

Let Down The Rains

by Michael Bettencourt

67 Highwood Terrace, #2, Weehawken NJ 07086
201-770-0550 • 347-564-9998 • m.bett@verizon.net

<http://www.m-bettencourt.com>

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Let Down The Rains

DESCRIPTION

A journey changes as the journey goes on, without any guarantee that where the journey ends is where it had intended to go from the start. This often happens in taxi cabs. This is what happens here.

CHARACTERS

- NATHAN DEMBIN, cab driver, must have Irish accent; significantly older than CAPELLA
- CAPELLA WING, a radio psychologist; considerably younger than NATHAN

SETTING

- Taxi cab
- Radio station studio
- Empty room in Rutland, Vermont
- Diner
- Doorstep of CAPELLA's apartment

MISCELLANEOUS

- Two chairs -- plain, wooden, armless
- Rocking chair
- A table
- Other props as called for in the play

Let Down The Rains

Scene 1

Two chairs center: the front seat of a cab, automatic transmission, NATHAN driving. Light on CAPELLA, with coat on and holding a small suitcase, hailing a taxi.

CAPELLA

Taxi!

(to herself)

C'mon, c'mon, c'mon.

(out loud)

Taxi! Taxi! Yes!

Lights up on NATHAN. Throughout NATHAN drives as if he were driving through mid-day city traffic.

CAPELLA

Great! Great! May I sit up front?

NATHAN

I usually don't let people sit up [front] --

CAPELLA

Why?

NATHAN

I'm not in the habit of frontloading my --

CAPELLA

I can be your co-pilot.

NATHAN

I prefer my fares in the back.

CAPELLA

But I was hoping for a view from the front. And everyone can use a good co-pilot. Please.

NATHAN

You could ride the hood as an ornament.

CAPELLA

The figurehead on a ship.

NATHAN

A ship'd be lucky to have a figurehead like you.
Come on.

CAPELLA goes to get in. NATHAN leans over to move the seat back.

NATHAN

Wait. I wouldn't want to be sued for the bruising of such pretty knees.

CAPELLA

A gentleman and a scholar.

NATHAN

You're half right.

CAPELLA gets in, suitcase on lap. She gives a drum roll.

CAPELLA

Your next line is, "Where to, ma'am?"

NATHAN

I'll bite: "Where to, ma'am?"

CAPELLA

Train station.

NATHAN

Penn or Grand Central?

CAPELLA

Penn.

NATHAN

To where, if I may ask?

CAPELLA

A train to my home.

NATHAN

A good place for you, home?

CAPELLA

Oh yes. Especially now.

NATHAN

And traveling light, I see.

CAPELLA opens the suitcase to show that it is empty.

CAPELLA

For bringing some home back to here.

NATHAN

Very good, then.

CAPELLA

Yes it is.

NATHAN hits the meter, pulls into traffic.

NATHAN

Some radio? Music? More heat, less heat?

CAPELLA

I am just like Goldilocks: everything is just right.

NATHAN

You're easy to please.

CAPELLA

That's not entirely true, but it's nice of you to say it.

NATHAN comes to a stoplight. CAPELLA drums her fingers on her suitcase.

NATHAN

And I might as well admit it -- I know who you are, Ms. Capella Wing. You are much better looking than your advertised face plastered on the sides of buses.

CAPELLA

And I have to admit that those pictures scare me -- enlarged pores, the nose like a rutabaga --

NATHAN

"The Shock of the New" -- nifty show title, The Shock of the New.

CAPELLA

Into its tenth year -- one decade of -- well --
(looking at his ID card)
-- Mr. Nathan Dembin, what would you call it?
One decade of my doing what?

NATHAN

You're assuming I listen to your show.

CAPELLA

I thought everyone did.

NATHAN

Perhaps one or three who don't -- but I am not among them.

CAPELLA

(mock anxious)

Oh, I was so worried --

NATHAN
Whenever it's on my shift -- like this morning.

CAPELLA
And?

NATHAN
You're looking for a review?

CAPELLA
A considered opinion.

NATHAN
From a raw-faced stranger.

CAPELLA
A warning about me, Mr. Dembin: if I'm in for a dime, I'm in for a dollar.

NATHAN
And you look eager for an opinion.

CAPELLA
I am all ears.

NATHAN
All right --

CAPELLA
Engage.

NATHAN
As a radio psychologist you, let's say, pull a lot of cars out of the mud that, personally, I would just leave there because they often sound like they simply want to spin their wheels in the muck for the joy of the spinning. I am less forgiving than you on that account.

CAPELLA
One not much for self-pity.

NATHAN
When I've applied it to myself, I've only gotten a rash, so I don't do it.

CAPELLA
You've never pitied yourself?

NATHAN
I didn't say "never" --

CAPELLA

You didn't say "never" --

NATHAN

Only that when I have so self-pitied, I've found that what I thought were anguished tears was just me peeing in my own boots. Pardon my Welsh.

CAPELLA

So I have these people peeing in their boots, so to speak --

NATHAN

And you take them more seriously than I think their tinkling deserves -- you show them what sounds like real heart.

CAPELLA

"Let no heart be unhinged" --

NATHAN

Sincere without making me feel you're "acting" it. And given the daily crap that sluices out of this radio -- you're a touch above. And did that go on a bit too long?

CAPELLA

I may pay to have you quote yourself on my show.

NATHAN

Sometimes my tongue wags worse than a puppy.

CAPELLA continues to drum on her suitcase.

NATHAN

Or beats like those fingers of yours. You seem a bit jittery -- have been since you got into my ticking whale.

CAPELLA, noticing her own drumming on the suitcase, smiles and stops -
- for a moment. Then picks it up.

NATHAN

Is it about going home?

CAPELLA

Not about going home.

NATHAN

So home is a good place.

CAPELLA

Home is a great place.

NATHAN

As it isn't for so many. You're lucky.

CAPELLA

I'm not peeing about it.

More drumming.

CAPELLA

I want to tell you something.

NATHAN

In fact, I'd prefer --

CAPELLA

Would that be all right?

NATHAN

Ms. Wing, I am not a confessional kind of cabbie.

CAPELLA

I wouldn't want to tell you if you were.

NATHAN

Like I said, I usually prefer my fares in the back, limited information in my ear.

CAPELLA

But up front -- yes? Made room for my knees.

NATHAN

Prow of the ship.

CAPELLA

Meaning I'm not "usually."

NATHAN

What else could be concluded about a woman with a rutabaga nose?

CAPELLA

This would be like me doing a call-in to you.

NATHAN

You to me.

CAPELLA

Bartenders, hair dressers, cab drivers, and parish priests all play in the same league --

whether you like it or not -- and you all aspire
to be radio psychologists.

NATHAN

So, my only chance.

CAPELLA

I will never be in the flesh in your cab again.

NATHAN

All right.

CAPELLA

Good.

NATHAN

I'll pick up the phone.

CAPELLA

Good.

CAPELLA hesitates, then pulls back her hair to show NATHAN a bad
scrape on her right ear.

CAPELLA

Look, Nathan Dembin.

NATHAN stops but through the next lines inches forward as the traffic
creeps.

NATHAN

What is that?

CAPELLA

What would you call it?

NATHAN

A pretty bad scrape from being in a scrape. Your
ear looks like hamburger.

CAPELLA

I -- acquired this -- mark about hour before I
got onto your boat.

NATHAN

I should be taking you to the --

CAPELLA

It doesn't hurt --

NATHAN

But still --

CAPELLA

It's minor.

NATHAN

That's not minor.

CAPELLA

I'm not suffering.

NATHAN

Why aren't you?

CAPELLA

You don't really suffer from getting such a gift.

NATHAN

That.

CAPELLA

Who says a gift has to comfort? Where is it written that a gift brings only joy?

NATHAN gives her one long look of understanding.

CAPELLA

You know exactly what I mean, don't you? Because I discovered something. Missing.

NATHAN

Connected to that --

CAPELLA

Yes.

NATHAN

And you want to tell me about that?

CAPELLA

Because of how you complimented my knees. Let me ride up front. Same league, remember?

(coaxing)

"Confrere" --

NATHAN does not refuse to listen.

CAPELLA

All right. I like my show. I think it's good, and you do, too, it seems. I like my life -- I think it's good, too.

NATHAN

Your word on that.

CAPELLA

I have a book out -- soon to be plural --

NATHAN

Congrats.

CAPELLA

I do my lectures, I write my articles. I admit I'm ambitious -- but I admit I'm not all that ambitious because I like things sweet and a little easy --

NATHAN

Who wouldn't?

CAPELLA

The life-gift to me of a happy childhood with two stable parents, no psychic scars, and only mild demons to dance with.

NATHAN

A wonderful litany.

CAPELLA

I have had, and I am having, an intact life. And all of that is true.

NATHAN

An apple without a bruise, it seems.

CAPELLA

Ah --

(considers the phrase)

-- an apple without a bruise --

(drawn out)

But --

NATHAN

(mimicking her)

But.

CAPELLA

(prompting him)

But --

NATHAN

That "but" bears the sound of a bruise.

CAPELLA

Knew I could depend on you! Exactly. Something -- underneath -- is not right. Something -- inside is not satisfied despite --

NATHAN
Despite all your listed satisfactions.

CAPELLA
Yes.

NATHAN
An emptiness?

CAPELLA
No -- a -- boredom.

NATHAN
Ah --

CAPELLA
You say that like you know it.

NATHAN
I do say that like I know it.

CAPELLA
(pointing to ear)
But then this.

NATHAN
How?

CAPELLA points to her right.

CAPELLA
Could we pull over there? I need your attention.

NATHAN
It's a commercial zone -- no standing --

CAPELLA
I'll pay any tickets.

NATHAN, not especially liking the idea, pulls over and stops.

CAPELLA
Thank you. There's an alleyway I usually exit by
from the studio -- and there she was -- Dolores.
She was the last caller --

NATHAN
I remember her.

CAPELLA
On me like contact paper, Mr. Dembin.

NATHAN

She had been shouting at you on the air.

CAPELLA

Which she continued to do in the alleyway. Along with some slapping and slamming.

NATHAN

That's how --

CAPELLA

And then, whoosh, gone. But the attack is not important.

NATHAN

You said an hour before --

CAPELLA

And I had a cup of tea after -- not important -- if someone assaulted you in this cab, you'd be scared, right?

NATHAN

I constantly practice the proper "cringing" that is going to save my life.

CAPELLA

Brought up the same way. You know --
(takes up a mock defensive posture)
But -- there's that "but" again, Mr. Dembin --

NATHAN

But no cringing with Dolores?

CAPELLA

And that's not all. What Dolores had done -- it felt good.

NATHAN

It didn't frighten --

CAPELLA

It thrilled me. You do not pronounce me crazy.

NATHAN

No, I didn't. I don't.

CAPELLA beats a quick happy tattoo on her suitcase.

CAPELLA

The one thing I've started to hate lately? My voice. I hate this perk creeping into it.

NATHAN

"Perk."

CAPELLA

Oh so animated, so -- jaunty. You know.
(in a perky voice)

"And how can I help you today solve your problem?" while underneath in subtitles, "your stupid little life?" Not good. People phone me from the heart of darkness looking for ease, and more and more they find this perked-up voice telling them things that I can't believe I --

NATHAN

Like Dolores. I heard what you said to Dolores.

CAPELLA

And?

NATHAN

I thought it flippant. And harsh. And not in your usual vein.

CAPELLA

Exactly! She had the standard guy standard maltreating her like standard crap -- but instead of "shocking" her into, say, the "new" thing of standing up for herself --

NATHAN

You've done that.

CAPELLA

I have done that -- I have -- but, instead, I, the slightly bored perky little meatman --

NATHAN

"Meatman's" a bit far --

CAPELLA

-- I heard myself telling her that maybe the reason he treated her so miserably is that she really is a miserable person and that she needs to --

NATHAN

And that's when the ballistics began.

CAPELLA

And she was right! But see -- with a quick-fingered engineer, that doesn't matter.

NATHAN

Volume to zero.

CAPELLA

And the closing theme plays, and the perky little voice of Capella Wing is already winging out to the stars. I dispense and then move on, out of my hands --

CAPELLA cleans her hands.

CAPELLA

But when Dolores smacked me down, I suddenly felt very, very, very, very real. After Dolores, I was definitely not bored.

(imitating Dolores)

"I am not going to let you fucking make me feel small!" -- that suddenly put me in my body, the complete opposite of radio waves -- I had weight! It was almost erotic, Nathan Dembin. Really. Really! The asphalt, the grit against flesh, "I am not going to let you fucking make me" -- she made me suffer -- and she brought me back.

NATHAN

Ms. Wing, that's not suffer[ing] --

CAPELLA

The pain made me feel full again.

NATHAN

That's not [suffering] --

CAPELLA

I should thank Dolores since she had really, really listened. Maybe I should have a Dolores smackdown once a week.

(smacks her suitcase)

And that's my story.

NATHAN says nothing, then puts the car into gear and pulls away.

CAPELLA

What?

NATHAN

It's nothing.

CAPELLA

Confreres don't lie.

NATHAN

I don't want to disrespect you, so I'll keep the puppy shut.

CAPELLA

I didn't tell you for you to keep your mouth shut. Give me a response.

NATHAN

I don't think you want a response.

CAPELLA

(statement and question)

I don't?

NATHAN

I think you want approval. A congratulations.

CAPELLA

Is that so?

NATHAN

I think, for some reason, you want --

CAPELLA

(cutting him off)

Enough with the "I thinks." How about this, Nathan Dembin? Are you listening?

NATHAN

With my unscraped ears.

CAPELLA

(without rancor)

How about confrere Nathan Dembin just giving me the straight fucking answer I asked for?

NATHAN keeps an eye on CAPELLA and an eye on the road. CAPELLA keeps her eye on NATHAN.

CAPELLA

(perky)

Have I hit a nerve, Nathan?

NATHAN

You may rent the cab, but you don't rent me.

CAPELLA

So where did "a ship would be lucky to have a figurehead like you" go to? Or were you just blowing smoke up my skirt for the sake of a good

tip? Maybe you think I need something else up my
--

NATHAN

The Dolores smackdown? One of the daftest ideas
I've heard in a long time --

(dismissive)

Pain as a gift -- adrenaline as truth --

(catches himself)

I think the rest should be done in silence.

CAPELLA

I think the rest should be loud with the goddamn
truth.

NATHAN

The benefits of truth are over-rated.

CAPELLA

People who say crap like that over-rate
themselves.

Silence as the gauntlet is thrown down.

CAPELLA

Pull over, right now.

NATHAN

I can't be --

CAPELLA

Right there -- there!

NATHAN pulls over to the curb. CAPELLA gets out of the cab. NATHAN
looks over his left shoulder as if to pull away.

CAPELLA

Wait a second -- I didn't tell you to leave.

NATHAN

(jamming the gear into Park)

You got out --

CAPELLA

You still have my suitcase --

NATHAN

-- what else am I supposed to suppose?

CAPELLA

Get out of the car --

NATHAN
We can't be having a tête --

CAPELLA
Hup! Hup!

NATHAN, clearly controlling himself, goes to slap the meter off.

CAPELLA
Keep it running -- that's right -- get your hand
away from that --

NATHAN gets out of the car and stands opposite CAPELLA.

NATHAN
All right, you pulled me over, you're paying for
the time to run -- so what do you want?

CAPELLA
"Daftest." Daftest. Is that the best you can
do? I want your full attention. I want a better
insult. Look at me straight and tell me --

NATHAN
Take your complaint to the hackney division --
"my driver was not rude enough" -- I have check-
off cards --

CAPELLA
Don't get back inside --

NATHAN
Then get back in the cab.

CAPELLA
I've got nothing to hide.

NATHAN
Get back in so I can take you safely where you
want to go.

CAPELLA
No.

NATHAN
That's my job. It is not my job to toss trash
with you on the street, Capella Wing -- I am just
not going to do that.

NATHAN gets back into the cab. Then CAPELLA gets back in. NATHAN
puts the car into gear and jerks the car back into traffic. A horn
blow, a rude gesture. CAPELLA waits until they're going again.

CAPELLA

Now, that was adult.

NATHAN

Shut up. Sorry. I don't need to insult you. Because you've insulted yourself -- that loopy notion of --

CAPELLA

Loopy --

NATHAN

That daft idea --

CAPELLA

Daft --

NATHAN

Whatever the Christ you want to call it --

CAPELLA

You want to call it.

NATHAN

That stupid idea, then, that pain -- your "Dolores smackdown" -- your suffering -- you didn't suffer -- the -- notion -- that pain is a form a spiritual enlightenment -- that attitude, Ms. Wing -- that -- goddamn -- privileged --

CAPELLA

Go on.

NATHAN

It's exactly what an intact unbruised well-off apple would say. "Aesthetic suffering." The aesthetic suffering of the unbruised apple.

CAPELLA reaches into her coat pocket, pulls out a dollar, slaps it down.

CAPELLA

You and I are definitely in for the whole dollar now, Nathan Dembin.

NATHAN

No we're not. A short distance to go.

CAPELLA

I've got the whole fucking island if I want it.

NATHAN refuses to budge, so CAPELLA begins drumming on her suitcase in a manner calculated to annoy -- perhaps even on to the dashboard and the pine-tree air freshener invisibly hanging from the invisible rear-view mirror and even NATHAN, though she doesn't touch him.

Finally, NATHAN reaches out -- does not touch her hands but indicates that she should stop. CAPELLA adds a tattoo or two more to make her point, then rests. NATHAN reaches into his pants or shirt pocket and pulls out a dollar bill, drops it on her suitcase.

Then NATHAN pulls over to the curb -- or double-parks -- and shifts in his seat to face CAPELLA. He considers what to say, then launches.

NATHAN

One thing I have not been liking about your show.

CAPELLA picks up the two dollars and pockets them.

CAPELLA

I'll hold on to these.

NATHAN

That sometimes, to this ear, you lose your heart and flip up into your head. Maybe that's when this infamous boredom kicks in.

CAPELLA

And how [does this] --

NATHAN

You get all "tough love" -- rub the caller's face into "the truth" -- like you're doing them a favor. That's when you lose me.

CAPELLA

A lot of them need [that] --

NATHAN

And who are you to tell them what they need to need?

CAPELLA

That's why they call.

NATHAN

Now you're just truculent.

CAPELLA

Tru-cu-lent --

NATHAN

Then how's pig-headed and tart-mouthed and spite-filled? You know that's not why they call you. You said so yourself.

CAPELLA

Nathan Dembin doesn't think people should be made to face the truth --

NATHAN

"Should be made to" --

CAPELLA

-- when it's not facing the truth that's jerking their lives around.

NATHAN

"Should be made to" -- a nasty phrase, Ms. Wing. A "head" phrase, a "perk" phrase. Fascist.

CAPELLA

Daft, loopy, stupid, and now "fascist."

NATHAN

"Should be made to" is just like Dolores grinding your ear into the ground. "I am not going to let you fucking make me feel small!" Think about that for a moment.

(touches his ear)

"Should be made to" -- I know what I'm talking about. Is that what you want carved into your tombstone? "Capella Wing, perky little meatman, hurt people for their own good." How nice to provide them with such a service!

(softer)

How nice.

CAPELLA

(sotto voce)

"Perky little meatman."

NATHAN

Not saying it's all the time, or even all that often -- but by your own admission it's more and more --

CAPELLA

(sotto voce)

"Perky little meatman."

NATHAN

And when your voice goes "Now, let me be straight-out with you," I just want to tell the caller to hang it up because you're going to busy-body them to death.

CAPELLA

Does Nathan Dembin think I do anything right?

NATHAN

He already said you do -- it's when your heart is tuned in, not your head. Then you don't go "daft."

CAPELLA

This is not what the marketing people usually tell me.

NATHAN

The "marketeers" --

CAPELLA

They suck up the conflict -- they supposedly can track ad revenue against when callers take offense.

NATHAN

And is that not offensive? No wonder you're bored. Ms. Wing, those who ring you usually have too much "should be made to" being done to them by every bottom feeder in their lives -- they don't need it from you, even if they say they do.

CAPELLA

(to herself)

Phoning in from the heart of darkness.

NATHAN

Those who call you, Ms. Wing, are the bruised apples God threw out of Eden. There's nothing else to call them.

CAPELLA

No aesthetic suffering for [them] --

NATHAN

Not an option for them. All they really want -- is a kind word and what will pass for an embrace to pick themselves up out of their self-pity and move on. The intact ones never have the right to tell the bruised ones what is good for them.

CAPELLA

You know this.

NATHAN

I know this harder than you can imagine.

NATHAN shifts in his seat and pulls into traffic.

NATHAN

I never could be a radio jock.

CAPELLA

Why?

NATHAN

Because when I open my Irish gob, I insert one foot, then the other, and throw in my hobnailed boots for the door prize.

An awkward but not necessarily uncomfortable moment.

CAPELLA

Tell me, Mr. Dembin -- are you a bruised apple?

NATHAN

Funny you should ask that.

CAPELLA

Even while daft, I still have a radar.

NATHAN

Because today I am. To be fair with you -- I feel more bruised today than I have in a long time, and so some of my comments may have come from that --

CAPELLA

Promise not to get tough with you.

NATHAN

All right.

But NATHAN does not speak right away.

CAPELLA

I do promise --

NATHAN

I am in mourning for my friend. For a friend who died. Thomas Carlyle.

CAPELLA

I'm very sorry --

NATHAN

This friend kept me hopeful -- and now I am not so sure.

CAPELLA

How -- did he --

NATHAN

Thomas was murdered.

CAPELLA

Oh God.

NATHAN

Thomas was a beggar and crippled -- that's how I met him -- he had his station up on 59th -- but he had made a complete work of art out of his incompleteness. I'd give him some of my tip money, I'd spot him to meals, we'd take in a game or a museum -- and we'd talk. My dim view of the dim tide of humanity was lifted every time I talked with him.

CAPELLA

Mr. Dembin, I am sorry.

NATHAN

Apparently murdered for sport, since no money was taken. There's nothing else to say.

CAPELLA

I never take "nothing" at face value.

NATHAN

I have heard you use that phrase before.

CAPELLA

So let it gently prod you to go on.

NATHAN

It is not easy to speak of my feelings, even in ordinary hours. But I am angered, Ms. Wing -- I am enraged -- at how a brute coward has broken something so beautiful. I apologize if I have been rude --

CAPELLA

You haven't been rude.

NATHAN

-- since it was driven by an unhealthy regard for my own grief outside the grief of others.

CAPELLA

No apology needed, Nathan Dembin. I'll take this over Dolores any day.

NATHAN

And with that dispensation, we have the train station coming up.

A sudden realization that the ride is over as NATHAN pulls to the curb. They wait.

NATHAN

I haven't asked you where home is.

CAPELLA

Did you love your friend?

NATHAN

I did. I do. I will continue to.

CAPELLA begins to cry. NATHAN digs a packet of tissues out of his jacket pocket. CAPELLA takes them, uses them. NATHAN gently takes the used ones and puts them into his pocket.

NATHAN

I sometimes think a taxi is like a whale, like the ticking belly of a whale, taking all of us scared little Jonahs through a wicked city where everyone swims around in a dream -- and then it lets you go -- abandons you to scrabble around for a truth that will save your life.

CAPELLA

The Farm.

NATHAN

What?

CAPELLA

The Farm -- I'm going to The Farm. You asked me where I was going.

NATHAN

The Farm.

CAPELLA

The Farm.

NATHAN

Where the weary be at rest, hey?

CAPELLA
(grinning)

Once upon a time --

(stops herself)

One hundred acres in Rutland, Vermont -- we,
friends, bought it an ice age ago and started a
commune --

NATHAN

And you still have it going?

CAPELLA

It's weird and it's strange but we still have it
going.

NATHAN

Now you should see your face --

CAPELLA

Rocking chair on the porch -- such peace in that
rocking chair, Nathan Dembin --

NATHAN

I can hear it rock in your voice.

CAPELLA

Gardens, bird-song -- three or four stay year-
round, the rest of us --

NATHAN

Escape the wicked cities when you can?

CAPELLA

Money has to be made and paid. But yes, escape,
and that is where I am going, where "the weary be
at rest."

NATHAN

(taking the last of her tissues)

It sounds wonderful. You are very lucky.

CAPELLA

I'm sorry --

NATHAN

Apology is futile.

CAPELLA

Not for me -- little ol' intact me -- for your
friend -- for Dolores --

NATHAN

And some for yourself would be all right.

CAPELLA

Nah-uh -- gotta be "tough" -- no self-pity!

NATHAN

Ah, go on -- take a little!

CAPELLA

And some for yourself.

NATHAN

Acceptable.

CAPELLA digs money out of her coat.

NATHAN

I wish there were more time to hear about The
Farm.

CAPELLA hands him the money.

CAPELLA

Here's your dollar back -- and the fare.

NATHAN hands her back some.

NATHAN

No tips for me today. In homage to Thomas --
give it to whom you think needs it so that hope
may arise.

CAPELLA

A cab driver not taking a tip -- I'm surprised
the world doesn't fall off its axis.

NATHAN

I'm surprised about that very thing every day.
You have a good trip.

CAPELLA

Watch out for this wicked city.

NATHAN

Full-time occupation.

CAPELLA hesitates getting out.

CAPELLA
If you would like to talk more about him --

NATHAN
(smiling)
Face to face and not on the phone?

CAPELLA
Even you say I do a good job. It is a something
I can do.

NATHAN
Being who I am, Ms. Wing, I am going to let that
car sit in the mud a bit and spin.

CAPELLA
All right, then. All right. But not too long.

NATHAN
Eventually an ox will pull me out.

CAPELLA
Take care.

NATHAN
And you as well.

CAPELLA still hesitates, and there is the feeling that they would both sit there far longer if only one of them would suggest it. Finally, CAPELLA gets out, moves out of the light, and stands. NATHAN stares in the direction that CAPELLA has left, as if following her with his eyes.

NATHAN
"There the wicked cease from troubling, and there
the weary be at rest."

NATHAN waves. CAPELLA waves back. Lights shift to Rutland, Vermont.
Transition with music.

* * * * *

Scene 2

CAPELLA slumps in a rocking chair, coat draped over her shoulders, suitcase by the chair. There is also a second chair. She holds legal documents. She rocks.

NATHAN shows up at what would be the front door, a kit bag slung across his shoulder. CAPELLA notices NATHAN, laughs.

Oh, oh, oh. CAPELLA

Are you all right? NATHAN

In such shapes -- CAPELLA

Are you all right? NATHAN

-- do our angels come. CAPELLA

Where is everything? NATHAN

CAPELLA holds out the documents for him to read. NATHAN kneels by the rocking chair and reads in silence.

I found those in a neat diseased white envelope on the seat of this rocking chair. I'll bet you if I had sat on it, I would've rotted out my cunt. CAPELLA

NATHAN shuffles through the papers.

They took it. NATHAN

They took it, all righty. CAPELLA

All of it. NATHAN

They took me, all righty. CAPELLA

You got outvoted. NATHAN

And, stupid me, I didn't even know they were voting. I left them a message I was coming up -- post-Dolores -- in that hour -- CAPELLA

They cut you out of the vote -- NATHAN

CAPELLA

Must've made them scurry around -- like rats --

NATHAN

You being here wouldn't have made any difference
--

CAPELLA

That's why they hadn't changed the locks yet -- I
had to discover the infection --

NATHAN

(reading)

The new owners are changing the locks next week.

CAPELLA

Funny how we called that a trust.

NATHAN

But they didn't cut you out of the money -- at
least that's a --

CAPELLA

We had established the legal entity of a trust,
and, stupid me, I thought that meant --

NATHAN

It says here --

CAPELLA

I know what it says.

NATHAN

They just needed a majority --

CAPELLA

I know! And now all I have is the book of the
dead and you.

CAPELLA turns to him.

CAPELLA

And why am I not surprised to see you here?

NATHAN sits in the other chair. He folds the papers and hands them to
CAPELLA, but she lets them drop.

NATHAN

I am really sorry --

CAPELLA

A sorry one you are -- I assume you hijacked the cab --

NATHAN

I did --

CAPELLA

-- to Rutland-edge-of-the-abyss-Vermont --

NATHAN

I did --

CAPELLA

My used kleenex in your pocket?

NATHAN

They are --

CAPELLA

How gallant.

NATHAN

More gallant than you have at the moment --

CAPELLA

And my not being surprised to see you: what is that supposed to mean?

CAPELLA gets up, paces, then slams the rocking chair against the floor.

CAPELLA

Tell me what anything of this something is supposed to mean.

CAPELLA slams down the chair again.

CAPELLA

The meaning -- what is the goddamn meaning -- betrayal and treachery and murder and treason and false heart and -- aaahhhh!!!

CAPELLA has the chair over her head, ready to smash it down, her coat fallen from her shoulders -- absolute rage. NATHAN gets to his feet.

NATHAN

Ms. Wing, don't -- you talked -- don't -- you talked to me -- don't! -- about the rocking chair, about the chair that gave you peace -- gave you peace -- a friend that stayed -- it didn't do any of this screwing-over --

CAPELLA pauses, looks around, looks at NATHAN, and laughs. NATHAN takes the chair from CAPELLA and puts it down. CAPELLA walks up to NATHAN and puts her hand against his cheek.

CAPELLA

My fool.

But instead of a caress, CAPELLA gives him a vicious slap with her other hand.

CAPELLA

I want to sit myself inside this rage. It is warm and sharp and clear.

CAPELLA goes to slap him again, but NATHAN grabs her wrist. She goes to slap him with her other hand, and he grabs that wrist as well. She gets a hand free, goes to slap, he blocks her. It is a strained awkward dance, but NATHAN has the strength to control it.

CAPELLA pulls her hands away.

CAPELLA

Right now I wish I had Dolores on the phone. Because I would tell her -- all of them -- that I hate being eye-deep in the running sewer called their "lives" because it's so hard to love people who don't love themselves -- "he doesn't like me, I don't feel actualized, what's my full poten[tial]" -- Christ! -- fire! ice! fucking locusts! -- doesn't matter as long as it would wipe away this scum, this scum that -- scum that would -- that would do that, scum that pisses where I sleep and shits where I dream and takes - - and takes -- and takes -- the possibility -- of peace -- away -- from me. Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhh goddamn it!

NATHAN goes to put her coat around her shoulders. CAPELLA pulls it out of his hands, pulls it tight around her.

CAPELLA

Christ, give me that -- I don't even feel like hitting you again --

NATHAN

Good, because I don't feel like turning the other cheek --

The silence hangs.

CAPELLA

What are you doing here?

NATHAN

I am as surprised as you are about my ending up
in Rutland-edge-of-the-abyss-Vermont --

CAPELLA

Stop it -- don't bull[shit me] --

NATHAN

None intended --

CAPELLA
(smirking)

"Geezer on a Quest" --

NATHAN

I did choose -- I chose you --

CAPELLA

And why would The Geezer waste himself on a
choice like that?

NATHAN

The Geezer is hundreds of miles past thinking
it's a wasted choice.

CAPELLA

Thus proving his mental defect. Because from
this point forward I intend to be someone who --

NATHAN

So you're kicking this gift to the curb?

CAPELLA

Gift?

NATHAN

What is a gift but something you don't know you
need and still get?

CAPELLA

I needed you?

NATHAN

Why else am I here?

CAPELLA

Just go -- I'm tired --

NATHAN

Will this new "someone" be --

CAPELLA

Go --

NATHAN

-- maybe, Wonder Woman "in her satin tights /
fighting for her rights" --

CAPELLA turns on him.

CAPELLA

If you're going to mock me --

CAPELLA goes to kick him.

CAPELLA

-- call me someone with a side-kick so I can kick
you in the fucking side --

NATHAN moves out of the way.

NATHAN

Or will you be Achilles -- "sing, O goddess, of
the anger of Achilles" --

CAPELLA throws the chair at him.

CAPELLA

Shut up!

NATHAN sets the chair upright, stands on it.

NATHAN

Behold the low-rent hard-ass.

CAPELLA

Shut up.

NATHAN

The car spins its wheels in the muck of its own
self-pity --

CAPELLA moves toward NATHAN, who, with a surprising spryness, gets off
the chair and puts it between himself and CAPELLA.

NATHAN

Here, this hard-boiled romantic with a stone
heart to keep her safe from the bungs of the
wicked world --

CAPELLA

Shut up.

NATHAN gets back up on the chair.

NATHAN

"Vengeance is mine" --

NATHAN does a careful little jig on the chair.

CAPELLA

Stop that.

NATHAN

I'm your good-luck Irish leprechaun, come at the
end of the rainbow. La-di-dah-di-dah-di-di --
I suppose you're gonna sue 'em.

CAPELLA

You're going to crack your bones --

NATHAN still dances.

NATHAN

Bring on the sharkish lawyers --

CAPELLA

Stop --

NATHAN

I'm here to stop you from such legal foolishness
-- top of the mornin' to ya --

CAPELLA

Irish leprecunt --

NATHAN stops dancing.

CAPELLA

I am going to sue them.

NATHAN

No! No! Ms. Wing, I have to try harder --

NATHAN starts dancing again.

CAPELLA

It's Capella -- and stop --

NATHAN

Still Ms. Wing to me --

CAPELLA

Just stop!

NATHAN stops dancing, catches his breath. They watch each other.

CAPELLA

Why shouldn't I make them suffer? Why shouldn't
I murder them back?

NATHAN gets off the chair.

NATHAN

Sit. Please.

CAPELLA

Answer my question.

NATHAN

Sit.

CAPELLA sits in the rocking chair. NATHAN sits in the other chair.

NATHAN

I add to your docket of heart-murder by supposed
friends the case of Senseless Brutality versus
Thomas Carlyle.

CAPELLA

Thomas --

NATHAN

My beggar friend.

CAPELLA

Right.

NATHAN

My bruised apple.

CAPELLA

I'm sorry -- I'd forgotten.

NATHAN

Who do you think got me to come here? It never
would have been Geezer Nathan Dembin all on his
own.

With THOMAS' name in the air, they fall into silence.

CAPELLA

Shit! Shit!

More silence.

CAPELLA

It's like I have this fucking monitor that sits up here -- "oh, look at how rageful she's being, how she's trying to be so sincere" -- a goddamn critique -- a performance --

CAPELLA faces NATHAN.

CAPELLA

But there was a moment -- a moment --

NATHAN

There always is --

CAPELLA

-- when I saw the papers -- when I first saw you --

NATHAN

Pure --

CAPELLA

Pure it was --

NATHAN

That's why we sometimes hunger for rage --

CAPELLA

-- it was clean -- so clean -- right through the gut -- purged -- cleansed --

NATHAN

Filletted --

CAPELLA

Chop-chop! -- and then -- to get dragged -- back to -- grief --

NATHAN

To the Farm and Thomas and [Dolores] --

CAPELLA

-- and all the annoyance of having to, again, breathe in and breathe out --

NATHAN

And to figure in and figure out --

CAPELLA

Keep in and keep out --

NATHAN
Call in and call out -- that should've been yours
--

CAPELLA
It just got me tired --

NATHAN
Me, too -- all of it --

CAPELLA looks at NATHAN directly.

CAPELLA
If you're my weather report, Mr. Dembin, then
what's the forecast?

NATHAN
I talked to Thomas, all the way here -- a little
like talking to someone on the radio. About what
I seemed to be doing.

CAPELLA
Do you know what you're doing?

NATHAN
No. And yes. And then no and yes again.

CAPELLA
You're ahead of me.

NATHAN
Do you want to hear what I said to Thomas?

CAPELLA
Of course.

NATHAN
Good -- because there is much riding on the back
of this horse.

NATHAN pauses, then stands, turns, unzips his pants to tuck in his
shirt.

CAPELLA
What are you doing?

NATHAN
This is the only way I know how to do this.

NATHAN finishes the tucking-in and turns to CAPELLA.

CAPELLA

You look like a schoolboy.

NATHAN

And altar boy -- old bottle for a new wine.

CAPELLA

(pointing, smiling)

Ah, Mr. Dembin --

NATHAN looks down and sees that his fly is unzipped. He pivots away, zips up.

NATHAN

Oh, for Christ's sake --

NATHAN turns back.

NATHAN

Is everything --

CAPELLA

Intact.

NATHAN

Good. Wouldn't want your mind distracted.

NATHAN once again takes up his recitation stance.

NATHAN

What the schoolboy/altar boy in the ticking whale said to his friend Thomas.

CAPELLA

You look like you've just dropped forty years.

NATHAN

More like forty IQ points.

(prepares himself)

Okay. What I told Thomas. I told Thomas about an article I read about lost twins -- about how in a lot of twin pregnancies, one of the twins just disappears, leaving an empty space. Thomas mused that maybe every single baby is a left-behind twin because he noticed that we never seem to stop hungering for that "one" who makes us feel complete.

CAPELLA

Thomas is a much better co-pilot than I was.

NATHAN

(holds up hand)

I lose track easily. I added that perhaps this also explains the human puzzle that, at one and the same time, we ache to be connected and yet fear any closeness because we may lose it again to chance and death. And yet we do manage, somehow, to connect. Thomas agreed. It went something like that.

CAPELLA gives him two claps of applause, then falls silent. NATHAN cups his hand to his ear, as if he were wearing a headset, and sits.

NATHAN

Thank you for calling. How can I help you?

(to CAPELLA)

Make believe I know what I'm doing. Come on.

CAPELLA

Thank you for taking my call.

NATHAN

How can I help you?

CAPELLA

I'm not sure.

NATHAN

I never take "I'm not sure" at face value. You have to try a little harder.

CAPELLA

I want to understand.

NATHAN

All right.

CAPELLA

And I want amnesia.

NATHAN

To protect you from the understanding -- all right.

CAPELLA

And I want revenge.

NATHAN

Which may or may not bring you peace -- all right.

CAPELLA

And I want peace.

NATHAN

Which may or may not come packaged with the understanding.

CAPELLA

How does this all connect?

NATHAN

Listen closely: Thomas speaks. You have to accept suffering, yours and others', accept its inevitability, and then forget it so that you can move on, but move on without forgetting it.

CAPELLA

I can't --

NATHAN

Ah-ah --

CAPELLA

Take my call again.

NATHAN

Thank you for calling.

CAPELLA

Thank you.

NATHAN

How can I help?

CAPELLA

I have no home to move on to.

NATHAN

I never take "I have no home" at face value. Try a little harder.

CAPELLA

I have no "try" left in me.

NATHAN

That only means that, for the moment, you have no love. And that "for the moment" only means for the moment, mind you. When you have love, then you have "try," then you have home.

(takes his "headset" off)

Or something like that. Thomas would've said it better.

CAPELLA indicates for NATHAN to hand her the papers.

CAPELLA

This is all I have, Mr. Dembin.

NATHAN

These? These are your instructions for letting go.

CAPELLA

You don't know how beautiful it was here.

NATHAN

And there are no more beautiful places?

CAPELLA

But to be cheated --

NATHAN

Vengeance doesn't bring the twin back.

CAPELLA

Can't I chop them in the neck? Just a few blood-spatters?

NATHAN

Always with the gut sensations.

CAPELLA

It's cold in here.

NATHAN

I can't tell you how empty I felt when I saw how emptied out everything was --

CAPELLA

Your one big let's-just-do-it impulse ends in a bust.

NATHAN

Let me finish the call, Ms. Wing.

CAPELLA

(laughing)

Go ahead.

NATHAN

But I think my trip here has been wildly successful. So does Thomas.

CAPELLA stands, grabs the valise, opens it, puts the papers inside.

CAPELLA

The kleenex.

NATHAN puts the used tissues inside as well.

CAPELLA

Take me back, Mr. Dembin. No more gold foil on the dung pile.

NATHAN

The whale awaits.

A few steps, then turns to face him.

CAPELLA

I still hate them. I still want to hurt them.

NATHAN

Betrayal is a form of murder, isn't it? Who wouldn't want to murder back?

CAPELLA

What would Thomas say -- have said?

NATHAN

"Say" is the right tense. Do the murdering in your head -- it's a lot easier to clean up afterwards, and you can do it as often as you want. In the meantime, get your revenge by living well -- much easier on the gut.

CAPELLA

Quite the fool, he was.

NATHAN

Thank God, wouldn't you say? I do.

CAPELLA leaves, standing just outside the light. Then NATHAN follows, slinging his kit bag across his shoulder and giving a push to the rocking chair that leaves it rocking. Then, on an impulse, he goes back and takes the chair. Lights go to black. Transition with music.

* * * * *

Scene 3

A diner mid-way between there and here: table, two chairs, two coffee cups, NATHAN stage left chair, CAPELLA stage right chair. NATHAN's kit bag is slung across his chair.

CAPELLA

I didn't realize I was so hungry.

NATHAN
Adrenaline can kill an appetite.

CAPELLA
You must be exhausted.

NATHAN
This bag of bones still has some kick in it.

CAPELLA
Dancing the little jig --

NATHAN
But it will be nice to get back.

CAPELLA
You'll be in trouble, though.

NATHAN
Still nice to be back.

CAPELLA
I'll take that as a theory-to-be-proved until I'm there.

NATHAN
Fair enough. What?

CAPELLA
(waving it away)
It's all right.

NATHAN
Not a good time to hold anything back.

CAPELLA
No, really --

NATHAN
Ms. Wing --

CAPELLA
It's nothing --

NATHAN
That didn't work in the cab and it won't work here. What is it?

CAPELLA
It's nothing -- As much as I want all this to feel -- adventurous? -- and the food was good, the talk was good --

NATHAN

Yes?

CAPELLA

My Dolores sense is still ringing.

NATHAN

Really?

CAPELLA

I gotta say it --

NATHAN

Loud?

CAPELLA

Off the hook.

NATHAN

Ah -- you mean, "Why did the geezer cross the road to Vermont?"

CAPELLA

I mean this -- you, total stranger, meets me once, then drives himself to Rutland --

NATHAN

Edge-of-the-abyss-Vermont --

CAPELLA

-- without -- look, I should just be flattered --

NATHAN

No -- no --

CAPELLA

Grateful --

NATHAN

-- what Dolores is saying is, What are the nasties in this fool?

CAPELLA

Yes. Exactly. I'm sorry, but -- yes --

NATHAN

When will his dirt hit me -- hurt me?

CAPELLA

Because nobody is this -- can be this --

NATHAN

And because you think that nobody has ever -- you can't trust me.

CAPELLA

Mr. Dembin, after today, who knows what's in anybody's heart --

NATHAN swings his kit bag around.

CAPELLA

Look, forget it -- I'm just being ungrateful --

NATHAN

Why are you so intent at this moment to make it all make out to be nice? It's not all nice.

NATHAN reaches into the bag and brings out an enormous sheathed knife, lays it on the table.

NATHAN

There are times when etiquette will get your balls cut off -- pardon the Welsh.

They stare at the knife.

NATHAN

SOG Recon Bowie.

CAPELLA

It has a name.

NATHAN

High-carbon SK5 steel and gun-blued for rust inhibition and stealth. Epoxied leather handle and spanner nut for balance and feel. Vietnam-war era.

CAPELLA

And it has you as its owner.

NATHAN

Go ahead if you want.

With both reluctance and fascination, CAPELLA picks up the knife.

CAPELLA

This has stories.

NATHAN

Of course.

CAPELLA

Has it --

NATHAN

It has been used. Go ahead.

CAPELLA unsheathes the knife.

NATHAN

Lower it -- I wouldn't broadcast it about.

CAPELLA

You have used this.

NATHAN

Yes.

CAPELLA

You are capable [of] --

NATHAN

Yes.

A moment during which CAPELLA must decide whether to hold the knife and ask the next question or put the knife away and give it back to him in silence.

CAPELLA

I have to ask.

NATHAN

You being you -- Dolores being Dolores -- you do, don't you?

CAPELLA

I do.

NATHAN

Because you know that even perfect angels kill, like St. Michael with his sword, and gallant knights do slaughter.

CAPELLA

Make it quick.

NATHAN takes the knife, sheathes it, puts it away.

NATHAN

We don't need this.

CAPELLA

Make it quick.

NATHAN

Nineteen-eighty-nine, Namibia. Do you know where Namibia is?

CAPELLA

No goddamn asides --

NATHAN

I didn't until 1985, when I went there in the middle of its war against South Africa for independence. I was recruited by one Irish mercenary named Donald Acheson, an IRA man, like me, who himself was a hired member of a South African Defense Force death squad titled, nicely, the Civil Cooperation Bureau --

CAPELLA

No goddamn editorializing --

NATHAN

Acheson does away with leading Namibian independence activist Anton Lubowski, shot nine times outside his house with an AK47. Acheson was named alongside nine other people for the murder. But. They missed someone.

CAPELLA

You.

NATHAN

I was a member of Acheson's crew -- Lubowski was only one of the many -- But I was also playing the other side -- the money was unbelievably good -- right, no editorials -- and I told the Namibians about the upcoming assassination. But for some reason -- After the killing, I found it expedient to change my occupation since it was not healthy to be pursued by two governments, three if Ireland chipped in. It wasn't hard -- I melted away. Into a taxi cab, my ticking whale. I do have blood on my hands.

CAPELLA

Why?

NATHAN

Many reasons, no absolutions -- I did it because the money was good, I'd known Acheson for the crazy IRA fuck that he was and at that time in the politics of my life "crazy IRA fuck" went a long way with me.

CAPELLA

I'm wondering if I should be afraid.

NATHAN

(pats his bag)

Of this? No -- no. I do carry it for protection -- which is an illusion because I am not sure I could ever use it again. For what it had been used for. You taking it out is the first time it's been out since -- well, it's never been tested in my cab.

CAPELLA

I meant afraid of you.

NATHAN

All I can say is this: I am what I am because of what I have been. I listen to Thomas and come for you in Rutland because of what I have been. Everything that was has been poured into what is. What else can I say? Except I wouldn't be surprised if you decided --

CAPELLA holds up a hand to stop him.

CAPELLA

Which hand did you use?

NATHAN

Both.

CAPELLA

Most often.

NATHAN

My left.

CAPELLA gestures to him, and NATHAN hands her his left hand. She slides it under her coat and places it on her left breast. NATHAN tries to pull away,

NATHAN

What are you doing --

CAPELLA does not let him go.

CAPELLA

Don't. Feel. Feel! What do you feel?

NATHAN

Nothing.

CAPELLA
Not nothing. Breast?

NATHAN
No -- I don't --

CAPELLA
Then what?

NATHAN
A ridge.

CAPELLA
A ridge of scar.

NATHAN
Cut away?

CAPELLA
Cut off. To the bone. By my own chosen knife.
A scarlet letter over my heart.

NATHAN gently tries to tug away, but CAPELLA holds him.

CAPELLA
What else? Feel.

NATHAN
Your heartbeat. Your ribs. Your breathing. In
and out.

CAPELLA
You feel my life -- the same as this morning --
and not the same.

CAPELLA keeps his hand there.

CAPELLA
Take it back now.

NATHAN takes his hand away, looks at it as if it's been either charmed
or withered.

NATHAN
"Should I be afraid of you?" is a question on the
table as well.

CAPELLA
We all have our knives in their sheathes --
that's all, Mr. Dembin, that's all it was.

NATHAN

Does this swap of information make it that we're traveling back together? Or not?

CAPELLA

I think -- I think we have to give our ticking whale a chance to spit us back onto the beach.

NATHAN

The Bible said "vomit" for Jonah -- but I think I can do us better than that.

They stand. NATHAN puts down money for the check.

NATHAN

Your dollar's in there. Jonah went on to complete his work, you know. Telling people about their sins. The whole city of Nineveh, as a matter of fact -- they put on sackcloth and repented and God accepted.

CAPELLA

The Ninevehns had it easy, though, didn't they? They got a full set of instructions.

NATHAN slings on his kit bag.

CAPELLA

I'll drive.

CAPELLA gestures for the keys. NATHAN reaches into his pocket and passes them on to her.

NATHAN

You give me a tough co-pilot act to follow.

CAPELLA

Just find us something interesting to listen to on the radio. Think you can do that?

NATHAN

Aye-aye, captain.

They turn to leave the diner, but CAPELLA stops.

CAPELLA

And I want you to know that just because you have the rocking chair in the back seat does not mean anything.

NATHAN

And I am getting close to being double your age.

CAPELLA

Nothing here has been tied up, neatly or otherwise, Mr. Dembin --

NATHAN

Since when is that a requirement? Or even a thing to be desired?

CAPELLA

And Dolores is still "on."

NATHAN

For us both.

NATHAN meets CAPELLA's gaze squarely.

NATHAN

A lot of deal-breakers here, aren't there?

CAPELLA

Just no talk radio on the way home.

NATHAN

Just music.

CAPELLA speaks as she walks away.

CAPELLA

I'm glad you saved the rocking chair.

NATHAN follows. Transition with radio/music.

* * * * *

Scene 4

Several days later. NATHAN is in the rocking chair; there is a second chair next to him. CAPELLA walks in, as if coming from somewhere.

NATHAN

Good show today, Ms. Wing.

CAPELLA

Yeah, it was. Why aren't you --

NATHAN

As you can imagine, I am no longer employed by my hackney company, the trip to Vermont off the meter somewhat outside their rules and regs -- they decided not to press charges once I told them of my heartfelt journey --

CAPELLA

You're kidding.

NATHAN

That and the restitution I made to them seemed to solve everything. They won't give me a letter of reference, though, I don't think.

CAPELLA

What are you going to do?

NATHAN

I have some means -- not to worry. But at the moment it gives me time to cross the river to your New Jersey porch and warm this up for you.

NATHAN gets up and offers CAPELLA the rocking chair, which she takes.

NATHAN

Adjustments for customer comfort.

CAPELLA looks at NATHAN closely.

NATHAN

What?

CAPELLA

Will you do me a favor?

NATHAN

I'm in favor of that.

CAPELLA

Will you call me Capella?

NATHAN

I suppose I've earned that.

CAPELLA

And should I call you Nathan or Nate?

NATHAN

Nate would be neat.

CAPELLA

Nate, sit down. Tell me what you liked about the show.

NATHAN sits.

NATHAN

Capella, your little intro about acting upon
one's primary impulses was strikingly apt.

CAPELLA

Nate, I want you to tell me all about what you
liked about it.

NATHAN leans into CAPELLA.

CAPELLA

You may.

They kiss.

NATHAN

That's just an introduction to my commentary.

CAPELLA

And we sit where the weary be at rest.

NATHAN

Finally.

BLACKOUT