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# MINNEAPOLIS: 2012

## a Verbatim Theatre Project

created by Chase Burns Broderick

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**STORYTELLERS:**

RYAN COLBERT

VIVIAN NGO

CHASE BURNS BRODERICK

**STORY-MAESTRO:**

RYAN PATRICK

**SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

Judy Bartl, Bruce Roach, Ron Peluso, Teresa Phung, Sheila Livingston, Nico, Wilson, Stacy, Tim, The Holiday Inn Boys, and Drunk Girls all over the World

~ Research Made Possible by University of Minnesota's UROP grants ~

with the poetry of

Louis Jenkins

1<sup>st</sup> Draft

August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012

919 21<sup>st</sup> Ave S

Minneapolis, MN 55404

Minneapolis: 2012 is an exercise in community and storytelling.

***a bit about its inspiration:*** I've always been inspired by the diversity within the Mini Apple. Its inhabitants range in sizes, shapes, and histories—but somehow the city maintains a complete and quirky feel. Thus, my initial thought with the project was to take interviews from people all over the city and create a one-man show. However, I found problems with representation.

What does it say for a white man to take stories of diverse people and put them on his body?

The project quickly expanded into a three person show—now including Ryan Colbert and Vivian Ngo. To further the concept of the piece, we each chose to represent stories of people physically different from us. The hope is that the text is not only challenged, but also deepened with this choice.

***notes on performance:*** The performance of this show is intended to be moveable. "Minneapolis: 2012" is designed to be able to be placed in any room, space, or concert hall. It's 'Ready-Made Theater'! Furthermore, the idea of the show is that we put the overall arch of each performance in the audience's hands.

The shows begin with a 30 minute 'meet and greet', where food and drink are provided to all. (There is no set and no props, so the budget is intended to be spent entirely on this party.) During the 'meet and greet', each audience member is given a checklist with monologue cluster titles on them. The audience chooses their favorites through democratic vote, the actors then organize to know the "playlist", and then the five most popular are performed! This design scheme creates a type of theater that is sustainable. Each show is different, and more monologue clusters can be added through a run of the show, thus allowing people to return again and again.

-CBB

**THE CAST**

**STORYTELLERS**

CHASE – 19. White.

RYAN – 20. Mixed Black.

VIVIAN – 21. Vietnamese.

& The STORY-MAESTRO

**THE CHARACTERS**

TERESA

SHEILA

NICO

‘DRUNK GIRL’

‘WILSON’

STACY

NICK

SUE

### A LEISURELY AND INTIMATE BEGINNING

a thirty minute get together with the audience  
there should be as much food and booze as budget can buy  
donations accepted— money not required  
partygoers are given a checklist with monologue cluster titles on them  
they choose their favorites  
(see following page for checklist)

the storytellers are dressed in fancy black and white,  
they serve the food and drink  
however, the white is easily removed, as they will be changing into blacks

the story-maestro serves the booze  
he is also dressed in black and white, but with an added flair of color

towards the end of the gathering, storytellers collect checklists  
the most popular are determined and become the performance schedule for evening

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## CHOOSE FIVE.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intimately, from a Distance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Serious Affairs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> For the Love of Beer        | <input type="checkbox"/> Gods                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Punks and the Naked Body    | <input type="checkbox"/> What's in Your Hot-Dish?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sides of Citizenship        | <input type="checkbox"/> The Mississippi Color Line |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Tobacco Club            | <input type="checkbox"/> What I Eat                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oh, to Know the Suburbs     | <input type="checkbox"/> That Quintessential Place  |

## A GAME

a safe game of “MARCO – POLO” is initiated

one storyteller covers their eyes with their hands and yells “MARCO”  
another yells “POLO” and becomes the person “MARCO” is pursuing  
when “POLO” is tagged, they cover their eyes and become “MARCO”, the pursuer  
this continues for a short bit

audience members are encouraged to enter play  
but there is absolutely no pressure

the name “MARCO— POLO” is eventually swapped for the storytellers’ names  
a game of “RYAN – COLBERT”, “VIVIAN – NGO” and “CHASE – BRODERICK” is played

audience members are encouraged to enter play  
if they say their first name, the responder must know their last name

the game then transforms into a game of titles  
the following must be used for each storyteller:

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### RYAN COLBERT

AfricanAmericanEuropeanNativeAmerican – Black  
PoorKid – WelfareKid

### VIVIAN NGO

Vietnamese – Asian  
RaisedinOrangeCounty – Spoiled  
Short – and Sweet

### CHASE BRODERICK

EnglishFrenchGermanRussianCzech – White  
Gay – Homo  
RaisedinIdaho – Ohio?

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terms can change and adapt based on what is found in rehearsal and performance

audience members may enter play  
it could get messy

the final term used in the game is for RYAN COLBERT:  
“RaisedinMinneapolis – That’sWhat’sUp”  
instead of one person responding, however,  
both VIVIAN and CHASE respond with “That’sWhat’sUp”  
turning it into a round  
that joyfully rises to a peak  
and then stops at a foot stomp

CHASE

This is—

ALL THREE

“MINNEAPOLIS: 2012”

VIVIAN

A theater piece about the people of Minneapolis—

RYAN

Their actual stories—

CHASE

And the spirit that binds them.

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the show transitions to the monologue clusters  
the order is determined by the audience’s earlier voting  
storytellers change into simple blacks  
story-maestro stays fabulous

## **MONOLOGUE CLUSTERS**

(Currently including 2 complete clusters, the 2nd draft will include a full 12.)

## CLUSTER ONE

### INTIMATELY, FROM A DISTANCE

The Story-Maestro stands.  
VIVIAN, RYAN and CHASE transform silently.

#### STORY-MAESTRO

'The Kiss' by Louis Jenkins.  
When I was eleven or twelve years old I thought  
a lot about kissing girls. Since I had never  
kissed a girl, romantically, that is, I was unsure  
how to go about it. I tried to imagine grabbing a  
girl roughly, as sometimes happened in movies,  
turning her around and kissing her hard on the  
lips. ("She struggled a moment then succumbed  
to the power of his passionate kiss...") Betsy  
O'Reilly would have knocked me down. How  
much pressure did one apply, should the lips just  
touch, lightly? (And what about French kissing?  
I could not imagine....) What was the proper  
duration of a kiss? The movies of that day often  
ended with a long kiss, the couple embraced,  
the music rose, but then the image faded. After  
the kiss what happens? Do you just stand there  
sort of embarrassed, shuffling your feet? You'd  
have to say something, but what? "Thank you for  
the really swell kiss, Alexandra?" The logistics  
were formidable. I thought about kissing a lot  
but I began to see that it was impossible.

#### TRANSFORMATIONS:

Vivian – NICO  
Ryan – STACY  
Chase – WILSON

NICO stares directly at the audience.

He has a frail frame, but a strong essence. Twenty years old— white. He likes to listen to people, and will often tilt his head to the side while doing so— this way you know he's there. However, he will demand his voice be heard when the time is right. His hands are dainty.

STACY texts on her phone.

She is a seemingly average 35 year old white Minnesotan woman. However, she has a quite high voice, and the demeanor of a woman much younger. Her hair is in a tight pony tail, and has been dyed blonde— just slightly. She has large breasts and likes to walk her dog.

WILSON smokes a cigarette.

A petite Nigerian man, he has a thing for chainsmoking. He wears almost all black, but has a bright purple scarf paired with a matching flower. Through his glasses you see inquisitive, pug-like eyes. Yet the rest of his body is motionless— waiting.

NICO

Nico.

STACY

Stacy.

WILSON

“Wilson”.

ALL

“Intimately, From a Distance”.

NICO

I have made a vow to myself to never have a job outside the arts. Being a dancer at The Saloon I consider to be a job in the arts because it is dancing.

STACY

I met this guy on Match.com.

*(indicates her blackberry)*

I haven’t been getting many dates lately so my best friend made me get an account. She actually set it up for me— what a bitch. And initially all the guys that were winking— or poking— or whatever-it-is at me were all really creepy. But OH MY GOD! This last guy is so hot! You have no idea. It’s totally restored my faith. If he walked in here you would DIE.

*(scans her blackberry more)*

WILSON

*(indicating STACY— still smoking)*

Women love to talk about relationships. It’s their number one topic. I have mostly women friends, and they always use me as a sounding board. They’ll talk about their problems with their boyfriends, their husbands, their business friends. This and that.

*(laughs a rather high-pitched laugh)*

When I first got divorced, I really became very, very careful with my woman relationships and kept them strictly at a friendship level— y’know?

NICO drinks from a water bottle.

NICO

I got introduced to The Saloon through this guy I once dated. I went on a Sunday. Which is Shower Night. Where strippers and random gay guys dance— typically naked— in showers to win a cash prize. And I was like— Oh. Maybe one day I would consider doing that. The thing is— I needed money since I just left my job, so I asked what the application process was to be a dancer. Well, you have to do this Shower Contest as an interview. And this freaks me out, because... in the past I have had some... concerns... over bodies and images and, like, nudity in front of an entire crowd of people. And, yeah, you're in this shower, with your— (*motions*)— just kinda hangin' there. So...

STACY

*(cutting in— still scanning her phone)*

When I first saw this dude's photo I wanted fuck him right then and there. And guess what makes it even better? He's not your typical black man.

*(WILSON gives a look.)*

It turns out he used to be a professional football player— a linebacker for the Vikings, the Bucks, and the Patriots. And he's a lawyer. AND he's an award-winning author. And you wanna know— he's the first person in his entire family to make it past the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. He's fucking smart. Oh— he's also a model. YEAH— he does EVERYTHING. Why do you think I'm wiggin' shit?

WILSON

For about a year after my divorce I wasn't ready for anything. Because I was depressed. Because my wife was the one who left. And the reason she gave was because I was always traveling. She wanted a husband that was always here in Minneapolis. Well— it just so happens that my job, which was paying for her and the kids' health insurance, required me to travel... But after we got divorced I still kept her on the health insurance until she got a full-time job. She was freelancing. She's in, uh, advertising. Right now she's living, in... Edina? Or something like that. With her soon-to-be-husband. Who has never married. So— anyway— she's marrying Luke. But Luke— it just so happens— is a documentary filmmaker. Who travels the world, as well.

*(He laughs.)*

NICO enacts what he describes. WILSON and STACY watch NICO with their backs the audience.

NICO

I was there at the club. And It's 11 o'clock, and it's sign up time. But I don't go until, like, third-to-last? I've been watching some nice looking people, and some— (*indicates gross*)— people— no offense to anyone— and everyone has been getting naked. You can't legally get into or out of the shower naked, but once you're inside... (*suggesting*)...

STACY

*(turning her head to audience)*

We went on a date at Psycho Suzie's and then went back to his house in northeast. I kid you not: I've found the sexiest man ever. And he has his NFL stuff framed all over the house. You don't even KNOW how much I freak out over football guys.

We ended up playing strip flag-football... and I lost. *(she giggles)* So my punishment was that I had to give him a massage using everything but my hands... So like my boobies... pussy...

*(She cracks up in embarrassment)*

I slipped baby oil all over his body and his muscles were just *(indicating his arms)* BA-CHOONK, BA-CHOONK. GOD!

*(Rolls back her head over the thought)*

NICO

*(Whispering coyly, referring to stripping:)* It turns out that theater helps a lot.

The other people just... bobbed around. They took an erotic shower at the wall. I danced—for—people.

*(He depicts each phrase.)*

I turned to the audience. I wore attractive underwear. I winked for tips. I looked right at the people. I DIDN'T grab money with my dick— No. There's a slot... and people grab money with their dick... Nope. I didn't do THAT. But I performed. Not just an "erotic" dance. I mean... What even is "erotic"?

STACY

*(a discovery:)*

OH MY GOD I've fucked an NFL player! I've always wanted to fuck an NFL player. It just came to me. Oh my GOD! I can cross that off my bucket list.

I may have hyped up my job to him, though. I told him that I'm still a vet tech. I mean, I used to be a vet tech—but I've been managing a LUSH cosmetics store for the past couple of years. At the Mall of America. So it sounds especially bad. Like, if you say you manage a store in Edina—

*(WILSON makes a noise.)*

—or something like that, people don't think twice. But when you say 'Mall of America'— It's like you're worthless.

WILSON

*(pulls out a flask)*

One of the reasons I drink? Stress. The other? People.

You know, I'm an accomplished person. I've written eleven novels, and I'm currently writing a memoir. But people look at me and they think I'm weird. Totally judgmental.

Alcohol is my only relief. I don't do drugs! I know a lot of people that do cocaine, though.

Doctors, lawyers... Especially the media and publishing people. It's too intense.

*(Laughs.)*

Right now I can perfectly say I'm homeless. While my ex-wife is in Edina with Luke from Wisconsin, I'm couch-surfing. I stay with friends. I went to boarding school when I was a kid, so I'm used to the nomadic lifestyle. My ex-wife— she needed more. I guess my kids do too. But I

love being in transition. I don't really need much technology. I have passports, frequent flyer miles, I speak several languages—

STACY

(*gets a text*)

—Hold on...

(*Stands up.*

*Reads text*)

DAMN-IT! He wants to hang out tonight— GOD— I can't! ...

(*In a whisper:*) I'm on my period. Ooooooh!— Any night but tonight. What do I say? "I'm sorry, sad face. I can't hang out tonight— BECAUSE I'M ON MY PERIOD."

(*Laughs*)

That's so gross! But he seems down to fuck.

NICO

Intimacy is weird.

I mean... when I first started stripping it was bit scary. Until the audience starting cheering for me I didn't even realize they liked it. But really... stripping is easy. Because I'm detached from it... I've never been extremely intimate with just one person one-on-one. It gets really scary. It's really easy when it's just, "You like my body. Here— have it." There's something performative about it. But I can't have sex. Because I can't perform during that. You can't. It's just... you and another person. And it's terrifying.

STACY

(*Beat*)

Maybe I should just text him: "I want your dick in my mouth. I wanna ride that shit... and I'm on my period."

(*She smirks*)

"You down?"

WILSON

(*Puts out his cigarette.*)

Women are weird.

(*Exits.*)

## CLUSTER TWO

### **FOR THE LOVE OF BEER**

The Story-Maestro stands. Ryan and Chase make their transformations in public. Vivian exits the room.

STORY-MAESTRO

Flight by Louis Jenkins.

Past mishaps might be attribute to an incomplete understanding of the laws of aerodynamics or perhaps to an even more basic failure of imagination, but were to be expected. Remember, this is solo flight unencumbered by bicycle parts, aluminum and nylon or even wax and feathers. A tour de force, really. There's a lot of running and flapping involved, and as you get older and heavier, a lot more huffing and puffing. But on a bright day like today, with a strong headwind blowing up from the sea, when, having slipped the surly bonds of common sense and knowing she is watching, waiting in breathless anticipation, you send yourself hurtling down the long, green slope to the cliffs, who knows? You might just make it.

TRANSFORMATIONS  
DRUNK GIRL – CHASE  
NICK – RYAN  
SUE – VIVIAN

“Drunk Girl” fiddles with her hair. She has very sharp features, appearing standoffish. However, when she opens her mouth she becomes surprisingly inviting. Hands long and witch-like, she is white and in her late teens. Her buoyant personality and more severe physical appearance are always at odds.

Nick nervously adjusts his glasses. A fairly large man, Nick nevertheless comes across as your boy next door. In his mid-twenties and white—he has a gruff blonde beard, but he comes across youthful due to the beard’s bright color. It’s hard to tell if Nick’s attempting to appear gruff, or merely apathetic.

DRUNK GIRL  
“Drunk Girl”.

NICK  
Nick.

ALL  
“For the Love of Beer.”

NICK

I'm originally from St. Paul. Went to Central High School— '06 baby. Um... Sorry. I get kind of shy when put on the spot.

DRUNK GIRL

PUT PEPPER ON MY MASHPOTATOES—I can do whatever the fuck— I— want.

I am so drunk. I don't even know. Ugh. I have rehearsal tomorrow— where I play a black woman— and I have to sing a black woman song. I don't know if I can do it... because LITERALLY I'm not black. (But I can sing like a black woman.)—

—Where am I? I just came here... and my friends came here... and they're laughing at me... IT'S SO NICE TALKING TO YOU. Like, really, I'm having so much fun. I had no one to talk to... and now I have you! I'm so happy—

NICK

So... I'm a bartender right now. At the Nomad. Y'know, on Cedar Avenue? I just kind of fell into it. I'll have worked there for about a year... in two weeks. It's super great because things are always different and weird. Whether it'S dead, and it's just hilarious that no one came, or whether it becomes super busy out of absolutely nowhere— the constant changes make it fun.

DRUNK GIRL

Hi. It's nice to meet you. (*shakes hand, then seductively:*) I'm an actress. (*laughs*) It's what I go to school for. But I plan on partying all the time next year at college. We're just gonna be drunk— as— fuck. (*a discovery*) Because you know what? Kristen Stewart is an actress. She's— like— made it. And I haven't made it yet? WHAT? Can you believe it? It's SO funny. I mean it's KRISTEN STEWART. She's so bad at acting that I don't think she's a real person.

NICK

Before workin' at the Nomad I was a Dairy Queen guy. I've worked probably every job I could think of— from grocery stores, to auto body work— I was even a tow truck guy. Like a junk tower. That was something. Oh— I was a bike delivery for Jimmy Johns. One of my more fun jobs. Everyone always thought we just smoked weed all the time— but no. We actually did shit. I mean, it's Jimmy Johns, but yeah— now I'm bartending.

DRUNK GIRL

What's your drink of choice?

NICK

Um... A nice beer?

(*Beat*)

Or do you mean a drinky-drink?

DRUNK GIRL

A drinky-drink!

NICK

A Margarita would be my drinky-drink. And for the beer I would get a really good, like, double ESP. Or a double IPA. Something with a lot of kick to it.

DRUNK GIRL

I should backtrack. Who am I? I am... I'm like 'keyboard cat'. Y'know that YouTube video 'keyboard cat'? That is who I am... like that is ME. That is my soul. And when I meet a guy who knows what the keyboard cat is... my panties are gonna come off so fast that nobody will know what to DO! (*screaming:*) BECAUSE I LOVE KEYBOARD CAT! If you don't love keyboard cat then you're not a person—

Vivian enters as Sue, a suburban woman with a big beer in her hand. A living stereotype of a Midwestern mom, Sue has an accent that kills to boot. Her body is frail, her hair is chopped, but an unbeatable vibrancy makes her all smiles.

SUE

My name's Sue. I'm from White Bear Lake— came into the cities to try out this here Pedal Pub. You just (*mimes pedaling*) pedal around and drink. Neat!

Sue sits down with everyone— loving the big city.

NICK

Y'know, even though I'm a bartender, it took me like two months to be able to talk about beers comfortably. I mean, I don't know the party shots. People come up with weird shit. Like, what is that shit? Don't try to confuse me.

I won't ever be that great at party shots. I mean, I just don't have to make them that much. It's the Nomad— don't order a party shot. But working here has definitely gotten me to know more about beers. You get to see all the companies come through, and you get to see what you like. And besides the Belgian bottles, I'd say I've tried everything. (I mean, you can't just open and taste it when it's a bottle. Also I'm just not a big Belgian fan. At least not yet, so...)

SUE

Well, I am certainly no boozehound! No, no, no. Certainly not. We just came out here to the Twin Cities for my husband's birthday.

DRUNK GIRL

I wish I could run away. School sucks. I just wanna get drunk all the time next year. And have crazy hot monkey sex. Like, you can quote me on that. You can put it on Facebook— cause it's true! I know it's gonna happen. And if my friends don't wanna party, I will just be on their porch, playing TWISTER. Can't escape me.

God. I love my friends. We're gonna leave here. And drink and fuck all the time. That's all I want. Because acting— school— SUCKS. All my teachers would literally fuck anyone. I really hate that. If I did a monologue or something and just dropped my pants and was awful— like if I didn't even know the words— the teachers would be like, 'You're Brilliant! You're showing your

vagina... That's all I want!' All the teachers want is for you to show your genitals... or cry... and if you do either of those things... You get an 'A'. It's ridiculous.

SUE

Well. Um. My husband's a biker— bicyclist— been biking for most of his life, and he loves to drink beer. So he said— 'Where can I go to combine the two'? So, uh, for a couple hours we think we're gonna have a gas here on this Pedal Pub! We just take a tour around Minneapolis and see all the bars they have here. I just think it's a hoot!

NICK

Watch out, some weird shit happens on Cedar. I mean we've never been held up or anything at the bar. But there's always something going on. Kids running around, tryin' to stab each other, flashin' guns around 'n shit. I mean, with that stuff— the door guys usually take care of it. But I always know what's going on.

SUE

Well. Nice place here. I think we're gonna... um, (*mimes pedaling*) pedal on t'the next bar.

All smiles, she exits.

NICK

But really, the weirdest thing that happened here didn't involve any violence or drunk dudes. The weirdest thing happened when there was this theater practice going on upstairs. We usually do private parties and stuff up there; rent it out and stuff. But it got hot up there during their practice and someone tried to open up a window— this was before we had A/C. And when they were opening it up, the window just fell out. And (*with a smile*) the shards just rained down on this old couple that were sitting outside. And this couple just narrowly escaped. It was fucking crazy. Everyone was just like— (*puts his hands behind his head and drops open his mouth*)— (*in a whisper*) "Oh my God! Oh my God!" This guy got like cut up in the back a little bit. But it could've, like, went in someone's neck or something.

DRUNK GIRL

Did anyone get sued?

NICK

Nope. I mean, we bought 'um a bunch of beer for the rest of the day just to say, "Sorry we almost killed you."

So that was sweet.

(*Beat.*)

DRUNK GIRL

I think I'm a whore. Like, I'm a piece of shit. You could put me on the side of the road... and someone could pick me up... and give me gonorrhea... and that would still be a step-up from what I am now.

NICK

Well, the Nomad is really just a bunch of shitty people getting together and becoming friends. That's not true at all bars. Some are really uptight. I mean— hey!

(*Looks at DRUNK GIRL.*)

You look like an asshole. You'll love the Nomad.

DRUNK GIRL

Hey— I will fuck a bitch up! Don't mess with me. I will put peppers in your eyes and sick snakes and bats on you. So people can back off. Take me or leave me. If you love me... you love me. Don't you love me?

(*Beat.*)

Are you still listening?

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*CLUSTERS 3 – 12 AVAILABLE IN THE SECOND DRAFT:*

**SERIOUS AFFAIRS**

**GODS**

**PUNKS AND THE NAKED BODY**

**WHAT'S IN YOUR HOT-DISH?**

**SIDES OF CITIZENSHIP**

**THE MISSISSIPPI COLOR LINE**

**THE TOBACCO CLUB**

**WHAT I EAT**

**OH, TO KNOW THE SUBURBS**

**THAT QUINTESSENTIAL PLACE**

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V

### A SUMMATION

after the five selected clusters are performed,  
the entire group rises to close with a final Jenkins poem

VIVIAN

'Diner', by Louis Jenkins

STORY-MAESTRO

The time has come to say goodbye,

RYAN

our plates empty except for our greasy napkins.

CHASE

Comrades,

ALL

Comrades,

CHASE

you on my left, balding, middle-aged guy with a ponytail,

STORY-MAESTRO

and you, Lefty, there on my right, with a pack of cigarettes rolled up in your t-shirt sleeve,  
though we barely spoke I feel our kinship.

RYAN

You were steadfast in passing the ketchup, the salt and pepper,

VIVIAN

no man cold ask for better companions.

CHASE

Lunch is over—

ALL  
the cheeseburgers and fries, the Denver sandwich—

VIVIAN  
the counter nearly empty.

STORY-MAESTRO  
Now we must go our separate ways.

RYAN  
Not a fond embrace, but perhaps a hearty handshake.

CHASE  
No? Well then, farewell.

STORY-MAESTRO  
It is unlikely I'll pass this way again.

VIVIAN  
Unlikely we will all meet again on this earth,

RYAN  
to sit together beneath the neon and fluorescent calmly sipping our coffee,

CHASE  
like the sages sipping their tea beneath the willow,

ALL  
sitting quietly, saying nothing.

The story has ended.  
Finish the food.

MN: 2012 22

