. Considers whether or not to actually disclose this.*

RACHEL

My grandmother.

RICHARD

Okay.

RACHEL

And this affair she carried on for like her entire life.

RICHARD

Oh.

RACHEL

Well sort of.

She and this guy she knew in college wrote letters to each other for like *years* which is sort of romantic but also super complicated because she had this whole family with my grandfather and her kids and stuff.

But I found all these letters and I'm trying to talk her into letting me film her reading them. Like looking straight into the camera just totally exposed.

RICHARD

Whoa.

RACHEL

Yeah and then I'll search for this other guy and get him to read his.

I dunno though. It's sort of messy. My grandma isn't the easiest person to talk to and these letters are still sort of a secret.

But honestly if it wasn't messy I wouldn't be trying to get it on camera.

That's the only reason to do this.

RICHARD

What do you mean.

RACHEL

Stories about like...

Okay so we all do this.

We all have the "you" we present to people and the "you" we keep for ourselves. Either because it feels good or because we're afraid. Or both.

But putting that out there on film can be therapeutic. For the people watching it and for the people in it.

Makes you realized we're not alone in that

But anyways, that's my film.

RICHARD

Cool.

RACHEL

That's my *current* film.

RICHARD

Sounds amazing.

RACHEL

Thanks. It might be like an instillation thing. I don't know yet.

RICHARD

...

RACHEL

...

RICHARD

Okay so there's something I should probably tell you.

RACHEL

What? What is it?

*(as if she has a sudden horrible idea of what it is)*

Ohmygod what is it?!

RICHARD

I

Um.

I didn't actually take my break yet.

*Rachel shoves him and laughs.*

RACHEL

You fucking *liar!*

RICHARD

I know, I'm sorry.

RACHEL

You are *twisted* man. You must really hate me.

RICHARD

No I don't! Not at all. I

I think I'm actually

I dunno.

*They look at each other, smiling.*

*Richard grabs the handle of the door to The Republican and sort of pauses, looking at Rachel.*

RACHEL

What's that look?

Oh is this some weird invitation? To come hang out with you inside the shady titty bar you work at?

*He shrugs.*

RICHARD

Sorry.

*She walks forward.*

RACHEL

Don't give me a look. Ask me.  
Say the words. Ask me Richard.

*Lights.*

*She walks inside.*

*Lights.*

*Richard and Rachel are brushing their teeth next to each other.*

*Richard stops after a moment and smiles into the mirror.*

*He spits.*

*Then burps.*

RACHEL

Ugh...

RICHARD

What?

*He continues to brush.*

*[...]*

*Richard and Rachel are going through yoga poses together.*

*Rachel is good.*

*Richard looks like he's still learning.*

*They speak between poses.*

RICHARD

What's it called?

RACHEL

Chinatown. I can't believe you haven't heard of it.  
Probably the greatest screenplay ever written.

RICHARD

Who's in it.

RACHEL

Faye Dunaway. Jack Nicholson.

RICHARD

...

RACHEL

You don't know Jack Nicholson?  
Five Easy Pieces? The Last Detail?

RICHARD

...

RACHEL

He was the Joker in the Tim / Burton Batman--

RICHARD

Oh Jack *Nicholson!*  
I thought you made documentaries.

RACHEL

I do but noir has my heart...

[...]

*Almost complete darkness.*

*In bed, Rachel wakes up with a start. She sits there, upright in the darkness for a moment and then reaches out for Richard next to her.*

*He's not there.*

RACHEL

Richard?

...

RACHEL

Richard.

*Richard enters in the darkness, or maybe he was just always standing there and we only see him now.*

RICHARD

I'm right here Rachel.  
Are you okay?

RACHEL

Where were you?

...

RACHEL

Come back to bed.

...

Richard?  
RACHEL

[...]

*Rachel and Richard brush their teeth in the same sink.*

*They don't speak to each other.*

*They brush and brush. Rachel looks at Richard out of the corner of her eye.*

[...]

*Rachel and Richard are both drunk in her apartment.*

*Rachel drags a chair forward, laughing.*

Come on, we're recreating it now!  
RACHEL

Nooo.  
RICHARD

Yes! We're gonna jog your memory.  
If you can't remember the night we met then we're doomed.  
Sit.

*He moves and sits in the chair.*

*She moves another chair and sits across from him.*

You were there.  
And I was here.  
RACHEL

Okay.  
RICHARD

It was the Draught Horse.  
RACHEL

Right.  
RICHARD

And you were shitfaced.  
RACHEL

RICHARD

Yes. Clearly.

RACHEL

But so was I.

And you told me your bullshit story about being a student and your bullshit name and then you saidddd...

*She waits for him to answer.*

RICHARD

*(sbrugging, smiling)*

I don't know!

RACHEL

Ugh!

RICHARD

I wish I did! I wish I did, honestly.

RACHEL

I can't--

RICHARD

*(reaching out to her)*

Rachel...

...

RACHEL

Well, let's make it now then.

Let's make it new.

*She composes herself.*

*Holds out her hand.*

RACHEL

I'm Rachel.

*Her hand hangs there. Richard looks at it.*

[...]

*Rachel stands down center alone, dressed for bed. She brushes her teeth for a long period of time.*

*Richard enters. He walks over to where Rachel is stationed. Takes his toothbrush and starts brushing.*

*They brush in silence for a long time.*

Rach. RICHARD

...

What. RACHEL

...

Are you okay? RICHARD

Yes. RACHEL

...

I'm sorry. RICHARD

For what? RACHEL

... RICHARD

... RACHEL

For leaving. RICHARD

... RACHEL

Without telling you. RICHARD

... RACHEL

RICHARD

The place sort of freaked me out.  
I don't usually go to places like that.

RACHEL

Places like what?

RICHARD

It just felt a little  
Chaotic.

RACHEL

So wait so the *bar* we decided to go to made you just disappear?

RICHARD

I didn't disappear--

RACHEL

Let me tell you what I saw. One minute we're at the bar dancing and you're *with* me. One minute you're *there* and the next minute I turn around and you're just *gone*.

RICHARD

I know--

RACHEL

I turn around and I'm *alone*.  
That's disappearing. You can't fucking do that.

RICHARD

I thought someone was

RACHEL

What.

RICHARD

Nothing. I dunno.

RACHEL

No you thought someone was what.

RICHARD

I thought someone was following me.

RACHEL

*What?*

RICHARD

I don't know.

Who?  
RACHEL  
RICHARD  
...  
RACHEL  
Who did you think was *following* you?  
RICHARD  
...  
RACHEL  
I think you should just stay at your place tonight.

Um. Okay.  
RICHARD

Maybe for the next few nights.  
RACHEL

...  
RICHARD  
Are you breaking up with me?

RACHEL  
No.  
I don't know.  
There's nothing to break up. We're just--

RICHARD  
...

RACHEL  
Whatever. We can talk about this later. Just please go.

*Richard starts to exit.*

RICHARD  
I really did think I saw someone. I didn't mean to leave you.  
I just let it get the best of me.

RACHEL  
Tell me what you saw.

RICHARD  
I thought someone recognized me.

From what. RACHEL

... RICHARD

Recognized you from what. RACHEL

*Richard looks at her.*

Why won't you tell me your name. RACHEL

I did. RICHARD

No, your full name. First name, last name.  
Why won't you tell me?  
Do you not *trust* me? RACHEL

I do, of course I do. RICHARD

Well you don't act like it. RACHEL

... RICHARD

Tell me your name. RACHEL

I can't. RICHARD

*He exits.*

*Lights.*

*Lights up on an old pay phone inside the Republican.*

*Richard talks into it. He is drunk.*

RICHARD

Hi.

It's Derek.

Or Richard I mean. You know what I mean.

It's me.

Umm.

...

I saw they're playing Stranger on the Third Floor at the Ritz this weekend. That Peter Lorre film you said you...

I didn't know if maybe you wanted to go or...

...

I've been thinking a lot about the documentary with your grandma and like

And what you were saying about the "you" we put out in the world and the "you" we keep to ourselves and...

I agree. I do that. But I didn't mean to...not with you.

...

Listen I've been fucked up most of my life but I didn't feel that way when I was with you.

And I don't want to lose that.

But I know two weeks ago I sounded crazy.

And you must think I'm

...

But

I wanted you to know that I'll tell you.

I'll tell you my name and I'll tell you what happened.

If you still want to know.

I'll do it Rachel.

...

You know where to find me.

*Richard hangs up.*

*He walks outside to his post in front of The Republican.*

*He waits for Rachel to appear.*

*In another space, low lights rise on Rachel as she sits at her computer watching a film.*

*Her phone illuminates with a new voice mail. She looks her phone.*

*She turns it off and continues to watch.*

*Lights down.*

*A projection of Rachel's film.*

*An elderly woman looks into the camera and reads one of her letters.*

*It's more than just a straight shot of him sitting there. She cuts to b-roll and uses music too.*

*It's not artsy and not exactly sympathetic to this woman, but her direction does support the words of her letters in a way that makes this an enjoyable, if uncomfortable, film.*

*It's a good film.*

*An extended moment of darkness.*

*Softly we start to hear the sound of dripping. One single drip that echoes through what sounds like an enormous cavern.*

*Maybe there is some very soft whispering again.*

*After a time the whispering stops. The dripping stops.*

*Silence.*

*Lights up on a swanky bar.*

*Rachel and Richard sit there. They both look a bit older.*

RACHEL  
*(laughing)*

Riiiiight.

RICHARD

No bullshit. Three semesters in.  
Here.

*He pulls out his wallet and shows her his ID.*

RACHEL

What's that?

RICHARD

My student ID.

RACHEL

No it's not.

RICHARD

Yeah it is!

RACHEL

That's not what they look like.

RICHARD

It is. Maybe they changed the design after you graduated. Here see?  
Come on, you think I made this thing?

*She shrugs.*

RICHARD

Aw Rach! How twisted do you think I am?

RACHEL

Pretty twisted.

*Richard puts his wallet down.*

RICHARD

Okay. Well today was a total surprise to me.  
I mean it was on the syllabus but promise I didn't, like, manufacture some ID and sneak  
into this random class you're speaking in to like  
I don't even know.

RACHEL

Sure sure.

RICHARD

I didn't know I was going to see you today.

RACHEL

...

RICHARD

You don't believe me?

*She shrugs.*

*He leans back and sighs. He drinks.*

RICHARD

I saw your film.  
Before today I mean. I saw it a while back. I've been following it.  
It's good.

RACHEL

Oh thanks.

RICHARD

It is!

RACHEL

We don't have to talk about it.

RICHARD

No I want to.  
It's not going to screen around here?

RACHEL

What like in a festival?

RICHARD

I dunno.

RACHEL

I'm done sending it out.

RICHARD

Why!

RACHEL

I'm just done with it. I was proud of my grandma for what she said. For what she owned up to.

But it's just my grandma. It's a small story.

RICHARD

It won like a million awards!

RACHEL

It won zero awards.

RICHARD

Or like

But the one place. Um

They gave it like some *ovation!* I read it on your blog, some like accolade.

RACHEL

Oh Orinda.

RICHARD

Yes. The Orinda Film Festival.

RACHEL

Yeah.

RICHARD

And what were the others.

RACHEL

Richard.

RICHARD

Come on! One was

Um

Austin?

RACHEL

Atlanta.

RICHARD

Fuck! So legit!

And Miami!

RACHEL

Yeah. That was sorta crazy.

RICHARD

Miami is huge! Such a huge festival.

RACHEL

Well no one in New York or LA wanted it so  
Which is fine I guess.

RICHARD

Fuck them.

RACHEL

Or Park City but we won't talk about that.

RICHARD

Such a crap shoot. Such a crap shoot out there.

RACHEL

I'm not upset, I'm just done with it. I sent it out and now I'm done.

RICHARD

Because you know Tom Hanks now so you're good.

RACHEL

What?

RICHARD

What you were saying earlier about the--!

RACHEL

I don't know Tom Hanks.

RICHARD

You work with him.

RACHEL

No.

RICHARD

His company.

RACHEL

I have an *internship* with PlayTone. Which, yeah, is Tom Hanks' production company. But I don't know him. I've never even seen him.

RICHARD

Yeah but--

RACHEL

He's one of many people involved there. Many many people.

Okay.  
RICHARD

And it's just an internship.  
RACHEL

Okay. Sorry. I thought you worked with him maybe.  
RICHARD

No.  
RACHEL

...  
RICHARD

It sucks. I hate it. I hate LA.  
RACHEL  
I haven't achieved anything. Like I said, it was just a small story. No urgency.

Noooo. People saw *everywhere* your film. In a bunch of film festivals.  
RICHARD

Three.  
RACHEL

Three film festivals. Three *legit* film festivals.  
RICHARD

No one's heard of Orinda.  
RACHEL

Yeah they have.  
RICHARD  
And you just spoke in front of a class at a university. Like, a year after graduating. Like *one* year after graduating you're lecturing a class.  
That's amazing.

You're the expert.  
RACHEL

No I'm not.  
RICHARD

I don't actually remember you saying anything about going back to school when you and me were--  
RACHEL

RICHARD  
Well I told you I was a student.

RACHEL  
Yeah but you weren't.

RICHARD  
But I wanted to be.

RACHEL  
I don't remember you saying that.

RICHARD  
No?

RACHEL  
No. I thought it was just one of your lies. That it was something you said to like--  
I don't know why you said it.

RICHARD  
I think I said it because--

RACHEL  
But also you're studying film. Like *specifically* film.

RICHARD  
Correct.

RACHEL  
And that's not...

RICHARD  
What.

RACHEL  
...

RICHARD  
Is that weird?

RACHEL  
Yes.

RICHARD  
That you inspired me to go back to school?

RACHEL  
That's what happened?

RICHARD

So...

Okay yes I went back because you--

It wasn't totally a conscious thing though. I saw you making films. Making these ideas we were talking about come alive and I thought

Yeah subconsciously I probably thought, cool. I would like to do that too.

RACHEL

Okay.

RICHARD

And...

I asked you to come here tonight because I have something I want to tell you. Something I want to pitch to you.

RACHEL

What.

RICHARD

I know I was

Um

Guarded when we were hanging out.

RACHEL

Hanging *out*?

RICHARD

When we were--

RACHEL

Fine. Yes you were guarded. And weird as fuck. Continue with the pitch.

RICHARD

Okay right. And there were things I was keeping from you but I wasn't--

RACHEL

Like your name?

RICHARD

Yeah.

RACHEL

And you want to tell me those things now?

RICHARD

Yes. Well no not specifically but--

RACHEL

Okay well this pitch sucks by the way.

RICHARD

Just hear me out.

I saw your film, that you made with your grandma. And there was real truth there. You were super thorough and fair and I'm interested in maybe--

RACHEL

Are you going to tell me your name or what?

RICHARD

I am yes.

RACHEL

Okay.

RICHARD

But I'm trying to tell you why I want to--

RACHEL

Don't explain. I don't want an explanation.

RICHARD

...

RACHEL

If you don't tell me your name right now I'm leaving.

RICHARD

But it's not that / simple--

RACHEL

The next words out of your mouth should be your name.

...

...

RICHARD

Richard Turner.

*She tries to process this but can't immediately find anything alarming about this name.*

RACHEL

Okay...

Richard *Joseph* Turner.

RICHARD

*Slowly her expression changes to slight confusion. She's working something out in her head and Richard is watching it happen.*

RACHEL

Do I know that name?

RICHARD

I'm sort of hoping you don't...

*She starts to look panicked but still confused.*

RACHEL

Why. What the fuck. Why are you hoping I don't.

RICHARD

...

RACHEL

Are you gonna *talk*?

RICHARD

You don't know the / name--?

RACHEL

I mean I *guess maybe*  
But  
Richard...

RICHARD

Joseph Turner.  
Okay let me go back. So I--

RACHEL

So this is like a *thing*. You didn't tell me your name because you *did* something.

RICHARD

Yes.

RACHEL  
*(standing)*

What the--

RICHARD

Nono. It's okay it's okay.

RACHEL

That is *so* fucked up.

RICHARD

No I know. But I'm here so that we can--

RACHEL

There's no we!  
You can't not tell me something like this--

RICHARD

I'm trying to tell you now.

RACHEL

If you wanted to tell me, you could have talked to me two years ago in *person*. Face to face before we *fucked!* Not---

RICHARD

I know. You're right. But I haven't been able to do that. With anyone.  
And I thought this could--  
Rachel. Please sit. Please. It's okay.

*Rachel pulls her chair away from him and sits in it.*

RACHEL

*Talk.*

RICHARD

Okay. I wish this wasn't me. I wish this wasn't my story. But it is.  
And for the last ten years, not only have I not told anyone my real name, but the entire story has been...*buried*.  
But I'm here because I want to tell you.  
And...  
And because I want your help.

RACHEL

Doing what.

*Lights.*

*Lights up.*

*At center Richard sits in a chair.*

*Around him, on the edges of the darkness, Rachel appears every so often running cables this way and that way.*

*Richard watches her.*

*Rachel starts to set up a boom microphone.*

RICHARD

Is there anything I can do orrr

RACHEL

No. This won't take long.

*She finishes setting it up, she puts it near Richard. She exits off into the darkness.*

*Richard sits there by himself and looks at the microphone. He breathes in deeply and rubs his sweaty hands on his pants.*

*From the darkness, unseen, we hear Rachel:*

RACHEL

Do you want something to drink. Some water or something.

RICHARD

I'm okay.

*Rachel emerges from the darkness with a chair. She puts it in front of Richard and sits.*

*She stares at him.*

RICHARD

Are we rolling?

RACHEL

Not yet. I want to talk to you first.

RICHARD

Okay.

RACHEL

...

RICHARD

Hi.

RACHEL

Hi Richard. I'm super skeptical about this.  
I don't know why you want to do this.

RICHARD

I want you to know what happened.

RACHEL

Okay but you can tell me. We can just sit here and talk and you can tell me.  
We don't have to film it.

RICHARD

No I know but--  
You told me some people can set things free when they put them down on camera.  
I saw you do that for you grandma. I want that to work for me.

RACHEL

It's not that easy.

RICHARD

I wanna try.  
Even if you and me are the only ones who ever see this.

RACHEL

...

RICHARD

I'm tired of this hanging over me.

RACHEL

Okay.

*Rachel stands and walks back into the darkness.*

*A live feed of Richard sitting in the chair is projected behind him.*

RACHEL

*(unseen)*

Okay Richard we're rolling.

*Richard tries to get comfortable.*

RACHEL

Please state your name.

Richard Joseph Turner. RICHARD

That's your real name? RACHEL

Yes. RICHARD

Do you go by another name? RACHEL

Yes. RICHARD

And what name is that? RACHEL

Derek. RICHARD

Why do you tell people your name is Derek. RACHEL

It's just....easier. RICHARD

Then what. RACHEL

Then telling them who I really am. RICHARD

You're afraid people will recognize your name. RACHEL

I'm afraid they'll remember what I did. RICHARD

...

So we can assume you're the same Richard Joseph Turner that, at 12 years old-- RACHEL

Yes. RICHARD

...

RACHEL

You were tried as an adult, yes?

RICHARD

No.

RACHEL

Says here you were--

RICHARD

Okay yes. At first yes I was.  
There was a hearing after it happened that I don't even  
I hardly remember anything about it.

RACHEL

Because later in appeals they made it clear they felt the initial decision by judge Krause was  
rushed. They threw out your guilty plea. Overturned your sentence.

RICHARD

...

RACHEL

Right? This is all public record.

RICHARD

...

RACHEL

Richard. I told you this wouldn't be easy.

RICHARD

Yes that's correct. That's all correct.

RACHEL

Your public defender said you didn't understand the proceedings. That even though you  
confessed you didn't understand plea bargaining or even most of what your own lawyers  
were saying. Is this true?

RICHARD

I told you I don't remember anything from the hearing.

RACHEL

Your case was retried. And here you are.

RICHARD

...

Did you hurt that little boy? RACHEL

... RICHARD

Richard. RACHEL

He wasn't *little*-- RICHARD

Did you hurt him? RACHEL

Yes. RICHARD

In self defense? RACHEL

... RICHARD

Yes. RICHARD

So you were attacked. RACHEL

People think I lured him out there.  
I did not lure him out there. RICHARD

Did he attack you. RACHEL

HE WAS ATTACKING ME EVERYDAY BY--! RICHARD

Okay. RACHEL

I'm sorry. RICHARD

You have to be calm. I'm not doing this if you-- RACHEL

RICHARD

I didn't mean to--  
I'm sorry.

...

RACHEL

You say that boy's name in your sleep.

RICHARD

What?

RACHEL

Cole. You say his name almost every night.  
Tell me about him.

...

RICHARD

No one cared about any of this. When they asked me why I--  
When I told them later, none of it mattered.

*(he breathes deep)*

Cole singled me out for some reason. At the beginning of sixth grade I changed schools. He decided he hated me and he just didn't let up. He would say things to me. Do things to me. Most of the time in the locker room. After P.E. because there was never anyone around. Never any grown ups.

He told me that he was going to bring his dad's hammer into school. That he was going to hammer both of my hands until they were broken and bleeding so I wouldn't even be able to go to the bathroom without someone helping me.

...

And it got worse. Every time we were alone it was something else.

And then one day his friends

Grabbed me. They pinned be down

This was all some joke to them. They brought me in back, stretched me across one of the benches. And Cole pulled his pants down.

And one of his friends

They dared him to

To piss on me.

To take a piss on me.

...

And he did.

On my face.

In my mouth.

They all laughed.

And then just left me there.

...

RACHEL  
I'm sorry Richard.

RICHARD  
Yeah.

...

RACHEL  
I'm going to keep going. Okay?

*Richard nods.*

RACHEL  
When did the incident occur. In the woods.

RICHARD  
The next school year. I hadn't seen him all summer.

RACHEL  
Why were you out there with him?

RICHARD  
He was friends with my cousin John. I was sleeping over at John's house and Cole came over. He just showed up, I had no idea he was going to be there.

RACHEL  
Did your cousin know how Cole treated you?

*Richard nods.*

RICHARD  
John's parents were in bed and Cole started talking about sneaking out of the house. He had brought over a bag of paintballs and they wanted to throw them at cars I think. But cars can stop. People can get out and get us in trouble. So they decided it would be better to go through the woods to the tracks and throw them at trains. So we left.

RACHEL  
You went with them.

RICHARD  
Yes.

RACHEL  
Why would you go with them.

RICHARD

I don't know. It sounds stupid now but  
I didn't want them to leave me behind.

RACHEL

You weren't planning on hurting Cole.

RICHARD

No. Never.  
It had been three months since the locker room. I just thought  
I thought things were going to be better now.  
But I was wrong...  
We left the house through the basement door, went down the hill and into the trees. We  
cut through to the dirt path that led to the rock wall that separated the trees from the train  
tracks.  
And we sat there and waited.  
Cole had snuck some of his dad's vodka and poured it into a water bottle. Him and John  
were passing it back and forth.  
The more they had the worse it got.  
John didn't mean anything. I don't think. He was just following Cole.  
But they started coming after me.

RACHEL

Hurting you?

RICHARD

Well. No. Just saying things. At first.

RACHEL

What type of things.

RICHARD

I dunno.

RACHEL

Richard. Do you remember the things they said?

RICHARD

Yes.

RACHEL

Can you tell us some of the things they said to you?

RICHARD

...

RACHEL

If we're telling a story here  
 If we're trying to tell your story  
 I think it would be helpful if you told us some of the things he said.

RICHARD

...

RACHEL

If you can.

RICHARD

He called me a bitch. He called me a faggot.  
 He told me he was going to throw me in front of the next train.  
 And he drank more.  
 He told me people told him they saw me having sex with my sister. With my little sister.  
 He tried to get me to admit that I had.  
 He told me he was going to call the police on me. That having sex with your sister was illegal and he was going to tell the police what I had done.  
 And he just kept drinking.  
 I didn't know the way back. I had never been out there before.  
 So I just sat there. Looking down at the dirt.  
 Him and John were getting drunk.  
 John turned to him and said "Look at my eyes! Look at my eyes!"  
 He asked how big his pupils were, said he could feel them.  
 Cole called him a light-weight. A pussy. Told him his eyes were huge.  
 And I  
 I don't know why. I have no idea why but I suddenly spoke and said  
 That's a hole.  
 And they said What? And I said  
 The center of your eye. The black. It's just space. It's a hole.  
 Cole didn't believe me. But he was afraid that I knew something he didn't.  
 He told me to Shut the fuck up.  
 But John said "I've heard that."  
 Heard what.  
 That it's a hole. That the black you're seeing is just the back of your head.  
 And I said "If you're careful and you know what you're doing, you can put things in there.  
 Inside the space. In and out."  
 And they asked how I knew that. And I told them  
 Because, I've done it before.  
 I told them it was like a game. That people do it at parties to show off.  
 I told them that needles are the easiest. That I had used sewing needles.  
 Cole still didn't believe me, so I told him I could show him.  
 John wanted to see it. He wanted me to do it.  
 Cole thought it was too dark. He was stalling. He was scared.  
 I told him that I could see fine in the dark. I always have.  
 I told him to trust me.  
 And he had to. He wasn't going to let me show him up.

He made me swear it was a hole. Swear that I was telling the truth.  
He said if I hurt him at all he would bash my brains on the train tracks.  
In my pocket I felt something.  
A nail. I had picked it up on our way down the hill on our way to the woods.  
I didn't even know why at the time. But it was the perfect size.  
I showed it to John and Cole and they agreed.  
John helped Cole into place, and he leaned back.  
I stood over him and helped bend his neck slightly.  
Into the moonlight.  
I told him that the most important thing is to keep his eye open.  
At all times Cole. Just keep it open.  
No matter what. Don't blink.  
I held the nail softly between my fingers. And I leaned in...  
Cole. Hold very still. This won't hurt.  
Hold still. Hold still....

*Lights fade.*

*Later.*

*The space is very bright now. Rachel is putting away her equipment. Coiling up cables. Breaking down tripods.*

*Richard sits in a chair nearby with his head in his hands.*

*Rachel cleans in silence.*

...

*Richard raises his head.*

RICHARD

Thank you.

RACHEL

...

RICHARD

Rachel.

*Rachel looks at him.*

RICHARD

Can you talk to me?

RACHEL

I don't really know what to--

RICHARD

...

RACHEL

This is a lot.  
I appreciate that you--  
I dunno. This is a lot.

RICHARD

I know.

RACHEL

I had this.

*She absently flips through the pages of notes and research she had with her.*

RACHEL

But hearing you say it all out loud  
It's a lot.

RICHARD

...

RACHEL

For the record it's still complete fucking bullshit you didn't tell me any of this two years ago.  
That's still *supremely* fucked up.

RICHARD

I know.

RACHEL

Like, I really just can't--  
That's not something you can just *keep* from someone!

RICHARD

I know.  
But I've never told anyone this. And so now I'm--  
What happened in those woods.  
I've always tried to convince myself it's not who I am.  
But I'm tired of trying to convince myself.

RACHEL

...

RICHARD

Are you afraid of me?

RACHEL

No. I'm not.

RICHARD

Will you help me?

...

RACHEL

Yes.  
If you want to tell this to people, if you want to come clean, then yes.  
There's a story here. It's messy as fuck. But there's a film in it buried somewhere.

RICHARD

I can get us an editing dock at Temple.

I mean I have to go back home.

RACHEL

Home to LA?

RICHARD

Yeah.

RACHEL

You said you hate it there.

RICHARD

I still live there.

RACHEL

I thought we were going to make this together.

RICHARD

I don't know what to tell you.

RACHEL

So you're taking the footage with you?

RICHARD

Do you want it?

RACHEL

...

No.

RICHARD

So I'll just take it.

RACHEL

I think we should just keep it between us. For now.

RICHARD

Of course.

RACHEL

Maybe we just end up throwing it out. I don't know.

RICHARD

I can shuffle through it. Try to come up with something rough. It's gonna be a beast but give me a few weeks and I can send you something.

RACHEL

RICHARD

Okay.

RACHEL

Or whatever. We can decide what this is later.  
You're the one putting it out there.

RICHARD

Yeah. It felt...  
I don't know.

RACHEL

This will help.  
I really think it will.

RICHARD

Okay.

...

RICHARD

Should I come out with you? To LA?

RACHEL

No. It's your story. But this is my film.  
I'll keep you updated on the progress.

*Lights.*

*Lights.*

*Rachel sits at and editing dock capturing Richard's footage. She has headphones in so we can't hear the dialogue.*

*She eats out of box of Chinese food as it captures. She sort of watches it absently.*

*She sees something and makes a note of it on a clipboard she has next to her computer.*

*In another space Richard stands outside the Republican on a cold night. He takes a flask out of his pocket and drinks from it.*

...

*Rachel is making progress with the editing. Now she's actively cutting together a scene.*

*Maybe we see the image projected as it's being cut and edited?*

*In another space Richard sits at a computer and writes an email.*

*He hits send.*

*He coughs.*

*In Rachel's space her cell phone glows. She glances at it and ignores it, goes back to editing.*

...

*Richard drinks.*

*Rachel edits.*

*Their separate moves begin to become a sort of dance.*

...

*Rachel is toggling between a choice. Can't get it to cut the way she wants it.*

RACHEL

Goddamn it!

*Richard furiously scribbles something down in a notebook and then passes out.*

...

*Rachel paces back and forth away from the editing dock, reviewing her notes.*

*Richard is leaving a voicemail:*

RICHARD

Hi Rachel, it's Richard.  
I finally got a phone so you can reach me here if you need to.  
I haven't heard from you...  
Um, lemme know how everything is--

*Richard starts coughing. It turns into a coughing fit. He can't stop. He doubles over and tries to end the call. He does so and nearly collapses.*

*Rachel's phone glows. She doesn't see it. She continues to pace.*

...

*Richard brushes his teeth alone.*

*Rachel watches a portion of the film back. It's coming together.*

*Richard gets into his bed and sleeps.*

*Lights down on Richard.*

*Rachel continues to work on the film.*

*She reaches a point she seems happy with. She hits Save.*

*Picks up her phone and dials.*

*Richard's phone rings.*

*It rings and rings.*

*Richard wakes up with a start and picks up the phone.*

*He is groggy and sick.*

RICHARD

Hello?

RACHEL

Hi it's me. What are you doing the next three days.

RICHARD  
I'm, uh--  
Rachel?

RACHEL  
Yes.

*Over the following Rachel starts to pack her suitcase.*

RICHARD  
Where are you?

RACHEL  
I'm still in LA, but I'm coming back to Philly tomorrow.

RICHARD  
I've been calling you.

RACHEL  
I know. I'm so sorry. I've been working on this non-stop. It looks good.  
But we have some re-shoots we need to get done if we want it to be cohesive.

RICHARD  
Reshoots?

RACHEL  
Your interview.  
There's more we have to cover.

RICHARD  
Um. Okay.

RACHEL  
Also I need you to help me with some b-roll. I've contacted a friend who can take us out to the train tracks on Sunday to get some footage.

RICHARD  
Oh.

RACHEL  
I also need your help contacting some of the people involved with your case.

RICHARD  
What?

RACHEL  
We need to interview them. We need their perspective. We can't have a film that's just you talking into a camera.

RICHARD

Uhhhh yeah that's not, um

RACHEL

What.

RICHARD

I'm not totally all that comfortable doing that--

RACHEL

It's completely necessary.

RICHARD

I thought we were just trying to see if there was anything there.  
You said we weren't telling anyone that--

RACHEL

We're not. We're not telling anyone. No one knows about this but us.

RICHARD

Okay but asking other people to be filmed would--

RACHEL

No you're right. I'm sorry. I'm just thinking ahead. When you see what I have you'll understand. You'll want to move forward too.  
We can talk about reaching out to other people. I know it puts you in a weird spot. But I can be the one that asks them--

RICHARD

I have to think about it.

RACHEL

Thanks Richard. I know it's shitty but I'll be there with you.  
I'm with you.

RICHARD

Thank you.

RACHEL

And we need it for the film.

RICHARD

I--

RACHEL

We'll go over all this tomorrow. Are you able to clear your schedule for the next three days?

RICHARD

Yes. I can.

RACHEL

That's amazing. Thank you thank you. My flight gets in around noon so if you could--

RICHARD

Sorry, and you said we're reshooting the interview? Like the questions?

RACHEL

Not from scratch. Some of what we got is good.  
We just have more we have to cover. I'll walk you through it.

RICHARD

Okay. Okay because I'm not exactly feeling all that great.

RACHEL

Oh shit. Since when?

RICHARD

Since--  
I don't know. Since we filmed a few weeks ago I guess.

RACHEL

Richard. Fuck. You have to take care of yourself.

RICHARD

I know. It's just--  
I think it's just a cold.

RACHEL

Okay well please please please take a heavy dose of DayQuil or whatever -- I feel shitty for the late notice but getting away from PlayTone for a long weekend was its own battle.

RICHARD

Right.

RACHEL

Three days should be enough. We can get this done.

RICHARD

Okay.

RACHEL

It's going to be amazing. It looks amazing so far. We just need a little push.

RICHARD

Okay.

RACHEL

You're going to be okay to help me with the b-roll?

RICHARD

Yeah.

RACHEL

And to be on camera? And do these interviews?

RICHARD

Yeah. I think so. Yeah.

RACHEL

DayQuil. Lots and lots of DayQuil.

RICHARD

I will. Okay.

RACHEL

I'll text you when I land.

*Lights.*

*Lights up on the space where Rachel and Richard filmed the interview.*

*Richard is parked in front of the editing dock with headphones on, he's watching the footage Rachel has edited together.*

*He looks extremely sick.*

*Rachel is watching over his shoulder, pacing a little.*

RACHEL  
*(peering over his shoulder)*

This part will change.

RICHARD  
*(taking off the headphones)*

What?

RACHEL  
Nothing, I was just saying this part is filler until we--  
Just keep watching.

*Richard puts the headphones back on. He continues to watch.*

*Rachel finds a seat somewhere and waits for him to finish.*

*The footage ends and Richard slowly takes off his headphones.*

*He sits there.*

RACHEL  
So?

RICHARD  
...

RACHEL  
You see what I mean? We need more interviews.  
This isn't a film.

RICHARD  
...

RACHEL  
Not yet.

RICHARD  
Yeah. Okay.

RACHEL

So if we could maybe have a longer conversation about--

*Richard has another coughing fit.*

*Rachel moves and grabs a bottle of water. She gives it to him, he drinks. She rubs his back.*

RICHARD

Thanks. Sorry.

*Rachel feels his forehead.*

RACHEL

Jesus.

*Rachel turns and walks away. Sits down in a chair.*

RACHEL

We need to figure this out.

RICHARD

I'm feeling better.

RACHEL

I appreciate you trying to rally but you are running a fever right now Richard.

RICHARD

I don't think it's that bad.

RACHEL

And I only have two more days here.

RICHARD

I know.

RACHEL

Maybe I should have just stayed / home...

RICHARD

I can film. I can interview.

RACHEL

Do you even *want* to?

RICHARD

...

RACHEL

You wanted to take it slow. I get that. You wanted to see some results.

RICHARD

Yes.

RACHEL

Okay so I worked my ass off to give them to you.  
Here they are, right? You just saw them. So what do you think?

RICHARD

I...  
It's different. Seeing me on film saying all that. It's just...different.

RACHEL

So now you don't know.

RICHARD

I don't know...

RACHEL

It's hard to see this objectively.  
It's hard to be outside your body and look at what we have here.  
But I can tell you we're close to making something pretty amazing. You have something you want to tell, something that I think you *should* tell.  
But we've hit a--  
I can't keep working with the footage we have.  
We're close but

RICHARD

I know.

RACHEL

I just want to get this done. I'm putting a lot on the line for this.

RICHARD

Okay do you know what *I'm* putting on the line--?

RACHEL

I do I do!  
I didn't mean that. I'm trying to--  
Listen we can't just *sit* on this okay? We have a *deadline*, right?

RICHARD

Deadline.

RACHEL  
I just mean...  
Like figuratively. Like a--

RICHARD  
A figurative deadline?

RACHEL  
No like--  
You know what I mean.  
There's urgency.

RICHARD  
What urgency.

...  
RACHEL  
Okay so  
Do not freak out because this is actually really exciting.

RICHARD  
What.

RACHEL  
So. Like I said I've been working on this non-stop.

*Rachel walks over to the hard drive that holds the footage. She takes it in her hands.*

RACHEL  
I've been bringing this with me to PlayTone everyday. Staying late until everyone is gone so I can use the editing docks they have in the lab to put our film together.  
A few weeks go by--

RICHARD  
Someone saw it.

RACHEL  
What?

RICHARD  
That's what you're going to say isn't it. Someone saw the footage.

RACHEL  
Well...  
Yes but--

RICHARD  
*(standing, pacing)*

No!

*Richard tries to breathe deep as he paces back and forth.*

*He tries his best to steady himself but is clearly beginning to break down.*

RACHEL

Nonono! Listen--

RICHARD

Rachel I told you! I told you I didn't want anyone--  
I can't--  
I can't do this--

*Richard seems to be having a panic attack.*

RACHEL

No but it's actually really great. He's one of the associate producers there and he's actually really interested in what we have so far.

RICHARD

What's--what's--

RACHEL

But he has to see more so--

RICHARD

What's his name?

RACHEL

What?

RICHARD

What's his name?

RACHEL

Why?

RICHARD

Just tell me!

RACHEL

His name is Akeem. Walker. Why, do you know him?

RICHARD  
No. But--  
Okay. Okay.

RACHEL  
What.

RICHARD  
Did he know me?  
Did he know Richard Joseph Turner?

RACHEL  
No.

RICHARD  
You can't--  
I can't believe you showed this to people.

RACHEL  
Person. One. I was showing him what I was working on. This is my film too.

RICHARD  
You said you wouldn't.

RACHEL  
Five minutes Richard, that was all. And he had no idea who you were. It's okay.  
Actually it's an opportunity for us because--

RICHARD  
I mean I don't even know what he looks like. He could come to the Republican or be  
behind me in line / at some--

RACHEL  
Who, *Akeem*?

RICHARD  
Yes.

RACHEL  
You think Akeem is going to track you down to like, follow you?

RICHARD  
It's *plausible*. And I would have no idea--

RACHEL  
Richard. He's not coming to Philly to--

RICHARD

He could!

RACHEL

Listen you're not feeling well and I think you're blowing this out of proportion. *No* one is following you. *No* one knows who you are. I don't think anyone cares.

*Richard takes the hard drive in his hands.*

RICHARD

If no one cares then why are you trying to make me do this!

RACHEL

You asked *me* to do this.  
And also  
I wanted to help you.

RICHARD

Right.

RACHEL

Okay yes your story has the kind of urgency I've been looking for  
But you said you want to come clean! And I have the means to--

RICHARD

This was a bad idea.

*Richard starts pacing back and forth, the hard drive still in his hand.*

RACHEL

Richard. I think you're doing--  
I think your impulse to share your side of things is the right one.  
You did something--

RICHARD

Don't.

RACHEL

Something wrong. Something horrible.  
But you were a kid. A scared kid.

RICHARD

Rachel.

RACHEL

But that is only one part of you. It's one facet of--  
If people *do* remember the name Richard Joseph Turner then they deserve to know the  
other side of you. The side I've gotten to know.

RICHARD

And what side is that?

RACHEL

Richard? Please put the hard drive down.

RICHARD

I don't want--

RACHEL

Richard, we are *so* close to--

RICHARD

I don't wanna do this.

RACHEL

We can blur out your face. We can alter your voice.

RICHARD

I DON'T WANNA DO THIS!

RACHEL

So why did you tell me you did?!

RICHARD

For you!

I wanted to do this for you! So you and I could--

I care about you Rachel. And I wanted to tell you. I wanted to be near you and let you in.

RACHEL

Okay. I want that too.

RICHARD

No. No.

I fucked it up. It was fucked from the beginning.

This is impossible. *Us*.

It's impossible.

RACHEL

...

RICHARD

Isn't it?

Richard...  
RACHEL

*Richard, with the hard drive still in his hand, rushes to Rachel. He kneels in front of her.*

RACHEL  
Richard if I wasn't me. If I was someone else, would this be possible.

RACHEL  
*(backing away from him)*  
Richard, what are you--

RICHARD  
If my name wasn't--  
If I didn't do what I did. If I was different.

RACHEL  
It doesn't work that way!

RICHARD  
If you forgot that--

RACHEL  
Richard stop!

RICHARD  
No listen listen! My name isn't Richard. It's not.  
It's Derek! It really is. Andandand

RACHEL  
You're freaking me out!

RICHARD  
And I've never been to the train tracks! And there's no one named Cole!  
It was all--

RACHEL  
Richard!

RICHARD  
I can make it real. Let me make it real.

*Rachel backs away.*

*Richard stands up and takes two steps away from Rachel.*

*He turns away from her, and hurls the hard drive against the wall.*

*It smashes into pieces.*

*He looks at the broken machinery on the ground.*

*Behind him, Rachel fades away.*

*Into the darkness.*

*He turns around, sees she's not there.*

RICHARD

Rachel?

*He searches for her for a moment.*

*But she's gone.*

RICHARD

Rach.

...

RICHARD

No.

Oh no...

*Richard throws himself onto the ground and frantically tries to piece the hard drive back together.*

RICHARD

Come on come on!

Rachel!

"You saidddd!" "You saidddd!"

Come on!

*He gathers the pieces and tries, in vain, to put them together.*

RICHARD

"We're recreating it now!"

"You said we're recreating it now!"

Rachel!

*He stands up and searching the room for the missing peices of the hard drive.*

RICHARD

“Jog your memory.”  
“If you can’t remember the night we met then we’re doomed.”  
Then we’re fucking doomed.  
Fuck!

*He picks up the pieces of the hard drive he’s collected and hurls them into the darkness.*

RICHARD  
*(throwing them)*

AARRRGGGGG!!!

*He stands there.*

*Breathing heavily.*

*He looks forward. Breathes in and out.*

*Behind him a video feed is projected.*

*It’s the empty chair he was sitting in as he gave his interview.*

*A recorded voice emits from somewhere.*

RACHEL  
*(recorded)*

Come on, we’re recreating it now!

RICHARD  
*(turning)*

No...

*There’s no one there. He is still alone.*

RACHEL  
*(recorded)*

Yes! We’re gonna jog your memory.  
If you can’t remember the night we met then we’re doomed.  
Sit.

*An empty chair is bathed in light.*

*Richard sees it.*

*He walks over and looks at it.*

*He sits down slowly.*

*Another chair appears in light.*

*It is empty.*

RACHEL  
*(recorded)*

You were there.  
And I was here.

RICHARD

The night we met.

*Rachel appears out of the darkness.*

*She does not seem herself.*

*This is a memory.*

*She sits in the chair far across from Richard.*

RACHEL

And you told me your bullshit story about being a student and your bullshit name and then you saidddd...

*She waits for him to answer.*

RICHARD

I don't know...

RACHEL

Richard.

RICHARD

I wish I did. I wish I did...

...

RACHEL

Well, let's make it now then.  
Let's make it new.

*She composes herself.*

*Gets up out of her chair and walks to Richard.*

*Holds out her hand.*

Rachel. RACHEL

*Her hand hangs there. Richard looks at it.*

*He stands.*

*He shakes her hand.*

Richard. RICHARD

Oh it's Richard is it? Not--- RACHEL

No. It's Richard. RICHARD

So what's your story. RACHEL

Nothing. I don't have one. RICHARD  
I blend in. I try to be happy. I don't have anything to hide.

Sounds nice. RACHEL  
And you go to Temple?

No. RICHARD  
I study caves.

*What?* RACHEL

Yes. RICHARD  
That's what I want.

I didn't know that was a thing. RACHEL

I study one cave in particular. I know everything about it. RICHARD

Why just the one? RACHEL

RICHARD

Because. It's special.

RACHEL

Tell me about it.

*Lights start to dim.*

RICHARD

When I was ten I went out to Indiana. With my family.  
We went out to visit my grandparents.  
And on our last day there my grandma took me to this cave.  
The Moon Cave.  
This park ranger gave us flashlights and helmets and walked us down. Down this path. Into the dark.  
And after what felt like  
I don't know. Hours. He brought us into this *enormous* chamber. Two football fields it must have been. Maybe more. Miles down.  
And the man told us about the first people who discovered the cave. How they made the same walk we did. Into the dark. Only they didn't know how deep they were or when it would end.  
But they found this cavern. Where no human had ever stepped foot before.  
And then he told us to turn out our flashlights. So we did.  
And we all stood there. Underneath everything. In the dark.  
Most people don't ever get to see darkness like that.  
It's not like this.  
It's different. It makes you different. Because it just goes on.  
And you feel lucky to be a part of it.  
Even after you turn the flashlights back on and everything feels safe again.

RACHEL

The Moon Cave.

RICHARD

I could stay like that.

...

RACHEL

You wish you told me all this?

RICHARD

I wish I had told you my name.  
I could have told you everything.

...

RACHEL

Maybe we don't say anything. See what that does.

RICHARD

What?

RACHEL

I have an idea. Here.

*She goes back over to her chair.*

*She brings it over and positions her chair closer him. The chairs are right in front of each other.*

*As she passes him, moving the chairs back and forth, he puts a loving hand on her shoulder.*

RACHEL

No touching. We don't know each other right now.

*She sits in the chair.*

RACHEL

*(patting the chair in front of her)*

Come on Richard, sit down.

*He sits. They are very close to each other. They get situated.*

*She smiles.*

RACHEL

No smiling either.

RICHARD

I'm / not--

RACHEL

Sh!

*They both settle. Focus.*

*They sit for a long time. Both trying to remain serious. Their gaze softens. They look at each other.*

RACHEL

Okay now close your eyes.

*Richard stares forward, not wanting to take his eyes off her.*

RACHEL

Richard for this to work you have to close your eyes.

*He does. They sit there.*

RACHEL

You see?

...

RACHEL

Hold still.  
You feel that?

*He nods or smiles.*

RACHEL

Now this is how we met.

*(quietly)*

Just hold still, hold still, hold still...

*Lights.*

END OF PLAY.