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Cast of Characters

ABBEY, 23, a parking lot attendant

JOHN, 27, another parking lot attendant

LANCASTER, 35, a rich man

Setting

The play is set at the long term parking lot at the airport in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Onstage there is a heated booth with service windows on either side. It is winter. There are no cars visible.

Production Notes

The author grants permission for production groups to alter potentially objectionable language.

LONG TERM PARKING

by Ruth McKee

Scene 1

(Lights up on the parking lot. It is a cold day, in January. JOHN and ABBEY sit in the booth. ABBEY taps her nails on the counter. JOHN watches her, increasingly irritated. ABBEY catches JOHN's glare and stops. She sits still for a moment, bored.)

ABBEY. You get the paper?

JOHN. No. I've got yesterday's though, if you want it.

ABBEY. Yeah, give it to me.

(JOHN finds the day-old paper.)

ABBEY. Thanks.

(ABBEY lifts the paper so it covers her window.)

JOHN. Abbey.

ABBEY. What?

JOHN. If you block your window like that, you can't see people coming. They'll all come around to my side.

ABBEY. There's no one here.

JOHN. But there will be.

ABBEY. I'll put it down when they come.

JOHN. I don't want to serve everybody.

ABBEY. I'll read the paper until lunch, and then you can read and I'll take over, okay?

JOHN. No, that's not okay.

ABBEY. Sure it is. They don't really need two of us; it's just for show.

JOHN. So it doesn't look good for you to be lounging there.

ABBEY. I don't think anyone cares.

JOHN. I don't know, if Eric comes out, or...

ABBEY. Eric isn't working today.

JOHN. I know, but...

ABBEY. What's the problem?

JOHN. I don't like it.

ABBEY. I'm sorry, but you're not my boss.

JOHN. I've been here longer.

ABBEY. I was on the night shift for a year and a half.

JOHN. I've been on the day for three years.

ABBEY. Good for you.

JOHN. I have seniority.

ABBEY. No you don't; you're just more of a fuck-up than I am.

(JOHN doesn't respond.)

ABBEY. Listen, you've never worked with me before, but they have. They know how I am, okay?

JOHN. You give them attitude and they move you to the day.

ABBEY. I didn't ask to be moved.

JOHN. Roger's a good worker.

ABBEY. I know he is.

JOHN. He's got a family.

ABBEY. I'm sure he has.

JOHN. He shouldn't have to work nights.

ABBEY. Then maybe he should get another job.

JOHN. Or maybe—

ABBEY. Listen, whatever goes through Eric's mind, that's not my fault. I don't control it, okay?

JOHN. I know you don't. But—

ABBEY. I didn't ask to switch shifts with Roger; they came up with that on their own. So don't blame me 'cause you're not working with your buddy anymore. This is me, this is the girl you're going to be working with, alright?

JOHN. I don't mind that you're a woman.

ABBEY. You better not.

JOHN. I'm just ... Roger's a friend of mine.

ABBEY. That's what I'm saying.

JOHN. It just, it's not fair. Roger's such a good worker, he didn't deserve to be demoted.

ABBEY. And I didn't deserve to be promoted?

JOHN. I'm not saying that.

ABBEY. Yes you are.

JOHN. Did Curtis let you get away with attitude?

ABBEY. Curtis didn't do shit. He just sat there and farted.

(JOHN laughs.)

JOHN. Poor Roger. He doesn't deserve that.

ABBEY. No one does.

JOHN. I just don't—

ABBEY. I think it was supposed to make everyone happier. I think we were supposed to work well together.

JOHN. Really.

ABBEY. You don't think you can work with me?

JOHN. No. I can.

ABBEY. Good.

JOHN. Just—

ABBEY. Do you want your paper back?

JOHN. No.

ABBEY. Are you sure?

JOHN. Yeah.

ABBEY. Okay.

(ABBEY moves the paper so it doesn't block the window, and continues reading.)

JOHN. What are you reading?

ABBEY. Real estate.

JOHN. Are you moving?

ABBEY. No, I just like to read the listings.

JOHN. Do you live alone?

ABBEY. That's none of your business.

JOHN. Okay.

ABBEY. I live with my mom.

JOHN. That's cool.

ABBEY. It is?

JOHN. I mean, yeah. My mom's dead.

ABBEY. I'm sorry.

JOHN. I live alone.

ABBEY. Oh.

JOHN. Where do you live?

ABBEY. Near downtown.

JOHN. That's cool. I bet you go out all the time, huh?

ABBEY. No, I've been working nights.

JOHN. Oh yeah.

ABBEY. And I don't have a car, so, you know, it's hard to get around on the bus.

JOHN. Yeah.

(ABBEY puts down her paper.)

ABBEY. What's Lancaster doing here?

JOHN. Who?

ABBEY. Lancaster. That green beemer there. He usually comes Friday nights. He shouldn't be here now.

JOHN. Oh.

ABBEY. It's a beautiful car, isn't it?

JOHN. Hm. Not my type.

ABBEY. I bet it would be if you could afford it.

JOHN. No, I don't think so. Forest green is...

ABBEY. Elegant. Shit! I'm not prepared!

JOHN. Prepared?

ABBEY. He's here every two weeks, like clockwork. He's not supposed to come in out of the blue.

JOHN. He travels a lot, huh?

ABBEY. He goes to Vancouver.

JOHN. And he's a friend of yours?

ABBEY. No. I just recognize him.

JOHN. Well, he's all yours, then.

ABBEY. John!

JOHN. What?

ABBEY. I can't, John.

JOHN. What do you mean you can't? You haven't taken half as many customers as I have this morning. It's your turn.

ABBEY. I know, but can you please just get this one? I promise I'll get the next five if you do.

JOHN. No.

ABBEY. I'll get the next ten, John.

JOHN. No. You know him. He's all yours.

ABBEY. John, *no!*

(LANCASTER enters. ABBEY ducks down from her window and LANCASTER continues to JOHN's window. JOHN motions him back to ABBEY. LANCASTER waits for a moment as ABBEY slowly rises to face him.)

LANCASTER. Hello.

ABBEY. Hi.

LANCASTER. Are you ... are you alright?

ABBEY. Fine.

LANCASTER. You're sure?

ABBEY. Uh huh.

LANCASTER. I didn't expect to see you here today. I'm dropping of my car.

ABBEY. Okay.

LANCASTER. I'll be back on the 22nd.

(ABBEY starts to fill out a form.)

LANCASTER. That's the 22nd of February.

ABBEY. Oh.

LANCASTER. I know, it's a longer trip than usual. They're sending me to Tokyo I'm afraid.

(ABBEY smiles at him.)

Zoe's filthy, I'm sorry, she really needs a wash. I know she's in good hands with you, though.

(LANCASTER passes ABBEY his keys.)

LANCASTER. Goodbye.

ABBEY. Okay.

(LANCASTER exits. ABBEY resumes breathing.)

ABBEY. Oh. My. God.

(JOHN watches ABBEY, confused.)

JOHN. What was that about?

ABBEY. Nothing. I did it, didn't I?

JOHN. Sure. After you hid from him.

ABBEY. I wasn't hiding. I dropped something.

JOHN. Oh, come on, Abbey, you looked ridiculous.

ABBEY. I did?

JOHN. You've got a job to do.

ABBEY. I know.

JOHN. You can't be afraid to do it.

ABBEY. I know how to do it! I just wasn't ready for him.

JOHN. You just have to learn not to be so cold.

ABBEY. I was cold?

JOHN. Yes.

ABBEY. Oh shit.

JOHN. It's okay; you just need practice.

ABBEY. John, I know how to do my job.

JOHN. No you don't! You spend half the morning sitting around, letting me get all the customers and when you finally take one you're cold to him. But it's okay. You just don't know how to do the job.

ABBEY. Yes I do!

JOHN. I bet you just didn't get many customers on the night shift. You don't have to be embarrassed, Abbey. It's okay. I understand.

ABBEY. I know how to do the fucking job, John! We got twice this many customers at night.

JOHN. You did.

ABBEY. It's not the job. It was the customer.

JOHN. Lancaster.

ABBEY. Yes.

JOHN. You're afraid of him.

ABBEY. Yes. I mean, I just wasn't ready for him.

JOHN. Because what, you have a history?

ABBEY. No, there's no ... what makes you think there's a history?

JOHN. Nothing.

ABBEY. Oh.

JOHN. He has a name for his car?

ABBEY. Yeah. Well, that's what he calls it. That's what it says on the plate.

JOHN. It might be a woman's name.

ABBEY. Do you think he was really asking me to wash his car?

JOHN. No.

ABBEY. I think he was.

JOHN. Are you crazy? He doesn't want you to drive his car to the wash. And even if he did, you'd still get in trouble if you took the it off the lot.

ABBEY. You'd report me?

JOHN. Someone would.

ABBEY. Doesn't matter. I could still wash it.

JOHN. Here?

ABBEY. Yeah.

JOHN. You'll freeze!

ABBEY. No I won't. I'll wait for a warm day.

JOHN. In February?

ABBEY. Sure.

JOHN. Do you think he's going to pay you to do that? To wash his car?

ABBEY. No.

JOHN. Great. You're going to get frostbite all over your body for nothing.

ABBEY. For him.

JOHN. He could take "Zoe" to a car wash like a normal person.

ABBEY. Maybe he doesn't want to. Maybe he doesn't trust them, and he wants me to.

JOHN. You've washed his car before.

ABBEY. No. But I've washed the windshield and stuff.

JOHN. How long have you known this guy?

ABBEY. I don't know him, John. He's just a regular. Haven't you ever seen him? He must be here every Monday morning. Every second one.

JOHN. Yeah, I've seen him.

ABBEY. If you were a woman, you'd notice him.

JOHN. He's not that good-looking.

ABBEY. Are you joking?

JOHN. You think he's hot?

ABBEY. Yeah!

JOHN. The guy's balding; he's fat.

ABBEY. He's gorgeous.

JOHN. You just like him 'cause he's rich.

ABBEY. That's not true at all. It's his eyes. You've never looked at his eyes, have you?

JOHN. Monday mornings are always busy.

ABBEY. What's that supposed to mean?

JOHN. I don't have time to stare into a man's eyes. I don't know, maybe if I saw him on a Friday night.

ABBEY. It's not the eyes themselves, but the way he listens to you. I don't know how to describe it.

JOHN. I listen with my ears, personally.

ABBEY. Shut up.

JOHN. He's a scumbag.

ABBEY. You don't know him.

JOHN. No, I remember him. He comes in Monday mornings, looking hungover. He's always got a woman with him, a different woman. I don't know where he finds them, must pick them up on the plane, or in Vancouver.

ABBEY. He likes people, see. He attracts them, he makes friends everywhere he goes, that kind of guy.

JOHN. However you want to look at it.

ABBEY. He's not like that. I've talked to him.

JOHN. Oh, I'm sure. And what did you talk about?

ABBEY. I don't know. His car, what does it matter?

JOHN. I'm telling you he's a scumbag. I can't believe you have a thing for him.

ABBEY. What's wrong with having a thing?

JOHN. He's a customer.

ABBEY. So?

JOHN. It affects your work.

ABBEY. So I got a little nervous; it's not a big deal.

JOHN. You're so worked up about this stranger that you can't do your job properly.

ABBEY. What's wrong, John? Do I sense a little jealousy here?

JOHN. Ugh. If I was the slightest bit attracted to you it would be totally gone knowing how you feel about that scumbag.

ABBEY. He's a good guy.

JOHN. You wash his windshield. You let him use you.

ABBEY. It's just a crush, John. What's wrong with a crush?

JOHN. What if he has a wife? What if he has children?

ABBEY. There's still nothing wrong with it.

JOHN. Do you know if he has a family? Do you check these things out before you throw yourself in a man's lap?

ABBEY. I haven't thrown myself in his lap!

JOHN. Sure.

ABBEY. You just saw me with him. Did I look like a girl who was throwing myself into his lap?

JOHN. No, you looked like you were hiding something. Like you couldn't talk because I was around.

ABBEY. You really think there's something going on?

JOHN. It's not safe, what you're doing. What if he's married with a family, have you thought about that?

ABBEY. No, because nothing—

JOHN. Have you thought about what your "little crush" might be doing to them? To Zoe, whoever she is?

ABBEY. John, it's not like that! He's not like that; he's got class.

JOHN. Oh, he's classy enough to have an affair with his parking lot attendant?

ABBEY. Oh, John, is that what you think?

JOHN. I have a pretty good idea.

ABBEY. Based on what?

JOHN. Based on something Curtis told me.

ABBEY. Oh, John, you don't know shit.

JOHN. Oh, I think I do.

ABBEY. What do you know?

JOHN. I know that they took you off the night shift for some reason, and I know that reason has to do with something between you and a customer. This customer.

ABBEY. You don't know shit, John. Last week wasn't even one of Lancaster's weeks. And he wasn't a customer. He wasn't a fucking customer!

JOHN. Oh, just a friend you brought around, then?

ABBEY. You don't know shit, John.

JOHN. Then tell me.

ABBEY. He was just some guy, some creep that was wandering around.

JOHN. People wander around here at night?

ABBEY. Of course—what, have you never worked a night shift? There was this one guy that we'd always see. Liked to fuck with the locks. Curtis said he spotted him in a red Toyota, went to go kick him out, left me alone in the booth.

JOHN. So you took the opportunity.

ABBEY. It wasn't something I wanted to happen.

JOHN. Oh, it just happened.

ABBEY. Yeah.

JOHN. How?

ABBEY. You're sick, John. You want to know how? The guy just barged into the booth and started touching me.

JOHN. Oh.

ABBEY. What do you think, you think I was asking for it, in my sexy uniform.

JOHN. Did you know him?

ABBEY. No.

JOHN. Oh.

ABBEY. You thought it was a customer? That fucking Curtis. What did he tell you?

JOHN. Just that he'd caught you having sex in the booth.

ABBEY. That fucker.

JOHN. Yeah.

ABBEY. He didn't get that far, thank God.

JOHN. Good.

ABBEY. Thank God I'm not working with him anymore.

JOHN. Yeah.

ABBEY. Fuck.

JOHN. I'm sorry.

ABBEY. It wasn't a big deal.

JOHN. No Abbey, I'm sorry.

ABBEY. Yeah.

JOHN. It's good, it's good for me to know.

ABBEY. So you can pity me?

JOHN. So I can try to understand you.

ABBEY. Oh.

JOHN. I'm really...

ABBEY. You still think I should be back on the night shift?

JOHN. No.

ABBEY. I did nothing to provoke that man.

JOHN. I know. I didn't think. I shouldn't have listened to Curtis.

ABBEY. Yeah.

JOHN. But when I saw the guy. The way you were acting.

ABBEY. It's not like that with him.

JOHN. I know, I know. I just ... be careful.

ABBEY. What does that mean?

JOHN. Just ... I don't want you to do anything to provoke this guy. He may not be all that you think he is.

ABBEY. Okay.

(ABBEY exits the booth, takes a few deep breaths. JOHN watches for a moment, then joins her outside.)

JOHN. Did you go to the cops?

ABBEY. Yeah.

JOHN. Good.

ABBEY. I had to. It wasn't like I had a choice.

JOHN. Or else other women....

ABBEY. Or else I would have lost my job.

JOHN. So you told Eric?

ABBEY. Yeah. Before Curtis did, thankfully. And Eric called the cops. He gave me a week off and switched me to this shift. His supervisor had been telling him for months that he should put me on the day, that it wasn't safe for him to have a woman working in the middle of the night. So he was very understanding, for once. I don't think the middle of the night was so dangerous. If I'd been working with someone else I would have been fine.

JOHN. You mean you think Curtis was involved?

ABBEY. I don't know.

JOHN. Yeah.

ABBEY. I mean, either way, he wasn't there. When I needed a partner there was no one there.

JOHN. Have they caught the guy yet?

ABBEY. No.

JOHN. They will.

ABBEY. Yeah, and then there'll be a trial and he'll hire some expensive lawyer.

JOHN. He was rich?

ABBEY. I don't know. He smelled rich, but he didn't look rich.

JOHN. Clean?

ABBEY. Fancy cologne. I don't know, that's about all I can remember clearly. You think they can build a case on cologne?

JOHN. Sure.

ABBEY. I just wish they could skip this whole mess. I don't care if he gets away. I just don't want to have to tell people about it all the time.

JOHN. I'm sorry.

ABBEY. I don't want your pity.

JOHN. Okay.

ABBEY. It's in the past. I just want to forget it. Now you know why I'm on the day shift; that's enough.

JOHN. Okay.

(A plane flies overhead.)

ABBEY. So what about you?

JOHN. What about me?

ABBEY. Why are you on the day shift?

JOHN. I was working as a night watchman before. Lori wanted me to work days, so I found this job.

ABBEY. Your ... girlfriend?

JOHN. She was my wife.

ABBEY. She died?

JOHN. No, no. Just divorced.

ABBEY. You seem a little young to be divorced already.

JOHN. Tell me about it.

ABBEY. How old are you?

JOHN. Twenty-seven.

ABBEY. Yeah. Too young.

JOHN. You're older?

ABBEY. No, no. I'm only twenty-three.

JOHN. Um-hm.

ABBEY. What happened?

JOHN. With Lori? She left me. I couldn't afford to have children so she left me for a man who could.

ABBEY. She couldn't wait? For you to make more money?

JOHN. It was complicated.

ABBEY. Oh.

JOHN. Anyway she's gone. I should get back in the booth, you know. In case anyone comes.

(JOHN heads over to the booth. ABBEY lights a cigarette.)

ABBEY. Shout if you need me. I don't like to be in that booth any longer than I have to.

(A plane flies overhead.)

ABBEY. One-twenty-five to Calgary, making connections to Vancouver, Yellowknife, Anchorage.

JOHN. You memorize the schedule?

(ABBEY crosses to stand outside JOHN's window.)

ABBEY. A girl's gotta do something to pass the time.

JOHN. You like planes, huh?

ABBEY. Yeah.

JOHN. I've never been on one.

ABBEY. Neither have I.

JOHN. Have you ever been out of Canada?

ABBEY. No. You?

JOHN. No. I went to Winnipeg once. Moose Jaw.

ABBEY. I've been to Calgary.

JOHN. I hear Calgary's beautiful.

ABBEY. It is.

JOHN. Did you go to the Rockies?

ABBEY. No. We didn't get that far.

JOHN. I'd like to go there.

ABBEY. Yeah.

JOHN. I heard that the Rockies are amazing to fly over, on a clear day.

ABBEY. Who told you that?

JOHN. I don't know. Television. I guess.

ABBEY. Sometimes I think I should just go somewhere. Just buy a plane ticket, to anywhere. Winnipeg, Moose Jaw even. Just to see what it's like, you know?

JOHN. Why don't you?

ABBEY. You've been to Moose Jaw. It's just like this, isn't it?

JOHN. Yeah.

ABBEY. I saved up enough money once. I saved up two hundred dollars and I decided. I just decided that I was going to get on the next plane. I didn't care where it was going, just whatever the next plane was and I was going to go. And come back the same day, before my shift.

JOHN. Yeah?

ABBEY. The only flight I could afford wasn't until five o'clock. I wouldn't have been back in time.

JOHN. Why didn't you just go?

ABBEY. I would have lost my job. You know how hard it is.

JOHN. You could have stayed, found one there.

ABBEY. I don't know anyone in Moose Jaw.

JOHN. Yeah.

ABBEY. I lost my nerve the next day. And the day after my mother's washer broke. So there went my money.

JOHN. You support your mother?

ABBEY. I help her out. I pay her mortgage and stuff. She's on disability, though, so she does alright.

JOHN. That's good of you.

ABBEY. I do what I can. She has M.S.

JOHN. I used to read books for the M.S. Readathon.

ABBEY. So did I.

JOHN. So strange, what happens to people.

ABBEY. When I took this job I thought all kinds of exciting things would happen. You know, here we are at an airport. All the good stuff happens at airports. People leave their husbands, run from the law. There are hijackings, plane crashes, hostages taken....

JOHN. I know.

ABBEY. People go places at airports.

JOHN. Not in Saskatoon.

ABBEY. Yeah. Not here.

(Another plane.)

JOHN. Aren't you getting cold out there?

ABBEY. A little.

JOHN. You want to take lunch now?

ABBEY. No, I don't need a break. I brought a sandwich.

(ABBEY enters the booth.)

JOHN. I'm going to go get a coffee inside.

ABBEY. Okay.

JOHN. You're okay on your own for a few minutes?

ABBEY. Yeah, John. I'll be fine.

JOHN. Okay. Do you want anything?

ABBEY. Coffee'd be nice.

JOHN. Milk?

ABBEY. Just black.

JOHN. You're a brave woman.

ABBEY. I know.

(JOHN exits. ABBEY watches him go.)

Scene 2

(Two weeks have passed and it is a colder day, in February. It is mid-afternoon, dusk. Sound of a plane overhead. Lights up on JOHN and ABBEY in the booth.)

JOHN. That's the third Volvo today.

ABBEY. I'm glad to see you taking an interest in cars.

JOHN. I like those ones.

ABBEY. You're weird, John.

JOHN. What? They're nice cars.

ABBEY. Boxy.

JOHN. Yeah.

ABBEY. That's an okay kind of guy, that drives a Volvo. Down to earth. Maybe a little eccentric, but alright.

JOHN. You judge men by their cars?

ABBEY. Is there any other way?

JOHN. I don't know. Some guy drives an expensive car, you know, money isn't everything.

ABBEY. It isn't. I judge more by the way they treat their cars. A guy can be driving a Lexus and you can still tell that he's a slob. If you just look.

JOHN. Oh.

ABBEY. Yours looks alright.

JOHN. Thank you.

ABBEY. You're welcome.

JOHN. You don't have a car. No one can tell what you're like.

ABBEY. Yeah. I'm a mystery, I guess.

JOHN. What kind of car would you drive?

ABBEY. If I had all the money in the world?

JOHN. Yeah.

ABBEY. A BMW.

JOHN. Come on. Be realistic.

ABBEY. You said if I had all the money.

JOHN. Why a BMW, why not a Mercedes?

ABBEY. I like their symbol better.

JOHN. That's great.

ABBEY. If I had all the money, maybe I'd buy two or three cars.

JOHN. Maybe you'd buy one just like Zoe.

ABBEY. Maybe I'd buy Zoe.

JOHN. From Mr. Lancaster?

ABBEY. He'd sell if I offered him enough.

JOHN. For a used car.

ABBEY. She's my favorite car.

JOHN. She's just got your favorite driver.

ABBEY. I'd like her anyway.

JOHN. Right.

ABBEY. He's coming back in a week.

JOHN. I know.

ABBEY. It snowed last night. Do you think I should go clean her up again?

JOHN. The water you used has probably frozen around the tires and gotten her stuck into that spot.

ABBEY. Shit, do you think so?

JOHN. No. But if we used hot water it might. Then you'd have her there to look at for a while longer.

ABBEY. Mr. Lancaster would be pissed.

JOHN. It'd be his fault. He's the one who wanted it washed.

ABBEY. John....

JOHN. He could come get her in the spring.

ABBEY. I'm gonna go look at her. Maybe I could vacuum. Ben's got one, right? In the terminal.

JOHN. I wouldn't do that. I used that machine on my car once and the smell....

ABBEY. Oh.

JOHN. Don't vacuum the man's car, Abbey. He didn't ask you to go inside it.

ABBEY. But there are crumbs and things.

JOHN. You went inside, didn't you?

ABBEY. I just took a look around.

JOHN. Abbey.

ABBEY. What, are you going to report me? I didn't take anything.

JOHN. Sure.

ABBEY. I just wanted to see what it was like.

JOHN. See if you could figure him out from the car?

ABBEY. Yeah.

JOHN. Did you find anything?

ABBEY. Gum wrappers. Aspirin, an old Band-Aid. A book.

JOHN. What book?

ABBEY. The 1994 World Almanac.

JOHN. Strange.

ABBEY. Some old newspapers. Maps in the glove compartment. A Map of Saskatoon, of Saskatchewan. A Road Atlas of North America.

JOHN. He does a lot of driving.

ABBEY. I guess. He's got about 90,000 kilometers on his odometer. And the car's only a '97 model.

JOHN. Wow. My car would have fallen to pieces if I'd done that much driving. I guess that's what you pay for.

ABBEY. The Florida page is all crumpled, like he's been using it a lot. Texas has a coffee stain.

JOHN. Maybe he's a snowbird.

ABBEY. At his age? I bet he has parents who are, though. I bet he's got an old mother with a motor home down in Florida, and every year he drives her down there and stays with her for a week, and then every spring he goes and picks her up again.

JOHN. Why wouldn't she just fly?

ABBEY. She's afraid of flying. And they love the drive together. It's their favorite time of year.

JOHN. The man loves his mama.

ABBEY. Yeah.

JOHN. What about Texas, then?

ABBEY. Maybe his parents are split up. He has to drive his father there.

JOHN. Or his wife's mother.

ABBEY. There's no wife.

JOHN. Or else he's a drug dealer.

ABBEY. John, really.

JOHN. It's possible!

ABBEY. Yeah, right.

JOHN. Don't be stupid, Abbey! Look where the guy goes. Vancouver to make his pick-up from the Orient, Texas for South America. Florida to get the shit from Cuba.

ABBEY. John, don't be ridiculous!

JOHN. I'm not being ridiculous! You don't know what he does. Why would anyone with this much money, with a car like this, with business in Florida, in Vancouver, in Texas, live in Saskatoon? He's controlling the drug ring here. It's always some rich prick.

ABBEY. John!

JOHN. Some white-washed jerk that when you scratch the surface, he's the one who's responsible for all of it.

ABBEY. John! He's in windows.

JOHN. What?

ABBEY. He works for Dorian windows. He runs the place.

JOHN. How do you know?

ABBEY. There was a note. On letterhead. He's the chairman.

JOHN. Oh.

ABBEY. He's humble. No one's sent him to Tokyo. He sent himself.

JOHN. Oh.

ABBEY. He's a good guy.

JOHN. What did the note say?

ABBEY. From his secretary. A packing list.

JOHN. Not his wife?

ABBEY. On letterhead?

JOHN. Yeah.

ABBEY. He can't be married if his secretary is packing for him.

JOHN. You're right.

ABBEY. He's single.

JOHN. He could still have a girlfriend and not be married. You didn't find anything else?

ABBEY. No.

JOHN. No lost earrings, no used condoms?

ABBEY. No.

JOHN. No lipstick stains or perfumed handkerchiefs?

ABBEY. If he has a girl she hasn't been in his car.

JOHN. Okay.

ABBEY. He's not a homewrecker. He's not a drug dealer. He's just a rich guy who works a lot.

JOHN. And travels a lot.

ABBEY. Yeah.

JOHN. Fine.

ABBEY. So it's okay, then, right? It's okay for me to have a crush on him.

JOHN. Yeah, I guess.

ABBEY. I won't hurt anyone, right?

JOHN. Right. No, I guess you won't.

ABBEY. Good.

JOHN. Not many people today.

ABBEY. It's too cold.

JOHN. I wouldn't come back to Saskatoon if I knew the weather was going to be like this.

ABBEY. Not even if you had work to get back to?

JOHN. Yeah, I guess, then. Don't want to lose a job.

ABBEY. Yeah.

JOHN. You finish school?

ABBEY. No, you?

JOHN. Quit in grade eleven.

ABBEY. You ever think about going back?

JOHN. Sometimes. I mean, I don't want to work here forever. I'd like to work for myself. You know, own my own company.

ABBEY. Doing what?

JOHN. I don't know. Maybe run my own lot.

ABBEY. That doesn't sound very exciting. That's some dream you've got there John.

JOHN. I know how to. It's realistic.

ABBEY. But isn't there something you really like to do?

JOHN. Yeah.

ABBEY. What?

JOHN. Woodworking.

ABBEY. See, that's better. I like that. You could start your own business as a carpenter.

JOHN. Yeah.

ABBEY. You do any of that now?

JOHN. Yeah. In my basement. I make furniture.

ABBEY. That's great.

JOHN. You need any furniture?

ABBEY. No. Not really. I mean, I could probably use some shelves, but, I don't know if—

JOHN. I can make you some.

ABBEY. I can't really afford it.

JOHN. I wouldn't charge you anything.

ABBEY. John!

JOHN. Really, it would be a pleasure; lumber isn't very expensive.

ABBEY. But your time.

JOHN. I enjoy it. I've got a house full of furniture and nowhere to put the new stuff I make.

ABBEY. You could start selling it. You could start your own business. Now.

JOHN. I don't know.

ABBEY. It's scary.

JOHN. I'm not ready yet.

ABBEY. I know.

JOHN. I don't even know if I'm any good. I haven't really shown anyone my stuff.

ABBEY. Oh.

JOHN. You doing anything this weekend?

ABBEY. No, why?

JOHN. Maybe you could come over and see it.

ABBEY. I don't know.

JOHN. Sure, maybe you could come for dinner.

ABBEY. Your house is really far away; I don't know, John.

JOHN. Then we could do something else. We could go to the movies or something.

ABBEY. No, John.

JOHN. No?

ABBEY. I don't date the men I work with.

JOHN. I didn't say it would be a date; it could just be buddies.

ABBEY. No.

JOHN. It could be a date, then.

ABBEY. No, John.

JOHN. If you think it's just because of my wife. It's not. It's not just that I'm lonely, it's that....

ABBEY. I know.

JOHN. So, no plans, huh?

ABBEY. No. I mean, no. I've got plans. I'm just...

JOHN. Waiting.

ABBEY. Yeah.

JOHN. Sure. You wait, then.

ABBEY. I'm sorry John, I just want to keep my options open.

JOHN. You don't sound very open to me.

ABBEY. What do you mean?

JOHN. If you won't go out with the men you work with, who do you think you're gonna date?

ABBEY. Let it be, John.

JOHN. No.

ABBEY. Other people.

JOHN. What other people?

ABBEY. I don't know, other people.

JOHN. I don't see any other people.

ABBEY. Well, what do you know?

JOHN. You mean people like Mr. Lancaster?

ABBEY. No.

JOHN. They don't see you, people like that. You aren't other people to them, Abbey.

ABBEY. I know.

JOHN. No, what I mean is, I see you looking at those planes, I see you dreaming of another world. I know you want to get out. But that other world, it isn't dreaming of you. They're not....

ABBEY. Yeah.

JOHN. I don't mean to be harsh, Abbey.

ABBEY. Yeah.

JOHN. I'm not helping. I'm ... I'm just trying to help.

ABBEY. I know.

JOHN. I like you. You're a dreamer. I like that you're a dreamer, I just think that....

ABBEY. You've got to give me a chance, John.

JOHN. What do you mean?

ABBEY. It's only been a couple of weeks.

JOHN. Since we met.

ABBEY. Since I was taken off the night shift.

JOHN. Oh. Right.

ABBEY. You don't know me. You don't know anything about me.

JOHN. And he does?

ABBEY. Yes.

JOHN. Sure.

ABBEY. You don't know anything about him.

JOHN. Neither do you. You just have this obsession. You see this prick bring his car in here, and you develop this whole fantasy so that no one else....

ABBEY. You're just jealous. You're not trying to understand.

JOHN. I do understand. You're lonely and you're projecting all this shit onto a stranger.

ABBEY. He's not a stranger, John. You just ... you don't know. You haven't seen us together. I mean when we're really, when we're really talking. There's a real connection.

JOHN. Oh, right. I really saw you connecting.

ABBEY. Yes you did, don't you remember? You thought we were having an affair!

JOHN. But that wasn't because, that was....

ABBEY. He's a really good man, John, a caring man.

JOHN. Not to mention that he's rich and drives a beautiful car.

ABBEY. It's not about those things. I mean they help, but, they're not the reason that I'm in love with him.

JOHN. But if you met a caring man who was not rich and not handsome and didn't drive a fancy car you would like him just as much?

ABBEY. Yes! I mean, if we had the same kind of connection, yes.

JOHN. I see.

ABBEY. You think it's all about the money, about the status, John, and it's not. It's more than that. It's more than what you've seen.

JOHN. What is it?

ABBEY. I don't....

JOHN. What?

ABBEY. I just ... I saw him downtown once.

JOHN. You met him? You had a date?

ABBEY. No, no, not like that. I just saw him walking down the street, and the guy, you know the guy in the cowboy hat? Everyone knows him. Preaches to imaginary crowds.

JOHN. Yeah, of course, that wacko.

ABBEY. Well the “wacko” was there preaching, in front of the Trattoria, you know, and Mr. Lancaster stopped. And he listened.

JOHN. So he listens to the wackos.

ABBEY. Please, John, just shut up for a second. Mr. Lancaster stopped, and he listened. The guy was going on about pollution or recycling or something like that, and calling people who drove cars agents of the devil that day. And Mr. Lancaster stopped and listened. This big rich company chairman stopped. And talked with him for ten minutes.

JOHN. So?

ABBEY. No one ever listens to him. No one ever even talks to him; they just let him talk to himself.

JOHN. That’s because he’s crazy.

ABBEY. He’s not crazy. He’s just like any of us. He’s just lonely.

JOHN. No he’s not, he’s nothing like us, Abbey, you don’t know....

ABBEY. What makes you think you do?

JOHN. I know.

ABBEY. I’ve known people like him. They are just like any of us. They start out just like any of us and then something....

JOHN. Sets them off and puts them in a different category. Different from us.

ABBEY. No. They’re not ... you don’t see what he sees.

JOHN. No.

ABBEY. Mr. Lancaster can see. He tries to understand.

JOHN. I try to understand.

ABBEY. You’re ... he finds people. He tries to understand people.

JOHN. That guy on the street.

ABBEY. Yes.

JOHN. Well, I'm trying to understand *you*. When do you think he's going to start doing that?

ABBEY. He will.

JOHN. No, Abbey. You don't know how he sees things. The guy on the street is a puzzle to him. He's outside of society, somewhere out there in orbit and he's fascinating. But you're right there under his boot and he thinks he knows exactly what you are. He's never going to stop to try to understand you.

ABBEY. You're wrong. You're just saying that because you're jealous.

JOHN. I wish I was.

ABBEY. You're wrong. You're totally wrong.

JOHN. I hope so.

ABBEY. Stop it! Just cut out that you-hope-so business. I don't need your pity.

(JOHN looks at her in silence.)

Leave me alone!

JOHN. No.

ABBEY. What?

JOHN. I have no interest in leaving you alone.

ABBEY. John—

JOHN. You're my partner. I'm here to protect you, to look out for you.

ABBEY. I don't need you.

JOHN. Sure you do. I need you too.

ABBEY. You do?

JOHN. Isn't that why there are two of us on the shift?

ABBEY. I guess.

JOHN. I'll leave you alone about Lancaster. I didn't realize that you were "in love" with him.

ABBEY. John....

JOHN. I'm sorry. An honest mistake.

ABBEY. Okay. I'll let it go this time.

JOHN. Are you okay?

ABBEY. Yeah. I'm fine.

Scene 3

(Two weeks later and later in the day. The sun has set. JOHN sits in the booth; ABBEY stands outside doing a bathroom dance. John gets up and joins her.)

JOHN. I could get you a cup.

ABBEY. What?

JOHN. You could pee into a cup.

ABBEY. I don't need to pee.

JOHN. Right.

ABBEY. I just need a cigarette; have you got a cigarette?

JOHN. No.

ABBEY. Damn it.

JOHN. You could go into the terminal and buy some; I don't mind holding down the fort for a minute or two.

ABBEY. No.

JOHN. You could go to the bathroom while you're at it.

ABBEY. Will you shut up with that?

JOHN. He's probably coming in on the eight o'clock.

ABBEY. It could have been the six.

JOHN. It's six-thirty.

ABBEY. The plane was late.

JOHN. Five minutes.

ABBEY. Well, he's got luggage, remember?

JOHN. He'd be here by now. You can go, it'll be fine.

ABBEY. I don't have to; I have a strong bladder.

JOHN. No you don't.

ABBEY. I do today.

JOHN. You look like you're about to explode, Abbey.

ABBEY. It's only another half-hour till the shift's over.

JOHN. Okay. If you think you can wait.

ABBEY. I can.

JOHN. You're shaking. Go.

ABBEY. It's just cold.

JOHN. No it's not. You're going to hurt yourself.

ABBEY. No I'm not.

JOHN. The shift's almost over, what are you going to do when the shift's over, are you going to keep waiting? He may not even come today. He may have met some beautiful Japanese woman and have decided to stay in the Orient for the rest of his life.

ABBEY. John!

JOHN. Well, you could keep the car, I bet.

ABBEY. I don't want his car.

JOHN. Fine, I'll take it then.

ABBEY. He'll be here.

JOHN. On the eight, I swear to you.

ABBEY. I don't know.

JOHN. You go now, and I'll wait with you until eight o'clock, okay?

ABBEY. You don't have to do that.

JOHN. I know, and I hate to, but I will.

ABBEY. Okay.

JOHN. And you'll pass him on his way if he's coming, I'm sure.

ABBEY. Not if I'm in the bathroom.

JOHN. Then if he comes while you're gone I'll ask him to stay.

ABBEY. You will? How?

JOHN. I'll stall him.

ABBEY. How?

JOHN. I don't know. He's not going to come, just go. Run.

ABBEY. Okay.

(ABBEY runs. JOHN sits alone for a moment before LANCASTER strolls onto the stage, dragging a large suitcase.)

LANCASTER. Hello.

JOHN. Shit. Uh, hi. May I help you?

LANCASTER. Yeah, I need to pick up my car. Lancaster.

(JOHN surveys the wall of keys.)

JOHN. Lancaster. Lancaster....

LANCASTER. The BMW.

JOHN. Oh, of course. The green one.

LANCASTER. Right.

JOHN. She's right there.

LANCASTER. I know.

JOHN. Good.

(Pause.)

LANCASTER. So ... what do I owe you.

JOHN. Oh! Let me see. That's 27 days ... so it comes to a total of ... thirty-nine twenty-four.

LANCASTER. Okay.

(LANCASTER produces cash.)

JOHN. You aren't going to charge it?

LANCASTER. No.

JOHN. Uh, okay, well I'll have to make change. I don't have any change, I'll have to go into the terminal.

LANCASTER. Keep it. Just give me my keys.

JOHN. Your keys, right.

(JOHN gives him a set of keys.)

LANCASTER. These aren't mine.

JOHN. I'm sorry, sorry. What was the name again?

LANCASTER. Lancaster.

JOHN. First name?

LANCASTER. It should be under my last name. Just give me my damn keys.

JOHN. Oh! Here they are! I'm very sorry sir.

(JOHN gives him the right keys.)

LANCASTER. It's okay, just don't do it again.

(LANCASTER begins to leave.)

JOHN. So ... how was your trip?

LANCASTER. It was fine.

JOHN. Good.

LANCASTER. Goodbye.

(LANCASTER begins to leave again.)

JOHN. Mr. Lancaster!

LANCASTER. What?

JOHN. Abbey wanted to talk to you!

LANCASTER. Who?

JOHN. Abbey. The girl that I work with, Abbey.

LANCASTER. Oh yeah, nice girl.

JOHN. She's just stepped away for a moment and she wanted to say hello.

LANCASTER. Well okay, then. Tell her I said hi.

JOHN. No, I mean, she wanted you to wait.

LANCASTER. What for? Is there a problem?

JOHN. No, no problem. At least I don't think there's a problem. She just wanted to see you.

LANCASTER. Oh, well tell her I'm sorry, I really didn't have time to wait.

JOHN. She's just in the bathroom.

LANCASTER. That's too bad.

JOHN. She washed your car.

LANCASTER. Did she?

JOHN. But then it snowed, so you can't really tell.

LANCASTER. Right, well, give her the tip that I gave you, then.

JOHN. Seventy-six cents? She practically froze her hands off doing that for you.

LANCASTER. Well, I didn't ask her to, did I?

JOHN. No, but...

(LANCASTER turns to leave again.)

You prick.

LANCASTER. Excuse me? What did you call me?

JOHN. Fucking rich prick.

LANCASTER. You better watch your mouth, mister. I could report you to the management.

JOHN. I can report you too.

LANCASTER. For what? What do you have to report me for?

JOHN. Taking advantage of the workers.

(ABBEY enters, unseen by the men.)

LANCASTER. Come on, I can't help it if the girl wants to impress me.

JOHN. She washed your car in the middle of February and now you won't even wait for two minutes while she goes to the bathroom? What the hell's your problem?

LANCASTER. The car looks like shit.

JOHN. That's not the point.

LANCASTER. I'm still going to have to go to the car wash with it. She hasn't done anything for me.

JOHN. But put her body, her health on the line.

LANCASTER. I can't help it if the girl's a masochist!

JOHN. She's not a masochist, she's in love with you.

ABBEY. No.

(ABBEY folds, as if in pain.)

JOHN. Abbey. Shit.

ABBEY. No. No, I'm ... don't listen to him, please.

JOHN. He wants to tip you seventy-six cents, Abbey.

ABBEY. I don't care.

JOHN. But Abbey....

LANCASTER. I'm really sorry Abbey. Can I....

ABBEY. No, you can't do anything.

LANCASTER. Okay.

JOHN. Do you need something, are you okay?

(No response from ABBEY.)

LANCASTER. It looks like she's in pain. I'll go get some help.

ABBEY. No.

LANCASTER. You're alright?

ABBEY. Yes.

LANCASTER. Can you breathe?

ABBEY. Yes.

JOHN. Breathe, Abbey.

LANCASTER. I've got aspirin. Do you...?

ABBEY. No. Just go. Please.

LANCASTER. You're sure you're alright?

ABBEY. Yes.

LANCASTER. Alright. I'm sorry. About this.

JOHN. It's okay. It's not your fault.

(LANCASTER goes. ABBEY sits up.)

I'm sorry Abbey.

ABBEY. Fuck you, John.

JOHN. But Abbey—

ABBEY. Just shut up!

JOHN. I'm sorry.

ABBEY. Why did you have to go and do that?

JOHN. I was trying to stall him.

ABBEY. You did a great job.

JOHN. I got carried away, I'm sorry. He's just such a....

ABBEY. Jerk, I know.

JOHN. Are you okay? Can I get you a glass of water or something?

ABBEY. I'm fine.

JOHN. You don't look fine.

ABBEY. How am I supposed to be?

JOHN. Upset.

ABBEY. Well I'm not. It's not a big deal.

JOHN. It is too, it's a huge deal. You've just been blown off by this guy!

ABBEY. Thanks, John.

JOHN. You can cry.

ABBEY. I don't need to cry. I'm fine.

JOHN. But it hurts, doesn't it Abbey?

ABBEY. No.

JOHN. Abbey, it doesn't help to hide it.

ABBEY. You don't know anything, John. You don't know how I feel.

JOHN. I know exactly how you feel.

ABBEY. What the hell, cause you've been rejected before? Because your wife left you? You think all rejection feels the same, John? You think all hurt feels the same?

JOHN. No.

ABBEY. 'Cause it doesn't, John. Rejection is personal. You haven't lived my life. You haven't lived your life up to this point, waiting, hoping for some decent person to come along, until finally one does and he treats you like shit, just like all the others. You don't, you can't know how that feels, John.

JOHN. Yes I can.

ABBEY. Fuck you.

JOHN. I know how it feels when the person you're in love with looks at you like you're garbage.

ABBEY. Oh yeah, sure, John. When did that ever happen to you?

JOHN. Every day.

ABBEY. What? You think you're in love—

JOHN. Yes.

ABBEY. Oh, John. It's not that—

JOHN. Sure.

ABBEY. You aren't my type.

JOHN. What, because I notice that you exist? Because I pay attention to you, don't try to dick you over?

ABBEY. No, you're just...

JOHN. What, nice?

ABBEY. I don't know. I'm not attracted to you.

JOHN. Yeah.

ABBEY. I'm sorry.

JOHN. No, I'm sorry. I thought you were smarter than that. I thought you had lived enough to know.

ABBEY. I don't—

JOHN. You don't deserve me, Abbey.

ABBEY. You're right, I don't.

JOHN. I thought you were in love with Lancaster, I thought he mattered so much to you that you wasted all this time on him. But that's not it, you say, you were just waiting for someone to look at you like you're worth something, right? Well here I am, I think you're worth something.

ABBEY. But John, no.

JOHN. Yeah, no. That's not good enough, is it. You're not looking for a good man, are you Abbey. When it comes down to it, I'm not pretty enough for you. Or rich enough.

ABBEY. It's not looks, John, it's not money. It's chemistry. It's that spark, there's no spark here.

JOHN. Well maybe your head is too far up in that fantasy world of yours to feel it because I personally feel one hell of a spark.

ABBEY. Oh, John. I...

JOHN. Forget it, Abbey. I don't know why I'm wasting my time telling you this.

ABBEY. It's not you.

JOHN. It's not me, it's not Lancaster...

ABBEY. It's me.

JOHN. Bullshit.

ABBEY. It's my problem, okay? You're right, my head is up in a fantasy world. Maybe in another situation I would feel a spark. Maybe if I'd met you at a bar or something. Maybe if I'd met you before ... I did, I would have felt a spark. But I didn't, I haven't. I can't here. Here there's nothing. There's nothing in me like that. There's no room anymore, for those kinds of feelings. Here.

JOHN. What about Lancaster?

ABBEY. Delusions, John. Acting.

JOHN. You told me you had feelings for Lancaster just so I wouldn't make any moves on you?

ABBEY. I told myself I had feelings just so I could think I was capable of them. But now, now that he's ... I'm not really sad about it. It wasn't ... real.

JOHN. Oh, Abbey.

ABBEY. I'm fucked up.

JOHN. No, you're not. You just need a new job.

ABBEY. You're right.

JOHN. I mean, even if it's another parking lot. At least it would be a different parking lot. At least it wouldn't be the place where ... this happened to you.

ABBEY. Yeah. My God ... I've got to get out of this place.

JOHN. Yeah.

ABBEY. I mean, not just the lot, the whole place. My mom at home, this guy running around somewhere that ... I don't even remember what he looks like. But that smell. I've got to get away from the whole thing.

(A plane flies overhead; ABBEY says nothing.)

JOHN. Let's go then, let's just go.

ABBEY. The shift's over.

JOHN. No, I mean, why don't we just go?

ABBEY. Where?

JOHN. I don't know. Vancouver?

ABBEY. What's there?

JOHN. A clean slate.

ABBEY. Yeah.

JOHN. Come on, let's just get in my car and go.

ABBEY. I don't have any money.

JOHN. That doesn't matter.

ABBEY. I don't even have enough to help out with gas.

JOHN. I have enough to get us there. We'll go on welfare. They've got a good welfare program in B.C.

ABBEY. Yeah?

JOHN. It'll be fun.

ABBEY. I don't know, John. I think if I take off it'll have to be on my own.

JOHN. Yeah.

THIS PLAY IS NOT OVER!

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