

Straight on 'Till Morning

Noa Gelb

Cast of Characters

Girl: early 20s

Boy: early 20s

ACT I

Scene 1

It is night. Two people, a boy and a girl, sit in a parking lot looking up at the stars. They are 22, though they seem younger. They are best friends, though they are closer than most. The sounds of crickets and distant traffic can be heard. There is a 6-pack of craft beer on the ground next to them, they are both on their second bottle. Next to each of them is a backpack. This is a regular occurrence for these two.

GIRL:
I'll never get over this view.

BOY:
Yeah, it's nice.

Beat.

GIRL:
I'm going to miss this. Being able to see the stars.
You can't see the stars in the city.

BOY:
Only in the country.

Beat.

GIRL:
Do you know what you're doing? After graduation.

BOY:
No idea.

Beat.
I was thinking maybe traveling. Seeing the world.

GIRL:
Where would you go?

BOY:
I don't know. I've never left here. Maybe China. Or Norway. Or one of the islands in the Pacific. Somewhere different.

GIRL:
Maybe I'll come with you.

BOY:
What about you?

GIRL:
What about me?

BOY:
What do you want to do? After graduation?

GIRL:
I'm working for my dad's company-

BOY:
No, I know what you are doing. But what do you want to do?

Beat. Girl thinks about this. She sits up.

GIRL:
You know what I want. I want to fly. Like right now. I want to just say fuck it and fly straight up.

Standing. She points to a star.
I want to go there. The second star to the left and straight on till morning.

BOY:
(laughs)
Yeah, that sounds nice.

Beat.
You haven't told him yet?

GIRL:
(sitting back down)
No.

BOY:
You've got to tell him. If you don't want to take over the company, you've got to tell him. I'm sure he'll understand.

GIRL:
You don't know him.

BOY:
He's your dad.

GIRL:
Yes, he is. And he wants one thing from me. To continue his legacy. If I tell him I don't want it, it would crush him.

BOY:

Could you do it? The job? If you wanted to?

GIRL:

Yeah, I could. That's the awful part. I could be really good at it. But I don't want a desk job. That just sounds so... stationary. I want to be able to go where I want, see what I want, do what I want.

BOY:

So why don't you?

GIRL:

I owe him.

Beat.

I don't want to talk about him. Put on some music.

Boy reaches into his backpack and pulls out a phone and a portable bluetooth speaker. He proceeds to play soothing, calming music, the kind befitting a night under the stars. They both listen to the music for a while in silence. Girl then reaches over to her backpack and pulls out a box. Inside the box, she takes out rolling paper, marijuana, and a grinder. She proceeds to make a joint. When she's finished, she puts away all of the materials back into the box pushing it over to the side. She goes to her bag for a lighter only to discover she doesn't have one. By the time she turns around, Boy is ready with his own lighter, a practiced routine. Girl takes a long drag.

This is another thing I'm going to miss. No weed allowed with the biweekly drug tests all employees have to do.

She passes the joint to Boy, who also takes a drag. They continue to pass the joint between each other for the following.

BOY:

I heard from her today.

GIRL:

You're kidding.

BOY:

She wanted to get drinks.

GIRL:

Did you go?

BOY:
Yeah.

Beat.

GIRL:
You gonna leave me in suspense? Tell me what happened.

BOY:
She said she misses me.

GIRL:
Does she?

BOY:
(pause)
I don't know.

GIRL:
Do you?

BOY:
I don't know.

Beat.
She just got dumped.

GIRL:
By the guy she cheated on you with.

BOY:
Yea, well, she said it was a momentary thing. That it didn't mean anything.

GIRL:
If it didn't mean anything then she didn't need to do it.

BOY:
Yeah, you're right.

Beat.

GIRL:
Do you love her?

The horn of a train is loud as a train passes. It is a long train. There is no talking until the train has passed.

BOY:
I did.

GIRL:

And now?

Boy starts to say something, but stops himself. He is clearly struggling with something.

BOY:

Do you want to dance?

GIRL:

Now?

BOY:

Yea. I want to dance. I don't want to think about her.

GIRL:

(standing up, offering hand)

Come on, then.

She helps him up and he gently takes her in his arms. She is confused, but is willing to go along. They sway to the music. For a while, the only sounds are the crickets, the distant traffic, and the music. Boy has closed his eyes.

BOY:

I don't think I still love her.

Beat.

GIRL:

Let's go to China first.

BOY:

What?

GIRL:

I'm coming with you. China, then Norway, then Samoa. It's in the Pacific, to warm up after the cold of Norway.

(She is excited, already planning the trip.)

We can live out of backpacks. Rent motorbikes in China, go where we feel like. See the Great Wall, the Terracotta Warriors, The Forbidden City!

BOY:

We could ride horses across a fjord and stay in cities we can't pronounce.

GIRL:

Ride one of those raft things and only eat fresh fish from the ocean.

Boy laughs. There's a beat. It's sad. They know this is their last time together like this. They don't know if they will see each other again. Slowly they stop swaying until they are just standing there, hugging. Girl's head is in Boy's chest, face out. Tears welling up. Boy has his head on top of Girl's, face a similar expression of mourning the end. They hold tight to each other, acting as each other's lifeline's in the scary pool of change.

BOY:

I'm going to miss this.

GIRL:

(sadly)

Me too.

Lights fade as the two stand there. The stars become brighter and the music becomes louder. Blackout.