

SEASCAPES

By
Andrea Stolowitz

Agent Contact:

Beacon Artists Agency
ATTN: Patricia McLaughlin
501 Broadway, suite 1200
New York, NY 10036
212-736-6630
beaconagency@hotmail.com

Playwright Contact:

Andrea Stolowitz
3009 SE Kelly Street
Portland, OR 97202
858-883-6111
astolowi@yahoo.com

Time: The Present

Location: Long Island

Characters:

John Fisher: An architect, mid-late 40s

Claire Fisher: John's wife, mid-late 40s

Gabriel Clay: A student, mid 20s

Artie Lowenfeld: Friend of John's. Early 50s

FBI Agent: An older guy. Can be doubled as Artie.

A living room in an expensive Long Island ocean front home. There is a large painting of a winter seascape hanging on the back wall. John enters the living room tying his tie, dressed in a nice suit. He looks in the kitchen where he expects to see Claire. He comes back to the living room and looks around briefly but doesn't see her, he goes out on to the deck and then turns back upstage and exits the door he entered. He calls

JOHN

Claire?
Claire?

Suddenly in the living room, Claire pulls her head up from her desk where she had fallen asleep. As she moves papers fall. She is wearing grey sweat pants and a tee shirt. Her hair is a mess. She rubs her eyes. She looks at the computer monitor and sees it's frozen. She hits the keyboard hard, several times. The computer remains frozen. Claire crawls under her desk. As she does this more papers fall. John re-enters.

JOHN

Claire?

CLAIRE

It's frozen again.

JOHN

Did you try-

CLAIRE

It doesn't work.

JOHN

You have to-

CLAIRE

I hit it, I waited, it didn't do anything.

Claire crawls out from under the desk. The computer is re-starting.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Good morning.

JOHN

Did you-

Claire stares at John. He leans over and gently touches one button on the keyboard. The computer re-starts.

CLAIRE

You know in ancient cultures losing your memory meant you were certain to die because you had no ties to your ancestors or your--whatever they're called--the people who come after you, and if you lost that tie, well you were out to sea basically. No connection. The end.

JOHN

Claire, this is Bellport, Long Island and we live in the early part of the 21st century and we've invented Zoloft to make ourselves feel better about the fact that we live in Bellport, Long Island in the early part of the 21st century.

CLAIRE

That's not funny John.

JOHN

I know. I know Claire. It's not funny. Nothing is funny.

CLAIRE

You're just able to forget. Forget everything that's happened, just naturally like that, and that makes you feel superior. Like you can function so damn well. Well great. Congratulations that you have the strength to forget.

JOHN

The computer's up.

Claire stares at it. Pause.

CLAIRE

John-

JOHN

Go on. It's working now.

CLAIRE

I'm sorry. I didn't mean that. John-

JOHN

Let's start again. I'll come in and say good morning and you'll smile and we'll have a cup of coffee together and I'll go off to my meeting and you'll, you'll go about your day.

I'll go put the coffee on.

CLAIRE

There's no more.

JOHN

OK. No coffee then.

The computer beeps, Claire turns to the computer.

CLAIRE

It's him.

She looks at the monitor; John waits.

He says he's scared.
It's hot there. Unbearable.

Claire begins to type, still standing.

He says he hasn't eaten all day.

*Claire is more absorbed in typing. John waits a beat
and then exits. Blackout.*

Scene 2: John and Artie at Artie's house, later that day. They are drinking and have their ties off and collars unbuttoned.

You got 'em!

ARTIE

You think?

JOHN

They loved you, with that thing--what was that thing you had?

ARTIE

The thing?

JOHN

Come on--help me out here. You know the THING, the satellite thing.

ARTIE

Oh. The satellite aerial map. That's pretty standard.

JOHN

See. That's what I mean. You're too dismissive of yourself. You brought the map thing and they liked it. Loosen up, come on, have another.

ARTIE

Artie motions to the Martinis he's made. They drink.

So you think they're gonna take me?

JOHN

Like I said, they were impressed. I mean your units can have people moving in by the end of summer.

ARTIE

Did they like the park?

JOHN

The park?

ARTIE

In the design--I have the townhouses built around a central lake area with a park.

JOHN

Yeah. Like I said, I think it looks great. If I didn't already live here I'd consider moving. No really... Your model--all those little trees--those oaks--

ARTIE

Poplars.

JOHN

What?

ARTIE

JOHN

They're poplars. The poplars give a kind of sports-car-Long Island feel.

ARTIE

I love it. The way you put things. I just love it.

JOHN

So when I left-

ARTIE

I told them what a great smart honest guy you are. I'm telling you, you've got nothing to worry about.

JOHN

Thanks.

ARTIE

What are friends for, right?

JOHN

I appreciate it Artie. I mean I know--
I don't know, with all the stuff that's been going with Claire and--

ARTIE

It's OK. It's all gonna be great.

About the drinks

Want another?

JOHN

No. Thanks. I gotta go soon.

John walks to window.

ARTIE

Nice view, huh?

JOHN

Yeah.

ARTIE

The light, I don't know, when the light hits the water like that it makes everything, I don't know look kind of well you know-

JOHN

I do.

Artie hands another drink to John.

ARTIE

Here. Take it. You did good today. You should celebrate. You gotta celebrate sometimes too you know.

John takes the drink.

JOHN

It'll be good. I mean to have a project, to be working again. Feel excited when you get up in the morning. Have a plan. Get something done with the day. Come home tired.

ARTIE

That's right.

JOHN

I'll be back in the swing of things. Building spaces for people to inhabit.

Artie laughs.

ARTIE

That's why I love ya. Most people would just say they design houses, but not John Fischer. Johns builds...What was that?

JOHN

Spaces for people to inhabit.

Artie holds up his glass as a toast to John.

ARTIE

Here, here.

They drink.

I'm pretty fucking loaded. Minnie would have a cow. She can't drink anymore because of that stuff she takes.

JOHN

Zoloft.

ARTIE

Yeah. Yeah. That stuff. It's better than the diet pills though. My God she slept like two hours a night and the rest of the time she just wanted to "chat", all the time. She had all the fucking energy in the world. It was driving me up a wall. She had a fantastic ass though. It's a tradeoff if you know what I mean. I mean I'm 53 years old. I need to sleep more than I need a wife with a great ass. Right?

John smiles in spite of himself

You see I'm right. Right? C'mon.

Pause. They drink.

I don't know. It used to be no one cared about how anybody else felt. You were depressed, you shut up about it. Now everyone's gotta express every little problem. Drives me nuts.

John looks at Artie. Pause.

Ah-shit John. I didn't mean...I wasn't talking about-

JOHN

I know. It's OK.

ARTIE

It was Minnie. I was talking about Minnie. John?

JOHN

Really, it's OK. I know that.

John looks at his watch.

I gotta go.

He stands. Artie looks.

ARTIE

John-

JOHN

Call me in the morning Artie. Call me as soon as they decide anything, OK. Even if it's not me. Just call me, alright?

ARTIE

I will. As soon as I hear, I'll call.

John starts to exit.

John-

He turns

Drive safe.

*John exits. Artie looks out the window and sighs.
Blackout.*

*Scene 3: John enters the living room.
Claire's not there although the lamp over
her desk and her computer are on. There are
huge piles of printouts, books and random
papers scattered about. John picks up some
of the papers and starts reading them. As he
reads, Claire enters with a huge mug of
coffee.*

CLAIRE

What are you doing?

John jumps and then puts down the papers.

JOHN

I'm sorry, I-

CLAIRE

Those papers were in order.

JOHN

I just wanted to see what you were working on.

CLAIRE

Please. You wanted to make sure I wasn't-

JOHN

I'm just interested.

CLAIRE

I spent all day downloading statistics, which you've just rearranged.

Pause

JOHN

What do you say we go out? Have a nice dinner, relax a little.

CLAIRE

He's waiting for me.

JOHN

I see.

CLAIRE

He's got no one else John. No one. No family, no friends. His best friend pretended not to know him. His daughter won't let him in her house. He's too dangerous to them, so they avoid him. And if he stays in any place too long they'll find him.

JOHN

Claire, I think, I mean do you think, I'm not sure it's healthy for you to-

CLAIRE

I knew you were going to say that.

JOHN

I think it's great that you want to help him. And I think it's admirable that you spend all day doing it. It's just-

CLAIRE

He needs me John. He says he wouldn't be able to get through the day without my company. And when I'm not on-line with him I e-mail Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, The Brookings Institute. I'm not going to let him disappear John. And when he's there, on line, I try to make his day bearable.

Beat

JOHN

I'm gonna go to Shanghai Palace. Do you want to come?
I would like it very much if you'd come with me. We can be back in an hour, OK?

There's a pu-pu platter there with our names on it.

Claire smiles a little.

I'll let you have both the shrimp toasts and I'll throw in an umbrella drink.

Pause. She considers.

CLAIRE

I can't John. I can't. He's-

JOHN

It's OK.

Claire turns back to the computer.

Should I bring you something? Some noodles?

CLAIRE

No. No. I'm fine.

Claire types. John waits.

Really. I'm really fine. I'll see you later.

John looks at her and then exits. Blackout.

Scene 4: Next Morning. Light pours in through the window. Claire is waking up next to the computer. She looks at the monitor and pushes a button. The machine whirs and wakes up. Suddenly all sound stops and the computer goes dark.

CLAIRE

Damn it, damn it, damn it.

She crawls under the table and unplugs the computer and plugs it in again. Nothing from the computer. Claire touches the keyboard from under the desk. Still nothing. She stands up and calls offstage.

John? John!

She moves almost entirely off stage.

JOHN!

Claire returns and touches the keyboard again, very gently. Nothing. She tries again gently. She crawls under the desk and tries again. She comes out and picks up the keyboard and slams it against the table.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Stupid fucking machine.

She slams the keyboard again, pulling the cable out which attaches it to the computer.

Damn it.

Claire picks up the keyboard, crosses the living room with it and in a rage, hurls it off the deck.

She pauses and breaths and realizes what she did. She looks over at the computer which is now keyboard-less. Claire stares at the computer. She moves the mouse around.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Shit.

Claire sits down on the couch. She takes a pile of papers from the coffee table and hurls them across the room. They fly everywhere. She picks up the phone and dials.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Hello. No, I can't... hello? Shit.

Claire stands and paces.

Hello? Yes. I need a keyboard. I don't know. A standard size I guess. It broke. No, not a key, the whole thing. It can too just break...Look...Hello? Hello? HELLO?

Claire slams down the phone hard and returns to stare at the computer. She bangs the mouse on the table. Suddenly there's a knock on the door. Claire stares at the computer. The knock comes again. Claire ignores it.

GABRIEL

Hello?

Claire doesn't move. The person knocks again gently.

Hello? I'm sorry to bother you but-

CLAIRE

Just a second.

Claire sighs and goes to the door. She opens it and Gabriel Clay rushes in. He's holding a towel to his bleeding head and holds her keyboard up like a battle flag.

GABRIEL

You know what the trouble with you people is? You have no concern for anybody else. None. What gives you the right? I mean what really gives you the goddamn right? So what if you're rich. You don't own the airspace around your house or the beach below it. It's a PUBLIC beach you know and I'm the public. I bet you haven't seen one of me in a while.

Claire walks out of the living room

Oh go ahead. Go call the cops to get me out of your house. I'll tell you what lady, I could sue. I could...I could have brain hemorrhaging. As we speak I could be dying of a brain hemorrhage.

Gabriel walks a bit to where Claire went and yells

(MORE)

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

We can no longer allow the rich to parade around in their armored existence, leaving a wasteland behind in their tracks-

Claire re-enters with an ice pack, kitchen towel and first aid kit. She wraps the pack in the towel and hands it to Gabriel. He eyes the first aid kit, which she unpacks, with suspicion. He puts the ice pack on his head as Claire pulls out cotton balls and antiseptic.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

I use only natural medicine.

Claire continues preparing to clean off his head.

Hey lady, what is that stuff? Listen, thanks for the ice-pack but I think I'll just-

CLAIRE

Sit down.

Gabriel stares.

And put the ice back on your head.

Gabriel does and still stares.

Are you going to sit down, or not?

Gabriel doesn't move so Claire leans in and swabs off his head with antiseptic.

GABRIEL

Oww.

Claire swabs more and then finishes.

CLAIRE

There. I take it you don't want the triple anti-biotic cream?

GABRIEL

Do you have any idea the damage antibiotics do to our bodies, the environment and the small family farm? I took a class last winter about the horrors of antibiotics and the devastation they wreak.

CLAIRE

They offer university classes in the horrors of antibiotics?

GABRIEL

Well, I mean the class was called modern medicine and society. I just did a special report on antibiotics.

CLAIRE

I see.

GABRIEL

During the spring health services said I had a sinus infection, but I put my foot down and I refused to take the antibiotics. They made me sign a waiver.

CLAIRE

And?

GABRIEL

I signed a fake name.

CLAIRE

With the infection.

GABRIEL

Oh, well, for the first few days I had some trouble balancing, you know that whole inner ear thing, but then after that I was fine. I cured myself. Willpower and my body cured itself.

CLAIRE

You're young.

GABRIEL

So? And?

CLAIRE

You'll understand when you grow up.

GABRIEL

I am grown up.

Gabriel goes to touch his head.

CLAIRE

Leave it.

Gabriel puts his hand down. They stare at each other.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Listen, uh, do you, do you know anything about computers.

GABRIEL

Yeah.

CLAIRE

Really?

GABRIEL

Yeah, they're the way to fight the dominant American consumer culture with an anonymous, uncontrolled, unmonitored exchange of information from sources far and wide.

CLAIRE

I meant about how they work.

Yeah. GABRIEL

Yeah? CLAIRE

You need these things, these extra things called peripherals. GABRIEL

Peripherals? CLAIRE

Yes, peripherals. Like a KEYBOARD for instance. GABRIEL

Look, um, I'm sorry about- CLAIRE

Imagine my surprise, walking along a beautiful beach on a beautiful day and wham, this thing falls out of the sky and whacks me on the head. I look up and see your deck, perched there, floating out from the house. You could have killed me. GABRIEL

Don't say that. CLAIRE

Why not? It's true Miss richy-rich. I could have dropped there, like a dead duck and never regained consciousness. The tide would have come in and washed me away. I would die from asphyxiation in the water and no one would have noticed. It's far away from everything this beach--I would just be gone without a trace. GABRIEL

Claire has slumped down during the story and is using the desk to support herself. She looks ill.

Get out. Get out of my house. Go. CLAIRE

I- GABRIEL

Please. Please. Just go. CLAIRE

Lady, I'm sorry. Look, are you OK? I was just, I don't know, I was just talking. Look do you want me to call someone? GABRIEL

No. No. Please. I'm fine. Please, just go. CLAIRE

Claire has slumped down more.

Really, I'm-

GABRIEL

Please. Just go.

CLAIRE

Gabriel exits and Claire sits there and rocks herself

Scene 5: John enters, tie in hand. It's late, he's been out celebrating. Claire is bundled, despite the July heat, under several large blankets on the couch. She's sipping water.

Claire-

JOHN

I'm OK.

CLAIRE

You look--were you sick?

JOHN

Something I ate.

CLAIRE

Claire.

JOHN

It's not that John. It's not. I just ate something I shouldn't have.

CLAIRE

I'm calling Susan.

JOHN

No. No. Please. It's really just something I ate.

CLAIRE

Fever?

JOHN

No.

CLAIRE

What did you eat today?

JOHN

I don't know.

CLAIRE

Come on Claire.

JOHN

An egg.

CLAIRE

And? JOHN

3 doughnuts. CLAIRE

You've got to eat better. JOHN

John sits down next to her on couch

It's late. CLAIRE

Yeah. JOHN

Where were you? CLAIRE

Huh? Oh, I went out with Artie and Minnie. I figured you wouldn't want to come. We had a drink to celebrate. The board picked me. I've got the project. JOHN

Good for you. CLAIRE

C'mon. Don't be like that. JOHN

Like what? I mean it, it's good for you. CLAIRE

Fine. JOHN

Anything else? CLAIRE

We were talking about the loft. JOHN

Oh. CLAIRE

And that dinner party we threw, the one with that stuff. JOHN

The styrofoam. CLAIRE

Yeah. Artie just kept saying it looked like everyone was covered in snow. Like we were all inside one of those snow globe things you shake. JOHN

CLAIRE

It was for the paintings. The seascapes.
I wanted to add texture.

JOHN

We all just sat there, eating our soup, snow falling indoors like some kind of late 80s
last supper snow globe.

CLAIRE

And all the kids...they were making snow angels.

Pause

JOHN

They asked about you.

CLAIRE

Yeah?

JOHN

I said you were doing some computer work now. Design stuff. Didn't want to go back
to teaching just yet.

CLAIRE

Uh-huh.

JOHN

Minnie said you should call her.

CLAIRE

Uh-huh.

JOHN

Maybe it would be good for you. You know, to get out a bit.

CLAIRE

The computer broke.

JOHN

What happened?

CLAIRE

It won't start-up right. The repair place can't send anyone till next Wednesday.

JOHN

He'll be OK.

CLAIRE

He's expecting me to be there.

JOHN

Claire-

CLAIRE

I tried going to Kinko's but I couldn't do it, it was so loud in there and so busy. Every five minutes someone wanted to know if they could jump on my computer. I tried explaining to them that I had to wait for him to log-on and that I didn't know when that would be but they just looked at me strangely. Finally the manager came over and asked me to leave. I tried to explain it to him, this pimply faced nineteen year old kid, but then I just started crying and he asked me if I needed any help to get home, if I was OK to drive.

Claire looks at John.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Why John? Why? Why him? Why us? Why did it happen to us?

JOHN

I don't know Claire.

CLAIRE

Maybe he's stuck somewhere. Waiting for us, waiting for us to find him.

JOHN

We looked Claire, we looked for three years. We don't know if he's even-

CLAIRE

He is John.

JOHN

Then he doesn't want to be found.

Claire sits up and gets excited

CLAIRE

We could start over, get another-

JOHN

Claire-

CLAIRE

The last one had too many other cases. He didn't devote enough time to-

JOHN

Claire-

CLAIRE

I think we should try again John.

JOHN

It's no use-

CLAIRE

I could start looking for someone tomorrow.

JOHN

No.

CLAIRE

It won't bother you. It'll be my thing, my project. And this time will be different. I know it. I feel it.

JOHN

No.

CLAIRE

John-

JOHN

I can't do it. The calls, the waiting.

CLAIRE

You can't do it?

JOHN

We tried Claire, we really tried.

CLAIRE

For God's sake John, he's your son.

JOHN

Don't.

CLAIRE

And you weren't there for him.

John waits a beat and then walks out. Claire stares after him. Blackout.

Scene 6: Claire is on couch with blankets pulled over her. Morning light spills in through the windows. There's a light tap on the door. Claire doesn't move. A louder tap and then a voice from offstage-

GABRIEL

Hello? Hello?

Gabriel enters. Claire looks up and says nothing.

Oh--excuse me. Sorry, I well, you know, uh--Your door is open.

Claire stares

I uh-well-I wanted to come by and apologize for yesterday. I think sometimes I can get carried away. You know like I have strong opinions and I yell about them a lot, but I never mean anything personal by it. So, like, I didn't mean to upset you.

He waits.

So I'm sorry.

He waits longer.

Are you OK?

Fucking brilliant. CLAIRE

Oh. OK. Good. OK then, I'll just, I'll see you around. GABRIEL

He turns to leave and walks towards the door.

Wait- CLAIRE

Yeah? GABRIEL

You want some breakfast? CLAIRE

Huh? GABRIEL

Cereal or something? CLAIRE

Uh-sure. OK. GABRIEL

The bowls are in the cabinet above the dishwasher. The cereal is on top of the fridge. The kitchen is that way. CLAIRE

Claire points; Gabriel exits to kitchen. Claire straightens the couch. Gabriel brings back two bowls.

I thought maybe you wanted some. GABRIEL

He sits.

So, what do you want? CLAIRE

Like I said, I felt bad about yesterday. GABRIEL

And? CLAIRE

So I came by. GABRIEL

They eat.

I thought, I mean if you wanted, I could have a go at your computer.

pause
Fixing it, I mean.

Claire stares at her cereal and finally answers.

CLAIRE
That would be very nice.

GABRIEL
Keyboard's are pretty sturdy. I'm sure nothing happened to *it*.

Claire stares.
I was just kidding. My head's OK. I've got a hard head.

Claire stares at Gabriel. He finally stands up to look at computer.

Nice computer. Top of the line.

CLAIRE
It's an annoying piece of shit that won't start-up properly and keeps crashing.

Gabriel fiddles with computer.

GABRIEL
Uh-huh.
So what do you do with it? I mean primarily? Are you a writer?

CLAIRE
No. I use the internet.

GABRIEL
Oh.

CLAIRE
I do human rights work.

GABRIEL
Oh.

CLAIRE
Surprised?

GABRIEL
Well-

CLAIRE
It freezes a lot. And then I have to re-start it and then it usually won't re-start.

GABRIEL
Uh-huh.
Software.

Software?
CLAIRE
You've got conflicts in your software.
GABRIEL
Of course. It figures. Why not in the software too?
CLAIRE
I could check it out for you. The software I mean.

CLAIRE
It's not going to start-up; I tried all morning.
GABRIEL
Watch as I with my amazing and magical abilities tackle the impossible!

Gabriel fiddles with the computer . It boots up.

CLAIRE
How-
GABRIEL
Extensions. You turn off the extensions.
CLAIRE
Oh.
They watch the computer boot.

You on summer break?
GABRIEL
What?
CLAIRE
From college?
GABRIEL
Yeah.
CLAIRE
What college?
GABRIEL
It's out of town.
CLAIRE
Which one?
GABRIEL
University of Oregon.

Portland?
CLAIRE

Eugene.
GABRIEL

What's your major?
CLAIRE

Dunno. I was supposed to declare this spring.
GABRIEL

Oh.
CLAIRE

Gabriel starts typing and checking files on computer.

GABRIEL
Well no wonder. You've got really old files on here that use really old software. You should update to newer versions.
You have to delete these.

No.
CLAIRE

GABRIEL
Fine. You're gonna keep having problems then. Some of these programs are from, jeez, like 1993.

Gabriel reads.

Who's Jason?
GABRIEL (CONT'D)

What are you doing?
CLAIRE

They're all from a file called Jason's hard drive.
GABRIEL

CLAIRE
You know what. Just leave it. I'll have my husband take care of it. Or I'll bring it to someone. Thanks for your help.

GABRIEL
They're gonna ask you the same questions you know.

CLAIRE
I copied the contents of his hard drive on to mine. Jason's my son.

GABRIEL
Well, those are the programs that are causing the problems. Like I said-

I know. I heard you. CLAIRE

Pause

We could burn them on a CD. GABRIEL

What do you mean? CLAIRE

Your computer has a CD burner. GABRIEL

So you're saying we'd put all the files- CLAIRE

And programs GABRIEL

From Jason's hard drive on to a CD. CLAIRE

A few CDs. GABRIEL

And anytime I wanted to look at them- CLAIRE

You'd put in the CD. GABRIEL

You're sure? CLAIRE

Yep. GABRIEL

And then the computer will work? CLAIRE

Yep. GABRIEL

OK. CLAIRE

You don't have CDs do you? GABRIEL

Lots. CLAIRE

GABRIEL
No, I mean empty ones.

CLAIRE
Oh. No.

Pause
I could get some. Where would I get them?

Gabriel laughs

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
What?

GABRIEL
You really do use only the internet.

CLAIRE
I'm old. I can't learn all about computers.

GABRIEL
You're not that old.

CLAIRE
Trust me. I am.

GABRIEL
Computer store. Buy a 10 pack of CDs.

Claire gets a pad of paper and sits back down. She writes.

CLAIRE
"10 pack of CDs". What else?

GABRIEL
That's it.

CLAIRE
Uh, sure. OK.
Can I use it?

GABRIEL
It'll probably crash.

CLAIRE
It's important.

GABRIEL
Your e-mail?

CLAIRE
You wouldn't understand.

No? GABRIEL

No. CLAIRE

Gabriel starts to gather up his stuff. Claire watches.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
I-I write to a political activist in Indonesia. He's being stalked by the police because he wants to organize an official investigation into all the people who disappeared under Suharto. We talk on-line. I think I'm the only one who talks to him.

How'd you find him? GABRIEL

CLAIRE
He found me. On-line. In a chat room about abductions. Everyone else there was talking about alien abductions. He and I were more interested in the earthly kind.

Wow. GABRIEL

Didn't expect it huh? CLAIRE

No. Not at all. GABRIEL

Gabriel looks at computer.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
I can turn off the extensions. I mean it's a short term solution, but it'll help.

Gabriel goes to computer and starts working.

I appreciate your help. CLAIRE

Like I said, I'm sorry about yesterday. GABRIEL

CLAIRE
Me too. I shouldn't have thrown the keyboard off the deck. It's just, well it's not a well-traveled beach. I mean it's usually just the neighbors that walk around here and they all work during the day.

GABRIEL
I was taking a walk. The best beaches are always where the expensive houses are. I like a nice beach.

Me too. CLAIRE

Gabriel finishes

GABRIEL
There you go. Should work OK for today.

CLAIRE
Thank you.

Gabriel stands there
Ten?

GABRIEL
What?

CLAIRE
Tomorrow?

GABRIEL
Sure.

Gabriel stands.
See you then.

CLAIRE
Wait-

GABRIEL
Yeah?

CLAIRE
I don't know your name.
I'm Claire. Claire Fischer.

GABRIEL
Gabriel. Gabriel Clay.

They look at each other, not sure what to do. Gabriel smiles.

I guess I'll see you tomorrow then Claire Fischer.

Gabriel turns to exit

CLAIRE
Wait-

Claire reaches into her purse and hands him some money.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
For the help.

GABRIEL
No, no really. Don't worry about it. I'll see you tomorrow. And don't forget the CDs.

Gabriel exits. Blackout.

*Scene 7: Artie and John at Artie's house.
They're drinking.*

JOHN

It's only been-

ARTIE

They want to sell while the market's still good.

JOHN

Everyone wants to sell while the market's good Artie.

ARTIE

Look John, I like your project. I do. I like the oaks-

JOHN

Pop-

ARTIE

The details, the artistic flair. But this isn't an art project you know. These are townhouses.

JOHN

And?

ARTIE

They want them done fast.

JOHN

They're being done fast.

ARTIE

John, the board went with you because I said you were a man who stuck to his word.

JOHN

I've got to get back to the office.

ARTIE

John-

JOHN

Look Artie, I appreciate your help getting the job but really, I think I know what I'm doing.
I gotta go.

John starts to exit

ARTIE

The board doesn't trust me.

John stops

JOHN

What?

ARTIE

I can feel it when I walk into the room. They all know each other, been friends for years, went to college together. When I walk in it's just...different. I have money so they let me in, but they don't trust me.

JOHN

Artie-

ARTIE

And Minnie thinks I shouldn't have told the board to look at you. She thinks if something fucks up they're gonna blame me.

JOHN

Nothing's gonna fuck up Artie. I promise. OK?

ARTIE

Yeah. Yeah. I know that. Just all this talk with Minnie. I don't know. And then the board had a meeting without me. I thought the sunset years were supposed to be restful. I'm gonna get an ulcer.

JOHN

I think maybe, for your own peace of mind, you should consider encouraging Minnie to take more Zoloft. Or there's this new stuff, Claire flushed it all, but I hear it's good...What is it? Celexa. Yeah that's it. "Celexa, for the new you".

ARTIE

What a fucking mess.

Pause

JOHN

Yep.

John drains his drink.

ARTIE

Want another?

JOHN

Nah. I really gotta get going.

ARTIE

John-

JOHN

What?

ARTIE

No hard feelings, right?

JOHN

No. And just calm down would you? It's all going to be great.

ARTIE

Yeah. Yeah. Thanks.

John exits. Blackout.

Scene 8: John arrives home at 3 AM. Claire is on the computer. Claire turns as John enters.

JOHN

I thought you'd be asleep by now.

CLAIRE

He's telling me all about his childhood. Do you know why?

JOHN

No.

CLAIRE

Because he says if they kill him he wants someone to be a witness to that. To know who he was. His history.

JOHN

The computer's working again?

CLAIRE

Yeah, yeah--this kid, he came over and fixed it.

JOHN

From the computer store?

CLAIRE

No. No. Some college kid. Here on summer break.

JOHN

He came to our house?

CLAIRE

He said it was the extensions. He turned them off or something so it wouldn't crash.

JOHN

Oh.

CLAIRE

He's also gonna burn a CD.

JOHN

A CD?

THIS PLAY IS NOT OVER

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Beacon Artists Agency
ATTN: Patricia McLaughlin
501 Broadway, suite 1200
New York, NY 10036
212-736-6630
beaconagency at hotmail.com