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Before Sunrise

By Richard Linklater

Do you have any idea
what they were arguing about?

Do you speak English?

Yeah.

No. I'm sorry,
my German is not very good.

Have you heard that
as couples age...

...they lose their ability
to hear each other?

No.

Supposedly, men lose their ability
to hear high-pitched sounds...

...and women lose hearing
in the low end.

I guess they nullify each other.

I guess. Nature's way of allowing
couples to grow old together...

...without killing each other.

What are you reading?

Oh, yeah.

How about you?

I was thinking about going
to the lounge car.

- Would you like to come with me?

- Yeah.

Okay.

How do you speak such good English?

I went to school for a summer
in Los Angeles.

- It's fine here?

- Yeah, this is good.

And I spent some time in London.

- Wow.

- How do you speak such good English?

Me? I'm American.

- You're American? Are you sure?

- Yeah.

No, I'm joking.

I knew you were American.

And you don't speak
any other language, right?

Yeah, yeah.

I get it, I get it.

I'm the crude, dumb,
vulgar American...
...who doesn't speak other languages,
who has no culture. But I tried.
I took French in high school.
When I first got to Paris...
...I stood in line
at the metro station.
I was practicing.
Whatever.
And I get up there,
and I look at this woman...
...and my mind goes blank. And I say,
"I need a ticket to get to... "
So anyway...
So where are you headed?
Well, back to Paris.
- My classes start next week.
- You're still in school? Where?
La Sorbonne. You know?
Sure.
You're coming from Budapest?
- I was visiting my grandmother.
- Oh. How is she?
She's okay.
- She's all right?
- She's fine.
- How about you? Where are you going?
- I'm going to Vienna.
Vienna?
What's there?
No idea.
I'm flying out of there tomorrow.
You're on holiday?
I don't really know what I'm on.
You know?
I've just been traveling around,
riding trains for two or three weeks.
You were visiting friends
or just on your own?
I had a friend in Madrid, but...
- Madrid, that's nice.
- I got a Eurail pass...
...is what I did.

That's great.
So has this trip around Europe
been good for you?
Yeah, sure. It's been...
It sucked.
What?
It's had its...
I'll tell you, sitting for weeks on end
looking out the window...
...has actually been kind of great.
What do you mean?
Well, you know, for instance...
...you have ideas that you
ordinarily wouldn't have.
- What kind of ideas?
- Want to hear one?
- Tell me.
- All right.
I have this idea, okay,
for a television show.
Some friends of mine
are cable-access producers.
Do you know what that is?
Anybody can produce a show real cheap,
and they have to put it on.
I have this idea for a show that lasts
What you do is you get...
...365 people from cities
all over the world...
...to do these 24-hour documents
of real time.
Capturing life as it's lived.
You know, it would start with a guy
waking up in the morning...
...and taking the long shower...
...eating a little breakfast,
making a little coffee...
...reading the paper...
Wait. All those mundane,
boring things...
...everybody has to do every day
of their fucking life?
I was going to say,
"The poetry of day-to-day life. "

You say it your way.
I'll say it my way.
- Think of it like this...
- Who's gonna watch?
Think about it like this. Why is it
that a dog sleeping in the sun...
...is so beautiful?
It is. It's beautiful.
But a guy taking money
from a bank machine...
...looks like a complete moron?
So it's like a National Geographic
program, but on people.
Yeah.
What do you think?
Yeah, I can see it.
Like, 24 boring hours... Sorry...
...and a three-minute sex scene
where he falls asleep right after.
Yeah, and that would
be a great episode.
People would talk about that episode.
You and your friends could
do one in Paris if you wanted.
I don't know. The key, the thing
that haunts me is the distribution.
Getting these tapes from town to town
so it would play continuously.
Because it would have to play all
the time, or it just wouldn't work.
Thank you.
Thanks.
You know what?
Not service oriented.
Just an observation about Europe.
My parents never really
spoke of the possibility...
...of my falling in love or
getting married or having children.
Even as a little girl...
...they wanted me to think as
a future career as a, you know...
...interior designer or lawyer
or something like that.

I'd say to my dad,
"I want to be a writer. "
And he'd say, "Journalist. "
I'd say I wanted to have a refuge for
stray cats. He'd say, "Veterinarian. "
I'd say I wanted to be an actress.
He'd say, "TV newscaster. "
It was this constant conversion
of my fanciful ambition into these...
...practical moneymaking ventures.
I had a good bullshit detector
when I was a kid.
I always knew
when they were lying to me.
By high school, I was dead set...
...on listening to what everybody
thought I should do with my life...
...and doing the opposite.
Nobody was ever mean about it.
I just could never get very excited...
...about other people's ambitions
for my life.
But you know what?
If your parents never...
...fully contradict you about anything
and are nice and supportive...
Right.
...it makes it even harder
to officially complain.
Even when they're wrong,
it's this passive-aggressive shit.
You know what I mean?
I hate it.
I really hate it.
Well, you know, despite all that
kind of bullshit...
...that comes along with it...
...I remember childhood as...
...this magical time.
I do. I remember when my mother
first told me about death.
My great-grandmother had died, and my
family had visited them in Florida.
I was about 3, 3 1/2 years old.

Anyway, I was in
the back yard playing...
...and my sister had just taught me
how to take the garden hose...
...and do it in such a way that...
...it sprayed into the sun
and would make a rainbow.
And so I was doing that...
...and through the mist,
I could see my grandmother.
And she was just standing there,
smiling at me.
And I held it there for a long time...
...and I looked at her.
And then finally, I let go
of the nozzle, you know?
And then I dropped the hose...
...and she disappeared.
And so I run back inside
and tell my parents.
And they sit me down
and give me this big rap on how...
...when people die, you never see
them again, and how I'd imagined it.
But I knew what I'd seen.
I was glad I saw that.
I've never seen anything
like that since. But I don't know.
It just kind of let me know
how ambiguous everything was.
Even death.
You're lucky you can have
this attitude toward death.
I think I'm afraid of death
I swear. I mean, that's why
I'm in a train right now.
I could've flown to Paris,
but I'm scared.
- Oh, come on.
- I can't help it.
I know the statistics say,
"Na, na, na, it's safer. " Whatever.
When I'm in a plane,
I can see the explosion.

I can see me falling
through the clouds.
And I'm so scared of those
few seconds of consciousness...
...before you die.
When you know you're gonna die.
I can't stop thinking that way.
It's exhausting.
Yeah, I bet.
Really exhausting.
- I think this is Vienna.
- Yeah.
- You get off here, no?
- Yeah, what a drag.
I wish I'd met you earlier.
I really like talking to you.
Yeah, me too.
It was really nice of you too.
I have an admittedly insane idea,
but if I don't ask you this...
...it'll haunt me the rest of my life.
What?
I want to keep talking to you.
I have no idea what your situation is...
...but I feel like we have
some kind of...
...connection. Right?
Yeah. Me too.
Right. Great.
Here's the deal.
Get off here in Vienna
and come check out the town.
- What?
- Come on. It'll be fun.
- Come on.
- What would we do?
I don't know. All I know is I catch
a flight tomorrow morning at 9:30...
...and I can't afford a hotel,
so I was going to walk around...
...and it'd be more fun
if you came with me.
And if I turn out to be a psycho,
just get on the next train.

All right, all right.
Think of it like this.
Jump ahead 10, 20 years, okay?
And you're married.
Only your marriage doesn't have
that same energy it used to have.
You start to blame your husband.
You think about all those guys
you've met in your life...
...and what might've happened
if you'd picked up with one of them.
I'm one of those guys.
That's me.
So think of this as time travel...
...from then to now to find out
what you're missing out on.
What this could be is
a gigantic favor...
...to you and your husband to find out
you're not missing anything.
I'm just as big a loser as he is.
Unmotivated. Boring.
You made the right choice.
You're happy.
Let me get my bag.
We should get a locker for all this.
What's your name?
My name?
Jesse. James, actually,
but everybody calls me Jesse.
You mean, Jesse James, no?
No. No, just Jesse.
I'm Celine.
This is a nice bridge.
Yeah.
This is kind of weird.
Isn't it? I mean,
I feel a little awkward.
- But it's all right. Right?
- Yeah, this is great.
- Let's go to some places.
- Yeah, let's go to some places.
- Let's ask these guys.
- Okay.

Excuse me. Excuse me?

Sprechen sie English?

- Ja. Of course.

- Do you speak German for a change?

- What?

- No, it was a joke.

We just got into Vienna today, and we're looking for something fun to do.

Like museums, exhibitions...

But museums are not that funny anymore these days.

They are closing right now.

How long are you going to be here?

Just for tonight.

Why did you come to Vienna?

What could you be expecting?

We're on honeymoon.

Yeah, she got pregnant, we had to get married...

I don't believe you.

You're a bad liar.

This is a play we're both in.

We would like to invite you.

You're actors?

Not professional.

Part-time for fun.

It's a play about a cow and Indians searching for it.

There are also politicians, Mexicans...

Russians, communists...

- You have a real cow on stage?

- No, an actor in a cow costume.

- He's the cow.

- Yes, I am the cow.

- And the cow's a bit weird.

- The cow has a disease.

She's acting a bit strange.

Like a dog.

If someone throws a stick, she fetches it.

And she can smoke with hoofs and everything.

- Great.

- As you see, there is the address.
It's in the second district.
Near the Prater. You know it?
The big Ferris wheel?
We should go. We should.
Perhaps you can go to the Prater
before the play.
It starts at 2130.
- 2130?

- **It's at 9:**

- **9:**

- Oh, right.
What's the name of this play?
It translates as "Bring Me the Horns
of Wilmington's Cow. "
I'm Wilmington's cow.
- All right.
- Great.
- You'll be there?
- We'll try.
I'm the cow.
Goodbye.
I got an idea. Are you ready?
It's Q and A time.
We've known each other a little while.
We're stuck together, so we'll ask
each other a few direct questions.
All right?
- We ask each other questions?
- And you have to answer honestly.
- Of course.
- Okay.
All right, first question.
- You.
- Yes, I am going to ask you.
Describe for me your
first sexual feelings...
...towards a person.
My first sexual feelings?
Oh, my God.
I know. I know.
Jean-Marc Fleury.

Jean-Marc Fleury?

We were at this summer camp together,
and he was a swimmer.

He had bleached-out
chlorine hair and green eyes...

...and to improve his times,
he'd shave his legs and arms.

- That's disgusting.

- He was like this gorgeous dolphin.

My friend Emma

had a big crush on him.

So one day, I was cutting across
the field back to my room...

...and he came walking up beside me.

I told him...

..."You should date Emma.

She has a big crush on you. "

And he turned to me and said...

..."Well, that's too bad, because

I have a big crush on you. "

So, yeah, it really scared

the hell out of me...

...because I thought he was so fine.

Then he officially asked me on a date.

I pretended I didn't like him.

You know, I was so afraid of

what I might do, you know.

So I went to see him swim

a few times at the competition.

And he was so sexy. Really.

I mean, really sexy.

We wrote these little declarations
of love at the end of the summer...

...and, you know, promised we would
keep writing forever...

...and meet again very soon and...

Did you?

Of course not.

Then this is the opportune time
to tell you I'm a fantastic swimmer.

- Really?

- Yeah.

- I make note of that.

- Okay.

- So it's my turn. No?

- Yes, your turn.

Hit me.

Have you ever been in love?

Yes.

Next question.

- What was the...

- Wait a minute.

- So I can give one-word answers?

- Why not?

After I went into detail
about my sexual feelings?

They're different questions. I could
answer the sexual-feelings thing.

But, you know, love... I mean,
what if I asked you about love?

I would have lied, but at least
I would have made up a great story.

Love is a complex issue, you know?

I mean, yes, I've told somebody
that I love them, and I've meant it.

But was it totally unselfish,
giving love?

Was it a beautiful thing?

Not really.

You know, it's like, love...

I mean, I don't know.

You know?

- Yeah. I know what you mean.

- But as far as sexual feelings go...

...it started with

an obsessive relationship...

...with Miss July, 1978.

Do you know Playboy magazine?

- I've heard of it.

- You know Crystal?

You don't know Crystal?

Well, I knew Crystal.

Is it my turn now?

Tell me something that
really pisses you off.

- Really drives you crazy.

- Pisses me off.

- God, everything pisses me off.

- List a couple.

Oh, I know. I hate being told
by strange men...

...strange men in the street...

...you know, to smile to make them
feel better about their boring life.

What else?

I hate...

I hate that 300 kilometers from here,
there's a war...

...people are dying,
and nobody knows what to do.

Or they don't give a shit.

I don't know.

I hate that the media's
trying to control our minds.

- The media?

- Yeah, the media.

It's very subtle, but it's
a new form of fascism, really.

I hate...

I hate when I'm in a foreign country,
especially in America...

...each time I wear black or lose my
temper or say anything about anything...

...they always go,

"Oh, it's so French. It's so cute. "

I hate that.

I can't stand that. Really.

Is that all?

Well, there's a lot of things, but...

- So it's my turn.

- Okay.

- You're gonna answer.

- Yes, I'll answer.

What's a problem for you?

You, probably.

What?

I had a thought the other day
that kind of...

...qualifies as a problem.

What is it?

It was a thought I had
on the train, so...

Okay. All right.

Do you believe in reincarnation?

Yeah. Yeah, it's interesting.

A lot of people talk about past lives and things like that, you know?

And even if they don't believe in it in some specific way...

...people have a notion of an eternal soul.

- Yeah.

- Okay.

This is my thought:

...there's not even a million people.

Ten thousand years ago, there's, like, two million people.

Now there's between five and six billion people on the planet.

If we all have our own...

...individual, unique...

...soul...

...where did they all come from?

Are modern souls only a fraction of the original souls?

If they are, that represents a 5000 to 1 split of each soul...

...in the last 50,000 years, which is a blip in the Earth's time.

So at best, we're these tiny fractions...

...of people walking...

Is that why we're so scattered?

Is that why we're so specialized?

Wait a minute, I'm not sure...

Yeah, I know, I know.

It's a totally scattered thought.

Which is kind of why it makes sense.

I agree with you.

Let's get off this damn train.

This place is pretty neat.

Yeah.

There's even a listening booth.

Have you heard of this singer?

I think she's American.

A friend told me about her.

Do you want to go see if that
listening booth still works?

Yeah, okay.

There's a wind that
Blows in from the north
And it says that loving
Takes this course

Come here

Come here

No, I'm not impossible to touch
I have never wanted you so much

Come here

Come here

Have I never laid down by your side
Baby, let's forget about this pride

Come here

Come here

Look at this. This is beautiful.

Quick. It's leaving.

Look, there's a rabbit.

Yeah.

Hey there, rabbit.

It's so cute.

I visited this as a young teenager.

It left a bigger impression on me
at that time than the museums.

Yeah? It's tiny.

I know.

A little old man talked to us.

He was the groundskeeper.

He explained that most
of the people buried here...

...had washed up on the bank
of the Danube.

How old are these?

Around the beginning of the century.

It's called No Name Cemetery...

...because they often didn't know
who those people were.

Maybe a first name, that's all.

Why were all the bodies washing up?

I think some were from accidents
on boats and things like that.

But most of them were suicides

that jumped in the river.
I always liked the idea of all those
unknown people lost in the world.
When I was a little girl,
I thought...
...if none of your family or friends
knew you were dead...
...then it's like
not really being dead.
People can invent the best
and the worst for you.
Here she is, I think.
Yeah, this is the one
I remember the most.
She was only 13 when she died.
That meant something to me.
I was that age when I first saw this.
Now I'm 10 years older,
and she's still 13, I guess.
That's funny.
That's the Danube over there.
That's a river, right?
Yeah.
This is...
...gorgeous.
Yeah, this is beautiful.
I mean, we got...
We got a sunset here.
- Yeah.
- We got the Ferris wheel.
It seems like...
...this would be a...
What?
You know...
Are you trying to say
you want to kiss me?
But you know what?
It doesn't matter what
generation you're born into.
Look at my parents.
They were angry, young May '68 people
revolting against everything.
The government, their conservative
Catholic backgrounds...

Then I was born, and my father
became a successful architect.
We traveled around the world
while he built bridges...
...and, you know, towers and stuff.
I mean, I really can't
complain about anything.
They love me more than anything...
...and I've been raised with all
the freedom they fought for.
And yet, for me now,
it's another type of fight.
We have to deal with the same shit,
but we can't really know...
...who or, you know, what the enemy is.
I don't know if
there really is an enemy.
Everybody's parents fucked them up.
Rich kids' parents gave them too much.
Poor kids', not enough.
Too much attention,
not enough attention.
They either left or
taught them the wrong things.
My parents are just two people
who didn't like each other much...
...who got married and had a kid.
And they tried their best
to be nice to me.
- Did your parents divorce?
- Yeah, finally.
They should have done it sooner.
They stuck together...
...for the well-being of my sister
and I. Thank you very much.
I remember my mother told me
right in front of my father...
...that he didn't really
want to have me.
That he was pissed off when
he found out she was pregnant.
That I was a big mistake.
That really shaped the way I think.
I always saw the world as this place

where I really wasn't meant to be.
That's so sad.
Well, I mean, I eventually
kind of took pride in it.
You know, like my life
was my own doing.
You know, like I was
crashing the big party.
That's the way to see it.
My parents are still married
and I guess they're happy.
But I think it's healthy to rebel
against everything that came before.
You know, I've been wondering lately...
...do you know anyone
who's in a happy relationship?
Yeah, sure. You know,
I know happy couples.
But I think they lie to each other.
Yeah.
People can live their
whole life as a lie.
My grandmother was married...
...and I thought she had an
uncomplicated love life.
But she just confessed to me
that she spent her whole life...
...dreaming about another man
she was in love with.
She just accepted her fate.
It's so sad.
In the same time, I love that
she had these emotions...
...and feelings I never
thought she had.
I guarantee you
it was better that way.
If she'd known him, he'd have
disappointed her eventually.
- How do you know?
- I know. I know.
People put romantic projections
on everything.
It's not based in any kind of reality.

Romantic projections?

Oh, Mr. Romantic up in the Ferris wheel?

"Oh, kiss me. The sunset.

Oh, it's so beautiful. "

Tell me about your grandmother.

What were you saying about her?

Check these guys out.

"Hans, I have a confession. I'm not wearing underwear underneath this. "

"Oh, really? Does that frighten you?"

Can I tell you a secret?

Yeah.

Come here.

- What?

- Come here.

Look at this palm reader.

She's interesting looking.

Yeah.

- Uh-oh. Uh-oh.

- What?

- I made eye contact.

- She's not coming over here.

- Yes, she is.

- Oh, shit.

Oh, no.

- You want your palm read?

- No.

- Are you sure?

- I'm sure.

- Okay.

- Hello.

Oh, here she is.

I want your palm read.

Yeah. How much is it?

For you, 50.

Okay?

Okay.

So you have been on a journey...

...and you're a stranger
to this place.

You are...

...an adventurer.

A seeker.

An adventurer in your mind.

You are interested
in the power of the woman.
In the woman's deep strength
and creativity.
You're becoming this woman.
You need to resign yourself
to the awkwardness of life.
Only if you find peace
within yourself...
...will you find
true connection with others.
That is a stranger to you?
I guess so.
You will be all right.
He's learning.
Okay.
Money.
You're both stars.
Don't forget.
When the stars exploded
billions of years ago...
...they formed everything
that is this world.
Everything we know is stardust.
So don't forget, you are stardust.
That's very nice and all.
I mean, that we're all stardust...
...and you're becoming this great woman.
But I hope you don't take that
any more seriously...
...than some horoscope
in a newspaper.
What? She knew I was on vacation
and that we didn't know each other...
...and that I was going
to become this great woman.
But what was that
"I am learning" bullshit?
That's way condescending, you know?
I mean, she wasn't even doing me.
I mean, if opportunists like that
ever had to tell the real truth...
...it would put them
out of business.

Just once, I'd love to see some
little old lady save up all her money...
...to go to the fortuneteller. She'd
get there and the woman would say...
..."Tomorrow and all
your remaining days...
...will be exactly like today...
...a tedious collection of hours.
And you will have no new passions
and no new thoughts...
...and no new travels.
And when you die,
you'll be completely forgotten.
Fifty schillings, please. "
That I'd like to see.
It's so funny how...
...she almost didn't notice you.
It's weird. I wonder why.
She was really wise and intense.
I really loved what she said.
You pay your money to hear what
makes you feel good about yourself.
Maybe there's a seedy section of Vienna.
We can buy a hit of crack.
Would you like that?
You're so...
Stardust. Stardust.
There's an exhibition.
I guess we'll miss it.
It doesn't start until next week.
Yeah, I think so.
I actually saw this one in a museum.
I stared and stared at it.
Must have been 45 minutes.
I love it.
La voie ferre.
It's great.
I love the way the people are
dissolving into the background.
Look at this.
It's like the environments...
...are stronger than the people.
His human figures are
always so transitory.

It's funny. Transitory?

Transitory.

- You think this is open?

- I don't know. Let's try it.

I was in an old church like this...

...with my grandmother

a few days ago in Budapest.

Even though I reject

most of the religious thing...

...I can't help but feeling for

those people that come here...

...lost or in pain, guilt...

...looking for some kind of answers.

It fascinates me how a single place

can join pain and happiness...

...of so many generations.

You're close with your grandmother?

Yeah.

I think it's because I always

have this strange feeling...

...that I'm this very old woman

laying down, about to die.

You know, that my life is just...

...her memories or something.

That's so wild.

I always think that I'm still

this 13-year-old boy...

...who doesn't really know how

to be an adult, pretending to...

...live my life, taking notes for when

I'll really have to do it.

Like I'm in a dress rehearsal

for a junior high play.

That's funny.

Then up there in the Ferris wheel,

it was like...

...this very old woman

kissing this very young boy. Right?

Do you know anything about

the Quakers, the Quaker religion?

No, not much.

Well, I went to

this Quaker wedding once...

...and it was fantastic.

What they do is...
...the couple comes in and they kneel
in front of the whole congregation...
...and they stare at each other.
Nobody says a word unless they feel
that God moves them to speak...
...or say something.
And then, after an hour or so of just...
...staring at each other...
...they're married.
That's beautiful. I like that.
This is a horrible story.
What?
It's not the appropriate place
to tell it.
Well, I was driving around
with this buddy of mine.
He's a big atheist, you know.
And he came to a stop
next to this homeless guy.
My buddy takes out a \$ 100 bill...
...and leans out the window...
...and he says,
"Do you believe in God?"
And the guy looks at my friend,
he looks at the money.
He says...
..."Yes, I do. "
My friend says, "Wrong answer. "
We drove away.
That's mean.
Would you be in Paris by now
if you hadn't gotten off the train?
No, not yet.
What would you be doing?
I'd probably be hanging around
the airport...
...crying in my coffee
because you didn't come with me.
I'd probably gotten off the train
in Salzburg with someone else.
Oh, yeah? Oh, I see.
So I'm just a dumb American...
...momentarily decorating

your blank canvas, huh?
- I'm having a great time.
- Really?
Me too.
I'm glad, because
no one knows I'm here.
I don't know anyone
that would tell me...
...all those bad things you've done.
- I'll tell you some.
- Yeah, I'm sure.
You hear so much shit about people.
I always feel like...
...the general of an army
when I start dating.
Plotting my strategy
and maneuverings...
...knowing his weak points,
what would hurt him, seduce him.
It's horrible.
If we were always around each other...
...what would be the first thing
about me that would drive you mad?
No. I'm not going to
answer this question.
I dated this girl once
who used to always ask me that.
"What about me bugs you?"
Finally I said, "I don't think
you handle criticism too well. "
She flew into a rage and
broke up with me. That's true.
All she wanted was
to have an excuse...
...to tell me what she thought
was wrong with me.
Is that what you want?
Something about me bugs you?
- What is it about me bugs you?
- Nothing at all.
If it had to be something,
what would it be?
If it had to be something,
if I had to think about it...

...I kind of didn't really like this reaction at the palm reader.

You were like this rooster prick.

What the hell

is a rooster prick?

You were like a boy whining...

...because all the attention wasn't focused on him.

All right, listen.

This woman robs you blind, okay?

You were like a boy

walking by an ice-cream store...

...crying because his mom won't buy him a milk shake.

I don't care what this charlatan has to say about...

What?

I understand a little, but he doesn't at all.

May I ask you a question?

So I would like to make a deal with you.

I mean, instead of just asking you for money, I will ask you for a word.

You give me a word, I take the word, and then I will write a poem...

...with the word inside.

And if you like it, if you like my poem...

...if it adds something to your life in any way...

...then you can pay me whatever you feel like.

I'll write in English, of course.

- Okay.

- All right. Great.

So?

Pick a word.

A word.

- Milk shake.

- Milk shake? Oh, good.

I was gonna say "rooster prick. "

But great. Milk shake.

"Milk shake"?

Okay, milk shake.

- All right, so...

- Good.

I gotta say, I like this
Viennese variation of bum.

I like what he said about
adding something to your life.

So, were we having
our first fight back there?

I think so. I think we were.

Even if we were, why does everyone
think conflict is so bad?

There's a lot of good things
coming out of conflict.

Yeah, I guess so.

I always think if I could
just accept the fact...

...that my life was supposed to be
difficult, that's what's expected...

...then I might not get so pissed off.

And I'd just be glad
when something nice happens.

That's why I'm still in school.

It's easier to have
something to fight against.

Well, we've all had such
competitiveness ingrained in us.

You know, I can be doing
the most nothing thing.

Throwing some darts
or shooting some pool.

Then all of a sudden,
I feel it come over me.

I have got to win.

Is that why you tried to get me
off the train? Competitiveness?

What do you mean?

I got a poem.

Oh, all right.

Will you read it to us?

Sure. Okay.

"Daydream delusion

Limousine eyelash

Oh, baby, with your pretty face

Drop a tear in my wine glass
Look at those big eyes
See what you mean to me
Sweetcakes and milk shakes
I am a delusion angel
I'm a fantasy parade
I want you to know what I think
Don't want you to guess anymore
You have no idea where I came from
We have no idea where we're going
Lodged in life
Like branches in the river
Flowing downstream
Caught in the current
I carry you
You'll carry me
That's how it could be
Don't you know me?
Don't you know me by now?"
Great.
- Thanks.
- Thanks, man.
Here you go.
- Thanks.
- All right.
- Here. Thank you.
- Thank you.
Good luck.
It was wonderful, no?
- What?
- He probably didn't just write that.
He wrote it, but he
probably plugs that word in.
You know, whatever, "milk shake. "
What do you mean?
Nothing. I loved it. It was great.
You know what drives me crazy?
People talking about...
...how great technology is,
how it saves all this time.
But what good is saved time
if nobody uses it?
If it just turns into more busy work.
I never hear anybody say, "With the time

I've saved using my word processor...

...I'm gonna go to a Zen monastery
and hang out. "

- You don't hear that.

- Time is so abstract anyway.

- Are you looking at this girl?

- What?

Nothing.

You wanna go in here?

- You wanna go in here?

- Yeah. It's a club, no?

Wanna go?

Hello.

Fifty schillings.

- Each.

- I got 100. Here, I got it.

I'll buy you a beer. Thank you.

- You gonna buy me a beer?

- Yeah.

You think Old Milwaukee

is expensive here?

We haven't talked about this yet,

but are you dating anyone?

You got a boyfriend waiting on you
back in Paris or anything like that?

- No, not right now.

- But you did.

We broke up six months ago.

Six months ago? Oh, I'm sorry.

I mean, I'm not that sorry.

Tell me about it.

No way. I can't.

It's really, really boring.

Come on. Tell me about it.

I was really disappointed.

I thought this one would last

for a while. He was...

...very stupid, ugly,

bad in bed, alcoholic...

- You know.

- A real prize winner.

I was kind of giving him a favor.

But he left me,

saying I loved him too much.

I was blocking his artistic expression
or some shit like that.
But anyway, I was traumatized
and became...
And became totally obsessed with him.
So I went to a shrink, and it came up
that I had written...
...this stupid story about this
woman trying to kill her boyfriend...
...and how she'd do it.
It's all the details
of how to do it and not get caught...
She was gonna kill her boyfriend?
Yeah, she was. It's nothing I would do,
but it was just some writing.
No, I understand.
This stupid shrink believed
everything I told her.
It was my first time seeing her.
She said she had to call the police.
She had to call the police?
She was totally convinced
I was really gonna do it.
Even though I had explained
it was just some writing.
She said, looking into my eyes,
"The way you said it...
...I know you are going to do it. "
She was totally out of her mind.
It was my first and last session.
So what happened then?
I totally got over him.
But now, I'm obsessed...
...that he's gonna die from
an accident or 1000 kilometers away.
And I'm gonna be the one accused.
Why is it you become obsessed
with people you don't...
...really like that much?
I don't know.
So how about you?
- What?
- Are you with anyone?
It's funny how we managed to avoid

this subject for so long.
But now you have to tell me.
Well, I kind of see love...
...as this escape for two people
who don't know how to be alone.
It's funny.
People always talk about how...
...love is this totally unselfish,
giving thing.
But if you think about it,
there's nothing more selfish.
I know.
So who just broke up with you?
What?
You sound like you just were hurt.
Do I?
All right.
Big confession.
I should've told you this
earlier or something.
I didn't come to Europe just to...
...hang out and read Hemingway in Paris
and shit like that.
I saved up my money all spring to
fly to Madrid...
...and spend the summer
with my girlfriend...
- Your girlfriend?
- My ex-girlfriend...
...who has been on this art history
program for the last year.
Anyway, I got here.
We were reunited at long last...
...and we went out to dinner our
first night with six of her friends.
Pedro, Antonio, Gonzalo...
...Maria, Suzy from home.
She managed to avoid being alone
with me for the first few days...
...and I stuck around just to let it
sink in that she wished I hadn't come.
So I bought the cheapest flight out,
this one leaving out of Vienna.
It didn't leave for a couple weeks,

so I bought this Eurail pass.
You know what's the worst thing
about somebody breaking up with you?
It's when you remember
how little you thought about...
...the people you broke up with,
and you realize...
...that that is how little
they're thinking about you.
You'd like to think
you're both in pain...
...but really, they're just,
"Hey, I'm glad you're gone. "
Believe me, I know.
You should look at bright colors.
That's what the shrink told me.
I was paying her 900 francs an hour...
...to hear that I
was a homicidal maniac...
...but I could shift my obsession if I
would concentrate on bright colors.
Did it work?
- Didn't help your pinball.
- Well, no.
Yeah, well, you know,
I haven't killed anyone lately.
Not lately?
That's good.
You're cured then.
There's breeds of monkeys,
and all they do is have sex...
...all the time.
And they turn out to be
the least violent...
...the most peaceful, the most happy.
So maybe fooling around's
not so bad.
- Are you talking about monkeys?
- Yes, I am.
- I thought so.
- Why?
I never heard this one.
But it reminds me of this perfect...
...male argument to justify them

fooling around.
Women monkeys are fooling around too.
Everybody's fooling around.
That's cute. I have this awful,
paranoid thought...
...that feminism was mostly invented
by men so they could...
...fool around more.
"Woman, free your mind,
free your body. Sleep with me.
We're all happy and free, as long as
I can fuck as much as I can. "
All right.
But maybe there's some
biological things at work here.
If you had an island...
...and there were 99 women
on the island and only one man...
...in a year, you'd have
the possibility of 99 babies.
But if you have an island
with 99 men and only one woman...
...in a year, you have the possibility
of only one baby. So...
You know what?
On this island, I think there
will be only, like, maybe 43 men left.
They would've killed each other
trying to fuck this poor woman.
And on the other island,
there would be 99 women, 99 babies...
...and no more man.
Because they would've all
eaten him alive.
Oh, yeah?
There's something to that.
On some level, women don't mind
the idea of destroying a man.
I was walking down the street
with my ex-girlfriend...
...and we'd just walked by these four
thuggy-looking guys next to a Camaro.
And one of them says,
"Hey, baby. Nice ass!"

So I'm like, "No big deal.
I won't get uptight about this. "
Plus, there were four of them.
Exactly. But she says,
"Fuck you, dickheads!"
And I'm like, "Okay.
Wait a minute, here. "
They're not gonna come over
and kick her ass.
So who just got pushed
to the frontline on that one?
Women say they hate it
if you're all protective.
But if it suits them, then
they'll tell you you're being unmanly.
You know what? I don't think
woman really wants to destroy man.
Even if they want to,
they don't succeed.
I'm sure even men are
destroying women...
...or are capable of destroying women
much more than women...
Anyway, it's depressing.
You know what?
- You wanna stop talking about this?
- I hate it.
Men, women, it's...
There's no end to it.
It's like a skipping record.
Every couple's been having
this conversation forever.
And nobody came up with anything.
I saw a documentary on that.
It's a birth dance.
A birth dance?
Should I give her some money?
Everything that's interesting
costs a little money.
So a birth dance, huh?
Looked a little bit
like a mating dance to me.
No, but really.
Women used it when giving birth.

In part of the world,
they still do it.
The woman in labor enters a tent...
...and the women of her tribe
surround her and dance.
They encourage her
to dance with them...
...so as to make
the birth less painful.
And when the baby is born,
they all dance in celebration.
I don't think my mom
would've gone for that.
I like the idea of dancing as something
everybody participates in.
I know. I heard about this old guy...
...who was watching
some young people dance.
He said, "How beautiful.
They're shaking off their genitals
to become angels. "
I like that.
One question, though.
When the women are dancing
and being all spiritual and stuff...
...where are the men?
Are we out food gathering? Are we not
invited? You all don't need us?
Men are lucky we don't
bite off their heads after mating.
Certain insects do that,
like spiders and stuff?
We let you live.
What are you complaining about?
See, you're officially kidding.
But there's something to that.
You keep bringing stuff like that up.
No, no. Wait a minute.
Talking seriously here.
I mean, I always feel
this pressure of being...
...a strong and independent
icon of womanhood...
...and not making it look like...

...my whole life is revolving
around some guy.
But loving someone...
...and being loved
means so much to me.
I always make fun of it and stuff...
...but isn't everything
we do in life...
...a way to be loved a little more?
I don't know.
Sometimes I dream...
...about being a good father
and a good husband.
And sometimes it feels really close.
But then other times...
...it seems silly...
...like it would...
...ruin my whole life.
And it's not just
a fear of commitment...
...or that I'm incapable
of caring or loving because...
...I can.
It's just that, if I'm
totally honest with myself...
...I think I'd rather die knowing...
...that I was
really good at something.
That I had excelled
in some way...
...than that I'd just been in...
...a nice, caring relationship.
I had worked for this older man,
and once he told me...
...that he had spent all of his life
thinking about his career.
He was 52,
and it suddenly struck him...
...that he had never really
given anything of himself.
His life was for no one and nothing.
He was almost crying saying that.
I believe if there's
any kind of God...

...it wouldn't be in any of us...
...not you or me...
...but just this little space
in between.
If there's any kind of magic
in this world...
...it must be in the attempt of
understanding someone sharing something.
I know, it's almost
impossible to succeed...
...but who cares really?
The answer must be in the attempt.
I think this is a civilization in
decline. Look at the service.
Where is the waitress?
In New York, she'd be out of a job.
I'm gonna call my friend in Paris...
...who I'm supposed to have
lunch with in eight hours.
Pick up.
- Pick up the phone.
- All right.
I've been working on my English.
You wanna talk in English, for laughs?
Yeah, okay. That's a good idea.
I don't think I'll be able to
make it for lunch today.
I met a guy on the train,
and I got off with him in Vienna.
Are you crazy?
Probably.
- He's Austrian? He's from there?
- No, No.
He's passing through. He's American.
He's going back home tomorrow.
Why'd you get off?
Well, he convinced me.
I mean, actually, I was ready to
get off the train with him...
...after talking to him a short while.
He was so sweet, I couldn't help it.
In the lounge car,
he began to talk about...
...him as a boy seeing

his great-grandmother's ghost.
I think that's when I fell for him.
Just the idea of this little boy
with all those beautiful dreams.
He trapped me.
And he's so cute.
He has beautiful blue eyes...
...nice pink lips...
...greasy hair.
I love it.
He's kind of tall,
and he's a little clumsy.
I like to feel his eyes on me
when I look away.
He kind of kisses like an adolescent.
It's so cute.
- What?
- Yeah, we kissed. It was so adorable.
As the night went on,
I began to like him more and more.
I'm afraid he's scared of me.
I told him the story about
the woman that kills her ex-boyfriend.
He must be scared to death.
He must be thinking I'm
this manipulative, mean woman.
I just hope he doesn't feel
that way about me.
Because, you know me,
I'm the most harmless person.
The only person I could
really hurt is myself.
I don't think he's scared of you.
I think he's crazy about you.
- Really?
- I've known you a long time.
I got a good feeling.
You gonna see him again?
We haven't talked about that yet.
Okay, it's your turn.
You call your friend.
All right, all right.
I usually get this guy's
answering machine.

Hi, dude. What's up?
Hey, Frank. How you been?
I'm glad you're home.
Cool. Yeah.
So how was Madrid?
Madrid sucked.
Lisa and I had our
long overdue meltdown.
Too bad. I told you, no?
Yeah, yeah. The long-distance thing
just never works.
I was only in Madrid
for a couple days.
I got a cheaper flight out of Vienna.
You know, it really wasn't
that much cheaper. I just...
I couldn't go home right away.
I didn't want to see anybody I knew.
I just wanted to be a ghost,
completely anonymous.
So are you okay now?
Yeah. I'm great. I'm great.
That's the thing.
I'm rapturous.
And I'll tell you why.
I met somebody
on my last night in Europe.
- That's incredible.
- I know, I know.
You know how they say we're all
each other's demons and angels?
Well, she was literally
a Botticelli angel...
...telling me everything
would be okay.
How did you meet?
On the train.
She was sitting next to
a weird couple that was fighting...
...so she moved. She sat
right across the aisle from me.
So we started to talk.
She didn't like me much at first.
She's super smart...

...very passionate...
...and beautiful.
And I was so unsure of myself.
I thought everything I said
sounded so stupid.
Oh, man. I wouldn't worry about that.
No, I'm sure she was not judging you.
No, and by the way,
she sat next to you.
I'm sure she did it on purpose.
Oh, yeah?
Us men are so stupid. We don't
understand anything about women.
They act strange,
the little I know of them.
Don't they?
I feel like this is
some dream world we're in.
Yeah, it's so weird.
It's like our time together
is just ours.
It's our own creation.
It must be like I'm in your dream
and you're in mine.
And what's so cool
is that this whole evening...
...all our time together,
shouldn't officially be happening.
Yeah, I know. Maybe that's why
this feels so otherworldly.
But then the morning comes
and we turn into pumpkins, right?
I know.
But now, you're supposed to
produce the glass slipper...
...and see if it fits.
It'll fit.
This friend of mine had a kid...
...and it was a home birth,
so he was there helping out.
But he said at that
profound moment of birth...
...he was watching his child
experiencing life for the first time...

...trying to take its first breath.
All he could think about was
that he was looking at something...
...that was gonna die someday.
He couldn't get it out of his head.
And I think that's so true.
Everything is so finite.
But don't you think that's what...
...makes our time and specific moments
so important?
Yeah, I know.
It's the same for us tonight, though.
After tomorrow, we'll probably
never see each other again, right?
You don't think we'll
ever see each other?
What do you think?
Actually, I don't know.
I hadn't planned another...
Me too. I live in Paris,
you live in the U.S. I understand.
I'd hate to make you fly.
You'd hate to fly, right?
I'm not so scared of flying.
I mean, I could.
Well, if you were gonna...
...come to the U. S...
...or if, you know, if I...
I mean, I could come back here.
What?
No, let's just be rational adults
about this.
We should try something different.
It's not so bad if tonight
is our only night, right?
People exchange numbers, addresses.
They end up writing once,
calling each other twice.
Right. Fizzles out.
Yeah, I don't want that.
I hate that.
I hate that too.
Why does everybody think
relationships should last forever?

Yeah, why? It's stupid.
But you think tonight's it?
I mean, that tonight's our only night?
It's the only way, no?
Well, all right.
Let's do it.
No delusions, no projections.
We'll just make tonight great.
Let's do that.
We should do some kind of handshake.
Give me your hand.
To our one and only...
...night together...
...and the hours that remain.
What?
It's just...
It's depressing, no?
Now, the only thing
we're gonna think of is...
...when we'll have to say goodbye.
We could say goodbye now.
Then we won't worry about it.
Now?
Say goodbye.
- Bye.
- Goodbye.
Au revoir.
- Later.
- Later, yeah.
Here's the plan.
You're gonna grab the glasses,
and I'm gonna get the wine.
- Red wine.
- Red wine. Right.
- You think you can do that?
- No problem.
- Wish me luck.
- Good luck.
Hello.
Do you speak English?
- A bit.
- Yeah? A bit?
I'm having kind of an odd situation...
...which is that...

You see that girl over there?
Well, this is our only night together...
...and she...
The problem is that she wants
a bottle of red wine...
...and I don't have any money.
But I was thinking
that you might want to...
...give me the address of this bar,
and I would promise...
...to send you the money, and you'd
be making our night complete.
You would send me the money?
Your hand?
For the greatest night in your life.
Thank you very much.
So often I've been with people
and shared beautiful moments...
...like traveling or staying up
all night and watching the sunrise.
And I knew those were special moments.
But something was always wrong.
I wished I'd been with someone else.
I knew that what I was feeling...
...exactly what was so important to me,
they didn't understand.
But I'm happy to be with you.
You couldn't know
why a night like this...
...is so important
to my life right now...
...but it is.
This is a great morning.
It is a great morning.
Do you think we have others like this?
What about our rational, adult decision?
Oh, yeah.
I know what you mean about wishing
somebody wasn't there.
It's just, usually, it's myself...
...that I wish I could get away from.
Seriously, think about this.
I have never been anywhere...
...that I haven't been.

I've never had a kiss...
...when I wasn't one of the kissers.
You know, I've never...
...gone to the movies when
I wasn't there in the audience.
I've never been out bowling
if I wasn't there...
...making some stupid joke.
That's why so many people
hate themselves. Seriously.
It's just, they are sick to death...
...of being around themselves.
Let's say that you and I
were together all the time.
You'd start to hate
a lot of my mannerisms.
The way...
...the way every time
that we would have people over...
...I'd be insecure, and I'd get
a little too drunk.
Or the way I tell the same stupid,
pseudo-intellectual story...
...again and again.
You see, I've heard
all those stories...
...so of course I'm sick of myself.
But being with you...
...it's made me feel like
I was somebody else.
I mean, the only other way
to lose yourself like that is...
...you know, dancing...
...or alcohol...
...or drugs, or stuff like that.
Fucking.
Fucking, yeah. That's one way.
Do you know what I want?
What?
To be kissed.
Well, I could do that.
Wait.
I have to say something stupid.
All right.

It's very stupid.
I don't think we should
sleep together.
I want to, but since we're never
going to see each other again...
...it'll make me feel bad.
I'll wonder who else you're with.
I'll miss you.
I know. It's not very adult.
Maybe it's a female thing.
I can't help it.
Let's see each other again.
No, I don't want you to break our vow
just so you can get laid.
I don't want to just get laid.
I want to... I mean...
I mean, I think we should.
We die in the morning, right?
- I think we should.
- Then it's like some male fantasy.
Meet a French girl,
fuck her and never see her again.
And have this great story to tell.
I don't want...
...this great evening to
just have been for that.
Okay, we don't have to have sex.
It's not a big deal.
You don't want to see me again?
No, of course I do.
If somebody gave me
the choice right now...
...of to never see you again
or to marry you...
...I would marry you.
Maybe that's a lot
of romantic bullshit...
...but people have gotten married
for a lot less.
Actually...
...I think I decided I wanted to sleep
with you when we got off the train.
Now that we've talked so much,
I don't know anymore.

Why do we make everything
so complicated?
I don't know.
What's the first thing you'll do
when you get back to Paris?
Call my parents.
What about you?
I don't know. I'll probably go
pick up my dog. He's with a friend.
You have a dog?
I love dogs.
- You do?
- Yeah.
- Oh, shit.
- What?
I don't know.
We're back in real time.
I know. I hate that.
What is that?
Sounds like a harpsichord.
Check that out.
Somebody's playing.
That's cool.
Can we dance to the harpsichord?
Of course.
Oh, wow.
I'm gonna take your picture...
...so I never forget you...
...or all this.
Okay, me too.
"The years shall run like rabbits. "
What?
Nothing.
I have...
...this recording of Dylan Thomas...
...reading a W. H. Auden poem.
He's got a great voice.
It's like...
"All the clocks in the city
Began to whirr and chime:
O let not Time deceive you
You cannot conquer Time.
In headaches and in worry
Vaguely life leaks away

And Time will have his fancy
Tomorrow or today. ' "
Something like that.
That's good.
When you talked earlier
about after a few years...
...how a couple would begin
to hate each other...
...by anticipating their reactions...
...or getting tired
of their mannerisms.
I think it would be
the opposite for me.
I think I can really fall in love
when I know everything about someone.
The way he's gonna part his hair...
...which shirt he's gonna
wear that day...
...knowing the exact story he'd tell
in a given situation.
I'm sure that's when I know
I'm really in love.
- Hey, guess what.
- What?
We didn't go to those guys' play.
Play?
The cow?
Oh, yeah, we didn't.
Oh, no. We missed it.
You know what bus to take
to the airport?
No problem.
- I should get on this one.
- Right here. You wanna get on there?
I guess this is it, no?
I really...
- You know...
- Yeah, I know. Me too.
Have a great life. Have fun
with everything you're gonna do.
Good luck with school and all that.
I hate this.
Me too.
The train is about to leave.

You know all this bullshit
we're talking about...
...not seeing each other?
I don't want that.
I don't either.
- You don't?
- I waited for you to say it.
Why didn't you say something?
I was afraid
you didn't wanna see me.
What do you wanna do?
Maybe we should meet here
in five years or something.
Five years? That's a long time.
It's awful. It's like
a sociological experiment.
- How about one year?
- One year.
- How about six months?
- Six months?
It's gonna be freezing.
Who cares? We come here,
we go somewhere else.
Six months from now or last night?
Last night. Six months
from last night, which was...
...June 16th.
So track nine, six months from now

at 6:

December.
It's a train ride for you,
but I gotta fly all the way here.
But I'm gonna be here.
- Okay, me too.
- All right.
We won't call, write or...
No, it's depressing.
Your train's gonna leave.
Say goodbye.
Bye.
Goodbye.
Au revoir.
Later.