

MIDNIGHT BURGER

Chapter 21: Chaos!

By

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Midnight Burger

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A PHONE RINGING AS MUSIC PLAYS ON A RADIO. A DOOR OPENS WITH A CHIME.

FRANK

Oh shit.

PHONE RECEIVER IS PICKED UP.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Horizon Motel?... Yes... No, we don't have a website... Uh huh... Yes, I understand... Well, ma'am you can actually make a reservation with me right now on the phone, it's been done... Uh huh... sure you can call back.

PHONE HANGS UP. DOOR OPENS.

FRANK (CONT'D)

We need to get a website.

JUNE

You don't want to do that.

FRANK

Of course I do.

JUNE

If you get a website then more people will come here and that's more work for me. Don't do that to me.

FRANK

You had to clean one room today.

JUNE

But what a room it was. Those people were a mess, dude, what was their deal?

FRANK

I think they were skiers.

JUNE

It's not ski season.

FRANK

Getting an early start?

JUNE

They were doing something strange with the trash cans. I don't want to know what.

FRANK

We're going to need more than one guest per night to stay above water.

JUNE

Yes, but what about my needs? Like my need to get paid for doing very little.

FRANK

Can you at least pretend I'm your boss?

JUNE

No. Hey, you know what I heard at the bar last night? I heard this place was in a meth corridor.

FRANK

What is a meth corridor?

JUNE

It's, you know, the corridor through which meth moves.

FRANK

What are you talking about?

JUNE

People steal cars, and then they use the stolen cars to move meth around the state. They don't want to get pulled over so they stick to the back roads. Boom, meth corridor.

FRANK

And we're in the meth corridor?

JUNE

Yes.

FRANK

And who did you hear this from?

JUNE

Edgy Steve.

FRANK

...Edgy Steve.

JUNE

Yeah.

FRANK

You know someone named Edgy Steve?

JUNE

I mean, I don't KNOW HIM know him, but I see him sometimes, he's around.

FRANK

And how does "Edgy Steve" know about the meth corridor?

JUNE

He's a meth dealer.

FRANK

...Great.

JUNE

Let me ask you this: A lot of people checking in driving Saturns?

FRANK

Saturns? Uh... sometimes, I guess.

JUNE

Most stolen car in America.

FRANK

Saturns are?

JUNE

You can start them just by shoving a flat head screwdriver in the ignition.

FRANK

But then who would want to steal a Saturn?

JUNE

People doing illegal things. Like?

FRANK

Transporting meth through the meth corridor?

JUNE

Right. How often do people check in driving a Saturn?

FRANK

... Often.

JUNE

They pay in cash?

FRANK

... Yes.

JUNE

Huh.

FRANK

We're in a meth corridor.

JUNE

Yep.

FRANK

Jesus Christ.

JUNE

Hey, their money's green.

FRANK

Their money is drug money.

JUNE

Don't worry about it. The Hilton family started out as brothel owners. You should own it. You don't want their business going to the Red Roof Inn or whatever. That's YOUR drug money.

FRANK

How did my dad not tell me this?

JUNE

He probably didn't even know. He probably stood behind the counter and was like "Oh, well, another fine gentleman staying at our establishment with hives and face tatoo, what are the odds?"

FRANK

Someone's going to get shot here over a drug deal gone wrong or something.

JUNE

No, dude, you're not the destination for the drugs you're in the corridor for the drugs. It's harmless.

FRANK

Harmless?

JUNE

Yeah. Buy a gun though. For real.

PHONE RINGS AND RINGS.

JUNE (CONT'D)

Phone's ringing.

FRANK

I don't want to pick up the phone, what if it's  
Tuco Salamanca?

JUNE

The meth people don't make reservations.

FRANK PICKS UP THE PHONE.

FRANK

Ché Meth.

JUNE

Ha!

FRANK

Excuse me. Horizon Motel, how can I help you?...  
Hello again, ma'am... Yes I know we should have a  
website... okay... two nights? On the fifth? Okay,  
we'll see you then.

FRANK HANGS UP.

JUNE

Ugh, two nights IN A ROW? I'm not doing turn down  
service.

FRANK

You don't know what turn down service is.

JUNE

Don't make me learn.

BUZZING OF THE LIGHTS FLICKERING ON AND OFF.

FRANK

Shit.

JUNE

Oh, damn, did you not pay the electric bill?

FRANK

I did. Barely.

JUNE

Probably just the wind or something. OR... the  
secret military base down the road.

FRANK

There's not a secret military base down the road.

JUNE

How would you know? It's a ssssseeeeeeeecreeeeet.

FRANK

What are you doing tonight?

JUNE

It's funny how you ask me that like there's a series of Balls that I've been invited to.

FRANK

You're going to the bar.

JUNE

I am, are you coming?

FRANK

I'm going to sit here for a while and try to convince myself that someone's going to show up, then when I give up on that dream I'll see you there.

JUNE

Okay, but if Edgy Steve's there, no shop talk about the drug trade you big criminal, don't bring your work home.

FRANK

Please leave.

JUNE

I love you.

FRANK

Love you.

DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES. AFTER A MOMENT THE DOOR OPENS AGAIN.

FRANK (CONT'D)

What'd you forget?

JUNE

Hi.

FRANK

June?

JUNE

Remember our fun jokes about you being in the drug trade?

FRANK

Like it was yesterday.

JUNE

That was fun right?

FRANK

I had a great time.

JUNE

That was some fun humor to try and get you to not freak out about things like you usually do.

FRANK

June.

JUNE

So keep that in mind when I tell you that there's a woman passed out in the parking lot.

FRANK

What?

JUNE

Yeah.

DOOR OPENS AND WE MOVE OUTSIDE. WE HEAR CRICKETS AND A DISTANT FREEWAY. JUNE AND FRANK APPROACH THE WOMAN ON THE GROUND.

FRANK

Who is that?

JUNE

No idea.

FRANK

We don't have any guests.

JUNE

She's alive, I can see her breathing.

FRANK

Ma'am?

JUNE

Ma'am?

FRANK

Ma'am can you hear me?

JUNE

Ma'am are you wasted?

FRANK

What are you doing?

JUNE

I don't know.



FRANK

I'm calling an ambulance. You didn't see a woman passed out in the parking lot?

JUNE

No, I walked out and she was there.

FRANK

What the fuck?

JUNE

Ma'am? It feels weird to call her "ma'am".

FRANK

Yeah, we need an ambulance. Yeah, this is the horizon motel up on 211? Yeah. There's a woman passed out in our parking lot. I don't know. No, she's not a guest she was just there all of a sudden... No she's breathing, she's not waking up though.

JUNE

Hey lady? No, that feels mean.

FRANK

Frank Simmons... Okay... yeah, at this number... Okay.

JUNE

Hey girlfriend.

FRANK

What are you doing?

JUNE

I don't know.

THE WOMAN SUDDENLY GASPS AND SITS UP.

JUNE (CONT'D)

Oh shit!

FRANK

Fuck... Ma'am, are you okay?

JUNE

We called an ambulance, okay?

FRANK

... Ma'am?

WOMAN

... Is that... the sky?

WE TRANSITION TO A HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM. PHONES RINGING  
AND NURSES RUNNING BACK AND FORTH.

NURSE

(Over intercom.)

Dr. Nate please report to room 15, this is my third time calling.

FRANK

Sorry if I screwed up your evening.

JUNE

No, this is fun. If you go to the bar every night you run out of stories to tell at the bar, y'know?

FRANK

Sure.

JUNE

What do you think she was on?

FRANK

On?

JUNE

She was on something, right?

FRANK

I don't know.

JUNE

"Is that the sky?" That's not what sober people say.

FRANK

I don't know.

JUNE

Is it mushroom season? When's mushroom season? She was probably on mushrooms.

FRANK

How did she get in our parking lot? There were no cars going by, right?

JUNE

I don't think so. Excuse me, nurse? When's mushroom season?

FRANK

The only thing in front of us is the 211. Behind us is the woods. She either came from the woods or the Highway.

NURSE

(Over intercom.)

Dr. Nate please report to room 15, this is my third time calling.

JUNE

I'm going with mushrooms. Her and her friends were off in the woods doing mushrooms and she wandered off.

FRANK

Yeah, you're probably right.

JUNE

Did she say anything else in the ambulance?

FRANK

No.

JUNE

That's not safe. Hallucinating in the woods how can that be a good trip?

FRANK

Where else are they supposed to go?

JUNE

This is a business opportunity. "Hey, kids. Sick of the woods coming to life and trying to eat you while you're tripping your nuts off? Come to the horizon motel."

FRANK

I just learned that I'm running a Meth Lodge, you want to add the mushroom people to that?

JUNE

I mean, you can't be MORE of a drug hot spot, you either are or you aren't. Might as well own it.

FRANK

You've had zero business ideas since I took this place over but suddenly there's illegal narcotics involved and you've had two in one night.

JUNE

I go where the money is.

FRANK

You live in central Oregon, that's not where the money is.

JUNE

I was born here, I'm not going to go live somewhere else, that's exhausting... Was she wearing a jumpsuit?

FRANK

Yeah.

JUNE

Like a Jiffy Lube type thing right?

FRANK

Yeah.

JUNE

What's that about?

FRANK

No idea.

JUNE

Was there a name tag or anything?

FRANK

No. They couldn't find any ID on her.

NURSE

(Over intercom.)

Dr. Nate please report to room 15, this is my third time calling.

JUNE

That is the third time Dr. Nate has gotten his third call. Someone needs to crack the whip on that guy.

FRANK

... I feel weird.

JUNE

Me too.

FRANK

This is really weird right?

JUNE

Yeah. Confirmed. It's fun, though.

FRANK

Is it?

JUNE

Yeah. We got a little mystery dropped in our lap. It's fun.

(MORE)

JUNE (CONT'D)

You know how people come through town from California or whatever and they're on a road trip looking for some kind of Twin Peaks vibe?

FRANK

Yeah.

JUNE

Because if you're not from here you think that's what it's like, right? You think there's a well meaning Sheriff and a mystery in the woods.

FRANK

They do.

JUNE

When actually it's just...

FRANK

Sad.

JUNE

It's just kind of sad and the Sheriff is a fucking asshole and everyone needs a shower.

FRANK

And everyone's dog is mean.

JUNE

Everyone's dog is mean. Anyway that's what it's really like but now look at us. A mysterious woman has emerged from the woods... Favorite Twin Peaks character, go.

FRANK

Uh... Ed.

JUNE

You're totally an Ed person. Guess mine.

FRANK

... Dr. Jacoby.

JUNE

No way. Audrey Horne.

FRANK

Really?

JUNE

We're both sex pots.

FRANK

I see.

JUNE

We're pots of sex.

FRANK

I'm going to go check on her. I'm allowed to do that, right?

JUNE

Honestly, I don't think anyone's paying attention to us, I think you can do whatever you want.

FRANK

I'll be right back.

NURSE

(Over intercom.)

Dr. Nate please report to room 15, this is my third time calling.

JUNE

(To the entire emergency room.)

Okay, Dr. Nate? Let's get it together Doctor, she's calling you for the third time for the fourth time. What if someone's dying?

FRANK

She's gone.

JUNE

What?

FRANK

She's gone, there's nobody in there.

JUNE

Did they move her?

FRANK

They had her on some fluids, the IV is just laying on the ground.

JUNE

Shit, did she escape?

FRANK

I didn't see her leave, did you?

JUNE

No.

FRANK

What the fuck is happening?

JUNE

I don't know.

NURSE

(Over intercom.)

Dr. Nate please report to room 15, this is my third time calling.

WE TRANSITION BACK TO THE HORIZON HOTEL. THE PHONE IS RINGING.

FRANK

Horizon Motel?... Okay... No, I'm sorry, we're all booked up that day, that whole week actually, do you want me to put you on the wait list in case someone cancels?... Okay... got it, I'll give you a call in case anyone cancels, thanks!

DOOR OPENS.

JUNE

The joint. She is jumping.

FRANK

Come in here.

JUNE

I've never seen this many cars in the parking lot.

FRANK

Do you recall a conversation we had a few months ago? You said I should open up the motel to people who wanted to safely trip on mushrooms?

JUNE

Sorry, I don't recall that conversation.

FRANK

We were at the hospital, we dropped off a woman, she disappeared?

JUNE

Yeah, it's not ringing a bell.

FRANK

We've been booked solid for two weeks.

JUNE

It's great right?

FRANK

There are definitely several people here tonight who are high on mushrooms.

JUNE  
No. Really?

FRANK  
What have you done?

JUNE  
Me?

FRANK  
Yes, you.

JUNE  
Frank, I'm sure I don't know what you're talking about.

FRANK  
June.

JUNE  
... I may have put the word out there.

FRANK  
What word did you put out there?

JUNE  
Nothing, just that, y'know, the Horizon Motel was a safe space.

FRANK  
You told people to come get high here?

JUNE  
That it was a safe space.

FRANK  
A safe space for what?

JUNE  
For getting high.

FRANK  
Goddamn it.

JUNE  
You were going out of business, Frank.

FRANK  
The sheriff's department is going to start raiding us. Then no one will want to come here and THEN we'll go out of business.



JUNE

Do you want to go out of business quietly or do it in a blaze of glory?

FRANK

Neither. I wanted neither of those things. I wanted a third thing.

JUNE

There's no third thing.

FRANK

How do you know?

JUNE

Frank, it's going to be fine. It's going to be great, they're going to write songs about this place.

FRANK

This isn't the Chelsea Hotel.

JUNE

Not with that attitude. Come outside.

FRANK

I don't want to go outside, it smells weird.

JUNE

Come outside.

FRANK

It's like Burning Man with trees out there.

JUNE

Come on. Summer's almost over, soon it will be rainy and shitty, come outside.

FRANK

Fine.

THE DOOR OPENS. WE HEAR MUSIC PLAYING FROM ONE OF THE ROOMS.  
THE SOUNDS OF ABOUT 5 SMALL PARTIES.

JUNE

Come on. Isn't this great?

FRANK

What is that smell?

JUNE

Don't ask about the smell.

FRANK

Is something on fire?

JUNE

Nothing that isn't supposed to be.

FRANK

...Okay... Okay, fine. What now?

JUNE

Frankie, this is your intervention.

FRANK

Oh it is?

JUNE

Yes.

FRANK

I am definitely not the one in the vicinity that needs an intervention. Room 9 maybe?

JUNE

You've been different since the funeral.

FRANK

... Yeah, it was my Dad's funeral.

JUNE

I know. It was tough for all of us but... I read something.

FRANK

YOU read something?

JUNE

I read. It was about grief. It was about losing a loved one.

FRANK

June-

JUNE

And it said that sometimes when a person loses a loved one they can, as a way of coping, take on the personality traits of the person they've lost... Uncle Pete was a pretty buttoned up guy... like literally. He's the only guy I knew who used the top button of his shirt.

FRANK

Okay.

JUNE

And you've been a little, y'know, top button of your shirt these days and so I wanted to drag you out here and say: "Hey. Stop it."

FRANK

Is this why you've turned my hotel into a drug den?

JUNE

A little. Look I'm not expecting you to rip your shirt off and run through the woods or anything I'm just saying, I would like my cousin Frank to remain my cousin Frank, is all.

FRANK

Okay. I will remain cousin Frank.

JUNE

Thank you.

THE WOMAN

Hi.

FRANK

...Holy shit.

JUNE

Is that... Is that who I think it is?

FRANK

It is.

JUNE

Well, shit. Hey there.

THE WOMAN

Do you remember me?

JUNE

...Well, last time we saw you, you were unconscious in our parking lot. Kind of sticks in your memory.

THE WOMAN

I guess so.

FRANK

Are... you okay?

THE WOMAN

Yeah... I... I'm really sorry... about all that.

JUNE

It broke up the monotony.

THE WOMAN  
Okay.

FRANK  
You disappeared from the hospital.

THE WOMAN  
Yeah. Sorry about that. It just kind of happened.

JUNE  
Happens to me all the time. "Whoops I disappeared from the hospital".

FRANK  
I guess we were confused more than anything.

THE WOMAN  
I mean... me too...

FRANK  
I'm Frank, this is my cousin, June.

THE WOMAN  
Hi...

FRANK  
So... What happened to you?

THE WOMAN  
Um... I brought this six pack of beer here, I heard that's a thing people do, is that a thing people do?

FRANK  
Sure.

JUNE  
Sure.

THE WOMAN  
Can I give you one?

RUMMAGING AROUND IN A BAG.

FRANK  
You know, we don't allow alcohol here, just hard drugs apparently.

JUNE  
Don't listen to him. Give me one.

THE WOMAN  
Okay.

THREE BEERS OPEN.

JUNE

So, what's your name?

THE WOMAN

... Clementine.

JUNE

Okay. Interesting.

THE WOMAN

Is that a good name?

FRANK

Is it good?

THE WOMAN

I... I picked it myself.

JUNE

Oh really?

FRANK

She picked it herself.

JUNE

She's like a nun. Or Cher.

FRANK

What made you pick that name?

CLEMENTINE

I like oranges.

JUNE

Satsuma was taken?

CLEMENTINE

What?

FRANK

So, you're okay then? We found you in our parking lot, we took you to the hospital, now you're back. But you're fine?

CLEMENTINE

Uh...My name's Clementine because I had to pick a name. I didn't have one. One I could remember.

FRANK

Wait.

JUNE

Oh fuck, did you have amnesia?

CLEMENTINE

That's what it's called, yes. When you found me here I had no idea who I was or where I was... Still don't.

JUNE

...

FRANK

Wh...

JUNE

Okay...

FRANK

She has amnesia.

JUNE

She does, she has amnesia. I'm sorry, we were making fun of you a little bit just now because we thought that you were just kind of a kook, but it turns out you've got some damage to your brain.

FRANK

Shit.

CLEMENTINE

It's okay.

JUNE

Did any of it come back?

CLEMENTINE

Not really. Small bits and pieces.

JUNE

Amnesia is really a thing, then. I thought it was just a thing in the movies.

CLEMENTINE

It's definitely a thing.

FRANK

That's wild. I'm so sorry.

JUNE

So what do you remember?

CLEMENTINE

Weird stuff.

FRANK

Like what?

CLEMENTINE

Like... I know a lot about beets.

JUNE

Beets?

CLEMENTINE

Yeah.

JUNE

What a random thing to remember.

CLEMENTINE

I know, right?

FRANK

It's been months. Have you just been wandering around trying to remember things?

CLEMENTINE

Essentially.

JUNE

Just... around town?

CLEMENTINE

...No. I've been... traveling. I'm uh, good at traveling apparently.

FRANK

Okay.

CLEMENTINE

How long has it been? Since you found me?

FRANK

Uh...

JUNE

Six months?

FRANK

Yeah, about that.

CLEMENTINE

That's it?

FRANK

I think so.

CLEMENTINE

It's felt like a lot longer. There's a lot more people here now.

FRANK

Everyone wanted to come to the site of the magical disappearing lady. They worship you as a God now.

CLEMENTINE

What?

FRANK

I'm kidding.

JUNE

How'd you get out of the hospital? We were sitting right outside your room.

CLEMENTINE

I don't know. I don't know how it all actually works.

FRANK

How what works?

CLEMENTINE

Just... It was weird, I don't remember much. I remember this place though. I've been wandering around trying to figure things out and I thought maybe I should come back here.

JUNE

Nice. Like a Hitchcock movie.

CLEMENTINE

Who's that?

JUNE

He's a... guy who makes movies.

FRANK

How can we help?

CLEMENTINE

I don't know. Does anything stand out? From when I was here?

FRANK

Stand out?

JUNE

Pretty much the whole thing stands out.



FRANK

It was the weirdest thing that's ever happened to us.

CLEMENTINE

Yeah.

FRANK

The jumpsuit.

JUNE

Right. You were wearing a jumpsuit. Like a coverall thing, like you were a mechanic.

CLEMENTINE

Really?

FRANK

Yeah. When you disappeared from the hospital the police showed up and they took it I think. You could probably get it from the station, they probably have it in a box somewhere.

JUNE

I am just now realizing that, because you left your clothes behind, you escaped the hospital with your ass hanging out. Power move.

CLEMENTINE

Oh...

FRANK

You said something when you first woke up.

CLEMENTINE

I did?

FRANK

Yeah. "Is that the sky?"

CLEMENTINE

Is that the sky?

FRANK

It was weird. It was, I know this sounds ridiculous but, you had this look on your face like... like you'd never seen it before.

CLEMENTINE

The sky?

FRANK

Yeah.

CLEMENTINE

Who's never seen the sky before?

FRANK

I don't know.

JUNE

Angler Fish.

FRANK

What?

JUNE

It's a deep sea fish. Y'know? Angler fish,  
Coelacanth, Pacific Viper Fish. Never seen the sky.  
What?

FRANK

Are you a deep sea fish?

CLEMENTINE

I hope not.

FRANK

Okay, well we eliminated that one.

JUNE

See, I'm helping.

CLEMENTINE

Is that the sky?...

FRANK

Look, I'm sure it's not like putting a hammer to a  
nail. I'm sure it'll all come back to you soon.

CLEMENTINE

I don't know. You know that feeling that  
something's right on the tip of your tongue?

FRANK

It feels like that?

CLEMENTINE

No, it doesn't. That's the thing. It feels like...  
It feels like it's gone.

JUNE

Well, in my experience things feel a certain way  
and then... then they don't.

FRANK

That was beautiful, thank you.

JUNE

I know you think I'm not helping but I'm totally helping.

CLEMENTINE

Look, don't worry about it. I didn't think coming here would change much, I just thought I'd give it a shot.

THE PHONE RINGS INSIDE THE OFFICE.

FRANK

Fuck, that's the phone. I'll be right back.

JUNE

Just let it ring.

FRANK

I can't let it ring, June, it's probably federal agents. I'll be right back.

CLEMENTINE

... So you two are related?

JUNE

Yeah, we're cousins. But my dad worked on a fishing boat and my mom worked late so I was over at their house a lot.

CLEMENTINE

That's nice.

JUNE

Yeah, being a sister-like cousin is great because I can constantly shift between big sister and little sister vibes. One minute I can be like "What do I do, Big Brother?" And then the next I can be like "Shut up! Do what I say!".

CLEMENTINE

Okay.

JUNE

Do you have any siblings?

CLEMENTINE

Um.

JUNE

Shit, I can't believe I just said that, I'm so sorry.

CLEMENTINE

That's okay. Maybe I do? What does it feel like to have siblings?

JUNE

Does it feel like there's someone out there and only they can truly understand what your childhood was like?

CLEMENTINE

No, I definitely don't feel that way.

JUNE

Who knows, maybe they're out there somewhere.

CLEMENTINE

That would be nice...

JUNE

... What kind of beer is this? I've never seen it before. "Voyager".

CLEMENTINE

I just liked the name. I got it in a place called Tokyo.

JUNE

... A place called Tokyo?

CLEMENTINE

Yeah.

JUNE

In Japan?

CLEMENTINE

I don't know...

JUNE

You don't know? You... wait. You were in Tokyo.

CLEMENTINE

...Yes.

JUNE

Which is several thousand miles away in Japan.

CLEMENTINE

Oh...

JUNE

But you didn't know that?

CLEMENTINE

... I should go.

JUNE

Hang on.

CLEMENTINE RUMMAGES AROUND IN A BAG.

CLEMENTINE

I should go, you probably have stuff to do, it's really busy.

JUNE

Wait a minute though.

CLEMENTINE

I brought you something else, I just... I feel so bad about all the trouble I caused you. Here.

JUNE

What... is this?

CLEMENTINE

I don't know. I don't know what it is, it just looked pretty so I thought, it looked like a gift so I would give it to you two.

JUNE

Clementine-

CLEMENTINE

I'm going to go.

JUNE

Wait a minute-

CLEMENTINE

Thank you. Thank you for finding me. Is it okay if I come back some time?

JUNE

Of course, but listen-

CLEMENTINE

Okay. I need to go. I've got... I've got a lot to learn.

JUNE

Where did you get this?

CLEMENTINE WALKS OFF.

JUNE (CONT'D)

Clementine?... What... in holy God...

FRANK  
Hey, where'd she go?... June?

JUNE  
She left.

FRANK  
Where did she go?

JUNE  
She just started walking toward the road.

FRANK  
Just all of a sudden?

JUNE  
Frank... something weird is going on.

FRANK  
Well, yeah.

JUNE  
She left us a gift, Frank.

FRANK  
What?

JUNE  
Here.

FRANK  
...

JUNE  
Uh huh.

FRANK  
... This...

JUNE  
Uh huh.

FRANK  
This... looks like a bar of gold.

JUNE  
It's a gold bar. She gave us a gold bar.

FRANK  
Is it real?

JUNE  
Well let me get out my testing kit.

FRANK

What the fuck?

JUNE

What the fuck indeed, my friend.

FRANK

Who is this person?

JUNE

Rumplestiltskin maybe? What's that writing say?

FRANK

The Perth Mint.

JUNE

Perth.

FRANK

Yeah.

JUNE

In Australia.

FRANK

I guess?

JUNE

Sure. You know that point you get to when so many weird things have happened that you just start shrugging your shoulders? I just arrived at that point.

FRANK

How much is this worth?

JUNE

Fuck, I don't know, we don't even know if it's real.

FRANK

What is happening?

JUNE

Also, she got the beer in Tokyo, which she did not realize was thousands of miles across the ocean. Just to put a cherry on top of the weird Sunday.

FRANK

Which way did she go?

JUNE

She's walking toward the highway.

FRANK  
C'mon. This is insane.

THEY WALK TOWARD THE HIGHWAY.

JUNE  
I was going to stop her, but a few pounds of gold  
in my hand, turns out, puts me in a bit of a state.

FRANK  
Amnesiacs in the parking lot, my hotel is a drug  
hovel, now strangers bearing gold, what's next?

JUNE  
I don't know, can I hold it again while we're  
walking? It's a good feeling.

FRANK  
Here.

JUNE  
...Oh yeah. That's the stuff. Amazing.

FRANK  
Don't get attached to it, it might be stolen.

JUNE  
Do you want to come home with Mommy, Gold Baby?

FRANK  
June.

A SIMI TRUCK ROARS BY.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Do you see her?

JUNE  
I don't.

FRANK  
Well... where the fuck did she go?

JUNE  
Maybe she hitched a ride?

FRANK  
In 60 seconds?

JUNE  
I don't know.

FRANK  
How... What is happening?



JUNE

(Laughing.)  
I don't know.

FRANK

(Also laughing.)  
What the fuck? An amnesiac just swung by and gave us beer from Japan and a gold bar from Australia.

JUNE

It's like we're trapped in a MadLib.

FRANK

Oh, my God...

JUNE

... Well... What now?

ANOTHER SIMI TRUCK ROARS BY AND WE SLOWLY TRANSITION TO THE SILENCE OF SNOWFALL. THE DOOR TO THE OFFICE OPENS AND WE HEAR MUSIC INSIDE. FEET IN THE SNOW APPROACH.

JUNE (CONT'D)

Hey.

FRANK

Hey.

JUNE

What do you think, do you think winter's here?

FRANK

I feel like the snow is a clear indicator that winter is here, yes.

JUNE

Aren't we usually full of skiers right now?

FRANK

There's a jack-knifed truck a few miles back. People have been stuck for hours.

JUNE

Really excited about how grumpy they're going to be when they check in.

FRANK

It's going to be great.

JUNE

... We've never skied... Isn't that weird? Most of our lives in the shadow of the misty mountain and we've never skied.

FRANK

Way I see it, life itself is already a too-fast careening down a mountain without any breaks, why do it twice?

JUNE

Easy there, Cormac McCarthy... What are you looking at?

A CAR DRIVES BY.

FRANK

There.

JUNE

What?

FRANK

That same car keeps driving by.

JUNE

It does? Are you sure?

FRANK

Yeah. Yellow Chevy Chevelle.

JUNE

How many times?

FRANK

Four times today.

JUNE

Huh.

FRANK

You didn't dump someone, did you? Are you being stalked?

JUNE

I don't FEEL stalked. What's the big deal?

FRANK

Nothing... Nothing, it's fine... Are all the faucets running a little bit?

JUNE

Yes, I still think that's weird, but all the faucets are running just a little.

FRANK

It keeps them from freezing up.

JUNE

How? If water wants to freeze, it's going to freeze.

FRANK

The pipes have water in them even if they're not being used, if you keep it moving they can't freeze up.

JUNE

That might be the most I've-been-an-old-man-since-I-was-twelve thing you've ever said.

FRANK

Doesn't make it not true.

JUNE

Okay.

FRANK

... I am... finally ready to talk about the gold bar.

JUNE

... No.

FRANK

Yes.

JUNE

Finally.

FRANK

I realize it's been a while.

JUNE

A while since the weirdest thing that's ever happened to us? Yes, it has.

FRANK

It scared the shit out of me.

JUNE

Everything scares the shit out of you.

FRANK

No, it doesn't.

JUNE

Sorry. Most things.

FRANK

Did it ever occur to you that the reason I have to freak out about things like, I don't know, a random huge bar of gold being dropped in our lap, is because you don't freak out about it enough.

JUNE

No, but also my brain isn't made of bees like yours is.

FRANK

What?

JUNE

Buzz buzz buzz all the time.

FRANK

Whatever. Look, I've gone back and forth about it, I think we need to call the police and just tell them everything.

JUNE

Really?

FRANK

Yes.

JUNE

For months we've been sitting here with a giant gold bar in our safe and all you've come up with is the most boring option?

FRANK

It was the first thing I thought to do and then I eventually came back around to it. Look we just tell the sheriff's department that we didn't know what to do so we hung onto it in case she came back for it. She's now obviously not coming back for it so we decided to call the police.

JUNE

I'm just... I'm so disappointed in you. After all this time.

FRANK

What if it belongs to someone and they're looking for it?

JUNE

What? Are you worried there's some impoverished family somewhere that's starving because they can't find their bar of gold?

FRANK

I don't know. June, do you know what the price of gold per ounce is? I looked it up.

JUNE

What is it?

FRANK

It's like fifteen-hundred dollars an ounce.

JUNE

Wow.

FRANK

That bar is the size of a sleeve of saltines. Do you know how many ounces that is?

JUNE

Sounds like a lot.

FRANK

It is a lot. What do you want me to do, put it in the bank?

JUNE

Of course not.

FRANK

What's your idea, then?

JUNE

Melt it down.

FRANK

... Melt it down how? Find a blacksmith?

JUNE

Yes.

FRANK

There are no more blacksmiths.

JUNE

I know a guy.

FRANK

Oh God.

JUNE

We used to date. He's super hot, but he wanted me to raise chickens or something he's a weird guy.

FRANK

How did you wind up dating a blacksmith?

JUNE  
Frankie, it's central Oregon, do you know how many people there are in those woods practicing professions that have been obsolete for a hundred years? It's the making-soap-from-beef-tallow Capitol of the world around here.

FRANK  
Who the hell is this?

JUNE  
You know him.

FRANK  
... No.

JUNE  
Yep.

FRANK  
T.S.?

JUNE  
Yep.

FRANK  
T.S. is a blacksmith.

JUNE  
Think about it for a second, it all makes sense.

FRANK  
...T.S. is a terrible name for a blacksmith.

JUNE  
That's because you don't know what the T.S. stands for, do you want to know what it stands for?

FRANK  
No.

JUNE  
Tarvok Stormbringer.

FRANK  
What?!

JUNE  
He had it legally changed, it's on his driver's license.

FRANK  
Why?!

JUNE

I don't know it's from some book or something.

FRANK

He went through all the trouble to change his name and then calls himself T.S.?

JUNE

It's even funnier that he kept his last name, so his legal name is Tarvok Stormbringer LeClerque.

FRANK

Oh my God... Sure, great idea. Let's trust our thousands of dollars of gold to the guy who rides a Gryphon to work in the morning.

JUNE

It's more on-brand than you think it is. I mean, "What do I do with all my gold" is kind of a fantasy novel problem.

FRANK

What kind of world are we living in where having a bunch of gold is a problem?

CLEMENTINE

(From on top of the roof.)  
I thought it was a nice gesture.

FRANK

Oh shit.

JUNE

Clementine!

FRANK

What are you doing on the roof?

CLEMENTINE

It's nice up here.

FRANK

HOW did you get on the roof?

CLEMENTINE

How do you know I haven't been here the whole time?

FRANK

I mean... at this point I'd believe anything.

JUNE

How'd you get past the wreck on the highway?

CLEMENTINE

Well, I was on my moped so I just zipped right through.

FRANK

What?

CLEMENTINE

I'm kidding, Frank.

FRANK

Oh.

JUNE

I had no idea there was roof access, I'm going to be up there all the time now.

FRANK

Please don't.

JUNE

You seem different, Clementine. Did you get your memory back?

CLEMENTINE

I didn't. I did learn allllllll sorts of other things though.

JUNE

Like what?

FRANK

Okay, hang on. Clementine... What the fuck?

CLEMENTINE

What?

FRANK

There's a bar of gold in our safe, Clementine.

CLEMENTINE

Yeah.

FRANK

And then you just vanished.

CLEMENTINE

I did.

FRANK

And now you show up. On our roof.

CLEMENTINE

Okay.



FRANK

So I repeat: What the fuck?

CLEMENTINE

It's funny, isn't it? Unexpected gifts. Things come to us out of thin air and then we... well we just reject them, don't we? "This good thing can't be happening. It has to be a bad thing in disguise. I better not accept it. I better treat it like a bad thing, I better worry about it and yell at people and if anyone tries to congratulate me for this good thing that happened out of the blue I better shut them down."... Right? Or we could do something else couldn't we? We could just say thanks. Enjoy it. Why don't we do that?

FRANK

Because nothing is ever just one thing, Clementine. The world's not that simple.

CLEMENTINE

But I want it to be.

FRANK

Me too. Doesn't really matter what I want, though.

CLEMENTINE

... He's kind of a pill, isn't he?

JUNE

He is. It's why I love him.

FRANK

Why don't you get down from the roof and tell us some things, Clementine?

CLEMENTINE

Okay.

FRANK

Don't jump-

CLEMENTINE'S FEET HIT THE GROUND.

JUNE

Nice dismount.

FRANK

Are you okay?

CLEMENTINE

I'm fine.

JUNE

You want a jacket or something, Clementine?

CLEMENTINE

What for?

JUNE

For, y'know, winter?

CLEMENTINE

I'm fine.

FRANK

Come inside.

CLEMENTINE

Okay, fine.

WE MOVE INSIDE THE OFFICE.

FRANK

I don't know what the deal is.

WE HEAR BUTTONS PRESSING ON A SAFE.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Maybe you're some sort of heiress or something, maybe the is a Patty Hearst situation, I don't know.

GOLD BAR THUDS DOWN ON THE FRONT DESK.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Okay. One bar of gold. Start talking.

JUNE

Frank, c'mon. She's got amnesia.

FRANK

You may not remember some things but we're not getting the full story are we?

CLEMENTINE

... It really is beautiful, isn't it? One thing I did learn: I learned that gold is made inside of a star. It cooks inside a star for billions of years. Then when the star finally grows old and dies, it coughs up all the gold and sends it flying across the universe... Gold is the dying breath of a star.

JUNE

That's cool. I didn't know that.

CLEMENTINE

What if I told you that's where I got it from? That I was there when a star died and I caught some of its gold, some of that dying breath. And then I found a man in Australia who could take what I found and press it into this little bar for you. This gold has travelled a long way to get here, Frank.

FRANK

Clementine. Tell us what's going on.

THE RADIO CRACKLES AND BUZZES.

ZEBULON

(In the radio.)

In the meantime, when so many thousands of the people had gathered together that they were trampling one another, he began to say to his disciples first,

CLEMENTINE

What is that voice?

FRANK

Clementine, come on.

ZEBULON

(In the radio.)

"Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known.

CLEMENTINE

You don't hear that?

JUNE

We don't hear anything.

CLEMENTINE

From the radio.

ZEBULON

(In the radio.)

Therefore whatever you have said in the dark shall be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms shall be proclaimed on the rooftops.

FRANK

It's just some music, Clementine.

ZEBULON

(In the radio.)

"I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him!

CLEMENTINE

I have to go.

FRANK

Jesus Christ.

JUNE

Clementine.

CLEMENTINE

That's not my name.

FRANK

What?

CLEMENTINE

I have to go.

JUNE

Are you okay?

CLEMENTINE RUSHES OUT THE DOOR.

FRANK

I'm sick of this shit, what the fuck?

THEY EXIT THE OFFICE. CLEMENTINE IS NOWHERE TO BE FOUND.

JUNE

Clementine?!

FRANK

Where...

JUNE

Clementine?!

FRANK

She's gone.

JUNE

Where the fuck did she go?... Jesus... Okay... Okay, look maybe I haven't been taking this seriously enough... She's fucking gone... Frank?... Frank, what the fuck is going on?

FRANK

There's that car again...

A DISTANT CAR PASSES BY THE MOTEL AND THEN SPEEDS OFF.

THE SOUND OF HORSES AND HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGES ON THE ROAD BELOW. WE HEAR A KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Yes, come in.

DOOR CREAKS OPEN.

JOHN

Mr. President?

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

What is it, John?

JOHN

I'm afraid the first lady will not be able to join you this evening.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Is that right?

JOHN

I'm afraid so.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

I will forever be envious of her ability to wriggle her way out of things.

JOHN

It is rather inconvenient that the American people have elected you and not her, Mr. President.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

I agree. So I'm to attend this evening as some sort of unshaven bachelor, then.

JOHN

Not as such, Mr. President, no.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

How's that?

JOHN

The keeping up of appearances is, of course, very important in matters of State.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

What form of roundabout explanation has begun just now?

JOHN

On the global stage we may appear to be a bit battered and bruised, Mr. President.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

I agree with you, John, it was a very impolite war.

JOHN

So it behooves us to project certain airs.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Airs?

JOHN

We don't want the nations of the world, namely our enemies, thinking that we have been weakened by strife.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

We have been weakened by strife, John.

JOHN

Indeed we have, but we don't want others to think it so, surely you agree.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

I agree.

JOHN

Appropriate that we're seeing a play this evening. I propose a bit of stagecraft.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Stagecraft? John, will I be wearing makeup at some point this evening?

JOHN

No, Mr. President but we will be putting on a bit of a show. A play within a play if you will.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

John, you have officially exhausted me, what am I to be doing this evening?

JOHN

Simply projecting an air of confidence and virility, while attending this evenings events with an ambassador.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Ambassador? From where?

JOHN

Luxembourg.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Luxembourg. That is a nation?

JOHN

So they say. A young one, but, there it lies, right in the middle of Europe.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

I see. A new nation?

JOHN

A bit, yes. Achieved their independence from France roughly twenty years past.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Luxembourg.

JOHN

Luxembourg.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

You wish me to attend the play this evening with an ambassador from a nation hardly out of its infancy, so as to project airs of... what are these airs again?

JOHN

Confidence.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Confident airs. For the ambassador from Luxembourg.

JOHN

A masterstroke in diplomacy, to be sure.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

... Very well. What's their name?

JOHN

Countess Jacquetta of Luxembourg.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

A woman?

JOHN

She is.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

A female ambassador?

JOHN

She appears to be.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

That's unusual, isn't it?

JOHN

Well, they were French not too long ago, certain behaviors do tend to linger.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Countess Jacquetta of Luxembourg.

JOHN

It is the one thing I miss about our former European ties. So many lords and ladies and countesses. We should consider having some of those in America.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

I thought that's why we created senators.

JOHN

They don't dress as well.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

... Very well. Spending the evening with a countess. Not bad for a country lawyer.

JOHN

And could you meet with her briefly before the affair this evening?

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Will this work never be completed, John?

JOHN

Well, there is always the grave, Mr. President.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Ah, that sounds nice.

JOHN

Shall I show her in?

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Please.

DOOR OPENS AND THE COUNTESS WALKS IN.

CLEMENTINE

(Speaking with an accent.)  
Mr. President. So lovely to meet you.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Countess Jacquetta of Luxembourg, I presume.



CLEMENTINE

I am honored to be in your presence.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

I am honored to be in yours. Your title does roll off the tongue much easier than "Mr. President".

CLEMENTINE

The difference being, yours was earned and mine simply given.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

So to what do I owe a diplomatic visit from the Kingdom of Luxembourg?

CLEMENTINE

We are a young nation, as you are, and we wished to learn from you.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Learn from our mistakes, you mean.

CLEMENTINE

Of course not. We admire your nation.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

We're not much to admire at the moment, Countess. We are, in fact, quite a mess at the moment.

CLEMENTINE

And yet you endure.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Yes... yes I suppose we do.

CLEMENTINE

We are a nation created by disagreement. The Belgians, the Germans, the French, they all insist we belong to them. When they are unable to agree we were suddenly left to our own devices. And now I stand before you.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Disagreement does tend to create a nation or two, does it not?

CLEMENTINE

Yes.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Though I am glad our current disagreement did not create two nations.

CLEMENTINE

As am I.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Countess, if you will allow me some expediency?

CLEMENTINE

Of course.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Due to the particulars of my tenure, I have not had the time I would have liked to devote to foreign affairs.

CLEMENTINE

This is understandable.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Though, in the time I have had, I have discovered one truth: that no foreign dignitary ever requested to meet just to say hello. Do we have business, you and I?

CLEMENTINE

... No business.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Countess, that is simply not true.

CLEMENTINE

... I am searching for something.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

I see. And what is that?

CLEMENTINE

... I do not know.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Ah. Well that is not what I expected you to say.

CLEMENTINE

Have you had this feeling? Searching without knowing what you search for?

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Certainly.

CLEMENTINE

And how did you go about this? This searching without a proper goal?

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Start with a word. That's what I like to do. You can use one word and one word only that describes what's absent. Give it a try.

CLEMENTINE

... Home.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Aha. Well there is a word that is far more elusive than one might think. One of those words that's a feeling disguised as a place. I do hate that.

CLEMENTINE

What do you suggest as a remedy?

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Hmm... Art.

CLEMENTINE

Art?

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Yes. I've been told that you're to accompany me this evening to see a play. I've found that art does illuminate the places in one's soul that have dwelled in darkness.

CLEMENTINE

What is this play?

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Our American Cousin. I'm sure it's quite bad, in truth. But bad art and good can equally illuminate, though one is certainly more enjoyable than the other.

CLEMENTINE

I look forward to it.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

As do I, Countess. Until then...

WE HEAR A CROWD'S LAUGHTER. THE SCENE MOVES TO THE PLAY THAT EVENING: OUR AMERICAN COUSIN.

CLEMENTINE

(Whispering.)  
I do not yet feel illuminated.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

(Whispering.)  
Give it time.

WE HEAR LIGHT FOOTSTEPS BEHIND THE PRESIDENT. THEN THE  
COCKING OF A PISTOL. THEN...

GLORIA

Move move move move move move MOVE MOVE MOVE MOVE!  
OOF!

JOHN WILKES BOOTH

UUG!

THE PISTOL FIRES INTO THE AIR. AUDIENCE MEMBERS SCREAM.

GLORIA

Gimmie that gun!

JOHN WILKES BOOTH

Unhand me woman!

CLEMENTINE

Oh my goodness!

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

What in the world!?

GLORIA

Gimmie that gun! RRRRRRR!

JOHN WILKES BOOTH

Stop biting me!

GLORIA

WHOA!

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Guards!

GLORIA

I got the gun! He's getting away!

JOHN WILKES BOOTH LEAPS DOWN TO THE STAGE.

GLORIA (CONT'D)

(Taunting him.)

I got your gun cabrón!

JOHN WILKES BOOTH

Sic semper tyranus!

GLORIA

Oh whatever! You're a shitty rebel, Chanco Villa!

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

What is the meaning of this?!

GLORIA

Oh, hey, Mr. President.

JOHN

Who is this? Guards, seize this woman.

GLORIA

Whoa.

CASPAR

(Southern accent.)

Calm down, everyone, calm down. Mr. President my name is Julius Bohannon, I am a member of your secret service. We have this disturbing situation well in hand.

JOHN

We were not informed that the Pinkertons were here this evening!

CASPAR

My apologies Mr. Hay, we had to move in secret so as not to cause this particular groundhog to dive back beneath the Earth as it were.

JOHN

You let an assassin get this close to the President?!

CASPAR

Well we certainly got there before you all did now didn't we?

GLORIA

That was fun.

CASPAR

I do apologize for the chicanery Mr. President. We did not want to alert Mr. Booth to our presence so we created a foil for him in the guise of this tiny Spanish woman.

GLORIA

Hey.

CASPAR

This is our agent- shit we forgot to give you a name.

GLORIA

Do we have to-

CASPAR

Esmeralda Villalobos.

GLORIA

Pulp Fiction, seriously?

CASPAR

Sorry. He never suspected a thing. Gentlemen, our documentation.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Well in that case, I suppose I owe you two a debt.

CASPAR

Not at all Mr. President, all in a days work. Now if you'll excuse us, we have a bit of cleaning up to do.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Ma'am, I can't thank you enough.

GLORIA

No problem, Abe.

CASPAR

Don't call him Abe.

GLORIA

Hey. Listen. Forty acres and a mule, you hear me?

JOHN

I'm sending the guards after this assassin immediately.

CASPAR

Oh, not to worry, Mr. Hay. We have a man on it.

GLORIA

Forty acres and a mule, Abe!

CASPAR

Let's go!

AN ALLEY OUTSIDE THE FORD THEATER. WE CAN STILL HEAR MUFFLED SOUNDS OF PANIC. A BACK DOOR OPENS AND WE HEAR FEET ON COBBLESTONE.

LEIF

You the guy looking for a horse?

JOHN WILKES BOOTH

Who are you?

LEIF

I'm Leif.

JOHN WILKES BOOTH  
You're not the man I was meant to meet, where is  
he?

LEIF  
He had a thing.

JOHN WILKES BOOTH  
What?

LEIF  
Look, do you want the horse or not?

JOHN WILKES BOOTH  
Very well.

HE CLIMBS UP ON TOP OF THE HORSE.

JOHN WILKES BOOTH (CONT'D)  
Thank you for this, my friend. The south will rise  
again.

LEIF  
Sure.

THE HORSE TROTS OFF INTO THE NIGHT.

LEIF (CONT'D)  
(Singing to himself.)  
I wish I was in the land of cotton...

A DETONATOR BEGINS BEEPING.

LEIF (CONT'D)  
Old times there are not forgotten look away-

LEIF PRESSES THE DETONATOR. OFF IN THE DISTANCE, JOHN WILKES  
BOOTH SCREAMS AND EXPLODES. THE HORSE NEIGHS AND RUNS OFF.

LEIF (CONT'D)  
Look away, look away, look away, dixie land...

ME MOVE TO THE DINER. AVA IS MAKING NOTES.

SONG:

EFFIE  
Ava, what are you pouring your thoughts into over  
there?

AVA  
It's kind of hard to explain.

EFFIE

... Ava do you mean it's hard to explain or it's hard to explain to us?

AVA

It's a map.

EFFIE

Oh. That's not so hard, is it? A map of what?

AVA

Everything.

EFFIE

Come again?

ZEBULON

I believe you'll need more pages in that book then.

AVA

It's not an actual map, it's just kind of a concept.

EFFIE

Of everything.

AVA

Yes. A friend of mine discovered something and no one would believe her. I didn't either for a while, but now I'm pretty sure she was right.

EFFIE

Why wouldn't anyone believe her?

AVA

Well, in science there's sort of a marketplace of ideas. You had a tractor back home, right?

ZEBULON

Oh yes. Very nice one.

EFFIE

We called it Sampson.

AVA

What did you have before that?

ZEBULON

We always had Sampson but before that my father just had a mule.

EFFIE

That was also named Sampson.



ZEBULON

It was an homage.

AVA

Okay, so tractors came along and you didn't need the mule anymore right? Which I'm sure was good news for everyone but the guy who sold the mules. The scientific world can, sometimes, be full of mule salesmen who are always skeptical about tractors.

EFFIE

I see. So your friend, she invented a tractor in a world full of mule sellers.

AVA

Exactly.

EFFIE

So what is the shape and size of this tractor, exactly?

AVA

Well... How did the universe begin? In the bible?

EFFIE

... Dear, she's asking us about the Bible.

ZEBULON

Yes, no sudden movements, we may scare her away.

AVA

C'mon.

ZEBULON

Well, Ava, it's interesting. There are, in fact, dueling theories on the beginning of all things.

AVA

Really?

ZEBULON

Yes. There are two interpretations of how the Lord created the world entire. They are called "Logos" and "Agon".

AVA

Speech and Struggle?

ZEBULON

Precisely. In one interpretation, with speech alone God created the world.

(MORE)

ZEBULON (CONT'D)

He spoke and matter itself would bend to his will,  
and through his words the world came to be. And the  
other interpretation, Struggle, involved a great  
battle.

EFFIE

That one talks of God as a warrior, and the world  
before him was one of chaos. He brought order to  
the chaos by defeating great sea monsters and such.

ZEBULON

Mot, Yam, Tannin, and Leviathan. The Psalms read:  
"You it was who smashed Yam with your might, who  
battered the heads of the monsters in the waters;  
You it was who crushed the heads of Leviathan, who  
left them for food for the denizens of the desert."

AVA

That second one's way cooler.

EFFIE

I like it too, it makes me feel better about my  
hatred for catfish.

ZEBULON

But if you're speaking of a map of all creation,  
for us it is never truly settled. The old  
Israelites believed the world to be like a great  
disc floating in a great ocean, but then that began  
to change.

AVA

Why did it change?

ZEBULON

Well, because of the arrival of people such as you,  
Ava. Men built great looking glasses that peered  
into the sky and our concept of the ground we stand  
on began to slowly change, and thus did our concept  
of its beginnings.

AVA

C'mon Mucklewains, I thought it was the word of  
God, I thought it was immutable.

ZEBULON

Yes, well...

EFFIE

We, in fact... well we believe that holy scripture  
was written by God's children and not God himself.

ZEBULON

Which can get one into trouble in certain circles.

EFFIE

There is the word and there is the world. And we find both to be perfect.

ZEBULON

But then there is the word and its interpretation.

EFFIE

And one cannot interpret without putting at least a bit of oneself into it. And we are, by design, imperfect, therefore so shall our interpretations be.

AVA

Then how do you ever know what to believe?

ZEBULON

That is the journey, Ava. And the fuel for that journey is faith.

EFFIE

So tell us, what was your friend's interpretation of everything?

AVA

She described it like a play. The beginning of all things is like a curtain rising. And every particle in the universe is a player in a great piece of theatre. And then eventually the curtain falls. That's not much different from what any other cosmologist would say. What my friend proved was that, also like a play, the curtain comes up again the next night. Sometimes the play is the same, sometimes it's different, but it continues on and on into eternity... and somehow all of that has something to do with a time-traveling, dimension-spanning diner. Which is hilarious.

EFFIE

Well, it's a nice story but there's no sea monsters in it.

DOOR CHIME.

CASPAR

-And then Gloria looks at him and says "Forty acres and a mule, Abe."

LEIF

To his face?

CASPAR

Looking right at him. Number 16 himself.

ZEBULON

Welcome back, y'all.

GLORIA

Just saved the republic, no big deal.

LEIF

It was pretty satisfying.

CASPAR

Gloria bit John Wilkes Booth.

AVA

You BIT him?

GLORIA

Let it be known, I will bite all confederates.

CASPAR

It was the bite heard round the world. Nations were shook.

GLORIA

Caspar doing LITerally a Froghorn Leghorn impression.

CASPAR

Ma'am, that is Julius Bohannon. Southern Gentleman, freedom fighter, and cigarette holder user.

LEIF

This was my favorite by far.

CASPAR

This pales in comparison to when we convinced Andre the Giant to run for French Parliament and that was my favorite.

GLORIA

What is not my favorite are these clothes. I'm going to go change, this reconstruction era corset is some bullshit.

CASPAR

Ava. Mission completed. Look, we're having a great time out there but please tell me we're getting somewhere.

AVA

Nothing definitive yet.

LEIF

Come on.

CASPAR

Ava, we've been at this for months.

AVA

I know.

CASPAR

Leif broke Jean Genet out of prison, Gloria shut down the first McDonalds.

AVA

I know.

CASPAR

I scared Catholic missionaries out of the Congo dressed as an evil gorilla, Ava.

AVA

We may have only done that one because I wanted you wear a gorilla suit.

CASPAR

I knew it.

LEIF

Point is, we're working our asses off out there.

AVA

Look, the theory is sound: the more chaos we create out there, the more deviations in a timeline we create, the better.

CASPAR

I get it. We're following Chuck's plan. We make chaos and this thing, whatever it is-

AVA

The Strange Attractor.

CASPAR

-Right, then it comes to us, but what does that even mean, what does it look like, what are we doing? How many Catholic missionaries do I have to scare away?

ZEBULON

Caspar, we must stay with the plan and have faith. There are no expedient paths to enlightenment.

EFFIE

But many thanks for scaring those Catholics away, they're like rabbits.

LEIF

As a side note, do we have any idea why we keep showing up at alternate Earths? This whole time all we're doing is Earth stuff, that can't be a coincidence.

AVA

We don't know that either.

CASPAR

I sure hope we're not going through all this because you don't want to admit that you're wrong about something.

AVA

I'm never wrong, Caspar, just waiting around for the moment that I'm right.

CASPAR

We've been waiting for that moment for a very long time.

AVA

"I'm impatient" said the one hundred and seventy three year old man.

CASPAR

Turning John Wilkes Booth over to the authorities was very satisfying, but it's not going to be satisfying the fifth time we do it.

LEIF

Oh. Say that again.

CASPAR

Turn John Wilkes Booth over to the authorities.

LEIF

Huh. Okay. Um. I didn't do that.

CASPAR

You didn't? What did you do?

LEIF

Y'know I... Killed him.

AVA

Whoa.

CASPAR

What!?

LEIF

What?

CASPAR

That was not the plan.

LEIF

The plan was to save Lincoln. I thought I had dealer's choice on Booth.

CASPAR

Dealers-... We're not playing Omaha Hi Lo.

GLORIA

What's happening?

CASPAR

Leif killed John Wilkes Booth.

GLORIA

Oh... Okay... You know I'm trying to feel a certain way about that but I got nothing. Is this what it's like being Ava?

AVA

Yes.

CASPAR

What did you do?

LEIF

You know, I met him in the alley with the horse, and as he was riding away I... I blew him up.

CASPAR

Leif!

LEIF

What?

CASPAR

You blew him up!?

LEIF

Why is that worse?

CASPAR

I don't know?!

GLORIA

Is the horse okay?

LEIF

The horse is fine.

GLORIA

Good.

CASPAR

Effie, Zebulon. Help me out here.

EFFIE

Leif. Murder is wrong.

LEIF

I know.

EFFIE

... Alright, well good.

CASPAR

That's it?! Zebulon?

ZEBULON

Yes I... hm. Well...

LEIF

Caspar, look. You're the history buff. What was GOING to happen to him.

CASPAR

He was... going to go hide in a Barn in Port Royal and then get shot in the neck by a Union soldier a couple of days later.

LEIF

Okay. And was there some sort of impassioned speech at the end about tyranny or whatever?

CASPAR

... Yeah.

LEIF

Okay. So the outcome is the same, I just saved the world from having to hear an impassioned speech from a straight-up-evil dude.

CASPAR

Leif.

LEIF

Hey, no one's given me credit yet for blowing up a dude on horseback and NOT killing the horse. That's called precision demolition, it's a lost art.

CASPAR

I feel weird about this.

LEIF

You'll be fine.



GLORIA

Incoming.

CASPAR

What?

GLORIA

Somebody's in the parking lot.

CASPAR

Who? Oh. It's the fucking Ambassador from Luxembourg.

GLORIA

She's having a weird day.

LEIF

She needs to get out of the parking lot, we're going to jump soon.

CASPAR

Oh NOW you're concerned for people.

LEIF

Innocent people, sure.

CASPAR

I'll go talk to her.

DOOR CHIME. CASPAR STEPS OUTSIDE.

CASPAR (CONT'D)

Good evening, Madam Ambassador. May I help you?

CLEMENTINE

What an unusual building.

CASPAR

Yes. Architects these days. May I escort you back to town, you must be in quite a state considering this evening's events.

CLEMENTINE

I was so impressed with your heroism.

CASPAR

Ah, well. It was a group effort.

CLEMENTINE

I am Countess Jacgetta of Luxembourg.

CASPAR

An honor to be in your presence, Countess. I am Julius Bohannon of the Shreveport Bohannons.

CLEMENTINE

... Are you certain?

CASPAR

Am I certain of what?

CLEMENTINE

Are you certain of who you say you are?

CASPAR

I'm quite certain.

CLEMENTINE

I have excellent ability to detect deception.

CASPAR

Do you now?

CLEMENTINE

Yes.

CASPAR

What would your sense of deception say about a woman calling herself Countess Jacquetta of Luxembourg when Countess Jacquetta was murdered in the 15th century. She was thought to be a witch. Have you risen from the grave to enact your revenge on mankind, Countess?

CLEMENTINE

(Dropping the accent.)  
Who are you?

CASPAR

(Dropping the accent.)  
Who are you?

CLEMENTINE

What is this place?

CASPAR

Honestly, I have no idea.

DOOR CHIME.

GLORIA

What's going on, Caspar?

CASPAR

Not sure.

CLEMENTINE

Who are all of you?

LEIF

We run a diner.

AVA

What's happening?

EFFIE

Dear, I have a very strange feeling.

CLEMENTINE

What the hell is that?!

CASPAR

Honestly, we don't know that either.

CLEMENTINE

I don't like this place. What is this place?

GLORIA

Calm down, just tell us your name.

CLEMENTINE

Are you trying to stop me? I won't stop.

CASPAR

Whoever you are, we think you may be doing something bad.

CLEMENTINE

No... No, I'm too close.

AVA

Too close to what?

CLEMENTINE

Tell me who you are!

GLORIA

Lady. No. You first.

CLEMENTINE

Never mind. I'll find out for myself.

CLEMENTINE SUDDENLY TELEPORTS AWAY.

LEIF

Shit.

AVA

See... Told you I'd be right eventually.

GLORIA

Okay. Everybody inside. Time to make plans.

WE SLOWLY TRANSITION TO THE SOUNDS OF A BUST DMV OFFICE. A PHONE IS RINGING.

CASPAR

Hello?... Yeah, look I can't talk about this right now, I'm slammed, okay? We'll.... We'll have to talk about it later, I'm not doing this now. Goodbye.

CASPAR HANGS UP.

CASPAR (CONT'D)

322? When you sign the wait list you need a first and last name okay? Clementine?

CLEMENTINE

Yes. That's me.

CASPAR

What's your last name, Clementine?

CLEMENTINE

Oh. I don't have one.

CASPAR

You don't have one.

CLEMENTINE

No. Can I get one here?

CASPAR

No, Clementine, you cannot get a last name at the Department of Motor Vehicles. Is there anything else I can help you with?

CLEMENTINE

Yes... Yes, I think there is, Caspar.

END OF CHAPTER 21.