

CHARACTERS

BEN	Love-sick worker; 30's.
MATT	Ben's boss.
ALLISON	Ben's object of affection; 20's-30's.

SETTING

An office.

BEN sits at his computer. He's typing away and leans in close to read a new email as a notification goes off. He sits upright, shocked and reads it again. He stands.

BEN

This is the time, Ben. You were waiting for this—a sign. She's not going to wait around forever. She's perfect. Now, there's nothing in your way. Go, Ben. Go, dammit. What's the worst that could happen?

He pushes his chair in nicely and starts to walk across the office. Various people greet him but he politely smiles or says "hey" and keeps moving. BEN knocks on ALLISON's door. She's on the phone.

ALLISON

Mom, can I call you back? No, I will call you back this time, I swear. You know I'm *working* right now? Mom, please. I'll even set a time. 10:30 AM. I swear.

BEN starts to lose his nerve and turns back.

ALLISON

I'm sorry, Ben. Just a minute.

BEN stops. He's entirely on the fence.

ALLISON

Mom, *please*. I'm hanging up now. No, it's not rude.

BEN

It really isn't.

ALLISON

See, even Ben agrees with you? Who's Ben? A guy I work with (*whisper but with intensity*) No, Mom. Not having this talk. Not now. Calling you back at 10:30 AM. Hanging up in one...two... (*hangs up*) If I wait 'til three, she always weasels a way back into the conversation. She could talk all day. Kinda lonely I guess. Anyways, I am sorry. That was rude of me and I am on the clock. What's up, Ben?

BEN stammers, unsure of how to proceed. He lost his fire and now can't figure out how this plays in his hand.

BEN

I must've forgotten.

ALLISON

Again, that's my fault. Don't you hate when you forget what you were going to say? Just sitting there right on the tip of your tongue.

BEN

If it was important, I'm sure it'll come back.

ALLISON

What if it never does?

BEN

Huh?

ALLISON

What if there's a middle ground—some kind of purgatory. Walls lined with forgotten requests. Drawers filled with the missing socks and bobby pins. I bet it exists. Everyone who immediately enters the room just smacks their head. All those things they meant to say—all the things they'd forgotten.

BEN

That's some crazy idea.

ALLISON

Think of it yet?

BEN

I think it's gone.

ALLISON

Boo. Let me help. I don't feel like working.

BEN

Okay.

ALLISON

Was it work related?

BEN

Doubtful.

ALLISON

Was it about lunch? It's almost lunchtime. Hey, we've never gone to lunch together.

BEN

That's true.

ALLISON

We should go sometime. What do you like to eat?

BEN

Almost anything. Except Indian, Ethiopian, and Sushi.

ALLISON

Western hemisphere. Got it.

BEN

You?

ALLISON

You know what I like to do? I wait until as late as possible to get lunch—like maybe 2 or 3. I go to one of those sports bars like Hurley's and get a big cheeseburger with onion rings, side of mashed potatoes, and a stout—so dark you can't see through it. Consume. Return to office. Sit in food induced coma for the rest of the day—and onions kind of make it so that people don't get too close.

BEN

I like your plan.

ALLISON

Thank you. So, was it lunch?

BEN

I don't think so.

ALLISON

Drat, now I'm hungry. Dinner?

BEN

...I can't remember.

ALLISON

Local sports team? Weather? Music? Hobbies?

BEN

I'm sorry for bothering you.

ALLISON

It's not a bother, Ben. Oops, 10:30. Mama awaits. Will you excuse me?

BEN

Of course.