

EIGHT
Harmony Nicole DeLeon
Phoenix College
Honorable Mention, One-Act Play/Scripts

CHARACTERS: DAVE, 30s
 PETE, 20s, trendy
 MEL, 30s, attractive
 LUKE, 30s, attractive
 TRACY, early 20s
 MOM, late 40s
 ABBY, 20s, attractive, bookish
 WILL, 20s, attractive

TIME: All scenes should run approximately eight minutes.

SCENE 1

PLACE: An office. Desk at center, cluttered, enormous stack of files.
 A chair next to the desk.

(DAVE types at computer. The phone rings.)

DAVE: QCthisisDave...yep...About a foot deep here. I don't know.
 Somewhere in the middle...the point of a queue is it's first come
 first—...yeah I realize that but...yep...Oh I understand
 priorities. Yeah. You do that. You have him call me.

(Hangs up. DAVE returns to typing. Enter PETE)

PETE: What's up, man? *(Sits)*

DAVE: Nothing. You?

PETE: Tired, man. How was the weekend?

DAVE: Short.

PETE: You do anything?

DAVE: Went to the Giants game.

PETE: Good seats?

DAVE: Pretty decent. My brother-in-law's.

PETE: He's the lawyer?

DAVE: Insurance. Sales or something. I don't really ask. What about you?

PETE: Cleaned out the garage. Pretty much took up the whole weekend.

DAVE: Yeah?

PETE: Yeah. Kelley was flipping out on me dude. Riding me all summer
 about it. "When are you gonna clean that junk out?" Seriously,
 dude. Turns out—all her stuff. Everything in there. She goes

through these phases—like right now, it's beads. You know what I mean?

DAVE: Beads? No.

PETE: You know—*beads*. Boxes of beads from the craft store. I swear like half my check here goes to the Hobby Lobby, dude.

DAVE: I don't get it. Beads?

PETE: I don't know. She makes necklaces or bracelets or something stupid with 'em. Beads, dude, beads.

DAVE: Wow. That's something else.

PETE: And yarn. Bags of yarn. Old coffee cans full of yarn. You believe that? Garage full of beads and yarn. No room for a lawnmower. But we have room for yarn! We got plenty of room for yarn! It's like we're running a damn quilting bee or something—

DAVE: Quilts aren't yarn.

PETE: Regardless, dude, yarn.

DAVE: Quilts are like patches. Scraps. Like pieces of other blankets or an old dress or something. You sew them together and it makes...it makes a whole new blanket. Yarn is like scarves. Knit hats. You know—*knit*. Knitting.

PETE: Yarn, knitting, hats. What is this? What I'm saying is she's on me for that garage and here it was all her stuff. Like what does she think—I'm the one filling up the place with beads and yarn and paint by number? Like I'm the one dropping the cash buckets at the Hobby Lobby? You see what I'm saying? Wasted my whole weekend on that garage. The whole weekend. And now I'm sitting here arguing about macramé and knit hats? I mean, what the hell is this? Some kind of life. Some kind of life, dude.

DAVE: Oh hey—you know that putz from Intake?

PETE: Dude, which one? Roger?

DAVE: Nah. The other one. The social cokehead.

PETE: Oh—Bryan. I guess he's clean though. No bumps. He's like strictly MDMA now.

DAVE: Nice. Anyway—called me up raising hell, wanting me to move Lorenzo up through the queue—

PETE: What!?

DAVE: Yeah!

PETE: God, I hate that guy. It's like wait your turn, dude. You want the front of the line, but so what. We all want something, and we don't

get it. Me, I want to drink large quantities of Wild Turkey and make explosives out of yarn-filled coffee cans, but I'm here. This dude wants Lorenzo moved up through the queue and you know what he's gonna get?

DAVE: Wild Turkey? What are you talking about—Wild Turkey?

PETE: He's gonna get nothing. Just sit up there in Intake and snort the booger sugar with all the other freaks.

DAVE: Yeah and then—

PETE: It's like—what's the point of a queue? What does he think, the world revolves around him? It doesn't. It really doesn't. In the grand scheme of things, that guy's nothing. Hell—in the very minor scheme of things, he's nothing.

DAVE: I know, I know, I know.

(Lights down)

SCENE 2

PLACE: A hospital. A gurney center stage.

(TRACY lies in the gurney under a sheet. MOM stands next to her, well dressed and overly made-up.)

MOM: I've heard good things about him.

TRACY: Who?

MOM: Dr. Sproule.

TRACY: *Who?*

MOM: The anesthesiologist. Don't you listen, Tracy?

TRACY: No. *(A long pause)* And you're sure Scott's not out there?

MOM: I'm sure. That boyfriend of yours is a real piece of work.

TRACY: You defend him!

MOM: Well I think it's nice of him to pay for this. It's very generous.

TRACY: Is it?

MOM: Isn't it?

TRACY: It's very generous, Mom.

MOM: Maybe if you were a little more appreciative he'd be here. If you didn't make things so difficult for everyone to hold a conversation with you.

TRACY: I'm a beast, Mother. A real beast.

MOM: *(starts to leave)* That's it. I don't have to put up with this—

TRACY: Mom—I'm sorry. I'm just nervous.

MOM: Why would you be nervous? You'll be asleep before they ever get you in the room.

TRACY: Do you think this is a bad idea?

MOM: Is what a bad idea? The implants?

TRACY: Yes. And—no.

MOM: What do you mean is it a bad idea? You were the one who was always complaining they weren't big enough—

TRACY: No, I wasn't.

MOM: I don't understand you. You know how many girls would kill to have a boyfriend who can not only afford to do this but wants to pay for your implants?

TRACY: I really can't imagine how many *would* want that.

MOM: Plenty.

TRACY: I just don't know.

MOM: What's not to know?

TRACY: Can you die? I mean—I know it's not the silicone anymore. But can you—

MOM: Stop talking like that! What are you talking about that for? Of course you're not gonna die.

TRACY: Everyone's going to die.

MOM: Oh would you stop? Just sit there and wait for the drugs to kick in—

TRACY: I could die.

MOM: You're not going to die. They go in through your belly button! How would you die from that?

TRACY: I could die from the gas.

MOM: You could not!

TRACY: I just want to know—would I know? Would I know I was dying? Or would I just—

MOM: I don't want to talk about this.

TRACY: —close my eyes. The old Tracy closes her eyes and the new Tracy never wakes up. And...if I died—suppose I died and the doctor had only put one of the implants in. Would you—would you tell him to finish, or would you let him just stop there? Would I be in the casket with one old breast and one new one?

MOM: Tracy, you're being ridiculous.

TRACY: Would you let them stop? Or would you make them finish the job?

MOM: I would make them finish the job.

TRACY: So I'd be new Tracy in the casket. And old Tracy, she just closed her eyes and she was gone. And the new Tracy—Scott's Tracy, your Tracy, she would be prettier and firmer and—and a lot of things. But it wouldn't hurt.

MOM: Are you finished now? Can we move on?

TRACY: Maybe I would die before they'd put the implants in. If that happened, would you still have them put in? If I was there dead, would you—

MOM: No! They wouldn't put them in if you died. Are you satisfied?

TRACY: No, I'm not satisfied.

MOM: I'm going to go look for Scott. I'm sure he's—

TRACY: This could be it, Mom. This could be the last time. The last time we fight like this.

MOM: I hope this is the last time we fight like this.

TRACY: I mean, how do you know? How do we know? This could be—
(starts to get drowsy)

MOM: Oh Tracy. Why do you have to do this? You make yourself sick over nothing.

TRACY: I can feel it. This is it. These are the last few...

MOM: What do you mean, you can feel it? Don't be ridiculous! Where did you learn such dramatics from? Honestly!

TRACY: I just know, Mom. I know...I know...I...know...
(TRACY closes her eyes) (Lights down)

SCENE 3

PLACE: A bedroom. Bed, center stage.

MEL lies in bed, under a comforter, propped up against pillows. She wears a nightgown. Luke lies next to her, but on top of the sheets. He wears a dress shirt and slacks. His feet are bare.)

MEL: I smell like you.

LUKE: Is that a bad thing?

MEL: (*MEL embraces LUKE*) It's a wonderful thing.

LUKE: (*tugs at his shirt*) Watch out. You got makeup all over me.

MEL: You're just going home.

LUKE: Exactly.

(Exits. MEL waits for next few minutes) (Enter LUKE. His shirt is wet)

MEL: Did it come out?

(LUKE resumes original position)

LUKE: We'll see. Didn't last time. I swear she could pick out a spot the size of a pinhead.

MEL: A pinhead? I bet she could.

LUKE: You got to be more careful. What is it you do? You don't use that—that powdered stuff?

MEL: No.

LUKE: What's wrong?

MEL: Nothing.

LUKE: Nothing, huh? What's wrong?

MEL: I don't want to waste time talking about it.

(LUKE and MEL cuddle. She avoids touching her face to his clothes. He checks his watch).

LUKE: Hey there, beautiful. I gotta go.

MEL: No. Stay.

LUKE: I want to. But I told her I'd be home at six—

MEL: Please. If you wanted to you would stay.

LUKE: No. I want to but—

MEL: But what? What else is there?

LUKE: I have to go. I'm sorry. We've got all afternoon tomorrow and—

MEL: Luke. This is it. You see that, don't you?

LUKE: What?

MEL: This is everything. Don't you see? It's all here. This is everything you've been—

LUKE: Mel—I know—

MEL: No. You don't. You said no one had ever really seen you, and I could. You said you never thought you'd find someone who had everything. If I have everything where should you go? What does it matter if it's six or seven or eight? What does it matter if it's eight and no one knows where you are?

(LUKE jumps, startled. pulls a vibrating cell phone out of his pocket and answers it.)

LUKE: Hey there...half hour...just got a late start... I'm walking out to the car now...It's not late...I said six. Alright... I don't care, whatever you want...Chinese...I'll just honk for you then. Okay. Love you too. Bye. *(hangs up the phone)* Yeah, I really got to go.

MEL: It's never going to happen, is it?

LUKE: What?

MEL: Nothing.

LUKE: Nothing?

MEL: Nothing.

LUKE: I know this isn't easy—

MEL: But it is. It is easy. Isn't it? Tell me how it's hard for you.

LUKE: I don't like to leave you, Mel. I hate it too—

MEL: But you do it. You leave. And sometimes you come back. But you never stay. And I wish—I wish you could stay. Because this is it, Luke. This is what living is for. There's no point to living without this...But this...is nothing. This has always been nothing.

LUKE: It's not nothing. It's—

MEL: It's nothing. It was a dream. But now it's nothing...You should go. You should just go.

LUKE: I don't want to leave like this, Mel. I care for you. You know I do.

MEL: No. I don't.

LUKE: Mel, come on. Come here.

MEL: I'm here. You're the one who's going.

LUKE: It's just...very complex.

MEL: No. It's black and it's white. It's night and it's day. It's easy.

LUKE: There's a lot of factors. Do I just walk out because I found the one?

MEL: No. You walk about because you can't be faithful. You walk out because you deserve to be kicked out.

LUKE: But she wouldn't see it—

MEL: She already sees it. Why do you think she calls so much? Why is she so desperate to have you home?

LUKE: It's just not like that. It's—

MEL: You should go.

LUKE: Talk to me, Mel. Tell me what's in that mind of yours?

MEL: The truth. And the truth is setting you free.

LUKE: What do you want me to do?

MEL: Stay.

LUKE: Alright. Let me call her back. I'll say—

MEL: Stay. Stay. Stay. Don't you hear me? Can't you hear me? Stay, Luke. Stay.

LUKE: Melanie I—

MEL: No. You don't.

LUKE: I thought we were on the same page—

MEL: Same page. Wrong book. Just go.

LUKE: Melanie—

MEL: Tell me in one word. Will it ever be different? (*pause*)

LUKE: No.

MEL: Go. Go live your life. Go love your wife.

LUKE: I'm sorry.

MEL: Honk for her. She'll come running.

LUKE: I wish it was different. You know that I—

MEL: Stop.

LUKE: You don't even know what I was gonna—

MEL: I know. I know. I know.

(Lights down)

SCENE 4

PLACE: A living room. A couch, center, a television.

(WILL sits at one end of the couch. ABBY lies with her head in his lap, knees raised. She is reading a book about astronomy.)

WILL: You seen this one?

ABBY: *(turns toward the TV)* The Marine Biologist. Yup. But I've seen them all—so it's fine.

WILL: Favorite line?

ABBY: The sea was angry that day my friends!

WILL: You're amazing.

ABBY: For that? No. *(a long pause)* So it says here if the sun exploded—went supernova—whatever—poof!

WILL: Poof? Poof is the sun exploding? That's the sound?

ABBY: Well, no. Might not be sound in space. Tree falling, no one around, all that sort of thing.

WILL: What is the sound of one hand clapping, etcetera?

ABBY: Yes. And Descartes and his 'a yellow chair in the dark isn't a yellow chair'—

WILL: That wasn't Descartes. That was you explaining Descartes.

ABBY: All the same—it says here—if the sun went poof we'd have eight minutes. Maybe a little less, maybe a little more, eight and some change, that kind of thing—but eight minutes more of existence. That's it.

WILL: Eight minutes. Would we know? Would we see the explosion and know we had eight minutes? Like a death sentence in the sky?

ABBY: I don't think so. The sun we see is eight minutes old. So I think we would see the sun we know. That same old sun we've always known. The skin cancer sun. The saves you from rickets sun. The sun'll come up tomorrow kind of sun. We would just see him for eight minutes and then—

WILL: Poof.

ABBY: Poof.

WILL: Eight minutes. Not very long. Eight minutes of George Costanza before a commercial break. The eternal commercial break.

ABBY: Eight minutes is good enough to do all the things you need to do.

WILL: But you wouldn't know. So you wouldn't do the things you needed to. You'd do the sort of things you do every eight minutes. There'd be no big goodbye. It would just be you living your life. Someone might tell you they love you—and you think, you think you got all the time in the world and you don't say nothing back. You say—I know. You say—okay. You say, pass the ketchup. You feel all his love, but you think—I got time. You don't realize it's your last eight minutes. Like right now—right now could be our eight minutes. Eight minutes left and here you are with your astronomy books and your half eaten yogurt, and I'm flipping to the Knicks game and hoping you won't notice. That's our eight minutes.

ABBY: Not a bad eight minutes.

WILL: Not a bad life.

ABBY: If my life is forever filled with eight minutes like those, I think I'm okay. I think the sun can let go if he needs to. I think I've done what I need to do.

WILL: You think so?

ABBY: You don't?

WILL: Other people wouldn't.

ABBY: Who cares? This is our eight minutes.

WILL: *(touches her hand)* Not a bad life.

ABBY: *(holds his hand)* So the Sun becomes a white dwarf then. All that matter—and now it's just a small percentage of the size it was—but still—all that matter. Says if you got a spoonful of a white dwarf, like a table spoon it would weigh millions and millions of pounds. Tons maybe. That's how dense it is! Let me find that page exactly. I don't want to be responsible for feeding you erroneous space facts—

WILL: Second favorite line?

ABBY: It's one of these pages. Planets, planetoids—Stars. Okay—uh second favorite line? Jerry's telling the girl—you know the whale's the largest mammal on earth. But like George says, they don't have to be. *(returns to book. A long pause)* What's the score?

WILL: You find that page?

ABBY: Don't change the subject.

WILL: 78-75. Knicks.

ABBY: You lucky duck.

WILL: That's me. Webbed-footed bird of extraordinary fortune.

ABBY: And maybe the weirdest thing—you know blue stars are the hottest? Red are the coolest? Which is so funny considering we say red hot and all that. Blue represents cool. No one says blue hot—but there it is. Blue is hot.

WILL: Like the blue part of a flame. That's the hottest part.

ABBY: I forgot you were a pyromaniac.

WILL: Retired.

ABBY: Maybe. *(returns to her book)* The laugh track on this episode sounds suspiciously like basketball commentary.

WILL: I love you, kiddo.

ABBY: I know.

(Lights down)

CURTAIN

