

We See a Woman

Character List

A cast of ten actors or more, perhaps depending on availability. Actors can play multiple roles

List in order of Appearance:

Mrs. Potts- From the play, "Picnic" by William Inge

Rachel- A woman in search of herself

Donald Draper- Lead from the television show, "Mad Men"

Rachel 2- Rachel's critical voice

Billie Holiday- Jazz Singer

Edith Piaf- French Singer

Ernest Hemingway- Famous Writer

Dustin- Man involved with Rachel

Guy in Bar

Tempest Storm- Aging Burlesque star

Eleanor Roosevelt- Self

Aretha Franklin- Self

Anne Frank- Self

Nellie Forbush- Lead Character from "South Pacific"

Acting Teacher

Actor Reading for Rachel

Actor Reading for Dustin

Students in an Acting Class

Scene 1

We see a woman in front of a computer typing...She gets up goes to the fridge and pulls out a jar of olives. She twists the top and it won't open. She tries again and she can't do it. She takes a breath, puts her shoulders back and tries it again. Doesn't work. She turns on the kitchen faucet and runs her fingers under the water until it gets hot. Then she runs the jar under the water for a few seconds, dries it off, bangs it carefully a few times. Finally, she is able to open it. She stands there for a minute, takes a deep breath, checks to see if anything broke or spilled. Nothing. It's okay. She gathers herself and to her surprise starts to cry, Takes a deep breath.

(Mrs. Potts appears from "Picnic"- a nice old lady ripped from the 1950's in a blue and white gingham dress with an apron around her waist)

Mrs. Potts: Why are you crying dear?

Rachel: Who are you?

Mrs. Potts: I'm in your head dear. You know who I am

Rachel: Mrs. Potts?

Mrs. Potts: That's me. Right out of the pages themselves.

Rachel: From Picnic?

Mrs. Potts: William Inge says Hello and Salutations.

Rachel: Is that how you pronounce his name? I never knew if it was Ing or Inge?

Mrs. Potts: Its Inge dear. Now why are you crying?

Rachel: Uh this is so stupid. I feel pathetic. I don't know

Mrs. Potts: You know.....I don't blame you for thinking of me. I always come to your mind when you can't open a jar. Yes... William Holden was gorgeous. What a hunk. Unfortunately, he went for Kim Novak, and its obscene how much older he was than her, but it was a film in the fifties. What do you expect? Just between you and me, I only gave him jobs so I could watch him thru my kitchen window. He definitely ruffled my feathers.

Rachel: But it wasn't just that. You were so kind to him. "Because when he walked thru the door and clomped thru the tiny rooms as if he was still outdoors. There was a man around the house, and it seemed good. And that reminded me, I'm a woman and that seemed good too."

Mrs. Potts: Look at you reciting those lines. Bill would be so impressed.

Rachel: But I'm not supposed to admit that. Right? I'm supposed to be able to stand on my own two feet.

Mrs.: Potts: Well, that's ridiculous. Why? Why wouldn't you want someone?

Rachel: I don't know- Because we are in the Me-Too movement? Because women are supposed to be independent and strong? Because I'm supposed to be able to do things on my own. Because no one talks about loneliness or isolation?

Mrs. Potts: Well, I never burned my bra and Betty Freidan, and Gloria Steinem came long after me but there's nothing wrong with wanting a little companionship.

While they have been talking Don Draper appears from the shadows- He is wearing fedora, sports jacket and slacks and he's holding a case of tools., He takes off his jacket and he's wearing a white undershirt. They both stare at him. He gets under the sink to fix a leak then realizes he doesn't know Mrs. Potts.

Don: I don't think I introduced myself. I'm Dick Whi...Draper, Don Draper

Mrs. Potts: Uh huh

Don goes back under the sink

When he's done, he gets up and sits at the kitchen table. She goes to the fridge and gets him a beer. He takes a swig. She turns to go back to the kitchen- He grabs her arm; she spins around, lands in his lap and he kisses her passionately.

Don: Just keep moving...FORWARD.

R: I know that's what you do but your also an alcoholic.

Don: I don't think about it

Rachel: I know.

Don: Start over. Reinvent yourself. You'll be shocked at how easy it is.

Rachel: I don't think that worked out very well for you eventually. I don't want to reinvent myself. I just want to figure out who I am.

Don: I can't help you with that.

Rachel: I know.

(Don disappears)

Rachel: I want to give a jar to someone one day that I can't open. I hand it to him, and he knows exactly what to do. We don't even look at each other. I give it to him, he opens it, gives it back to me and I just go on with my day. There's just this unspoken connection between us. He's there for me and I'm there for him.

(Rachel 2 appears- its Rachel but the critical voice inside her head that never shuts up)

Rachel 2: How romantic. Can I puke now?

Mrs.: Potts: Now that's nothing to be ashamed of. Doesn't everyone want that too? Good luck dear. Ill be thinking about you.

Rachel: Bye Mrs. Potts.

(She starts to cook dinner...Opens a bottle of wine and as she is cooking starts drinking. And she Puts Billy Holiday on)

Rachel 2: Is it any wonder you are having a break down? You're listening to Billy Holiday for god's sake. What do you expect? And The Me-too movement would hate you. *(Mockingly)* "Is it okay to want a man around?" God your pathetic.

Rachel: Not just any man of course. If I wanted that I could go get it, ugh...I am just fucking lonely. I need more friends, but everything takes time. Maybe if I listen to a TED talk, I will feel better.

Rachel 2: Your so stupid. *(She scoffs)*

(Billie Holiday appears- she's wearing her signature dress and flowers in her hair like she's going to go sing in a club)

Billie: What the fuck are TED Talks?

Rachel: OH, they're these things...Ugh it's not even worth going into... Should I meditate?

Rachel 2: Meditate, Shmeditate. How cliché can you get?

Billie: You need more friends

Rachel: Yeah, I know but everything takes time and energy

Rachel 2: Then you should just end it all right here right now. Nothing you ever do will ever come to fruition anyways- You don't know what you're doing. Who the hell are you that you think you can write a play. You'll never be anything.

(Rachel 2 goes for chips and tries to satiate herself with food.)

Rachel: Don't binge. You don't have to do that anymore. Call someone. Reach out.

Rachel 2: Fine. Your too chicken shit to call anyone. *(R2 Imagines cutting herself- Sees a knife on the counter and reaches for it, mimes cutting herself)*

Rachel: You're not a cutter. You have seen countless shows with women who cut. You're not going to cut- You've had too much therapy and it's been done on so many shows anyway.

(Then we see Rachel try to vomit like a bulimic)

Rachel 2: Well, I know you're not going to purge- first of all you have barely eaten anything and who are you kidding- you're not bulimic. You couldn't do that to your fingers and your teeth already have a lot of bone loss - you want to lose enamel too? Your too old for this shit.

Rachel: Jesus- Give me a break! Will you just shut up for two seconds?

Rachel 2: Fine, I'm not going to stay where I'm not wanted. I'll be hiding in the shallow depths of your brain until you summon me again. And when you do summon me, do you mind coming up with some better dialogue?

Rachel: Fuck off

Rachel 2; See? Maybe if you read a book once in a while your vocabulary would expand to more than expletives.

(Billie punches Rachel 2 in the face. She's out. Billie starts dragging her off stage as she is saying the next line)

Billie: Girl you just gotta start going out again

Rachel: I know but I get so tired, and I have to find parking, and everything is so expensive.

Billie: Quit your belly aching. So, the good shit starts late, Hard living. But it's worth it. I died young but no one could ever say I didn't leave something behind.

Rachel: Well, yeah but ...umm...you were also a heroin addict.

Billie: Shit girl, you gotta tell them everything *(she points to the audience)*

Rachel: Well, it's kinda common knowledge. I mean it doesn't take away from how great you were

Billie: I was great, wasn't I? No one wore orchids before me. I was an original.

Rachel: Yeah, you were. This is nuts. I can't take advice from Billy Holiday.

Billie: Fuck you

Rachel: No offense but have you ever listened to your own lyrics? I lost my man, when can I get my man, my man dumped me, and my woman did too. I mean how many times were you married? Were ever even sober? I love you but you died when you were like 40. It's like Edith Piaf telling me that wine is good for me cuz it has antioxidants.

Edith Piaf walks on stage and sings a bar of "La Vie En Rose" while drinking a bottle of wine. She can barely walk straight as she walks off the stage

Billie: Your drunk

Rachel: Yeah, I know, I am waiting for Ernest Hemingway to appear with a fifth of whiskey and a shotgun

Ernest: Here I am. I'll fuck you. The bullfight is at halftime. I have fifteen minutes.

Rachel: I'm so flattered. Thanks, but you're not that discriminating- no offense to the fantastic women you were with, but you just went from woman to woman.

Billie: Been there done that too.

Rachel: Thanks for the offer but I'm kind of over the one-night stand –or the fifteen-minute stand... for now anyways. Although you are sexy as hell, and I would love to have a conversation.

Ernest: Conversation good. Conversation fine.

Rachel: Just a two-word man, huh?

Billie: That's how I like em. *(She saunters over to Ernest, takes a swig of his whiskey and the two of them start slow dancing)*

(Billie talks to Rachel while she's dancing with Ernest)

Billie: Girl, you a strange fruit. Relax, its summertime.

Rachel: Billie, I don't know if you can say strange fruit in a sentence lightly anymore and it's not really summertime, it's more like fall, I think you are confusing your lyrics.

Billie: I don't give a fuck what I can and can't say. I aint gonna shut up for you or nobody, One, I'm dead and two, I already been in jail! You wanna throw me in the slammer again? Go ahead, maybe I could get some good drugs, better than this regulated shit all you freaks smoke now. And how the hell do I know that it's not summertime, you all gone and fucked up your Ozone layer so much I can't tell what the fuck season it is. 100 degrees in November...For Fuck sakes... Just write. Try not to judge, and God bless the child.

Rachel 2: Had to get a dumb joke in there huh?

Rachel: You again? I thought Billy punched you out.

Rachel 2: I'm like a vampire. The only way I die is if you drive a stake through my heart.

Rachel: Great.

Scene 2:

Setting: In a bar/nightclub. Plush red velvet seats with black wood tables and a stage at the end of a room with tables and chairs. The place looks like a speak-easy. We also see Rachel goes from typing to transition to nightclub and she changes into a burlesque outfit. Actors playing the different characters above change into audience members. They are drinking, socializing...

MC comes on:

MC: And now we welcome our debut performer Vida Verlangen! *(It's Rachel. She performs a burlesque act. When she is done, she exits. The other cast members are milling around socializing as if after a performance in the club.*

Dustin comes over to this guy-

Dustin: Hey, the woman you were just talking to...Is her name Rachel by any chance?

Guy: Yeah.

Dustin: Thanks

Guy: Why? Were you going to go for her?

Dustin: I don't know. Why?

Guy: Well, if you don't, I was going to.

Dustin: Yeah, I'm going to go for her.

Guy: Oh, okay then, good luck.

Dustin: Thanks Man

Rachel is standing there trying to look busy or like she is having a good time.

(He goes over to her) Hi... uh...Rachel?

Rachel: Yeah?

Dustin: Hi, *(He's standing there for a few moments waiting to see if she recognizes him)* Do you know me?

Rachel: What? Umm...sorry I...I'm so sorry...I know I know you, but I can't place you...

Dustin: It's Dustin

Rachel: Dustin? Holy, Holy Shit, oh my god, how are you? I'm so sorry. I can't believe it. Oh my God, this is so weird. Do you live in Long Beach?

Dustin: No, I came to see a friend of mine perform.

Rachel: Who?

Dustin: Shannon.

Rachel: Oh, Oh- This is so weird. As soon as you said your name I remembered you- the past 25 years just flashed in front of me...Bizarre

Dustin: I know-

Rachel: Wait, don't go away I want to talk to you. I just have to say goodbye to everybody...

Dustin: I'm not going anywhere...

(Guy comes back over)

Guy: Struck out, Huh?

Dustin: No, actually she's coming back

Guy: Oh. bummer. *(He walks away)*

(She leaves- he just stands there looking awkward trying to talk to people, mingle.... she comes back)

Rachel: Hi...

Dustin: Hi...

Rachel: Do you still talk to Tina?

Dustin: God, no.

Rachel: Did you hear that RosZha died?

Dustin: No...

Rachel: Yeah, I went to her memorial. It was intense

Dustin: Yeah, too bad.... *(They don't speak for a few moments)* So, you were really good. I was watching you thinking I know her from somewhere and then you moved a certain way and it dawned on me...Is that Rachel?

Rachel: That's so weird.... I always liked you; you know. There was just something about you ... I have this memory of you walking down the hall towards me wearing this black leather jacket. You were always so moody and brooding but you still seemed so decent.

Dustin: I was pretty angry back then.

Rachel: You're not now?

Dustin: I just don't give a shit anymore and I started doing TM- that really helped

Rachel: What's that?

Dustin: Transcendental Meditation

Rachel: Oh, of course.... You always reminded me of Stanley Kowalski *(Stanley Kowalski walks by. He's holding Blanche Dubois in his arms about to carry her off before the rape scene)*

Stanley: Stella!! *(He exits stage left)*

Dustin: *(looking after Stanley Kowalski)* I'm not a brute.

Rachel: Well, you sure looked like one back then.

Dustin: Back then?

Rachel: You still do. So...umm.. Where are you living?

Dustin: I'm kind of in between places. I'm actually sleeping on a friends couch right now. Not ideal.

Rachel 2: Red Flag... *(Rachel slaps her away)*

Rachel: Sounds like your homeless

Dustin: Not quite but it kind of feels like it. I was living in Nashville, I moved back here to make a film.

Rachel: Really?

Dustin: Yeah, I wrote a screenplay during the pandemic.

Rachel: Wow- you were productive- That doesn't sound like someone who doesn't give a shit.

Dustin: What about you? You're doing burlesque now?

Rachel: Yeah-

Dustin: I never would have thought...

Rachel: Yeah, it's a surprise to me too, I was so shy back then, but I really love it. I love the whole creativity of it and all the body acceptance, and the music. I mean its scary as hell, but it makes me feel so alive.

Dustin: That's great. You really were good. I loved the whole story aspect. It was unique.

Rachel: Thanks

(They just stand there just looking at each other)

Rachel: So, umm... you want to go make out in my car?

(HE DOESN'T SAY ANYTHING-JUST NODS HIS HEAD YES) Then:

Dustin: Take me home with you!

Rachel: Yeah, I don't know about that...But we can fool around in my car....

(She laughs, embarrassed.)

An elderly lady appears with long bright red hair and a burlesque outfit. Its Tempest Storm. She's moving as she says these lines doing a burlesque strip-there is music going in the background.

Tempest: I want to see more of the burlesque. You can be more specific about why you like it so much. That part is too general.

Rachel: Oh. Okay- I was worried it would be boring- and to be honest I'm a little embarrassed.

Tempest: No!! Take it from someone who had a fling with Elvis- Honey, go home and rhinestone your underwear. Trust me. He will only cause you heartache. And don't stop the burlesque. I did it into my nineties until I fell on stage during a show and broke my hip. *(She trips and falls)* Why have plain underwear when you can have bejeweled underwear.? Damn-that hurt. Pop a pastie for me honey!! *(She crawls off stage)*

Rachel: (*Back to Dustin*) Do you mind helping me with my stuff. I have so many props. I had to make three trips to my car back and forth.

Dustin: Oh, I get it, this is just a ploy to have a man carry your stuff for you.

Rachel: Yeah, I want someone to carry my books for me.

Dustin: I'll pin you too while we're at it.

Rachel: I'll bet you will.

(A young woman skips across the stage in a pink angora sweater, saddle shoes, and poodle skirt)

Dustin: (*He laughs*) Yeah, sure. I'd be glad to help you

(Hanging out at car)

Rachel: Thank you (*As he is putting stuff in her car- He's carrying a chair and puts his arm thru the seat*)

Dustin: Oops sorry-

Rachel: That's okay- It's an old chair, I know- it's so heavy. (*They awkwardly put the stuff in her car*)

(Suddenly a lady walks by wearing a MAGA cap, he sees it and as she walks by, he looks at her and nods his head no)

Dustin: Nice hat, don't understand people who voted for Trump.

Rachel: Yeah?

Dustin: They only have themselves to blame. It's their fault the world is the way it is right now. Yeah, I don't talk to people who voted for that motherfucker.

(She doesn't say anything-then- kind of taken a back at this news)

Rachel: I voted for Trump.

(Silence- he's just looking at her)

Dustin: You did?

Rachel: Yeah, I have a collection of his hats

(He doesn't know what to do he just stands there, dumbfounded)

Rachel: I'm kidding,

(He starts laughing)

Rachel: I got you good, didn't I?

Dustin: Yeah, you did. I couldn't tell if you were serious or not.

Rachel: I know- you looked so disappointed and confused at the same time. I felt so bad for you.... I could see this whole battle was going on between what's in your pants and your principles.

Dustin: Oh, I get it, you just like to give me shit, don't you?

Rachel: Dude, my parents are New York jews from Brooklyn, I grew up in Los Angeles. You really think I voted for Trump?

Dustin: I don't know

Rachel: That's intense- you don't talk to people who voted for him?

Dustin: Nope. I still would have slept with you though.

Rachel: Am I supposed to take that as a compliment?

Dustin: You can take it however you want.... You know, I would really love to take you out

Rachel: Get in.

(Dustin stops- comes out of scene)

Dustin: There is way too much dialogue here. Where's the action? And why are you using my real name. What happened to protecting the innocent?

Rachel: You're not so innocent.

Dustin: Well, they don't know that yet. Your just mad at me. That's why you're using my real name.

Rachel: Maybe but, it's really because if I use your real name, it's a way of keeping you alive. I'm still in love with you.

Dustin: Oh

Rachel: Yeah, try having a witty come back at that one

Dustin: I'll leave that up to you

Rachel: And you just want more action, so you don't have to feel anything

Dustin: I want to help you, so I am going to ignore what you just said.

Rachel: I don't need you. You can leave.

Dustin: Okay then, I'll get out of your hair.

Nellie Forbush in shorts and 1950's style top from South Pacific comes on singing and washing her hair:" I'm going to wash that man right out of my hair, I'm going to wash that man right out of my hair...and send him on his way."

Rachel 2: This is too white bread; you need more color. We are in 2022. You have to be more inclusive.

Billie: If you say “people of color” one more time, I am going to punch you in the face again.

The wheelchair bound Ado Annie and Black Transgender Ado Annie from the recent revival of Oklahoma come on and start singing “I’m going to Wash that Man Right Out of My Hair”

Billie: Stop. Stop... *(They Stop)* You can’t just add shit because you think you’re supposed to or you’re afraid of what people are going to think. *(Rachel looks despondent)*

The Gay Mans Chorus of Los Angeles saunter across the stage and begin singing very quietly from La Cage Aux Folle’s” I am what I am. I am my own special creation. Life’s not worth a damn till you can say, Hey World, I am what I am.” As they part Eleanor Roosevelt is revealed behind them.

Rachel: *(She mutters to herself)* This is so corny.

Rachel 2: Do you have to comment on everything?

Eleanor Roosevelt: You must do the thing you think you cannot do.

Rachel: Eleanor?

Rachel 2: Is this play just one big bumper sticker?

Eleanor Roosevelt: I beg your pardon. I have no idea what a bumper sticker is. But Billie is right dear. You mustn’t worry about being wrong. Or saying the wrong thing. I was hated by many and loved by few, but no one ever equates Eleanor Roosevelt with Milque toast. Perhaps pumpnickel or rye but certainly never milque toast.

Rachel: Where did you come from?

Eleanor: The Jewish Deli around the corner.

Rachel: There are no Jewish Delis around here. The closest thing to Chicken Soup is Albondigas Soup.... I’m scared I have nothing interesting to say.

Billie: This is boring. I’m going to go shoot up. Call me when you stop your bullshit.

Eleanor: You have nothing to fear but fear itself.

Rachel: You never said that. That was your husband.

Eleanor: And who do you think told him to say that?

Rachel 2: Of course. Its always the woman behind the man.

(Billie comes back on with a rubber tied around her arm)

Billie: Did I hear.... man? *And she starts in:* “Oh my man I love him so...he’ll never know...All my life is just despair, but I don’t care...”

Then all of a sudden with a flourish Aretha Franklin comes on and belts out:

Aretha: You all have it wrong its about *and she starts in with:* RESPECT Find out what it means to me...RESPECT take care of TCP sock it to me, sock it to me, *and Billie Holiday can't help but join in with Aretha and they both start singing together having a great time.*

Just a little bit. Whoa, babe (just a little bit)
A little respect (just a little bit)
I get tired (just a little bit)
Keep on tryin' (just a little bit)
You're runnin' out of foolin' (just a little bit)
And I ain't lyin' (just a little bit) ...'spect

Nellie Forbush: I can't compete with that. *(She sulks off defeated)*

Aretha yells after her.

Aretha: Hey, it's not like things were so easy for me. I was obese and diabetic, and yo-yo dieted for years.

Eleanor: Well, I had buck teeth and no chin, and my mother called me "Granny" when I was a child because I was so homely.

Billie: Oh yeah? Well, I was a hooker when I was a kid.

(Anne Frank enters)

Anne Frank: Well, I died of Typhus when I was 15 in a concentration camp.

All of them: SHE WINS.

Rachel 2: THIS IS SO WEIRD. You're totally veering off course.

Rachel: Well, that's cuz I don't know what I want or what I am trying to say.

Anne: I don't think that's true. I think you're fascinated by people's struggles and what they were able to accomplish in spite of it.

Rachel: Damn your smart.

Anne: Well. If I had lived, who knows? Maybe I would have become a famous writer

Rachel: You are a famous writer.

Anne: Only because of my extreme circumstances. And my journal just happened to be on the floor amongst a bunch of scattered papers left behind.

Rachel: I don't think it's as simple as that. Not every thirteen-year-old keeps a diary. And one so beautifully written and extraordinary as yours.

Dustin: Again, no action.

Rachel: Shut up. I'm having a moment.

Anne kisses Rachel on the cheek as she exits

Anne: Remember, in spite of everything people really are good at heart. *(They all watch her as she walks off)*

Dustin: Do you guys' mind? She has a due date.

Rachel: Well, I have how we met and the breakup but.... I mean I have the beginning and the end but nothing in the middle.

Winston Churchill enters with a cigar in his mouth and holding a glass of whiskey

Winston: *(In British Accent)* This is not the end, this is not even the beginning of the end, but it is the end of the beginning!

R: Winston! My main man!

Winston: What the hell am I doing here? You woke me from a nap. I don't have time for this! Wake me when the Americans arrive in Normandy!

(As he storms off, he takes a pad out of his pocket and begins to grumble as he is writing on his pad:

Winston: *(Grumbling to himself)* We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall

Dustin: Can we get back to this please. Why does it have to be linear? Life isn't like that, and neither is your brain apparently.

Rachel: But don't relationships have a beginning, middle and an end?

Dustin: Mine don't. They usually just go from the beginning straight to the end.

Rachel: And you wonder why women are always so mad at you.

Dustin: Were getting off topic again.

Rachel: I want to show how much fun we had and the great conversations.

Dustin: Why do you need to show that. Maybe that's just for you to hold on to.

Rachel: Maybe

Dustin: Maybe that part is sacred

Rachel: I miss you

Dustin: I don't live here anymore. I haven't talked to you in months. Why are you still holding on to me?

Rachel: Because as fucked up as we were, I never had anything like that before.

Dustin: Again, too much dialogue.

Rachel: God, you won't give me an inch.

Dustin: I'm here. Aren't I?

Rachel: Okay- how about this then if you want action:

It descends into a montage ala the movie "Love Story". Rachel puts on a wig, so she looks like Ali McGraw and Dustin puts on a Rugby sweater ala Ryan O'Neal. The music from "Love Story" comes on; They lie on the floor and do angel wings like it's snowing. They throw a football and either he catches it, or she does, and he tackles her, and they start making out on the ground. He sits down on the couch, and she lays her head in his lap. They are both studying and reading while drinking tea in front of the fire. They are playing twister laughing. Then they imitate the scene from Fatal Attraction. Madam Butterfly comes on- they are in the kitchen making spaghetti together having a grand old time. Then it just goes downhill- She puts on a black leather cap and maybe a leather vest and she has a whip in her hand. His shirt is off, they come towards each other, and she caresses his back. As she does, she finds a pimple and tries to pop it. He screams "Ow"!!"

Dustin: That's so corny. I don't do corny. And weird.

Rachel: Okay then- I have a bar scene.

Dustin: Where we spent so many a nights.

Rachel: Followed by a night in a hotel because we were too fucked up to drive.

Rachel 2: Another red flag

Rachel: Shut up

Dustin: They don't need to know that.

Dustin pulls a bar stool up to a bar and pretends he is Humphrey Bogart- He puts on a fedora and raincoat. He is smoking a cigarette; he is drowning in alcohol and Sam is at the piano playing "As Time Goes By"

Dustin: "In all the gin joints in all the world she had to walk into mine"

Rachel: Uh...plagiarizing... and this isn't *Everyone goes to Ricks*. Or *Casablanca*.

Dustin: I know...I was just living vicariously.... Look at you- "Miss who knows that Casablanca was a play before it was a film"

Rachel: Hey, I aint in an MFA program for nothing and besides, you're the film buff.

Dustin: I'm much more than a buff.

Rachel: I know.

He takes off hat and coat. Back to himself. They start a scene in a bar.

Dustin: I just got through 3 weeks of hell and am enjoying more than a few cocktails. Unfortunately, my cock isn't in your tail.

Rachel: Jesus. You trying to tell me something? Have you ever done that?

Dustin: Yeah.

Rachel: I haven't. One or two have tried, but it hurt too much.

Dustin: It has to be done with the right person. Someone you trust, you have to be relaxed.

Rachel: Well, I don't let just any cock in my tail ya know.

Dustin: Good thing I'm not just any cock

Rachel: Well, that remains to be seen.

Dustin: Oh, I get it- you must have had your eyes closed

Rachel: My eyes are wide open baby

Dustin: They looked pretty shut to me

Rachel: That's because your so enamored with your own cocktail..... Something like that?

Dustin: I don't know. It's kind of dumb. Witty but dumb.

Rachel: Well, I stole it from your texts.

Dustin: Oh! In that case, that's pretty good.

Rachel: The ego!!

Dustin: No, confidence, there is a difference.

Rachel: Whatever.

Dustin: Not whatever.....What about a scene showing us having anal sex.

Rachel: This isn't a porno.

Dustin: It was just an idea- and its action...

Rachel: Nah.... that would just be gratuitous, and some things are private. I never did that before. I only did that with you because... well...and I don't want to put it on stage for the world to see.

Dustin: I thought you enjoyed it.

Rachel: That's for another play. Maybe the sequel.

Rachel 2: You can't talk about anal sex!

Rachel: Look, if this is not going to be honest or cost me something then what is the fucking point? (*Back to Dustin*)

Rachel: This could be like a Greek play- Action happens off stage. Oedipus never gouged his eyes out on stage.

Rachel 2: Yeah, and he never had anal sex either.

Rachel: No, he just had sex with his mother. No biggie. And who knows what else? Those Greeks were a kinky bunch.

(We hear Oedipus crying out in pain off stage: I was blind but now I see!!)

Dustin: You know, you just turn everything into a joke, so you don't have to face yourself.

Rachel: That's not true

Dustin: You making jokes is just not dealing with what your feeling

Rachel: Look who's talking Mr. Action. And that's not true. I have to entertain.

Dustin: Again, why do you have to entertain, why can't you just be yourself?

Rachel: Because it's not enough. You'll just think I'm boring or not smart enough.

Dustin: That's you that thinks that. I never thought that.

Rachel: Then why didn't you want to be with me?

Dustin: Because of where I am. Not who you are. I just can't right now. Doesn't mean I don't love you.

Rachel: I think you never think about me. You just moved on. I really loved you.

Dustin: I know.

Rachel: Okay then, I guess we should do this then.

Dustin: You really want to relive this?

Rachel: No but this thing has to have an ending.

Dustin: Let's not. Let's just pretend we live in an alternate universe where we can stay in bed forever.

Rachel: Wouldn't that be nice.

Scene 3

All of the characters change into an acting/writing class setting. They pull up chairs into rows.

Acting Teacher: Okay, Rachel, you have pages tonight?

Rachel: Yeah. I have two scenes.

Acting Teacher: Okay Let's go. How many readers do you need?

Rachel: Just two. *She gets two chairs and puts them opposite each other in front of the rest of the class. She gives her pages to two actors in the class to read for Dustin and Rachel. Giving the pages to two of the actors:* Your Rachel and your Dustin. *(And she gives a third script to another actor. (The real Dustin stands in the corner leaning against the wall- He is overseeing the whole reading next to Rachel listening)*

Rachel: Can you read the stage directions? *During the following the other actor she gives a third script to is going to read all the lines in bold italics:*

Actor Reading Stage Directions: *A couple in bed in the morning...They have been talking, waking up.*

Rachel Reader: This is really hard to say, and I thought about not saying anything – it's just well, the other day when we were on the phone, and you were saying you have to move. I mean I know it's too soon and it's not even realistic and, I mean I know you have a lot going on and so do I-

(pause) It's just I would be lying if I didn't think about it, not now but in the future.... *(She waits to see if he says anything. He doesn't)*

Rachel Reader: (continued) And I was just wondering if it occurred to you. Or if you thought about it at all.... *(He doesn't say anything, so she keeps talking)* I mean I know you would be miserable here and there's nowhere for you to walk to and they don't even allow cats, but I just wondered if you thought about at all...about us... I don't know like living together at some point or if it had occurred to you. *(He interrupts her before she can finish the sentence)-*

Dustin Reader: No, it didn't occur to me **(He's not looking at her)**

(Silence)

Rachel Reader: OH Okay. It's just like when you stay stuff like I'm stuck here in California it kind of hurts my feelings because I wonder what that means for us...or like am I even a factor...

Dustin Reader: Look, I do not want to be here. The only reason I am here is to make a film and THAT IS IT. I cannot complicate my life any further than that.

(Silence – what she was afraid of has just landed)

Rachel Reader: Oh Okay

Dustin Reader: And you're about to complicate your life too. You're starting school in the fall.

Rachel Reader: I know that *(Silence)* Its just- I mean I feel love for you. I didn't know this was going to happen, but umm. I can't help it, I just do, and I don't want to put pressure on you- I know you're in limbo right now.... It's not like I'm looking for a ring or anything...I just...

Dustin Reader: Look I like you; I like being with you, I like being here with you *(He grabs her hips gently and then realizes maybe it's not the right time then backs off)* but that is it.

Rachel Reader: Well, I don't know if that's enough for me.... *(Beat)*

Dustin Reader: I get it.

Rachel Reader: Look I know I'm quiet or nervous around you sometimes- and maybe I transfer stuff onto you...it's just sometimes you know I can feel you pulling away and it makes me nervous- Like I'm trying to get you or something

Dustin Reader: I know, and you need to stop.

Rachel Reader: Are you mad?

Dustin: No and I wish you would stop thinking that.

Rachel: Well, you sure seem mad.

Dustin Reader: I'm not mad, I'm not upset. I'm not anything *(There is silence between them for a moment)*

Rachel Reader: You know, just because you tell someone how you feel about them doesn't mean you are promising them something.

Dustin Reader: What are you talking about? Of course, it does. *She doesn't say anything* So, do you want to get breakfast?

Rachel Reader: Ummm..., I need a second. I can't switch that fast.

Dustin Reader: Your funny

Rachel Reader: I don't feel so funny right now.

Rachel: That's it.

Acting Teacher: Okay, so we support each other in here. Do we want to hear more pages? Are we running for the exit? Do we want our money back?

Students: *Some of them raise their hand nodding they want more pages. One girl raises her hand halfway.*

Acting Teacher: Did you want feedback, or did you get what you needed by hearing it?

Rachel: Sure, I'll take feedback

Student 1: I'm just not hearing her voice at all.

Student 2: Yeah, I am getting a sense of him but not much of her.

Rachel: Oh. Okay. Well, I think she's just afraid to say anything because she doesn't want to scare him away or come on to strong

Acting Teacher: Rachel, you don't need to explain or justify anything. Your job is just to take it in and use it if you want or discard it.

Student 3: What's wrong with coming on strong? Honestly, I just wanted her to stop talking so much. She just kept going on and on...

Rachel: Well, I think she was nervous, and you know, she was really putting herself out there.

Acting Teacher: Uhh, you don't have to justify anything.....Knowing you the way I do I can sense you holding back. I would encourage you to write what you think is too personal even if its stream of consciousness and then you can go back and ask yourself can I share this?

Rachel Reader: Oh...Okay.

Acting Teacher: How many pages is the next one?

Rachel Reader: Like 4 or 5.

Acting Teacher: Let's do it

Rachel: Do we have time?

Acting Teacher: Yes

(Rachel hands the two actors the pages and they begin)

Rachel: *I guess I should preface this with this scene might be extraneous or maybe combine this one with the other.*

Acting Teacher: Are you apologizing?

Rachel: No, I just I don't know, it might be too much. Okay, I'll shut up...

The actor reading for Stage Directions:

Rachel and Dustin sitting at a restaurant booth. It is a hot summer day.

Rachel Reader: I just want you to know that this is not happening because you are about to get really busy. If anything, I admire how hard you work.... I was going to see if you wanted to go for a walk but it's just so hot outside.... Ugg. This is... this is just...

Dustin Reader: What?

Rachel Reader: I don't want to lose you.

Dustin Reader: Why would you lose me?

Rachel Reader: Because I can't do this anymore. It's too painful

Dustin Reader: I get it.... I think you're a fantastic woman and you deserve to have everything you want. I care about you; ... I want to support you...

Rachel Reader: That's it? Were you ever going to say anything?

Dustin Reader: Well, I knew it was coming and I was going to say something eventually.

Rachel Reader: Uh huh...you were just going to let me say it.

(Silence)

Rachel Reader: So, what now? Do I just start dating other people? Is that what you're going to do?

Dustin Reader: If that's what you want,

Rachel Reader: Well, what do you want?

Dustin Reader: I told you what I want. I'm not going to change.

Rachel Reader: Ugh, Jesus. You're not going to fight for me at all are you.

Dustin Reader: What do you want me to say? I wasn't looking for this. The only reason why I came up to you in the first place was because I recognized you.

Rachel Reader: What? That is such bullshit- then why did you ask me out in the first place? Why didn't you just walk away? I mean take some fucking responsibility.

Dustin Reader: I came over to you because I liked you, I wasn't looking to date anyone. I wasn't looking for this. I told you from the beginning that I didn't want to hurt you.

Rachel Reader: Blah, blah, blah... So, what are you going to do- just move on to someone else.....or?

Dustin Reader: Why would you say that. I'm not looking for anyone else. I haven't been seeing anybody else.

Rachel Reader: Dustin, I'm not accusing you of anything. *(More to herself)* You just go from relationship to relationship.

Dustin Reader: Isn't that what you do?

Rachel Reader; No, you Asshole!! I want to be with you! But I can't be with someone who has one foot out the door.

Dustin Reader: I didn't have a foot out the door when I was with you.

Rachel Reader: Yeah, I know- that's why this is so painful.

Dustin Reader: I get it..... Anyone would be lucky to have you.

Rachel Reader Don't say that to me. It's such a kiss-off and its bullshit anyways...

Dustin: It's not bullshit.

(Beat)

Rachel Reader: Have you ever asked yourself why your longest relationship is with your cat?

Dustin Reader: What? What are you talking about?

Rachel Reader: Nothing-... just keep being in denial about yourself. I hope you and your cat are very happy.

Dustin Reader: You psychoanalyze me, and I am out of here. Who the fuck do you think you are?

Rachel Reader: Uh..., someone who knows you pretty well I think and loves you anyway, you Idiot!!

Dustin Reader: I told you from the beginning I didn't know where I was going to be. That I was living on someone's couch.

Rachel Reader: Yeah, and you also said that you weren't trying to get out of this, and you wished you had met me years earlier, and you wooed me...hard.... you talk on both sides of your mouth.

Dustin Reader: I have things I want to do! I want to take a year off and write another screenplay, I have a buddy who lives in Pennsylvania who said I could use his place, I have to move in less than a month, I hate this city, I don't want to be here

Rachel Reader: I don't want to stop you from doing what you want to do.

Dustin Reader: That's not true, Be honest.

Rachel Reader: Okay, so I want to be with you. Why should I feel ashamed of that?

Dustin Reader: You shouldn't-

Rachel Reader: Why do you think I'm trying to stop you? When have I ever put demands on you or been anything but supportive?

Dustin Reader: Your putting demands on me right now.

Rachel Reader: Yeah. And you can't stand it. It's always on your terms. Well, I'm letting you go. Be well, God speed. May the force be with you.

Dustin Reader: Don't be sarcastic.

Rachel Reader: Well, if this is what you call making demands- If you think this is what's stopping you.

Dustin Reader: Because that's what happened before! and I wasted so much time being afraid to go after what I wanted.... The women I was with before- they all held me back in one way or another with their bullshit and it's taken me a long time to figure that out and I am not going to let anyone stop me.

Rachel Reader: But I'm not like that.

Dustin Reader: I know you're not like that. Why do you always compare yourself? This is not about you! I am telling you what it's like for me! Years of anxiety and it wasn't until I started

meditating that was able to relax and figure this out and I am not going to wait around anymore. It's now or never.

Rachel Reader: Dustin, Okay. I'm sorry. Your right. I'm not trying to make it about me. The only reason why I said that is because...it's just...Look, I want to know what things are like for you and how you feel about stuff. The only reason why I say that is because I feel like what we have is different. We communicate. We...We talk.... we do stuff together, we help each other. You're my partner.... And people do make it work!

Dustin Reader: That's not what you said before. You said you can't do this because it's too hard.

Rachel Reader: That is not what I said. You are twisting my words around. This is happening because you can't even tell me how you feel about me. This is about you only letting me in so far and then you pull away.

Dustin Reader: I never said I didn't have feelings for you. I am human, you know.

Rachel Reader: NO, I don't know. You never say anything.

Dustin Reader: And I am not going to. You want me to lie?

Rachel Reader: No, of course not!... I wouldn't want to offend your sense of integrity.

Dustin Reader: ...Wow-Your bitchy when you're mad.

Rachel Reader: Well, it takes one to know one.

Dustin Reader: You're calling me a Bitch now too on top of Idiot and Asshole?

Rachel Reader: If the shoe fits.

Dustin Reader: What other cliches can you pull out of your ass?

Rachel Reader: I don't know. Gimme a minute.... *(Then)*

"Surely you can't be serious. I am serious and don't call me Shirley."

Dustin Reader: "Guess I picked the wrong week to stop sniffing glue..."

(They both laugh- look at each other than after a moment....)

Dustin Reader: I have feelings for you.

Rachel Reader: Yeah, well...The only time you tell me is when your drunk and even then, you don't even remember.

Dustin Reader: Yeah, that was not cool.

(They don't say anything)

Rachel Reader: Ugh... We are just going around in Circles- SO, what now? So, are we just going to be friends?

Dustin Reader: It's not easy to make friends in Los Angeles.

Rachel Reader: I don't know if I can just be friends.

(Silence)

Rachel Reader: I fucking hate you right now.

Dustin Reader: Well, I don't want to go home. they are having a party at the house and if I go, I know I will have to do tequila shots. I don't have to be anywhere for the rest of the day

(She doesn't say anything)

Rachel Reader: There is an exhibit of Irving Penn photography in West Hollywood I have been wanting to go to.

Dustin Reader: Do you want to go do that?

Rachel Reader: Not really.

Dustin Reader: Well. I cleared the rest of the day. Do you want to go to a museum?

Rachel Reader: No, I don't want to go to a museum *(Beat)* I want you... to.....to...

Dustin: What?

Rachel Reader: To make love to me.

(Silence)

Rachel Reader: Do you want to go to my place?

Dustin Reader: Lets go to your place.

(They are sitting across from each other at her place not saying anything. He on the couch, she on the chair)

Rachel Reader: Someone tell a Joke. *(He laughs- doesn't say anything)* You want to play Twister?

Dustin Reader: Do you have Twister?

Rachel Reader: No. So, we are just going to sit here and stare at each other? Fine. I can play that game.

Dustin Reader: I don't play games.

Rachel Reader: You're the worst kind of gamer

Dustin Reader: What is that supposed to mean?

Rachel Reader: Nothing. You're just waiting for me to come over there, aren't you?

Dustin Reader: I'm not waiting for anything.

(She goes over to him. They embrace, they start kissing, Then)

Dustin Reader: Lets go to bed

(That's it for pages)

Rachel: That's it

Acting Teacher: Okay. Any feedback? A show of hands. Do we want more pages?

(A sprinkling of hands goes up)

Student 4: Potentially.

Student 1: I don't understand why he didn't just get up and leave. She was relentless.

Student 2: I don't know why I should care about these people.

Rachel: Oh...Uh... Okay

Student 3: And if he really did want to be with her would she want to be with him?

Rachel: Well, yes. I think so

Student 1: You have to wonder why she was with him or why she loves him so much if he obviously can't give her what she wants. Like what does that say about her?

Rachel: Well, she knew he was damaged, but she was hoping that maybe he would come around.

Acting Teacher: Are you saying you think he is damaged goods?

Rachel: No! I just meant that something must have happened to him to be so afraid to be close to someone.

Student 2: Do you think he is afraid, or do you think that maybe he's just not into her?

Student 3: Yeah, and doesn't she have problems with intimacy too if she chose him?

Rachel: But she's really worked on herselfand well, he seemed like he was into her.

Acting Teacher: Is she damaged too?

Rachel: Well, yes. I guess so... They both are in different ways.

Acting Teacher: These two are very reactive.

Rachel: What do you mean?

Acting Teacher: Well, they are both on the defensive and not truly able to be reflective.

Student 1: I think you should explore why she falls in love with someone who has limitations. You know we choose people for a reason. What does it say about her that she chooses him?

Rachel: Uh huh... (*This is too much for her. Like she's in therapy with a dozen therapists at the same time*)

Rachel: Right. Well, I think she loves how smart he is, and they have fun together and they do have a lot in common....

Student 2: This is like Women are from Mars and Men are from Venus.

Acting Teacher: You know at some point you have to wonder if this is just manipulation.

Rachel: Really? Can you say more about that?

Acting Teacher: Well, if she truly loves him wouldn't she let him go? And accept him for who he is?

Rachel: Oh, Uh huh.... Well, I think it's just she is so hurt. You know, she's trying to understand. I mean I wasn't aware... or she isn't aware...that it was...is... manipulation at the time. ...

Acting Teacher: You know so much about relationships is about timing.

(This comment lingers)

Rachel: Right. Okay. Well, thank you.

Acting Teacher: Anyone else have any other feedback? (*Silence*) Well, you certainly sparked conversation. Okay, well then that's it for tonight. Thank you everybody and well see you next week. Thanks. Goodnight

(Rachel just stands there- starting to gather her stuff. She looks around, everyone is milling around socializing gathering their stuff and walking out slowly. Another class done for the night. As she is putting her stuff together another student comes over to her)

Student 6: Hi, I just want you to know I didn't raise my hand because it was just so familiar. It was just hard to hear. I've been that woman. It wasn't that I didn't like it. It was just really raw.

Rachel: Oh okay. Well, thank you...Thanks for saying that. (*As she gathers her stuff and begins to walk off stage. Peggy Lee's song "Is that all there is" comes on. Dustin and Rachel come toward each other and slow dance together Maybe a disco ball is turning from the ceiling and the lights go to black as the lights from the disco ball are reflected on the floor as if they are dancing in another universe.*)

BLACKOUT