

#7

Young Woman
Young Man

Scene Four

The Young Woman and the Young Man

(Projected: the Town Green.)

PHOTOGRAPHER. The Town Green. It's beautiful, isn't it? Quaint, people say, if they're not from here. If you're from here, you may stop noticing. It takes effort to not stop noticing.

(YOUNG MAN enters pulling a child's wagon full of books stacked up, bound together so they reach heights much higher than they otherwise would - almost as tall as the YOUNG MAN himself. YOUNG WOMAN enters from opposite direction.)

YOUNG MAN. Florence, my love.

YOUNG WOMAN. Robert.

PHOTOGRAPHER. The Young Couple are engaged. Being engaged is a constant. For a short period of time you can say "my fiancé" this and "my fiancé" that. But sometimes you feel more engaged than other times because being engaged is not a constant.

YOUNG MAN. I'm getting closer, I think. To figuring it all out. This book maybe. Or this one. They all say a lot of things. About how to be. Some of them you have to decode. Some are hard to understand or are not directly applicable. But then if you read the next book, sometimes you start to understand the previous book. Sometimes they don't make any sense for pages and pages. Sometimes I fall asleep. But this is important. I'm going to figure it all out.

PHOTOGRAPHER. The Young Woman doesn't know what to say or how to say it.

YOUNG WOMAN. Robert.

PHOTOGRAPHER. She says.

YOUNG WOMAN. Robert. I - if - when - I -

YOUNG MAN. What's that?

PHOTOGRAPHER. The Young Woman feels the heavy weight increase, the weight she has been feeling ever since -

(YOUNG WOMAN collapses.)

YOUNG MAN. Florence! Are you okay? Help! Help! Hey! Someone!

(EMT 1 and EMT 2 arrive and go to work. They revive her.)

EMT 1. Stand back.

EMT 2. Did she complain of any pain?

EMT 1. What did she have for breakfast?

EMT 2. Miss? Young Woman, can you hear me?

YOUNG WOMAN. Yes. Sorry. Sorry, everyone.

YOUNG MAN. What's wrong?

EMT 2. Are you okay to sit up?

EMT 1. Drink this.

YOUNG WOMAN. Thank you. I'm fine. I just - I can't do it, Robert.

YOUNG MAN. What?

YOUNG WOMAN. I can't marry you.

EMT 1 & EMT 2. Ohh.

YOUNG MAN. But our love. These books. That ring.

YOUNG WOMAN. I just don't think I can be someone's wife. When you asked, I was so happy, but then the other stuff came. Not just doubt. Not just fear. Dread. I felt so lonely. So very lonely. And trapped.

YOUNG MAN. No.

YOUNG WOMAN. I'm not ready to be in a marriage.

YOUNG MAN. But our love.

YOUNG WOMAN. It is a real thing. But for how long? I am not who I will be. Neither are you. We change. We evolve. Marriage will not solve this.

EMT 1. We've seen this before. My first husband.

EMT 2. My second wife.

YOUNG MAN. But we can change together.

YOUNG WOMAN. I just can't now.
YOUNG MAN. We will be different than the rest. We will try harder. We will always be kind.

YOUNG WOMAN. There is nothing you can say.

(YOUNG WOMAN gives him the engagement ring back. YOUNG MAN accepts it.)

YOUNG MAN. I'm going to read the books anyway. So when it comes, I'll be ready. I'll wait for you.

YOUNG WOMAN. I don't know if it's fair to you. But then again, I could let you get away and always regret it.

YOUNG MAN. Oh.

YOUNG WOMAN. Are you hungry? Let's have a meal and see where it goes.

YOUNG MAN. I think I need to be alone. Right now. Call me tomorrow.

YOUNG WOMAN. Okay.

YOUNG MAN. Or the day after. Or the day after that. I have a lot of reading to do. I might need different books.

YOUNG WOMAN. Will you answer the phone when I call?

YOUNG MAN. I don't know.

(YOUNG MAN and YOUNG WOMAN exit in different directions.)

EMT 2. Too bad.

EMT 1. Yup.

(EMT 1 and EMT 2 start to exit. They are offstage or almost offstage for their next lines.)

PHOTOGRAPHER. So, that's sad.

EMT 2. You still with that guy?

EMT 1. Yup.

Scene Five

The Librarian and the Photographer

(Projected: the graveyard. The LIBRARIAN walks to the grave of The PHOTOGRAPHER. The PHOTOGRAPHER watches.)

PHOTOGRAPHER. She - this... So this is happening. At my grave. The Librarian.

LIBRARIAN. Hi. This is weird. Hi. I wanted to... I saw Charlie. I went to see Charlie, I mean. Wow. This is hard. I. Well, I guess I came for your blessing? I know we were never what you'd call the best of friends. Not that we - I don't have any animosity. I understood. I wanted good things for you. Better than what happened. I mean that. I'm not bitter. I'm resigned. I have my tea. I have my books. I'm not complaining. I don't want an exciting life. But that's not what I came to say. It's been a long time. When I let him go all those years ago. I guess what I'm saying is, I want him back. Which is to say get to know who he has become. But I can't do that if I don't feel like it's okay with you. I've come to you to formally make peace so that he and I - what am I saying? He doesn't want me. He has his own life. His own ways. It can't work. And he doesn't need more love. The love you had was enough for life. Wasn't it? I'm sorry to bother you. Please rest. Peacefully. Sorry.

(GRAVEDIGGER has entered during this. He has arms full of flowers.)

GRAVEDIGGER. Renee.

LIBRARIAN. Hi Earl. How's your mother?

GRAVEDIGGER. Good. Good. She crochets now.

LIBRARIAN. It's good to stay busy.

GRAVEDIGGER. Is it?

LIBRARIAN. When you came in, did you hear me, talking to the gravestone?