

CHARACTERS:

Prologue:

PETER and GINETTE, who have been dating for a little while.

Scene 1: SAD AND GLAD

JIMMY, a heating and cooling guy; SANDRINE, his ex-girlfriend; a salty WAITRESS.

Scene 2: THIS HURTS

MARVALYN, a woman who knows pain, and STEVE, a man who does not.

Scene 3: GETTING IT BACK

GAYLE and LENDALL, longtime girlfriend and boyfriend.

Scene 4: THEY FELL

RANDI and CHAD, two "Aroostook County Kids" - longtime friends.

Scene 5: STORY OF HOPE

Hope, who has traveled the world, and a MAN, who has not.

Scene 6: SEETING THE THING

RHONDA, a tough woman, and DAVE, a not-so-tough man who loves her.

Epilogue:

PETE and GINETTE, from the "Prologue."

Jimmy & Sandrine

1 of 3

Sad & Glad
Score 1

ALMOST, MAINE-Middle School Edition, 08/22/2024

Scene 2

SAD AND GLAD

The music and the northern lights fade.

It's about ten minutes earlier—8:50 P.M. or so.

A man, Jimmy, appears.

He sits alone at a table in a back corner of Almost, Maine's local hangout, the Moose Paddy.

He is nursing a couple of Cokes.

Sandrine St. Pierre enters.

She is coming from the ladies' room, cheerily heading back to her friends, who are up front.

Sandrine passes Jimmy's table.

Jimmy sees her—and is thrilled to be seeing her—and calls to her.

START
→

JIMMY: Sandrine!

SANDRINE: Hm?

Sandrine stops and turns and sees...Jimmy.

She is not happy to see him.

But she suddenly smiles so that he doesn't know that she's not happy to see him.

Jimmy!

JIMMY: *(A little too excited.)* Hey!

SANDRINE: Hey!

JIMMY: Hey!!

SANDRINE: Hey!!

JIMMY and SANDRINE: Heyyyy!!!

Jimmy bear hugs Sandrine.

Sandrine doesn't hug Jimmy back.

JIMMY: How you doin'?!?

SANDRINE: Doin' pretty good! How are you doin'?!?

JIMMY: I'm doin' good, doin' good! How are you doin'?!?

SANDRINE: I'm good, doin' good, great! How are you?

JIMMY: Great, great! How *are* ya?

SANDRINE: Great, // great!

JIMMY: Oh, that's great!

SANDRINE: Y//eah!

JIMMY: That's great!

SANDRINE: Y//eah!

JIMMY: That's great!

SANDRINE: Y//eah.

JIMMY: That's great!

SANDRINE: Y//eah.

JIMMY: You look great!

SANDRINE: Oh, [no, I don't]—

JIMMY: You look great.

SANDRINE: Than//ks.

JIMMY: You do. You look so great.

SANDRINE: Thanks, // Jimmy.

JIMMY: So pretty. So pretty.

Jimmy & Sandrine

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ALMOST, MAINE-Middle School Edition, 08/22/2024

SANDRINE: Thanks.

Awful, uncomfortable beat.

Then, a little to cheerily:

JIMMY: Here, have a seat!

SANDRINE: Oh, Jimmy, I can't—

JIMMY: Aw, come on, I haven't seen you in...well, *months*.

SANDRINE: Yeah—

JIMMY: And months and months and months and months and months and months and *months*, how does that happen? Live in the same town as someone and never see 'em?

SANDRINE: I don't know.

The waitress is in constant motion, always appearing and disappearing equally quickly.

WAITRESS: Look at you two, tucked away in the corner over here! Lucky I found ya! (*Referring to Jimmy's couple of Cokes.*) Is the man and his lovely lady ready for another round?

JIMMY: Sure, we'll [have a coupla Cokes]—

SANDRINE: No! We're not together.

JIMMY: Well, [we used to be]—

SANDRINE: We're all set, thanks.

JIMMY: Well, [don't you want a drink?]—

SANDRINE: All set!

JIMMY: Okay—yeah, we're good.

STOP →

Woman ! Man This Hurts 1 of 2

ALMOST, MAINE-Middle School Edition, 08/22/2024

Score 2

MAN: Yeah.

START

Beat.

The man adds "ironing boards" to his book labeled THINGS THAT CAN HURT YOU, and then he thinks.

↓

And then he picks up a book labeled THINGS TO BE AFRAID OF.

Should I be *afraid* of ironing boards?

WOMAN: Well, if someone swings it at your head and wallops you with it, yes.

MAN: Well, it's not [on this list]—... I have a list of things to be afraid of, too, and ironing boards are not on this list either.

WOMAN: Well they shouldn't be, really.

MAN: No?

WOMAN: No, you shouldn't be *afraid* of ironing boards.

MAN: No?

WOMAN: No.

MAN: But they can *hurt* you.

WOMAN: Yeah.

MAN: So I should be *afraid* of them.

WOMAN: No.

MAN: So I *shouldn't* be afraid of them?

WOMAN: Right.

MAN: But they can *hurt* me.

WOMAN: Well, if they're used the way you used it, yeah.

MAN: Oh-oh-oh! So, they're kind of like the opposite of God!

WOMAN: What?

Woman! Man

2 of 2

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MAN: Well, ironing boards can *hurt* me, but I shouldn't be *afraid* of them, but God, my brother Rob says, God *won't* hurt me, but I should *fear* him.

WOMAN: Um...I guess.

MAN: Boy, this is getting very complicated.

WOMAN: What is?

MAN: This business of learning what hurts, what doesn't hurt, what to be afraid of, what not to be afraid of.

WOMAN: Listen, you're goin' on and on about some nutty stuff: Are you sure you're okay?

MAN: Yeah. I told you: I don't feel pain.

WOMAN: Yeah, but—what do you mean? Do you have some sort of a condition or something?

MAN: My brother Rob thinks so.

WOMAN: What do you mean your brother Rob thinks so?, Haven't you been diagnosed?

MAN: No.

WOMAN: Well, have you been to a doctor?

MAN: Yeah.

WOMAN: Well, what does the doctor say?

MAN: That we have to go see other doctors who are too far away for us to go to. >

WOMAN: Wait—

MAN: But it's all good: My brother Rob said we don't need to know what the far-away doctors'll say, we just need to remember that sometimes bad things happen to good people and we just need to make the best of it and we've been making the best of it for a long time, >

WOMAN: Wait—

MAN: and—ooh!—if you don't believe me, >

WOMAN: Huh?—No—

MAN: you can hit me if you want to, to see [that I really don't feel pain]!

STOP

Gayle! Lendall Getting it Back

Score 3 1 of 2
ALMOST, MAINE-Middle School Edition, 08/22/2024

He does not move as quickly as Gayle.

What are you doin'? I thought you weren't comin' over tonight 'cause of Sandrine's bachelorette // party thing.

START

GAYLE: Lendall:



Gayle is seething.

She is full of something to say.

But she can't quite say it yet.

LENDALL: *(Approaching Gayle.)* Gayle—what's wrong? You okay?

GAYLE: *(Shutting Lendall up and stopping him from approaching.)* Shhh!

Gayle stills herself.

Lendall:

LENDALL: What?!?

Gayle steels herself.

GAYLE: I want it back.

LENDALL: [What are you talking about?] Huh?

GAYLE: I want it back.

LENDALL: *(Not comprehending.)* What [do you want back]?

GAYLE: All the love I gave to you?, I want it back.

LENDALL: *(Trying to understand what Gayle is talking about.)* What???

GAYLE: Now.

LENDALL: I [don't understand]—...I don't under//stand—

GAYLE: I've got yours in the truck.

LENDALL: *(Completely confused.)* What???

Gayle & Lendall Getting it Back

Scene 3

2 of 2

ALMOST, MAINE-Middle School Edition, 08/22/2024

GAYLE: All the love you gave to me?, I've got it in the truck.

LENDALL: What are you talkin' about?

GAYLE: I don't want it anymore.

LENDALL: What? [What do you mean you don't want it anymore?]

GAYLE: I've made a decision: We're done.

LENDALL: What?!?

GAYLE: We're done. I've decided. And, so, I've brought all the love you gave to me back to you. It's the right thing to do.

LENDALL: *(Completely bewildered.)* Um, I [really don't understand what you're talkin' about]—

GAYLE: It's in the truck.

LENDALL: You said.

Beat.

Lendall is completely baffled.

GAYLE: *(Frustrated that Lendall is not doing what she's asked him to do.)* I can get it for you, or...you can get it.

LENDALL: Well, I don't want it back.

GAYLE: Well, I don't want it! What am I supposed to do with all of it, now that I don't want it?

LENDALL: Well, I don't know!

GAYLE: Well, under the circumstances, // it doesn't seem right for me to keep it, so I'm gonna give it back.

Gayle heads to her truck.

LENDALL: Under what circumstances? *(Calling to her.)* Gayle, what are [you talking about]—? I don't understand what [you're talking about]—... What are you doing?

GAYLE: *(From off.)* I told you. I'm getting all the love you gave to me, and I'm giving it back to you.

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Randi & Chad

1 of 2

They Fell Sc. 4

ALMOST, MAINE-Middle School Edition, 08/22/2024

~~RANDI: Aw, buddy...~~

START

CHAD: and all I could think about was how not much in this world makes me feel good or makes much sense anymore, and I got really scared, 'cause there's gotta be something that makes you feel good or at least makes sense in this world, or what's the point, right? >

RANDI: Yeah.

CHAD: But then I kinda came out of bein' sad and actually felt okay, 'cause I realized that there is one thing in this world that makes me feel really good and that *does* make sense, and it's you.

Long beat.

Chad is surprised—and mortified—by the string of words that just came tumbling out of his mouth.

And everything stops.

Chad isn't quite sure what he has just said.

Randi isn't quite sure what she has just heard.

Long, long beat of these kids sorting out what Chad just said and what Randi just heard.

Finally, Randi extricates herself from the extremely awkward and strange and uncomfortable situation she finds herself in, and she starts to leave.

RANDI: Well, I'm gonna head. >

CHAD: Yeah...

RANDI: *(Disengaging from Chad.)* I gotta work in the mornin'...

CHAD: Well, I'm just supervisin' first shift at the mill, so I can pick you up any time after three—

RANDI: Oh, I don't know, Chad: Me and Lendall, we got a long day tomorrow—we're still catchin' up, fixin' roofs from all the snow in November., [We] Gotta do Marvalyn and Eric's, and—

CHAD: Well, four // or five? Six or seven?

RANDI: Prolly busy all day, I don't know when we'll be // done.

CHAD: Well, you just // say when—

Randi & Chad

2 of 2

They Fell

ALMOST, MAINE-Middle School Edition, 08/22/2024

CHAD: And sad

RANDI: Yup.

CHAD: So...I guess you win.

RANDI: Yup!

CHAD: That right there might make you the big winner of all time!

RANDI: Yup!

CHAD: Baddest date of all time!

RANDI: Yup!

CHAD: Congratulations!

RANDI: Thank you!

CHAD: So what do you pick tomorrow?

RANDI: Bowlin', supper at the Snowmobile Club, coupla root beers at the Moose Paddy, hang out.

CHAD: Good.

Randi and Chad air-toast and then chug their root beers simultaneously.

Little beat.

Maybe they fall into some sadness.

And then Chad laughs again.

RANDI: What?

CHAD: I don't know. Just sometimes...I don't know why I bother goin' "out." I don't like it, Randi. I hate it. I hate goin' out on these dates. I mean, why do I wanna spend my Friday night with some girl I might *maybe* like, when I could be spendin' it hangin' out with someone I *know* I like, like you, you know?

RANDI: Yeah.

CHAD: I mean...that was rough tonight. In the middle of Sally tellin' me how she didn't like the way I smelled...I got real sad, >

STOP

Daniel & Hope

Story of Hope

1 of 3

ALMOST, MAINE-Middle School Edition, 08/22/2024

And then realizes she has no idea why she thanked the man.

Sc. 5

WOMAN: I don't know.

The woman starts to leave.

The man watches the woman go for a beat.

Then:

MAN: Good-bye, Hope.

HOPE: Good-bye. *(Stopping.)* Argh!, I'm so...sorry to have bothered you... It's just, I was all alone out there in the world with no place in it, and I realized what I'd done—wait—you called me Hope. How did you know my name?

Hope approaches the man.

And really looks at him.

Maybe the man reveals himself in some way.

Hope finally recognizes him: He's Daniel Harding.

Hope is stunned.

Danny?!?

This is Magical Moment #7 (which happens at the same time as Magical Moment #6, when Marci's other shoe drops from the sky...(which happens at the same time as Magical Moment #5, when Chad and Randy fall in love with each other...which happens at the same time as Magical Moment #4, when Gayle sees her engagement ring and Lendall proposes to her...which happens at the same time as Magical Moment #3, when Steve realizes he's feeling pain for the first time in a long time...which happens at the same time as Magical Moment #2, when the waitress tells Jimmy that her name is Villian...which happens at the same time as Magical Moment #1, when East opens the bag containing Glory's heart so he can start repairing it—and Glory sees the northern lights).

A wisp of music or a gentle sound cue could help define this magical moment.

The northern lights appear.

DANIEL: Hello, Hope.

HOPE: *(In a bit of a spin.)* Danny...I didn't // rec[ognize you]—>

Daniel & Hope Story of Hope

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ALMOST, MAINE-Middle School Edition, 08/22/2024

DANIEL: I know.

HOPE: I didn't // rec[ognize you]— >

DANIEL: I know.

HOPE: I didn't even // recognize you!

DANIEL: I know.

HOPE: You're so...

DANIEL: I know.

HOPE: ...small.

DANIEL: Yeah. I, uh, lost a lotta hope. That'll do a number on you.

Long beat.

Daniel and Hope stand in a stunned, still, and awful silence.

Finally, Hope says something.

HOPE: Danny: I'm so sorry I never came back [to answer you]—

DANIEL: (*Kindly.*) Shh. It's okay. 'Cause, you know somethin'? You're early.

HOPE: What?

DANIEL: You're early! You said you'd be back with an answer to my question before the sun came up, and Jeezum Crow, the sun's not even close to being up yet! It only went down a few hours ago. Look how early you are! That's good of you.

Beat.

They enjoy Danny's goodness.

So...a taxi all the way from *Bangor*?!?

HOPE: Yup.

DANIEL: To tell me...?

Hope is about to say, "Yes," when she is interrupted.

HOPE : Daniel Story of Hope

30f3

ALMOST, MAINE-Middle School Edition, 08/22/2024

SUZETTE: *(Calling, from off.)* Honey? Dan? Hon?

Little beat.

Hope is stunned.

And then devastated.

Daniel is also stunned.

And then remembers that he has a wife.

Who's there?

DANIEL: *(Calling inside to his wife.)* Just somebody...needs directions.

SUZETTE: *(Calling, from off.)* It's awful late for directions.

DANIEL: *(Calling inside.)* Yeah—Suzette, listen...

Little beat.

I'll be right in.

SUZETTE: *(From off.)* Okay.

Beat.

Daniel slowly turns to Hope.

DANIEL: I—...

HOPE: What?

DANIEL: *(Simply, matter-of-factly.)* I hope you find it, Hope. Your place in this world.

Beat.

Bye.

HOPE: Goodbye, Danny.

Daniel goes inside.

And Hope lingers—she is at a loss.

Dave & Rhonda Seeing the Thing

ALMOST, MAINE-Middle School Edition, 08/22/2024

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Why?!?

Sc. 6

DAVE: (*Crestfallen that Rhonda would ask such a question.*) Well—...

RHONDA: I mean...thank you! // Thank you., Thanks., Thanks.

DAVE: There you go., That's what people say! There you go! You're welcome...

Rhonda props the painting up against a crate—it's best if the audience still can't see it.

And she sits in a chair and stares at Dave's artwork.

START ↓

RHONDA: So, Dave...I didn't know you *ainted*.

DAVE: Yeah. This is—...

Dave turns the painting right side up—because Rhonda propped it up against the crate upside down.

I'm takin' adult ed art. Tuesday nights. Merle Haslem¹⁷ over at the high school's teachin' it—it's real good—and this is my version of one of those stare-at-it-until-you-see-the-thing things. Ever seen one of these? Some of the old painters did it with dots. They called it—... (*Searches for—but can't quite come up with—"pointillism."*) ...somethin' ...but I did it with a buncha little blocks of colors, see, and if you just look at the little blocks of colors, it's just a buncha little blocks of colors, but if you step back and look at the whole thing, it's not just a buncha little blocks of colors: It's a picture of something.

RHONDA: Picture of what?

DAVE: I'm not gonna tell you, you have to figure it out.

RHONDA: Oh, come on, Dave!

DAVE: No, it takes a little time., It can be a little frustrating.

RHONDA: Well, why would you give me somethin' that's gonna *frustrate*?!?

DAVE: No-no-no, I just mean you gotta not *try* to look for anything, that's what'll frustrate you. You gotta just *kinda* look at it, so it doesn't *know* you're lookin' at it.

RHONDA: What're you talkin' about?

DAVE: Well...you gotta trick it! >

¹⁷ Pronounced, "HAZ-lum."

Dave & Rhonda Seeing the Thing

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ALMOST, MAINE-Middle School Edition, 08/22/2024

RHONDA: Huh?

DAVE: You gotta trick it!

Dave demonstrates "trickin' it": he walks by the painting, stealing glances at it as he does.

Just...trick it!

Dave demonstrates how "trickin' it" works again.

See? Walk on by, and...trick it!

He demonstrates "trickin' it" again.

See? Trick it!

Dave demonstrates again.

Just gotta walk on by and trick it!

He demonstrates again.

RHONDA: *(Amused and irritated.)* Dave—what are you doin'?' What're you talkin' about?

DAVE: You gotta not let it know. And hopefully you'll eventually see what it is. It's a common thing—it's somethin' everybody knows. Go ahead—try it!

RHONDA: *(Skeptically.)* Okay.

Rhonda reluctantly tries "trickin' it" a few times, like Dave did.

{Note to the actors playing Dave and Rhonda: feel free to play with adding language in the above "trickin' it" section. Just make sure it's all about "trickin'" the painting. And—have fun! This "trickin' it" business should be pretty darn funny.}

DAVE: There ya go, there ya go!

RHONDA: *(Giving up on "trickin' it.")* This is stupid. I don't see anything.

DAVE: No, you were doin' good—!

RHONDA: *(Putting an end to this ridiculousness.)* Dave!!

DAVE: All right, all right, then, how about do this: Just do what you usually do around the house at night, and check it out real casual-like, like...

STOP →