

## **It Was a Setup**

by Kirk Wood Bromley

T - Tim, Charise's husband

C - Charise, Tim's wife

J - Juliet, the girl Tim meets

*Before*

T - It starts with a feeling that something isn't childhood,  
which continues to this day.

A sparse sexual settlement of sorts unseen  
since it became so hard to say:

"Write, rote, rotten."

There's nothing wrong with making good money;  
it's just not possible.

The weasel market  
won't allow a free association.

I don't need  
no fucking gym. I am a fucking gym.

They've taken the big picture out of  
the backstory.

So what is this but pruned decibel wreckage?

I know she's out there somewhere, I'm just not  
sure I'm out there somewhere.

Red rover,  
red rover, can I please come over  
and sit facing the wall in the corner?

This is the holding, denied and felt,  
that gives so much to so little effect.

Maybe the mountains.

Maybe not the mountains.

But maybe the puppet theater mountains  
are preparing me to be weekend  
minutes with her.

I will stylishly tug  
at her genital noose, loosening  
the head enough to inspire its falling  
back into the sky.

I will be her super  
yeasty vaulting horse.

I will make her smile  
in suffocation.

I will, I will, O  
incomplete death sentence one two!

This is  
the story of a love that never happened  
between two people who never met  
in a world where no one ever finds love  
without the story of love stepping in  
and preventing anything from happening.  
Of course, such a love happens all the time.

C- I think of myself as a meadow,  
a high meadow, so hard to climb to only  
6 or 7 spanish adventurers  
have ever called it bonita, and to keep  
a tram or helicopter tour from lugging  
the masses to its flowered burbling mush,  
all those adventurers have sworn themselves,  
upon pain of death, to false directions,  
an oath every single one has broken,  
yet no executions have been meted out  
because nobody really cares about some  
meadow so hard to get to you lose your shirt  
finding it, which might be awesome if  
anyone trying to bag it had  
a torso worth fucking yourself over.

This doesn't make me anything special;  
it just means I'm not for sale in a world

where purchase is the only intercourse.

T - Maybe you can sense I've grown unmetaphoric.

C- What is he searching for with his arm  
all the way down her throat?

T- She's choke-singing!

C- Won't you climb to the edge of my anxiety  
and build the ruins of our ubiety?

T- I 'd like to apologize for that, but  
my rules won't allow it.

C- Pleased to meet you,  
most recent personal choice fatality.  
Let's remake the map we use  
to stay where we are.

T- Is getting wound up  
how you unwind?

C- Excuse me?

T- Did I cross the line?

C- The line, you fucking

T- bleep

C- runs between your heels!

T- I like you, whoever you are today.

C- I am the beautiful scrappy maiden  
who can invaginate this wildly  
self-important swinging metronome,  
incite the serpent to bipedalism,  
do dances about dances to the human  
upchuck, lick the time stamp, all the while  
arousing slurvian spiel.

T- You shall I  
marry, you shall I divorce, Miss Whatever

You Refuse To See It As, and we shall populate  
the governing fistulate with our half-  
fascinating dissertation tantrums!

C- I want every word on the tip  
of my tongue, that in our nasty  
macking you receive the squabble  
that heals thru boiling silence.

T- Is that your "I'm not sharing" face?

C- Welcome to  
Under Achieving. My name is Her Unused  
Ovaries, and I beg you to remember  
molestation has its hard-to-beat bargains.

T- The love between a man and a woman  
Left without saying why

C- Not in the mood for incorrect  
directions.

T- You're just another way to say  
"Who's that?"

C- O, so we're on speaking terms now?

T- Raise your hackles if you don't know what hackles are.

C- I'm waiting for someone who already came.

T- M'lady, I am hidden in the noodles, and you  
are cutting down on carbohydrates in  
an attempt to be ikebana enough  
to slip in between my coming and going  
of a knowing look between merchant  
and cyclone.

C- Are you coming onto me, cuz if you are,  
I'm over there.

T- I gotta threaten to jump  
so you can walk on by, kissing me  
with your lack of concern like a colossal  
use of wasted space.

C- Lookin' for a lover that isn't my other  
but they're so hard to regurgitate.

T- Someone to applaud my electrosleep  
somniaquos.

C- Someone to enthuse the biology of my  
slump.

T- Someone to smile when children pour out  
my secret mouth.

C- Someone to seduce me into the blender  
by climbing in first.

T- Someone to reaffirm  
my belief in fuck you meaning fuck me.

C- Someone to shove me in the opposing  
direction.

T- Someone to slam into every morning.

C- Someone to agree with me when I bellow,  
"I ate it cuz it made me fucking sick!"

T- Someone to hang herself when my spaceship  
goes down.

C- Someone to misfire my emotional  
triggers.

T- Someone to appreciate my  
booger farm.

C- Someone to teach me to listen  
when I'm talking.

T- Someone to ejaculate  
a swimming hole in my ears.

C- Someone to cuddle  
with me as the dirt hits my coffin.

T- Someone to grow young with.

C- Someone  
to puke so it's a party.

T- Someone to congratulate  
me for what I didn't do.

C- Someone to think  
my sense of humor caused the virus to wane.

T- Someone  
to read me a poem I could never write.

C- Someone to suggest the perfect indelible  
stain.

T- Someone to introduce me to  
questionable characters.

C- Someone to lie on top of me until  
I blow away.

T- That's the someone for me.

C- But?

T - Portions of her body,  
as I visualize it when occupied,  
were revealed to me today: the well-branded  
aboriginal macules of pseudo news,  
fitful caramel sighs, unacceptables  
in some sword mound, access points  
(inoperable), waterfalls too close to  
the road to be considered crucially  
scenic, but the thing I didn't know what  
to do with was that delicate bag of  
tuckered dud grudges. Clearly her sentiments  
were with me in my new food-trying time,  
but you can't fuck a wall that ain't brokened.

C- There's a discernible euphenic  
sensation one gets passing thru the Delaware  
Water Gap heading west, a kind of  
sonicating intestinal thrum that must somehow

be translatable into a successful dating strategy.

T- Or the sound  
of scrapping oak stands.

C- Or what the cop said  
to the rainbow.

T- Or how a tiny shove  
can shake you to your expired core.

C- It's not that I want to get laid, it's that  
I want the sensation of getting laid.

T- I feel like a dying business on a busy block.

C- I'm very mysterious, aren't I?

T- I used to act, but, you know, the rejection.

C- You are America's deficiency in wrath  
and conscience.

T- and you are the sexy part  
of being beaten to death by someone's breath.

C- I don't mean to sound racist, but it's  
pronounced hegemony, like high egg money.

T-- Was your childhood especially difficult?

C- Not after I met someone online.

T- I find the forced retention of facts  
tiring when it comes to trying to look  
like someone I've never seen.

C- Can you  
imagine getting turned on by raping  
yourself in a closeted windfall?

T- Maybe. Will any bigshots be there?

C- I'm going to get my ninetieth drink.

T- It's been nice talking to me.

C- May I join me?

T- No.

C- Fine, if you can't love me,  
at least do the method.

T- Have you ever seen  
such a sight in your life as you being tame?

C- I'm so poor, I love myself.

T- Fly to me, my scrambled egg!

C- Yes, I want you to worship me, and I  
expect the same from you, however that  
gutterizes the breath of a billion  
yogapaloozas.

T- I can't just reach out  
and grab your throat cuz there are laws  
against making things work.

C- Your shape stands in  
for all the teachings of the regretful  
scavengers to come.

T- I mean, like, what's the point of being  
naked if not everyone can see you?

C- This town smells  
of gonorrhea under laissez faire.

T- Haven't we met  
before?

C- Yes, but I don't remember it.

T- Squeeze me and I'll burp the answer to  
subcellular cackle spackle.

C- I like how  
you frown when you smile.



T- We might pop by this afternoon and ask  
for enough sugar to kill a large child.

C- I'm a fifth floor  
walk-up in handicap heaven.

T- Prejudice will get you everywhere.

C- Every single one of us is sitting on  
something that can't breathe.

T- I want my  
blanky back.

C- What is it with you and your  
high probability of you?

T- I'm trying to get back  
to where I've never been: You and your sugar  
cereal pre-teen bunkbed, where we played  
naked cherokee rockers with nothing  
to do but suck nitrous out of the cool  
kids.

C- If it gets in my heart, I spit it out.

T- Every door is open and off its house.

C- Now I lay me down to sleep  
I pray the lord to sell me cheap.

T- Won't you please let me  
enter you from a distance?

C- I love a false sense of accomplishment,  
as I must, for I'm thinking of our love.

T- Sing, O flesh bong!

C- Darker nights make for  
happier starfuckers

T- Can you hear me thru my mother muffler?

C- Pulse meter, pulse meter, meet me a pulse.

T- Are you coming?

C- No, I'm tied up.

T- That's what I meant, you slip knot!

C- I'd like to repair a port of lust lapse.  
I'd like to reprint a past of lopped lists.  
I'd like to repeat a pore of lost lumps.  
I'd like to report a pair of lost lips.

T- It's always a fence in the middle of a field.

J- You say:

C- There are so many innuendoes  
in the setting today.

J- I say,

T- your eyes could kill an iron horse.

J- You say:

C- Do you think when we grow up drugs will still have side  
affects?

J- I say,

T- do drugs have side affects?

J- You say:

C- I take issue with my irreproachable  
desire for your bacterial approach.

J- I say,

T- I just wanna walk into a room full of people I don't know and  
feel right at home.

J- You say:

C- You're a book I've read but want to keep, won't read it again,  
unless I do, but something about it  
gives me an awkward awesome sense of myself  
as the university of the moment.

J- I say,

T- would you mind playing with your hair  
so I can feel like that one rakish lad  
whose tongue sticks to the frozen pole?

J- You say:

C- Anything for my wingless cricket.

J- I say,

T- if I lived in you, who would my landlord be? And

J- you say:

C- The Captain  
of Team Looking Down.

J- I say,

T- so let's hide from each other and never come out.

J- You say:

C- I've got an opening but my cell phone  
filled it.

J- I say,

T- so we're done? and

J- you say:

C- Like mudcake in front of a plus model.

J- and you say:

T- I shall be king for a day that never dawns.

I shall leave  
my country in the lurch they call victory,  
and when you look away, I shall snap your  
portrait, cuz nobody gets my shit when  
I'm just screaming like I should.

I shall put my poems to sleep then lie next to them  
crying in a colossal diminution of the feat  
of intimacy's estranging powers.

It's 3 am. I'm alone in the center of the sky  
looking down on a midsized mistake  
in a state where only felons can vote.  
The goof in my ear seems to be sending  
signals of a horrible affectation  
to which he finds himself incapable,  
yet again, of putting pleasing terms.  
I turn, I die, I wag, I fart, I scream,  
"In my religion, and I have no religion,  
there is nothing substantial between us  
that cannot be whislt across the pond  
by simply stating what it is we want  
without any fear of comedic  
recrimination." And he replies,  
"Tho I have no type, I can tell you're not mine."

C- My goal  
is to drink so many imaginary men  
that I throw up, and in my hangover  
finally gain the impregnable resolve  
to coat my stomach with my mother's  
lipstick before I lift my skirt over  
my shoulders.

T- I'm sorry to interrupt, but I noticed  
you from across the cafe and I couldn't keep  
from thinking you might need help.

C- I'm sorry I'm crying.

T- Don't be sorry. Would you like to  
talk about it?

C- O, I'm just lonely.

T- Me too. It's hard, isn't it?

C- I just wish there was someone  
I could talk to, who would talk to me,  
and we could open up to each other  
and fuse with each other and then everything  
would disappear and then reappear  
in the incredible oneness of our  
I dunno.

T- That's what I want too.

C- That's all  
I want.

T- And someday, I bet you'll find it.

C- You think so?

T- Definitely.

C- You will too, I can tell.

T- Really?

C- Yep.

T- Well, it was nice talking to you.

C- You too.

T- Take care.

C- You too.

T- Who knows the form  
love will take now it lives under constant surgery?

C - Careful. She's the Asian  
equivalent to the Big Mac.

T- She entered me last night. It was a rental  
violation. She isn't real, but she's  
extremely well-versed in reality.  
In the movie in my dick, she's 16,

but in the dicks that are in the movie,  
she's twice half that. I prefer  
her skinny vision of herself.  
She's mine now, tho she belongs  
to everyone else. History called her  
a goddess, but history doesn't wear the pants  
in this nudist arctic diorama.

C- My formula is evident in my  
formula.

T- Perk it up, girlfriend. You just  
have to get drunk enough to crash into  
a house fully believing it will get you  
pregnant.

C - I fall in love when the wind blows,  
and my love is scattered by the wind.

T- Bring her in. We've many uses for her.  
She'll dust, replace the toilet twice daily,  
round up all my errant earplugs, fuck  
the mailman with his endogenous dogspray,  
but whether she or ye shall actually gain  
an intuition of your plush arrangements  
is something I'd prefer not to saddle my  
favorite band with. I am in love with her,  
making her conditional residence in me  
an embarrassment quite thrilling to admit to.  
Dear God, please let her never stop crying.

C- The point is to be close while moving.

T- I wish she wasn't just made out of light,  
elegantly composed by mysteriously  
motivated sales teams of halfway there  
suggestionists.

She's so fucking  
adorable I wanna shit in her poddy mouth  
and yell, "Dad, come wipe me!"

I'd like to sign off on her release from me  
but who wants to catch a rocket in  
his baby teeth?

C- Oo! Me! Me!

T- Who are you  
and why are you pretending to be so needy?

C- You are the brilliant American  
version of waiting in line to be told  
what to like.

T- I've gathered  
all my photos into a tiny chip in my eye  
so now when I go out I can stay in.

C - How's that working for you, Mopey?

T- I shall o'errule  
you some day with a difference you do not  
yet know is governing your indifference.

C- We are the love believers.

T- We never blink in the candy storm.

C- When we die, we don't  
rot, we just drink more juice until our  
fluidly exchanged carapace of minty  
mutton heals the frayed yarn of the hibernating  
dean who declared loyalty to sickness.

T- Are you doing  
anything tonight other than coming up with  
something you're doing tonight to avoid  
doing something with me?

C- Maybe that's it.  
We're just not meant to be on stage at this  
stage. I mean, who can make brain jelly love  
with all this I'm-okay coughing, late-comers  
flying in on broken glass atv's,  
critics asleep in their coke spoons, the psychotic  
red-headed midget upstairs screaming  
our lines thru the floor half a second before  
we blow them, windows onto the fashion  
dumpster, remnants of the prior hit peeking

thru our blacks; why did we ever expect  
this would change domestic policy to be  
more in-line with our abrupt ragamuffin  
revelations?

T- The girl who just served me  
my veggie wrap has got to be no older  
than my wedding rash, but I still wanna  
dunk my liver in her silver mine slag.

C- Now I get it. We actually are together.

T- Ten billion fucking losers can't be wrong.

C- We've broken the speed barrier standing  
our ground.

T- We make love by letting the help  
go.

C- Our relationship is as old as charging  
for fake levitation.

T- We've just let it  
fall into the middle of the off-ramp.

C- We've taken it for granted by some  
defunct foundation so drunk on dis-  
empowerment it thinks last night is  
the next big thing, so we live on top of each  
other, which, while physically impossible,  
is real enough to boost our withdrawal symptoms.

T- You don't like how messy I am, and I  
don't like how you think you're me in some  
crew so disgruntled by the recent union  
agreement they sweep the actors off their feet.

C- We measure our marriage in dog years  
and our only time together is spent  
lobbying seniors against strange signs of  
canine longevity.

T- No, we don't speak  
the same language, but between us we



can yell in 23.

C- You haven't a clue  
in my appetizing murder, but you know  
the smell is there, and you like it, and that  
fucks with your head when you're not fucking  
your head.

T- Cuz, baby, ever since you lost your  
passive feminine militancy,  
you've diarized a life of impeccable  
distribution, and now what do you have?  
Zoos so expensive not even the animals  
can get in.

C- Wouldn't it be nice to speak like I  
want you to?

*During*

T- When I met Juliet, she was dancing  
In a relocation of the first eruption  
Currently considered childish enough  
To exhilarate the diminishment  
Of sleeping with your predator  
Into generationally deadening  
Insignias of unperformable  
Heroism, for if anything ours  
Was the era of verus ab absurdo.

And with her first twitch, I fell to the floor.  
Hers was a form one could  
Swim in, had one not given up swimming  
In such forms due to the downside  
Of swimmer's ear bringing with it all manner  
Of unechoing reverberations,  
A form she wielded like pixy wind  
Startling some next-gen application  
Into cross-format gush, a form that danced  
Thru my mind like the ocean in a flag,  
Motion so wedded to motive it meant  
Nothing when they fought. O how she shone  
With the oscillance of all unsettled suns.  
So lustrous her transparency, looking  
Thru her you saw her.

God, she  
Is your daughter, and you have given up  
On her curfew, dropping the hang-tongue  
World into her ultraviolet scotoma,  
As she slimes light. Gorgeous, gorgeous, gorgeous,  
She so supple sharp, she sprang from her pants  
Smoked rebirth over the paralyzed  
Spasming neophilic masses,  
Like nothing ever happened without her.  
She is what we eat when we sleep.

Every man of the house dumpt his smoothie  
Into her shoes, hoping to go as her  
To his execution. She was what  
Foresight had evolved into.  
To say she was grounded implies a ground  
She hasn't yet become.

This is the sex of the storm.  
She is a message to me from my children  
Stationed on some mutagenic capsule  
Saying, "Father, we are flagging you down,  
For she is our desired emergency."

Her lips played off each other like two slides  
End to end, faux-memes crashing in blossom  
Extemporaneous primitivity  
That swisht like tomorrow's wagging tail,  
Chiming, "When I grow up, I'm going  
To be a teenager."

Following  
Juliet's performance, the cast and kind  
Went to a bar, and as I had workt with  
The producer in pornography  
And plagiarism, I was invited  
In gest. We started the night at opposite  
Ends of a long table, and as I had  
No hope of meeting her, I proceeded  
To assault my neighbors with bragging  
Disguised as curiosity, until  
I heard my name being called from the other  
Version of the room. It was the producer.

C- "There's someone I want you to meet. I've been  
Telling her all about you, telling everyone  
How important you might someday be."

T- And so it was that I met Juliet.  
After our introduction, she rose and walkt  
Directly to where I stood an unsafe  
Distance from the table, and looking so  
Deeply into my eyes our spines rubbed toes,  
She whispered like space junk recently  
Upgraded to possible flying baby:

J- They say you're a great [insert profession].

T- I have been known to grate on those who lack  
Soft behind their shield, but the only greatness  
In me is my great desire to serve  
The greatness in you.

J- So you enjoyed  
The performance?

T- You mean all that stuff  
Happening around you?

J- No, I mean  
All that stuff happening inside me.

T- That was as far from performance as I  
From feeling capable of commenting  
On what's inside you yet.

J- Are you one of those  
Who's against theater in the theater?

T- I'm against what in the theater keeps  
Theater from being more than theater.

J- Demands that usually end in divorce.

T- I guess I believe the action valued  
By theater is now most importantly  
Depicted as the drive to escape theater.  
I mean, what else are you doing when you  
Base what you'll become on what I've been?

J- I am filling my body with thoughts I love.

T- Yes, and why do that? What is it  
About you that makes you feel genuine  
Doing what is meant for everyone?

J- My desire to make the general  
Personal is not only self-creating,  
But feels an important aptitude  
To defuse, to share, to educate in.

T- How do you get to that place where you feel  
Like you're not there? Do you feign a wild  
Reception? Do you pity the eye  
That loathes you? I mean, what flavor are you  
On stage?

J-You're in my mind; you tell me.

T- The taste of my fingers in the face of fear.

J- Then why do you seem so out of work?

T- I need your body.

J- I need  
Your information.

T- Where are you going  
When you look at me?

J- I am too full of you  
To speak for myself.

T- We measure each other,  
So we are infinite.

J- You have dark circles  
Under your mouth.

T- That is your wilderness  
Of waiting.

J- But where am I in all this worship?

T- I see no solution behind my absorption  
Into you.

J- You cast me and I hook him  
In the mouth, and he says what a lovely rock.  
I think I will eat it, but no, it is  
My elbow, and I am broken by my will  
To behave. How will this all end? Neverish,  
As always. Place a lamp above the bed,  
As we may choose in what recess we gaze  
Against the too parallel day that shoots  
The fountain of youth into our eyes  
Before we've learned to close them with a simple  
Line about drowning in a dry hump while  
Everyone's looking.

T- I don't doubt you,  
And there's the crazy pitfall we enact  
Every night by tripping up in a state  
Of admirable gullibility.

J- Nothing is harder than what we do, except  
Not doing what we do.

T- The cast and crew spilled into the street,  
And by acting like I had nowhere to go,  
I ended up alone with Juliet.  
We each pulled out a cigarette and smoked,  
The energy between us lighter, both  
Of us, I assumed, wrapped in the heavy  
Shroud of uncertainty as to the next step  
In our standing still dance. I askt her which way  
She was headed, and offered to see her home.  
She was staying across town, and a journey  
Across Central Park at night was deemed  
The quickest route. She was nervous at the thought,  
And I promised her she would be safe in  
My presence, a promise I half meant to keep.  
This seemingly comforted her, which made me  
Feel very, very good about things.  
We spoke more as we strolled thru the dark park,  
Totally alone, everything slightly wet,  
Occasionally glimpsing each other  
In yellow lamp glow, then disappearing

Into a more viscous blank, we smoked, laught,  
And let the conversation roll across us.  
we talked about acting, the german word for trying  
To get laid, stood close, spoke rapidly,  
Gesticulated sharply, locking eyes,  
Interrupting and being glad to be so,  
Laughing, striving, wondering together,  
Thrusting huge electrical jolts  
Of empathetic soul vigor directly into  
Each other's chests, synchronized mouth  
Swimming, touch foregone but had, swaying,  
Swinging, lunging and not landing, drinking  
Smells, eating sights, thrashing in language,  
Easy as trees, bright, palpitating, laser thin  
Flesh volleys slamming repeatedly  
Into our dark twisted gawping word mist,  
staring, smiling, great vaguenesses  
Clouding us with intense sexual shine.

We finally emerged from the park, and came  
To her building, the very one before which  
Lennon had been shot, or so I thought.  
We embraced, she kisst me on the cheek,  
And before she went inside I let her know  
I'd be available Thursday or Friday, and that  
I had a show on Saturday I'd love  
Her to see.

T- She said

J- that's great,

T- She said

J- I'll be there,

T- she said

J- I'll get the info from your friend,

T- She said

J- it was wonderful to meet you,

T- she said

J- I look forward to seeing you again,

T- and then she disappeared.

I walkt  
To the subway, and as I stood above  
The stairs, harsh light belching from the earth  
Like a radioactive geyser  
Of rapid sitting, I thought, she likes me.  
Does she like me? She's got to like me.  
Why would she spend so much time talking  
To me if she didn't like me? Why would she  
Have let me walk her home if she didn't  
Like me? Why would she have stared at me  
Like that if she didn't like me? No one  
Stares at someone like that unless they're thinking  
Something inappropriate to say  
Too soon, you know, something like I like you.  
She did those things, and why would she do  
Those things unless she liked me? She likes me.  
She's got to like me. There was an energy  
Between us. It meant something. It was unique.  
This doesn't happen all the time. There's just  
No way she'd act like that unless she was  
Feeling like that. Like she liked me. She must  
Like me. She's just got to like me. She likes me.  
The train ride took 2 1/2 hours.  
It was 5 am when I opened my door.  
I got undresst, laid in bed, my wife  
Sleeping soundly beside me,  
and I reacht for my intangible Juliet.

J- You're smiling.

T- It's my allergy to you.

J- Such a brilliant man.

T- You shine, I reflect.

J- You made me feel alive tonight for the  
First time since the birth I can't remember.

T- I feel as if I were born of you.

J- A second life, and we give life to all.

T- Touch your face.

J- Only if you assume me  
True enough to nature to accept.

T- You're so focused.

J- A potential  
I never knew I had.

T- I am a starfish  
Clinging to a cliff.

J- The sea shall rip you  
Free.

T- A reunion, self to self, time to light,  
Was to can, thru you, tangled in your hair,  
Swimming thru your translucent skin,  
As you lie on top of me, I become  
Weightless, put wings to my words,  
Fallen into your esker, sinking, rose  
Above my body. I love your lips  
Because they spray delicious cookies.  
Toes tangled, eyes rubbing, our skins  
Won't keep it down. Your hair is growing  
Into my head, I've got a chalet in your pelvis,  
Nipples keep getting in my throat,  
We've lockt elbows in my mouth (around the moon)  
Pieces of your heart are under my nails,  
Tummies are touching, digest in my head,  
Whose ankle nose is this? I think I  
Just kist my ass, I'm on my back  
And I can see you beneath me, we're swapping  
Drives, we are the mist making moon,  
I like it in your dream, we kiss, we hump,  
we melt, we start,

T/C - and we are Juliet.

*After*



T- I never saw her again.  
I'd invited her to my show, Me, but  
She showed me. I tried to contact her,  
But nothing. I never saw her again.

It took me  
About six months to get there, but I've finally  
Come to accept she didn't like me.  
I mean, sure, she liked me well enough, but  
She didn't really like me well enough.  
Girl like that, you know, she walks in  
Pretty intense circles, big circles,  
Like only comes back around once every  
3.62 million years type circles,

Maybe she thought  
I was a pretentious prick. Maybe I am  
A pretentious prick. I do tell myself  
All the time, you're a pretentious prick,  
But I always thought it was something  
No one else noticed.

For me she was a star, and when  
I saw her the lid popped off the world  
And a trillion little earth friendly plastic  
Wedding cake figurines swirled out  
And danced thru my brain and it seemed to me  
Like the ultimate coupling, like she was  
Born to bear my bumble babes, but for her  
It was just one more hot night at a bar.  
Just another conversation, another  
Chance to act, just another chance to be  
Juliet.

The thought of this  
World where there are Juliets and  
Those that actually get to taste them,  
The thought that this world exists without me  
Both tempts and revolts me.  
It tempts me because I want in  
And it revolts me because I know  
That were I in, what I felt with Juliet  
Would become mundane, like a drug  
That's lost its jellyroll. Then again,  
Fuck that. I want in. I want it all

The time, yet none of this demeans her.  
Juliet will do what Juliet will do.

C- I've never known what to answer,  
even when I was very young, when askt,  
"What's your favorite color?" I mean,  
on the basis of what am I to make  
such an assessment? How each color  
makes me feel? But how do I arrive at  
that sensation? Do I actually trust  
myself to know myself? Do I actually  
feel my relationship with color  
to be something I can understand? If all  
these colors make me feel all these different  
things, don't they cancel each other out,  
leaving me, in effect, feeling nothing,  
or feeling a plethora of things?

J- What does plethora mean again?

C- I think it means too much.

T- No, it means too little.

C- Yeah, same thing.

T- Not really.

J- Yeah, same thing.

C- What should we talk about?

T- What is there to talk about?

C- Before we can figure out  
what there is to talk about, we've got to  
figure out what there is.

T- What is there?

C- My first reaction to that question is  
that great painting is an affront to me.

J- What?

C- I'm sick today.  
I'm told that makes this a sick day, which makes  
this your day in the annals of oracy,

T- So I ask you, mule, what's wrong with my work?  
Why do people leave just as I start  
to spray the room with thrilling infection?

C- Am I too much?

T- Too little?

C- Too lush?

T- Too sparse?

C- Too raw?

T- Too polisht?

C- Am I  
underdone?

T- Overdone?

C- Am I pretentious?

T- Am I feckless?

C- Am I too crude?

T- Too neat?

C- Inevitably, it's because I'm ugly.  
Were I beautiful, no one would leave me.  
Yet, of what is my ugliness constituted?

T- I think people find me angry.

C- Unclear.

T- Problematic.

C- Discomforting.

T- And something  
about me throws them back on themselves.

C- And they don't like that, cuz they're heavy,  
and it hurts to have something heavy thrown  
onto your back.

T- I think people can tell  
I'm talking to myself when I'm talking to them,  
but of course I'm not alone.

C- Actually,  
I am alone

T- So being with me is  
lonely.

C- I don't believe in character anymore.  
I don't believe what we call a person  
with a personality is what a  
person really is. I believe we're all  
basically the same thing, it's just that thing  
is hidden beneath varying degrees  
of unwillingness to be down with it.  
What is this thing and why our unwillingness  
toward it?

T- I don't know, and I know this is  
the easy way out, but I want out, so  
doesn't it make sense I'd take the easy way?  
Why should I take the hard way? Or rather,  
Why do you want me to take the hard way?  
What are you, some kind of armed accountant?

C- Winds are heavy  
across nine forms of not quite getting there,

T- You have got to contact me!  
I have something important to put on  
your head (hint: sexy negligence).

C- It's just  
so funny how everything happens in  
sequences that don't include any of  
the middle terms we assume found their way

into proclivity thru our flitting  
measurements.

T- Think of that. Flitting  
measurements. What will they fail to think  
of next?

C- I'm good, but I'm not good for you.

T- They said our poetry didn't push  
the story forward, so we pusht the story  
aside, and now all we have is the thought  
of letting folks in for free, which they  
won't let me do, cuz "free says bad," or so  
they say, those that one must pay to say  
what one will pay for dearly once it's said.

C- Here's a thought:  
Your spaceship is caught in a giant  
vortex, and you're swirling toward a tiny  
hole. You've got three minutes to do something,  
or you'll be smoosht to the size of my prospects.  
Engines are down, Captain's got a hearing problem,  
the crew can't take their lips off the flashback,  
two minutes. Gimme a call. Oops, sorry.  
I'm busy getting my nails done. The ones  
you pounded into my maven organ.

T- Sorry, darling. Since you, I don't do  
positive.

J- Who said,

C- Genius is drudgery.

J- Who said,

T- The future belongs to dense.

J- Who said,

C- Our clothes are killing us.

J- Who said,

T- Birth always comes too early.

J- Who said,

C- Misinformation breeds progress.

J- Who said,

T- We but rehearse our exit.

J- Who said,

C- I left my faith in that rock.

J- Who said,

T- Empty seats are for lovers.

C- Where I'm from, they shoot cats like you for doing what they do best.

T- See, the emptiness you bring to the room  
fucks me chocolate chip pancake style,

C- so pass the warm towelette before I hope  
for more bricks to the brow.

T- This is the healing you started, then  
abandoned mid-injection, leaving me  
unable to roll over in my urn  
lest I crush my belief you weren't above  
the law of averages.

C- I think you're shy to a fault, and I think  
I've fallen into that fault, and I think  
that fault is closing up, and I think  
I'm being presst into admitting  
it's my fault, but I don't admit it,  
cuz it's true, and girls much prefer big lies  
to kind gestures.

T- Welcome to the  
one-stop argument metropolis.

C- What we like about story

is that things come back around, giving us  
the illusion that things come back around,  
but you never came back around, and there's  
a story there somewhere, tho it's likely  
to have been drained and converted into  
a motorcycle race.

T- It's the story  
of a story not taking place, which is  
the only story I know, other than  
that one about the 6 zillion victors  
and the three girls dainty enough to dissolve  
into their own hums.

C - Is this that new kind  
of conversation where words fear to tread?

T- The ways in which we know each other  
have nothing to do with what we are.  
What we are is not knowable.

C- It is tangible, yet never toucht.

T- We'll never touch.

C- Stop saying we when you mean not you.

T- I sit and think pennyroyal we.

C- Clean up before yourself.

T- Nothing will always come between us.

C- So where does that leave us?

T- It leaves us right here, and it  
never returns.

C- Or, rather, it does, but we  
don't recognize it cuz it's still the same,  
and now it's us.

T- Heavy bad buzz, heavy bad buzz.

C- You're talking to yourself

again.

T- I'm my only captive audience.

C- Not being with you is like being with me.

T- It's like counting your change while being buried alive.

C- We are gathered here today, and everything else is Juliet.

T- If only i could drop by once,  
I promise to make it feel like I'm  
your only option for seeing more of me.

C- Look, the fact that this is going nowhere  
is great for me, cuz that's right where I am.

T- Okay, so you're non-responsive. But how can you possibly  
reject my advances if you refuse to receive them?

J- You were never a very warm rug.

C- Fuck, I drink too much schizophrenic spit.

T- I don't believe in character anymore.  
I believe character is a psychosis  
that's killing us, depriving us of all we  
need, shunting our minds into dead-end  
obsessions, both ludic and nociceptive,  
which merely perpetuate a growth cycle  
in the solutions we need problems to,  
so we generate more problems, our one  
renewable resource that is not only  
never new but mocks the very idea  
of resource in the sense of being  
something outside of us that revives us,  
because we are not being revived  
by the problems that fund our story wars;  
we are being stabbed into our own eyes.  
And I don't believe in Juliet anymore.  
Sure, everyone gets lucky now and then,  
but living for the exception is dying  
Every day. May I put you on hold?  
80 years later, click. And throughout it all



you suffer that inane music that's supposed to assure you someone's still there, but no one's there. The system is on you.

C- Isn't "not getting any" sticking to the subject?

T- I thought so too, until I thought so.

C- I'm a dragonfly taped to a dead duck.

T- Everyone is so good these days at being funny and weird and approved; well, I've got something to share with the group: I prefer women written by men.

C- I prefer the spotlight up my bung.

T- Music coming from the bars on a hot summer night, laughter, cheers, and I realize joy is possible as long as I'm not there.

C- You stuck me in the glasswares jungle, you broken panic button.

T- I want you screaming naked on my flatware, so I can shriek, "This steak stinks, and I love it!"

C- I say you meet under the park.

T- Can I see the manager?

C- This meal is rightly irked.

T- She should have called me weeks ago. Am I out of range?

C- Fire in the fountain!

T- She says I'm going insane, but where is sane and how do I get in?

J- Hey, loser. Got a light?

T- I'm not getting paid to do this. I'm an unfilled billboard for turning your headspace into an unfilled billboard because because...

C- It's like that time you were everywhere and nothing happened.

T- I can feel you thinking of me with whatever part one uses when one is thinking only of one's self.

C- Sit down.

T- There are no good seats.

C- Ideally,  
I need to talk to you, free of ideals.

T- Just let me repeat one thing before you go: you never came.

C - Sex doesn't sell until it starts to scab.

T- That drink I bought you? I hope it turns to piss.

C- O, so you're the end of the world? Yeah, well, I've seen worse when acting like a child.

T- This is a dream  
that's eaten its way out of my head  
and now it's too full to move.

C- You said my way or the highway,  
so I took my way, and it was the highway,  
so here I am, alone in Ohio.

T- In what sense are you qualified to give your opinion?

C- I'm always taking nine  
or two intelligence tests without even  
knowing it.

T- Yes! I'm high again!

J- Hi!

C- There's art in here somewhere, due to a defect in workmanship.

T- Why am I having such a hard time finding someone to knit me a cocksock out of their own skin.

C- O, goody. Semen on the breeze.

T- It's my hips, isn't it? My hips are too womanly. Well, that's what happens to a guy after he gives birth to 28 anticlimaxes. He fills out.

C- He's not sure what he fills out, but it gets him a gig scraping himself off her heels.

T- I'm pretty good looking

C- if you don't look.

T- I gave you everything I had, save for my ability to hold your interest.

C- Maybe I'll just move back to the heartland. Then, getting sick will be getting better. People will run across the street just to get a more panoramic view of my tired eyes.

T- I just wish you were here in this room so I could impress you with my floorplans for fame.

C - All I think about now is what my performance art piece will be like once I figure out what it is.

T- My genitals are like a giant box of crayons - unused most of the time, and when it is, little hands mess it up, but the job offers pour in.

C - I think I just had a genetically modified orgasm.

T - Clearly  
absorbing my bruise art is like eating  
too much pizza right after your parachute  
failed to open.

C- It would be nice to meet someone like you,  
or you, but I'd take like you, which might be  
more like you than you, since you don't like me,  
and as far as I can't see, I am you,  
cuz you're all I've got and I ain't got you.

T- Babe.

C- Let's recapture what we never had,  
my \$3000/hour intuitionist.

T- Maybe I'm just too long. Maybe if I were  
3 1/2, 2 1/2 minutes even, people would walk away saying,  
"You've got to see that. It's so barely there."  
I'd be a viral hit, and everyone would get sick with me.

C- Let us go then, you and I, our separate ways.

J- So much talking, so little talking.

T- I walk into a bar in a western.  
It's a one-horse town too poor to keep horses.  
Some dead lookin' hombre in the corner  
plays the part. Hizzoner is asleep  
on a whore's bill, the same whore, I'magine,  
what tries to catch my attention by  
standing up in her crib and drooling down  
her rifle hole. Three god-scaring bad  
asses strafe me with scowls as I approach  
the keeper, a greasy chip of a half-man  
with massive forearms and a tiny head.  
You seen this girl? I say, holding up  
a photo of Juliet's face super-  
imposed onto an artist's rendering  
of Cortez dropping a loaf on Tobasco.

C- You think if I seen that girl I'd be standing here without that girl?

T- A simple yes or no will do, friend.

C- Alright, friend. Yes or no.

T- I grab him by the gobs and lay him gently on the ceiling. Look here, Mr. Supreme Individual. I just lost my honey, and I'm lookin for a hive to stick my dick in, so if you want your slurb to be that hive, I am more than happy to get even with someone who's never dun nuthin to me by taking out my eyes and thinking you're the Princess of Misplaced Formaldehyde Fishing, so I suggest you come to my meeting of minds ready to cave like any black snow leopard should, or I will mind your meat, and trust me, friend, you will mind.

C- If I'd a known you were so sensitive on the topic, friend, I'd a never been so, how shall we say, helical with my words, but from hereonout you can count on nuthin but my whole-hearted willingness t'impugn myself before a self-appointed jury.

T- I appreciate it, friend. I truly do.

C- So, what can I do ya for, friend?

T- I need you to help me pull my balls off the marshmallow stick.

C- How long they been on there?

T- How you like em?

C- White on the outside, black on the in.

T- This is America, ain't it?

C- No, sir. America done  
gone outta business; employee theft.  
This here's feudal Japan, but with a much  
depleted costume budget and zero sense  
for hygiene or macrobiotic cooking.

T- Then let me put it this way, Mifune:  
(kono onna no kodomo ni aitta ka?)

C- Now that you put it  
that way, I reckon what maybe I have  
seen that girl.

T- What'll it cost me t'improve  
your memory?

C- Only 15%  
and a rewrite for the Big Bad Wolf.

T- You clearly have no idea how badly  
I wanna hang my holster round your ears.

C- Do you?

T- That depends on where you fall in the feud  
between those who believe in the power  
of words and those who believe what they say.

C- Well, I believe in the power of keepin  
my eyes on the floor, but the other day  
I just had to look up when I snifft  
the sweetest lady smell this here ole pug  
had ever had the pleasure of snortin,  
and I do believe I saw that very face  
starin at me as pretty as the sight  
of St. Louis to a visiting team.

T- And?

C- And I said, "May I help you, missus?"

T- And?

C- And she said,

J- "A shot of water, please."

T- A shot of water, please?

C- That's what I thought!  
Strangest funkkin request I ever heard.  
Can you imagine havin the purse of peace  
to stroll into some ritzy outhouse like this  
and calmly purr,

J- "A shot of water, please."

T- She's a mighty unique creature.

C- Ain't we all?

T- So, wudja do?

C- I said, "Sorry, missus,  
but I'm gonna have to see some ID."

T- You carded her for a shot of water?

C- Only so I could take down her vitals  
and suck on em next time I had a bath.

T- We're getting off topic.

C- So take us back.

T- What was her name?

J- Got No Clapper.

T- Got No Clapper?

C- That's what her ID said - Got No Clapper.  
Musta been one a them paleface squaws.

T- Are you sure it didn't say Juliet?

C- Well, now, come to think on it, it coulda,  
but you know me.

T- No, I don't.

C- I can't read!

T- Is this the woman we're talking about?  
Think hard, and answer true, or I'll teach you  
to read your own coroner's report.

C- As sure as I'm a worthless piece a splunk,  
that is the woman we're talkin about.

T- Did you get her a shot of water?

C- Yessa did.

T- Did she drink it?

C- Yes, she did.

T- And then?

J- And then she uppt and went.

T- Which way did she go?

C- See, that's the weird part.

T- I thought this was the weird part.

C- O, no. This is the part folks find familiar  
cuz we're sharing useless information.

T- So, which way did she go?

C- She didn't go any which way, really.

T- How does someone not go any which way?

C- She walkt thru them doors and just disappeared.

T- Yeah, I know the feeling.

C- Will that be all,  
or can I get you a shot of water?



T- One more thing - was she alone?

C- By the looks  
a the fella she's with, I'd say yep.

T- Could you describe this fella without hurtin  
my feelings?

C- Nope.

T- I thank you for your lack  
of specificity.

C- Anytime, friend.

T- I leave the bar, and walk into the Exxon  
Desert Wilderness Consortium.  
I can smell Juliet in the bedrock.  
In the cold heat, my mind  
starts playing tricks on me, those mean kinds  
of tricks like brothers too close in age  
play on each other, always resulting  
in someone losing a leg or running  
thru a glass door and severing the vein  
that carries sympathy to the knuckles.  
Juliet's face pops up in some cobwebs  
wooft between two saguaros, their 13 arms  
waving at me like,

C- "Hey, dude, over here.  
Wanna rise above it? Climb a cactus."

T- A pack of burros, driven by a desire  
to die, clamor around a salt lick  
on a rusty barbed wire fence, and I  
see Juliet in her motley herding skirt  
giving them tender slaps on the backside  
with my toothbrush, saying,

C- "Come on, now,  
too much salt enlarges the heart,  
and a small heart is a happy ass."

T- A sandstone outcropping assumes the shape  
of Juliet sitting with her knees

in her hands, head down, like a hiker locket  
between a rushing grizzly and six vultures.

J- What's a girl to do when playing dead  
is the only way to live?

C- Yet really  
living is the quickest way to die?

T- I should have taken that shot of water,  
cuz I'm starting to flake. I feel like  
a 3 year old pinned under the seat  
of a carnival ride, and the carnival  
is closed, and everyone's gone home, and my screams  
merely accentuate the cackling racket  
belching from the old school Spook-o-rama,  
which no one's been able to figure out  
how to turn off for years, so it's degraded  
to a shrill sonic blur of electrical  
feedback with nothing to feed on but  
feedback, so I break my neck trying to eat  
the cotton candy in my backpocket.  
Maybe this is love. Maybe this is  
9 actors in a room doing a cold  
reading of a wordless play written  
by a wooden duck. Either way it's  
neither way, cuz I'm lying face down  
in the scorching sand, kissing this frigid earth  
goodbye, for which I fully expect  
an harassment charge to be droppt  
decorously into my airy grave.  
All the women in my genetic headwound  
are standing over me squabbling about  
who should pick me up and skin me for shoes.  
I say, "Mom?" and they all answer,

J/C- "Daughter?"

T- "Why doesn't Juliet like me?" and after  
a bout of laughter that could scrape the paint  
off a Pollock model, my mothers retort:

J/C - "Because you didn't make her,"

T- and with that

I breathe my last fistful of exhaust  
and pass into a poster sitting in  
a discount bin in a Kinshasa print shop.  
It's a picture of a kitten clinging  
to a string with a look of terror  
and playfulness in its eyes. Beneath  
the picture is supposed to be a pithy  
caption meant to motivate Congolese  
laborers to give more of themselves, but the  
caption has been ripped off; hence the discount.

THE END

First produced in 2010 at The Home Of in Gowanus, Brooklyn.

Timothy Fannon as Tim  
Charise Greene as Charise  
Lucy Stack as Juliet  
Directed by Kirk Wood Bromley  
Choreography by Leah Schrager  
Music by Ivan Khilko  
Costumes by Anna Mains  
Stage management by Bettina Warshaw