

MAN on stage, wearing a suit coat, holding a briefcase, with an umbrella leaning against a bench. Enter WOMAN, carrying a gym bag. She looks around expectantly and then checks her watch. MAN notices her, nods his head. WOMAN smiles politely. The two make eye contact for a moment or two before turning back towards the audience. WOMAN yawns, MAN moves his umbrella so she can sit. WOMAN declines. WOMAN pulls book out of her bag, MAN pulls same book out of his briefcase. They open to identical places.

MAN:
Good book.

WOMAN:
Yes, it is.

MAN:
You know it's funny, I haven't read this in years.

WOMAN:
(happily) Me either.

They both sit and read for a little while. They cross their legs towards each other. They both stop and look at their watches and then look down the road.

MAN:
Which one are you waiting for?

WOMAN:
The 8:20.

MAN:
I'm catching the 8:14.

WOMAN:
Funny us crossing paths like this. A man and a woman. With nothing in common at first but the same book.

MAN:
It certainly is. Especially since I don't normally ride the bus. This is my first time.

WOMAN:
Your first time? Wait, so you shouldn't be here?

MAN:
No, not really. I'm sorry, am I imposing on a bus stop tradition that you have?

WOMAN:

I wouldn't know. This is my first time.

MAN:

So we're two strangers randomly crossing paths? (dead serious) This is bad news.

WOMAN:

(dejectedly) As soon as I saw that elderly couple kissing in the park, I should have just gone back to bed.

MAN:

(pointing at self and agreeing) Bride and groom coming out of a church. Who gets married on a Wednesday?

MAN and WOMAN both sit dejectedly

WOMAN:

Do you feel anything yet?

MAN:

No, not yet. At least, I don't think so.

WOMAN:

You don't think so?

MAN:

I don't know. I've got a presentation today; maybe that's why I've got butterflies.

WOMAN:

(standing) Where, in your stomach?

MAN:

No, in my appendix. Where else would I have them?

WOMAN:

Don't snap at me!

MAN:

(standing) Well don't snap at me!

WOMAN:

Why not?

MAN:

(blurting) Because you're even more beautiful when you're angry!

Pause. MAN begins apologizing profusely.

MAN:
I didn't mean that. I'm sorry. I didn't- it just slipped out.

WOMAN:
(stunned) You just called me beautiful.

MAN:
I didn't mean it.

WOMAN:
You didn't even say cute or charming, you jumped right to beautiful.

MAN:
One of us needs to go, now. I'll do it. If I hurry I can catch the bus further up the line.

WOMAN:
No, don't do that.

MAN:
(drawing closer) Why not?

WOMAN:
Because now you're being chivalrous, and it's a very attractive trait.

MAN:
(closer) Really?

WOMAN:
(closer) Yes, really.

MAN:
I mean, I was just trying to make you happy. (stopping himself) No, I mean, uhhh, screw you, I'm out of here!

MAN exits quickly. WOMAN watches him go, breathes a sigh of relief. Sits down on the bench, and smiles a wistful smile. RIVAL enters.

RIVAL:
Excuse me, is anyone sitting here?

WOMAN:
No, not at all.

RIVAL sits on bench next to WOMAN. She picks up her book, looks at him expectantly, RIVAL pulls out same book, opens to the beginning.

WOMAN:
Good book.

RIVAL:
Eh. It's all right.

MAN enters, tip toeing. WOMAN notices him half way in.

WOMAN:
You can't come back!

MAN:
(near a whisper) Just stay calm. I just came back to get my umbrella. We're not going to look at each other. We're not going to talk to each other. We're not going to notice how blue each other's eyes are-

WOMAN hands umbrella to MAN

WOMAN:
Here. Go.

MAN:
Thank you. Who's this?

WOMAN:
He's the new man in my life.

RIVAL rises, he and MAN shake hands

MAN:
Hello.

RIVAL:
Hi. Are you waiting for the 8:20 as well?

MAN:
No, I was waiting for the 8:14.

MAN turns to WOMAN

MAN:
Congratulations. Looks like you've finally found someone who's in it for the long run.

WOMAN:
Thank you.

MAN and WOMAN shake hands. MAN kisses WOMAN on the cheek. They stay close to each other.

WOMAN:

Now look what you've done.

MAN:

Sorry. For old time's sake.

WOMAN:

You should probably let go of my hand.

MAN moves hands to WOMAN's hips.

WOMAN:

That's not what I meant.

MAN:

Sorry

MAN lifts hands in air, WOMAN leans in to kiss him, MAN back peddles out of the way.

MAN:

(sputtering) What are you doing?

WOMAN:

I don't know, I don't know.

MAN:

He's sitting right there!

RIVAL waves happily

WOMAN;

I know, I know, I'm just so confused. I never thought I could feel this way again. I was just telling my girlfriend that I didn't think I'd ever fall in love again.

MAN:

Girlfriend? Is she single and heavyset?

WOMAN:

No, she's funny. She just hasn't found a man who appreciates her for who she is yet.

MAN:

But heavyset?

WOMAN:
(horrorstricken) She IS heavysset!

MAN:
This is getting worse instead of better. I never should have gone to that bar-

WOMAN:
Where you confided in your woman chasing friend that you were-

MAN:
Done with love! And as soon as he said that-

WOMAN:
The one thing he was looking for was love-

MAN:
I knew something bad was going to happen.

WOMAN:
Terrible

MAN:
Awful.

WOMAN:
Misera-

They kiss.

WOMAN:
This can never work.

MAN:
It's working all right for me.

WOMAN:
I mean we're too different. We come from two different worlds. I'm a yoga instructor who's losing her building to a bank.

MAN:
And I'm a banker foreclosing on a yoga instructor.

WOMAN slaps MAN

WOMAN:

How could you deceive me like that?

MAN:
Let me explain!

WOMAN:
You were using me all this time.

MAN:
It's my job; I never meant to hurt you. I love you.

WOMAN:
It's too late for that. Good-bye.

MAN:
You're going to miss your bus.

WOMAN:
I'm not going to miss anything.

EXIT WOMAN

MAN:
(sadly) I'm going to miss you.

RIVAL, reading his book, laughs to himself.

MAN:
Go a head. Laugh it up. Why not? I had it all and I threw it away. She's just another conquest for you, but for me? She was one in a million.

RIVAL:
I just think it's funny. Because she knows. And you know. But you both act like you don't know yet.

MAN:
What are you talking about?

RAIN SFX. RIVAL rises to exit

RIVAL:
Take care of yourself. No one wants to wind up (gestures at WOMAN's book on bench) like a book out in the rain.

EXIT RIVAL

MAN opens his umbrella, protecting himself. MAN sees WOMAN's book. He picks it up and tucks it in his jacket.

ENTER WOMAN

MAN:
I didn't think you'd come back.

WOMAN:
I didn't think you'd still be here.

MAN offers WOMAN umbrella.

MAN:
You're getting soaked.

WOMAN:
I'll be fine.

MAN:
It's big enough for the both of us. Can't we just be civil with each other? Like we were before?

WOMAN steps under umbrella, the two watch the storm.

WOMAN:
I lost my book.

MAN pulls out book, hands it to WOMAN

WOMAN:
Thank you.

MAN:
I want to say something, and I want you to hear me out. I'm sorry. I'm sorry that I wasn't honest with you about who I was. I'm sorry that I didn't try harder to explain. I'm sorry that it took this rain to bring you back. You make me feel alive again, and I want to make this work. I don't want to end up like a book left out in the rain.

WOMAN:
(pause) What does that mean?

MAN:
It means I love you.

They embrace

WOMAN:

I love you too. And I suppose I could start paying my taxes again.

MAN:

You don't pay taxes either?

They kiss again.

MAN:

Would you like to go get some coffee?

WOMAN:

We could just go back to my place.

MAN:

I know. But I think we should start with coffee.

They embrace again. MAN begins to laugh.

WOMAN:

What's so funny?

MAN:

I think you know.

WOMAN smiles.

WOMAN:

I think I do.

EXIT MAN and WOMAN as LIGHTS FADE