

# Directing Journal

By Andra Enache

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## Blank Director's Notebook

### Schedule

Monday Jan 30 <sup>th</sup>	Read-through, blocking
Monday Feb 6 <sup>th</sup>	Re-hashing from last week, cleaning it up

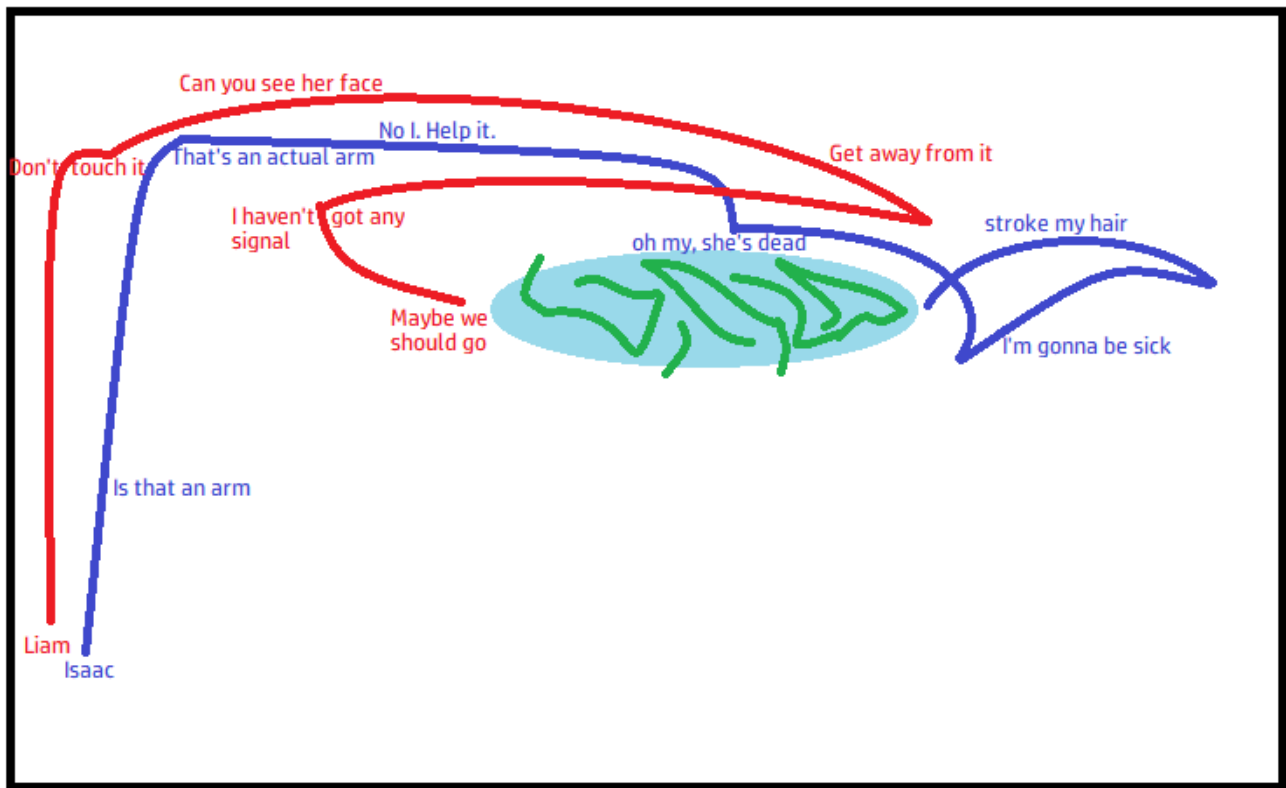
### Actors/Contacts

Name	Contact Info	Role
Isaac	864-569-4379	A
Liam	Telegram	B

### Concept Statement:

I chose this scene because it fit with my aesthetic. I wanted to focus on picturesque movement and tableaux inspired from the images. Two boys enter the scene, on a hike in the woods, and they discover a dead body covered in leaves. The scene follows as the two separate on a track between alarm and sympathy. Their innocence leaves them questioning what to do as they face their discovery. Using the blue blanket and the blue light paints a scene of a chill settling over the picture. The vines represent how death gives back to life. The boys also represent livelihood.

### Ground Plan and Blocking:





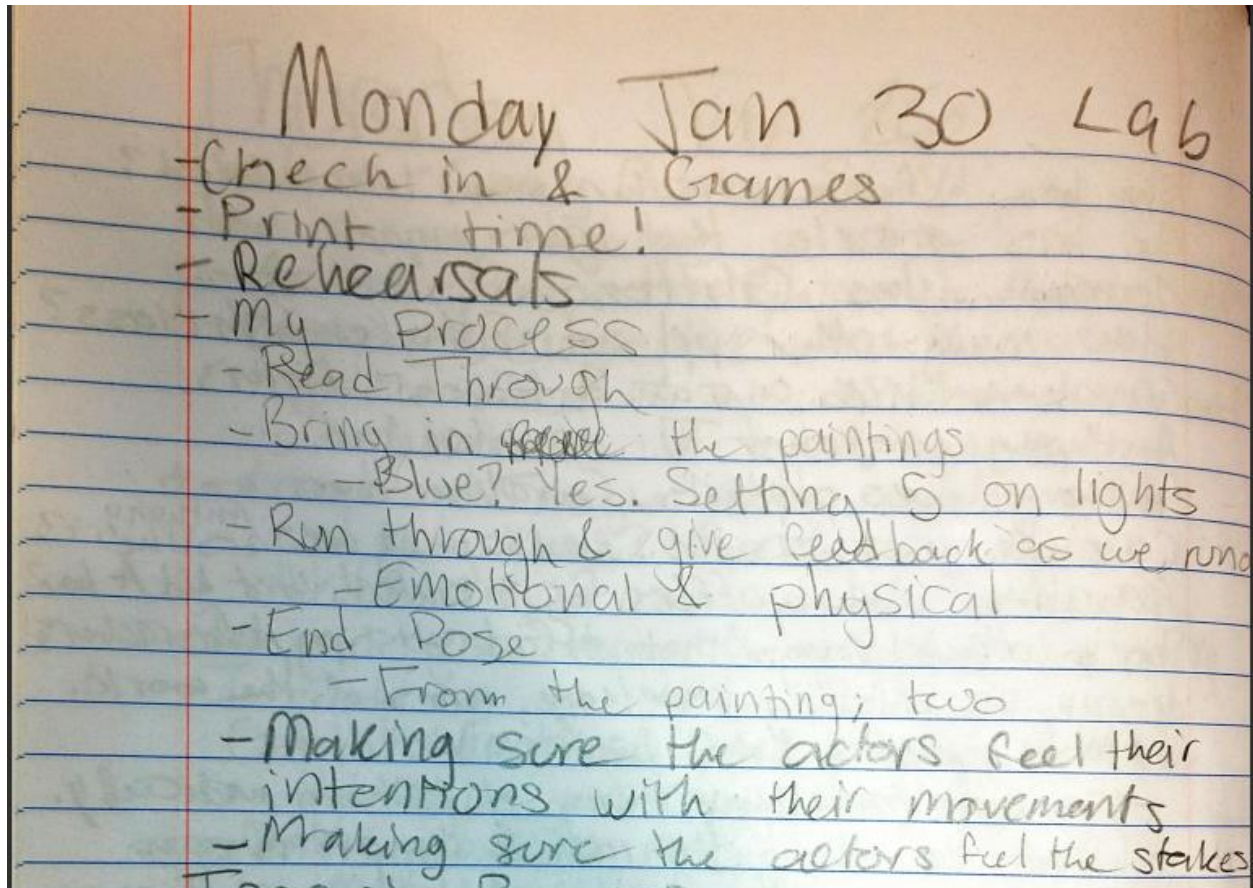
## Blank Director's Notebook

Props: Pillows, blanket, vines

Costumes: Regular daywear

Rehearsal Process:

Day 1: Jan 30<sup>th</sup>



- Emotional response:
  - How do you feel when you see a dead body?
  - How do you balance the law with morality?
  - How does inner conflict manifest physically?
  - How do the different textual reactions to the body affect character differentiation?
- “Too-much” rehearsal
  - Struggled to explain what I wanted them to do
  - They stuck to the set blocking already
  - I want my actors to raise the stakes.

Day 2: Feb 6<sup>th</sup>

- Review blocking
  - Don't forget to end in the angelic posing over the body
  - Working to quicken the pace



## Blank Director's Notebook

- Give feedback as we go along
- Do run throughs
  - Stay focused in the reality of the situation for your character
- Performances

















W. Muzyski







## RESEARCH and PREP

### Joan

- Joan of Arc is a patron saint of France, honored as a defender of the French nation for her role in the siege of Orléans and her insistence on the coronation of Charles VII of France during the Hundred Years' War. Stating that she was acting under divine guidance, she became a military leader who transcended gender roles and gained recognition as a savior of France.
- Joan entered Compiègne (1430) to strengthen its defense against Philip the Good, who had just renewed (March 1430) his alliance with the duke of Bedford. During a sortie she fell into the hands of the Burgundians (May 23). She was sold to the English, imprisoned at Rouen, tried before an ecclesiastical tribunal according to the procedure of the Holy Office, and adjudged a heretic. Though she signed a recantation, she quickly revoked it and was burned to death at Rouen on May 30, 1431.

### King Charles VII

- In 1420 the Treaty of Troyes recognized Henry V as heir to the French throne, excluding Charles.
- Although France had lost the economic prosperity and commercial importance it had enjoyed in the preceding centuries and the great nobles had become independent during the long partisan struggles of the Hundred Years' War period, Charles was able to begin the work of reunifying the kingdom by rallying the peoples' loyalty to himself as the legitimate king.
- After Charles VII's death (1461), his son and successor, Louis XI, managed to make the Truce of Saint-Omer (1463) with the Yorkist king of England Edward IV.

### Hundred Year War

- Hostilities in the Hundred Years' War began at sea, with battles between privateers. Edward III did not disembark on the Continent until 1338.
- The siege of Orléans proved the turning point of the war, the event which enabled Joan of Arc to fulfill her mission and save France.
- Edward IV and Louis XI then met at Picquigny (August 29, 1475) and decided upon a seven years' truce, agreeing in the future to settle their differences by negotiation rather than by force of arms. Edward was to withdraw from France, receiving in compensation a payment of 75,000 gold ecus and an annual payment of 50,000 ecus while both kings lived. This truce, seemingly fragile, survived various stresses and can be held to mark the end of the Hundred Years' War. No peace treaty was ever signed. Calais was retained by the English until 1553, and English kings continued to claim the title king of France until 1801.

### Circumstances within my 5-minute scene that could utilize improvisations:

- The conversation between the Court and Thomas
- A scene where Joan attempts to fit in at court
- A scene where a young Thomas first arrives to court
- The moment when God first talked to Joan
- A scene where Thomas and Joan reconcile after the fight (something that doesn't actually happen in the play)



## I Joan Directing Notebook Section

### The moment when God first talked to Joan

- Place: Joan's family's farm in rural 15<sup>th</sup> century France
- Time: Noon
- Immediate Circumstances: Joan has lived all their life on their small family farm. They know how to milk cows, collect eggs, and plant and harvest crops. They've been doing this work for seventeen years. They're doing the work, but their heart isn't in it.
- First Intention:
- Joan: To finish the chores at home and around the farm
- The Event: Joan hears the booming voice of God telling them to lead France to victory in the war with England
- Second Intention:
- Joan: To figure out what's going on

A scene where Thomas and Joan reconcile after the fight (something that doesn't actually happen in the play).

- Place: The court of the French King Charles at his palace in Paris
- Time: At the end of the day, after the court meetings have ended
- Immediate Circumstances: A few days have past since Joan and Thomas' argument. Joan travels from the battlefield to meet Thomas. They've been too nervous to enter while court is in process. They catch Thomas walking out of the meeting room and make an impulsive decision to approach them.
- First Intention:
- Thomas: To celebrate them reuniting
- Joan: To apologize
- The Event: Thomas forgives Joan
- Second Intention:
- Thomas: To ask them where they've been
- Joan: To inquire about what is going on in court
- Source: Josephine, Charlie. *I, Joan*. Samuel French, 2022.

### Characters:

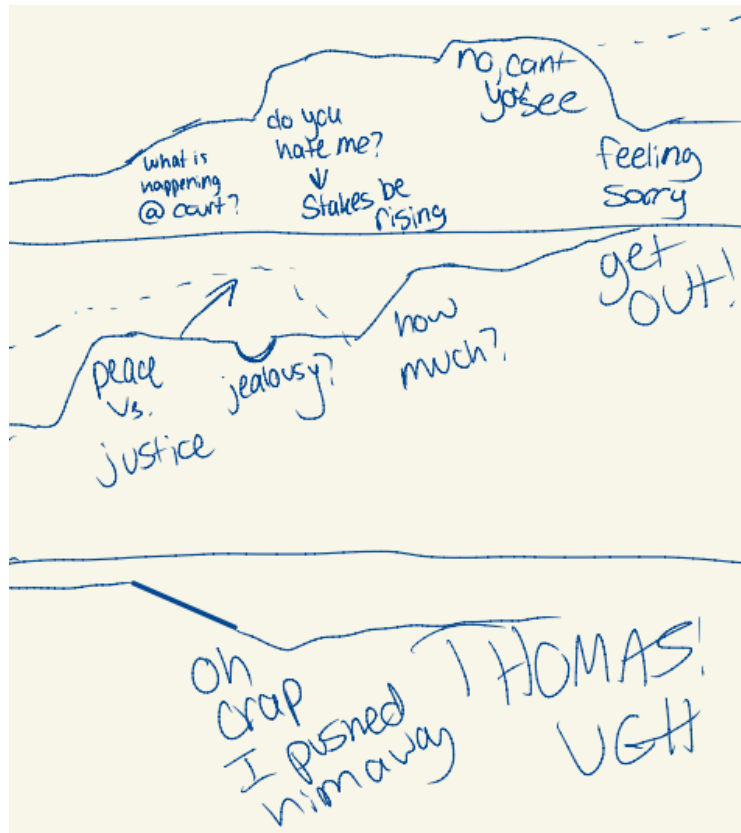
Thomas: He/him. Joan's only possible friend. Working class. Mid-twenties. Intelligent, charming, eager to please

Joan: They/Them. Seventeen years old. AFAB, nonbinary, working class. Strong and sweet, tender and brave. ADHD is part of their superpower.

### Story arc of the scene:



## I Joan Directing Notebook Section



### Plot:

- Joan, a peasant, arrives at court and demands to speak to the king. The king accepts despite the court protesting. Joan leads a troop to battle against the English but runs into backlash when the men and their leader Dunois don't want to listen to them. Joan ultimately leads a militia to storm the city and take it back in the name of France. Joan wins more battles and the men start to warm up to them. After a string of victories, Charles is able to crown himself king with Joan's help. However, in the court, the women start questioning Joan and their display of femininity or lack thereof. Joan leaves to go back out on the battlefield but after a failed attempt to recapture a city, they are dragged off the battlefield. Joan follows one last order that delivers them straight into the hands of the English. The king tricked them he realized his goals don't align with theirs anymore. Joan is burned at the stake by the English.
- The scene: Joan was just dragged off the battle field and Thomas is sent to take care of them. Joan is in a state of panic and escalates the stakes as they deal with the reality that the king doesn't want them anymore. Thomas tries to calm them down but is only frustrated and ultimately insulted by Joan. Thomas storms out and Joan finally snaps out of their spiral to realize how much they hurt Thomas.

### Timeline:

- The whole show: weeks as France fights the war, declares Charles king, and Joan is betrayed.
- The scene: Takes place in five minutes. Joan just woke up away from the battlefield and Thomas just came in from court.



## I Joan Directing Notebook Section



## Contacts

Name	Number	Role
Isaac	864-569-4379	Thomas
Ash	571-388-9102	Joan



## Schedule

Day	Description
Feb 13 <sup>th</sup> 3:45-5:20PM	In person Lab Rehearsal 1
Feb 20 <sup>th</sup> 3:30-4:30PM	In person Lab rehearsal 2 and presentation 1
Feb 27 <sup>th</sup> 3:45-5:20PM	In person Lab Rehearsal 3
Mar 13 <sup>th</sup> 3:30-4:30PM	Lab Rehearsal 4 (zoom) and other group presentation
March 27 <sup>th</sup> 7:00-8:00PM	In person rehearsal 5

## Concept Card

# I, Joan

Joan of Arc is historical figure who fought for what she believed was right. In the modern world, queer people must advocate for themselves to receive the rights they deserve. Combining these two, *I, Joan* tells the story of Joan as a nonbinary person. As in 15<sup>th</sup> Century, Joan, directed by God, leads a French army against the English. However, on their journey they discover that war, friendship, and identity are not as simple as they seem.

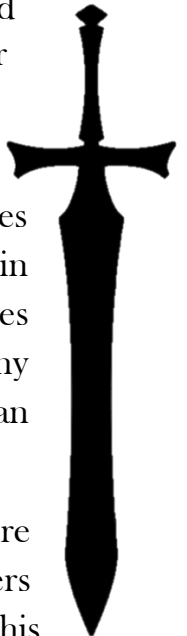
A key aspect of this production is how intimate Joan is with the audience. In this black box staging, Joan has a direct connection with who they talk to. A lifted platform that shapes the space stands erect at the edge of the playing space, and the rest of the action is played in the round. This empty space—representing many places at different times—symbolizes change as a motif through Joan’s story; they befriend, gain, lose, and get betrayed by many as they reach their fate. Even Thomas, their most trusted companion, ultimately leads Joan astray.

Like the space, time is fluid, and the play exists in a timeline separate from our own, where Twitter and the Hundred Years War exist simultaneously. The language of the characters once again balances this limbo between antiquated verbiage and contemporary slang. In this production, this push and pull between the old and new is emphasized through the costuming of the production with outfits representing the era a character is stuck in, either medieval or modern.

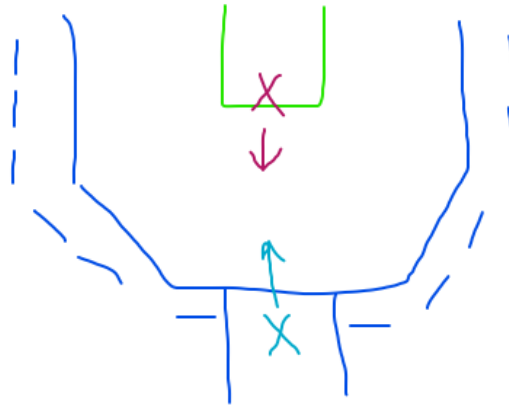
All these aspects of this production push towards a theme of moving towards a present day where people are free to be themselves and have control over their identity and choices. Joan represents those who had to be sacrificed for freedom and whose legacy is bigger than them.

“We are practicing our divinity by expressing authenticity.”

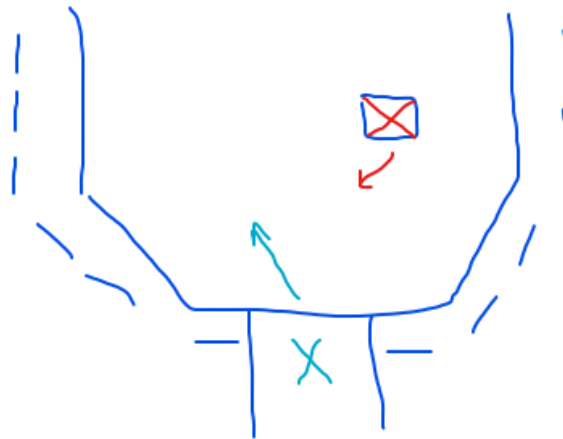
– Joan







### New Ground Plan



### Costumes/Props

- Costumes: Everyday wear
- Props: N/a
- Set piece: chair

## REHEARSAL NOTES

Rehearsal Feb 13<sup>th</sup>

- Character backgrounds
- Plot background
- Read through
  - First read through: don't work the cut-offs
  - Second read through: do the cut-offs
- Given thoughts:
  - -what are your operative words
  - -when are you trying to defend yourself vs prove something vs attack each other? How can we find the beats but still keep the energy up?

Rehearsal 2 Feb 20<sup>th</sup>

- Talk through research
- Do a run through to check in on where we are



## I Joan Directing Notebook Section

- Do a too-much rehearsal
  - Discoveries
  - Moment before: Joan paces
  - Ending: chase Thomas out
  - The middle: find out where they need to pace and who has center at what point
- Notes
  - Make sure we are using the cut-offs
  - Focus on the arc of the scene to motivate blocking
- Presentation 1
  - Really strong beginning but losing clarity in middle
  - I need to specify more where to pace and where to plant
  - **CHECK FEEDBACK FORM** for next rehearsal

### Rehearsal 3 Feb 27<sup>th</sup>

- Going through feedback
  - How to raise the stakes in different ways? Volume, pace, and pitch
- Isaac enter/exit front
- Make sure to stay planted when speaking an impactful line
- Moment before:
  - What are you thinking about before the scene starts?
  - What is their reaction when they're seeing each other for the first time?
  - And moment after: what do you feel when you leave each other
- Joan: Why do you have so many questions? What do you want Thomas to say?
- Thomas: What do you expect from Joan?
- Both: What are the character's definition of peace and justice?

### Rehearsal 4 March 13<sup>th</sup>

- Zoom rehearsal
- Running lines to practice memorization
- Rehashing what we talked about two weeks prior

### Rehearsal 5 March 27<sup>th</sup>

#### NEW PLAN: simplifying the blocking

- Split the stage in two halves: Joan's half and Thomas' half
- Feel free to move in your own space but do not enter the other side. Create the distance: removing some of the familiarity, Thomas you're more scared of the ticking bomb Joan is becoming
  - Thomas: move, pace, kneel, take up space, or don't. Make a choice
- The split gets broken in the end when Joan breaks into Thomas' area at "Peace?!" and corners him then yells for him to get out



JOAN. You know nothing! Nothing! Nobody knows!

DANCER ONE. Very well. Thomas is outside /

JOAN. No!

DANCER ONE. I told him you wouldn't see him, and yet he refuses to leave /

JOAN. Then tell him again!

DANCER ONE. He's been waiting for days. He insists he must see you. He's a good friend /

JOAN. No /

DANCER ONE. You need to see your friends. I'm letting him in.

JOAN. No, no! You cannot! You cannot disobey me!

Thomas  
Joan

run in from house doors  
↓  
DANCER ONE exits, and THOMAS enters.  
JOAN tries to be angry, but hugs him instead.)

be seated THOMAS. Joan! Oh Joan! I've been waiting outside your door, day and night, so worried about you! They wouldn't let me in?!

JOAN. I couldn't see you. I was so ashamed!

THOMAS. Why?!

JOAN. Oh Thomas, I *lost*! I lost and now I am lost!

THOMAS. No!

JOAN. For what purpose do I have now? What reason do I have for being?

THOMAS. Come on Joan, pick yourself up! Every great warrior suffers defeat! You lost one battle, but we can still win the war. We can, and we *must*!

stand and face him  
JOAN. How?! When my heart is so broken?! How could he betray us so coldly?

THOMAS. We don't know all the details, we mustn't assume /

JOAN. What's happening at court?

THOMAS. I don't know, I don't know, I've been here. Charles ordered me to stay here, to take care of you.

JOAN. I bet they're writing up the Treaty right now, without us!

THOMAS. No, Charles wouldn't do that, he respects you too much! He sent me here to protect you /

JOAN. He abandoned me! He hates me!

THOMAS. He *loves* you! He will call for you soon, I'm sure of it. He will call for you to fight again, and fight you will, and victoriously! So we must be patient and prepare /

JOAN. No no no you don't understand, he *hates* me /

THOMAS. No /

JOAN. I know it! Yolande has got in his ear because *she* hates me, and now *he* does too, they *all* do!

THOMAS. Come now! Come! Keep the faith /

JOAN. Do you hate me?

take a step back

THOMAS. What?! Of course not! How could I hate you?

approach slowly

JOAN. I don't know! I /.. It's broken, something is broken Thomas, I can feel it!

THOMAS. Nonsense! Nothing is broken. I love you, the King loves you, everything is well. You've just lost your confidence is all. You'll be back on your feet, fighting for France in no time at all! And I by your side, as always /

JOAN. What France will I be fighting for?

THOMAS. What?

JOAN. What is the strategy now?

THOMAS. I, I don't know.



sit JOAN. No, nobody does.

THOMAS. But look, one thing at a time. First, you need to rest, cus you're exhausted! You need to get better then we can move forward /

JOAN. Move forward how? Move forward where? What does that actually mean?

\*\*pull out the THOMAS. He will call for you soon. Call for you to fight /

desperation JOAN. They drag me from battle! They don't want me to fight, they want me constrained! Trapped in the chains that have held France back for generations!

THOMAS. No, no that's not true!

JOAN. What are they doing *right* now? Laughing at me? Plotting and scheming?

THOMAS. No, no of course not /

stand

JOAN. What does he want with me now? To swan around court in a corset? I am a warrior! I'm not one of them!

THOMAS. But you could be! You could *learn* to be at court. And be *brilliant* at it! Be of great service to this country /

walk away

JOAN. No /

THOMAS. I'm sure you could, I'm sure I'm sure there is a way forward /

turn around  
face him

JOAN. No! Can't you see I can't pretend to be someone I'm not?! I *have* to be myself! I have no choice! I can't bend out of shape like you do, trying my best to fit in, lying to myself and jumping whenever Charles calls?!

THOMAS. You may mock me, but I /

pull away

JOAN. That's not what I /

THOMAS. I've done what I needed to in order to survive. I won't be shamed for that!

approach him

JOAN. Thomas, I'm sorry /

THOMAS. And I'm proud of the work I have done! For this country, I have achieved great things. I've been living as an outsider in this court for longer than you can imagine. Do not speak to me of fitting in. I've worked my way up from *nothing*! I've learnt how to play their game /

JOAN. We don't need to /

THOMAS. You play their game, *then* you get powerful enough to change it from the inside. You manage upwards.

JOAN. Charles won't change!

THOMAS. He will, he will. I *know* him. I know he can change.

JOAN. And what if he can't? What if his fear is so great it swallows him whole? Taking this country and its people down with him?

THOMAS. We must be patient! And trust in the good works these men are doing! The King and his council are negotiating a treaty with the English /

JOAN. No /

THOMAS. And we should at least consider their attempts at peace! For they are seasoned with experience far greater than ours!

JOAN. Peace?!

step back

THOMAS. Yes! Are we not fighting for peace?

JOAN. No! Justice! We are fighting for justice /

create distance as  
tension. don't get closer  
than center stage

THOMAS. One and the same!

JOAN. No! No not at all the same! I will not *compromise* my country, I will not *betray* my people!

push him  
back with  
your words

THOMAS. *Your* people?

JOAN. They invade our homes, burn our villages, kill our people. And you want to arrange *peace*? Cutting up this land of ours on your maps, and your charts /



THOMAS. So when will it end? When will it end?! As brilliant as you are Joan, *when* will you stop /

JOAN. When we have Justice! When we have Revolution! I am called to lead the charge, I am chosen!

THOMAS. And I am not! Not all of us can afford the luxury of *revolution*. I do not have the wind at my back like you Joan, I don't have a God to believe in like you!

JOAN. Jealousy? Is this, jealousy?

THOMAS. No it's the truth! I love you, and I fear you've gone too far.

JOAN. Oh! Oh Thomas, you too? They have wormed their way inside your sweet sweet heart too?

THOMAS. No /

JOAN. I thought you were different, but you're just the same! Just the same as *all those men* at court /

THOMAS. Don't be foolish! I am so clearly on your side! I'm simply suggesting you slow down enough to *think*!

JOAN. How much did they pay you?

THOMAS. .

JOAN. How much?

THOMAS. How dare you? I have always, and will forever be, your greatest champion.

JOAN. And yet you betray me now?

THOMAS. The betrayal is all yours if you describe me thus.

JOAN. Get out. Get out! I never want to see your lying face again. You're a liar! You're a coward! A dirty traitor! Judas! Get out! GET OUT!

THOMAS. I thought us friends. My mistake.

(THOMAS leaves. JOAN paces, high on adrenaline, then suddenly regrets it.)

step back

step forward

stay grounded in place until the "get out" makes you flinch

Push him back with your words  
Cross into his side.  
Corner him

Exit

JOAN. Thomas?! Thomas!

(He doesn't return. JOAN beats herself up.) Collapse in the chair

Argh!

(Five ~~AFAB~~ DANCERS enter and stand in a clump centre stage, like some weird Greek chorus. JOAN looks at them, unsure.)

Hello?

DANCER ONE. We have an urgent message /

ALL DANCERS. From the King!

JOAN. I thought you worked for me, fought with me?

(The DANCERS shift, embarrassed, but stand firm.)

DANCER ONE. We have, an urgent message /

ALL DANCERS. From the King!

JOAN. Very well. What is it?

DANCER TWO. He did not wish to be apart from you for so long, his /

ALL DANCERS. Bravest soldier.

DANCER ONE. He understands how devastating the loss at Paris will have been for you.

DANCER TWO. And so to offer you a chance to /

ALL DANCERS. Regain your confidence /

DANCER TWO. And to /

ALL DANCERS. Serve the country /

DANCER TWO. You so love, it is required that you /

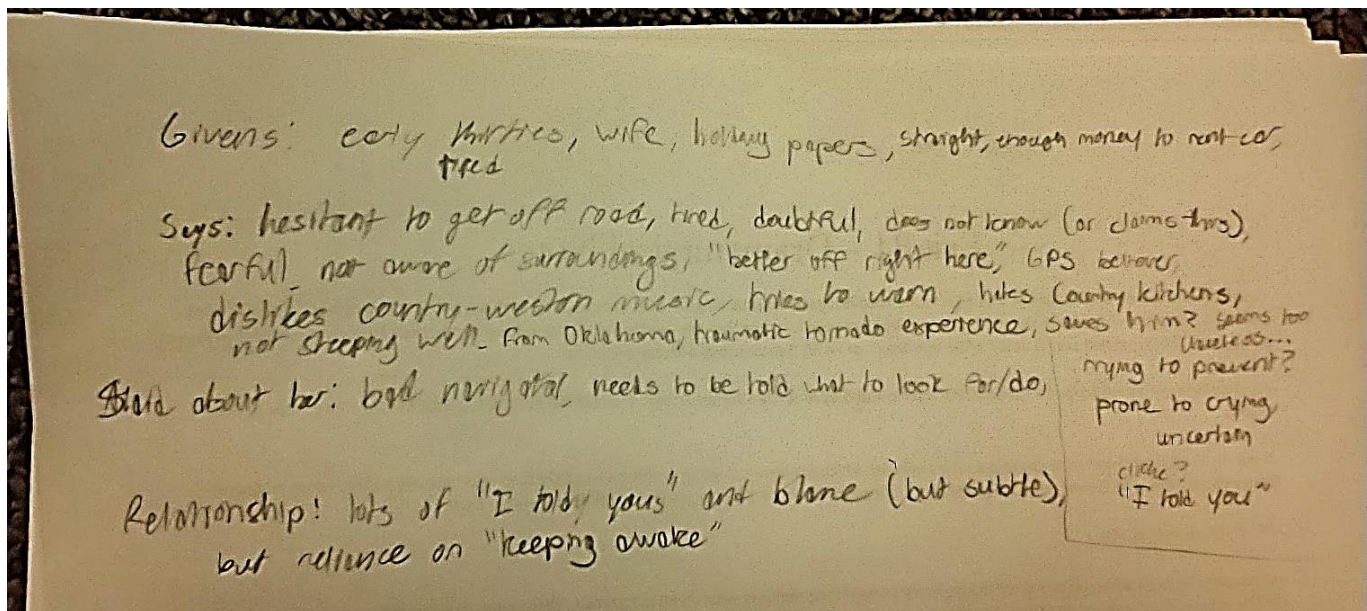
ALL DANCERS. Raise the siege at Compiegne.



## Research

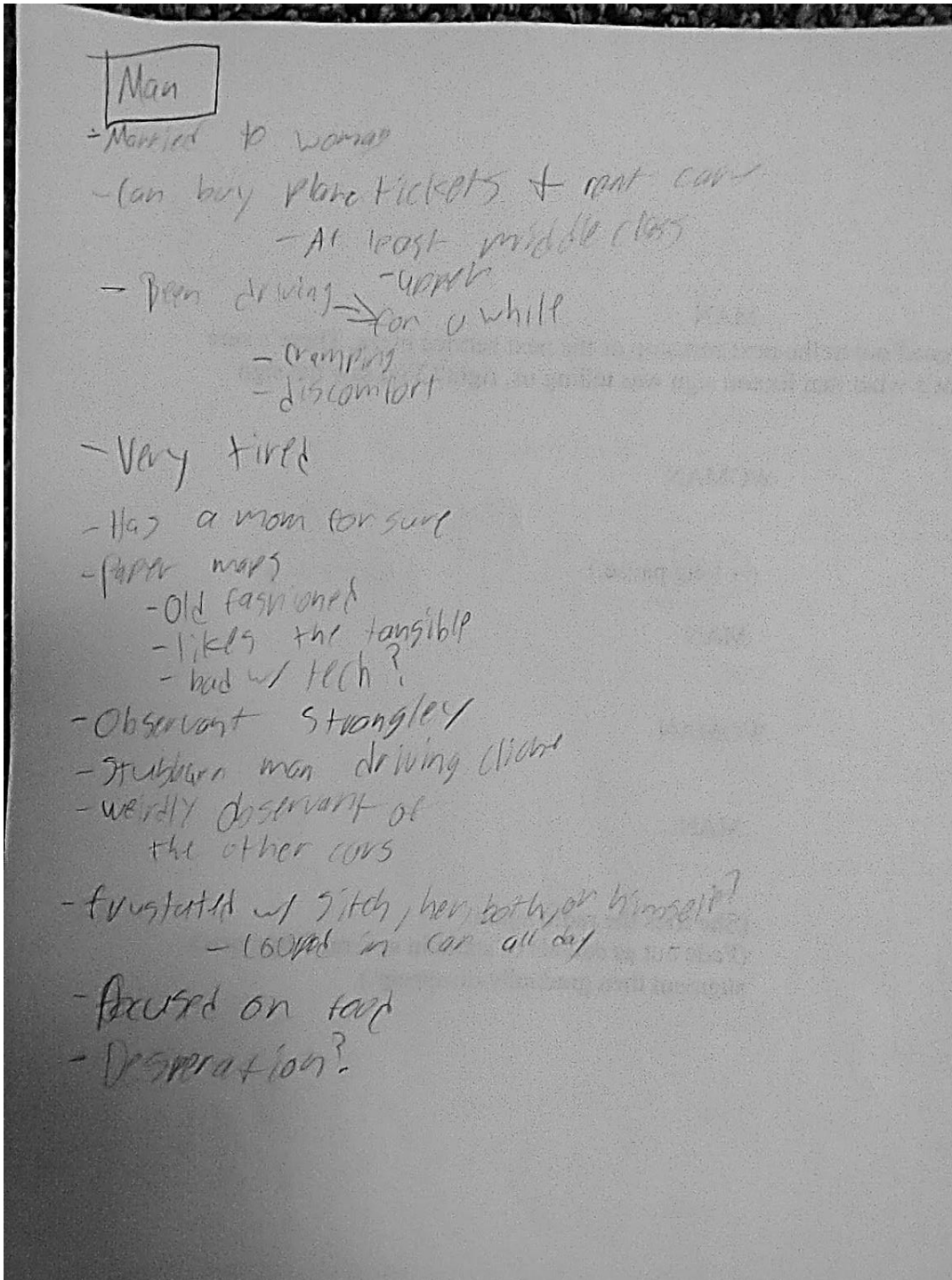
1. A service area can be defined as the area next to the road designed for providing services to road users such as, petrol stations, hotels, restaurants, etc. Rest areas are places next to the road with a parking area and facilities that are used by motorists to have rest in their travels, like toilets and picnic areas. The larger rest area is called a "Service Area", or an SA. Synonymous with Service plaza.
2. Norman Bates: Norman Bates is a fictional character created by American author Robert Bloch as the main antagonist in his 1959 thriller novel Psycho.
3. Runaway truck road: a traffic device that enables vehicles which are having braking problems to safely stop. It is typically a long, sand- or gravel-filled lane connected to a steep downhill grade section of a main road, and is designed to accommodate large trucks.
4. GPS in car as early as 2001
5. Where does highway 98 begin and end? The highway's western terminus is with US 84 in Natchez, Mississippi. Its eastern terminus is Palm Beach, Florida, at State Road A1A (SR A1A) near the Mar-a-Lago resort.
6. Merle Ronald Haggard was an American country music singer, songwriter, guitarist, and fiddler. Haggard was born in Oildale, California, toward the end of the Great Depression.
7. Established in 2008, ACME Freight offers complete logistics, trailer transportation, sea freight and air freight services.
8. Country Kitchens - Restaurant founded in 1939 with headquarters in Wisconsin

## Woman Character Analysis





Man character Analysis



1. Facts:

- The play is filled with qualities of absurdism: circular plot lines, weird pauses, meaningless dialogue, impossible things happening, gaps in memory.
- The man notices things outside the car; the woman keeps track of things inside the car.
- The morning before they flew on a plane, rented a car, and started driving on 98.
- The man wants to get off the road; he is hungry and tired.



## Exit 34 – Rehearsal Notes

- e. The woman is nameless, in her early 30s, a wife, holding papers in the car, tired, did not sleep the night before, can afford rental car/plane ticket, dislikes country-western music, hates Country Kitchen, has a traumatic tornado experience.
- f. The man is nameless, in his thirties, a husband, driving, can afford a rental car/plane ticket, knows his mom, prefers paper maps, stubborn, frustrated.
- g. The woman wants to stay on the road.
- h. They died in a car accident. The woman knows something is wrong and they shouldn't take the exit.
- i. The man is closer to death, in critical condition. The woman is less so.
- j. The woman is from Oklahoma.

### 2. Questions:

- a. Where are they?
  - i. They are in a limbo between life and death.
- b. Did the woman die in the tornado?
  - i. No.
- c. Did they crash?
  - i. Yes.
- d. What is the significance of exit 34?
  - i. The number 34 represents a connection to spiritual or supernatural. Taking the exit would mean leaving earth/the physical world.
- e. Where does highway 98 begin and end?
  - i. The highway's western terminus is with US 84 in Natchez, Mississippi. Its eastern terminus is Palm Beach, Florida, at State Road A1A (SR A1A) near the Mar-a-Lago resort.
- f. Are the car lights off?
  - i. Yes.
- g. What was he saying about his mom?
  - i. He was talking about her because they were going to visit her.
- h. Why didn't she get much sleep last night?
  - i. She felt like something was going to happen.
- i. Where are they going?
  - i. They were driving to see his mother.
- j. Why does she wait so long to admit it might not be 98?
  - i. It is actually not so long. It just feels like a long time for them because of supernatural time rules.
- k. How does time work in this space?
  - i. They are stuck in a time loop, separate from time passing in the real world.
- l. Why does the gas not go down?
  - i. Because they are not in the real world so no gas is used.
- m. Are we stuck in time?
  - i. Yes.
- n. Is there a loop?
  - i. Yes.
- o. But how did it become night?
  - i. They think time has past. It's their perception.
- p. Why is he the one driving?
  - i. Because that is the way the car was when they crashed.
- q. Who is driving the other cars?
  - i. The other cars is life support/paramedics keeping them from dying.
- r. Why didn't he label the maps?



## Exit 34 – Rehearsal Notes

- i. He didn't think about it. He had them stacked in the right order originally.
- s. Why do they both need to be up?
  - i. Sleep in this case would represent them being closer to death and they want to stay alive.
- t. What happens in the end?
  - i. The radio plays some noise. (not sure yet what)
- 3. Immediate Circumstances:
  - a. The morning before they flew on a plane and rented a car. They crashed their car and have been stuck in a loop for what they feel like is hours.
- 4. Time Plan
  - a. It is Fall 2012.
  - b. It is a Saturday night.
  - c. They are in a liminal space beyond human time and this scene takes place within a larger conversation that has felt like hours for them.

More research in rehearsal notes as well

## Contact Sheet

Name	Phone Number	Role
Seth	229-402-7196	Man
Page	334-730-3589	Woman

## Concept Statement

EXIT 34

What happens when a near-death experience places two souls in a limbo between reality and the afterlife? *Exit 34* is a film that sets a play that takes place in a car outside of said car. It is an exploration of absurdism and psychological thrill as the viewers see into the minds of a married couple.





A never-ending conversation seems to repeat as a couple in a car drives down the highway in the late hours of the night. Their plane flight and rental car land them on Highway 98, or so they think. What begins as a road trip devolves into hysteria when they seem to pass the same exit on the road over and over again while never being able to take it.

As this short film explores the psychology of a man and a woman caught in a panic, the scene changes as the conversation shifts focus between them. The man, paying attention to the road as he drives, sees his mind through the lens of the outdoors. The woman, struggling to figure out how they landed in their predicament, sees her mind through the lens of a film reel as she attempts to scroll through her fleeting memories.

**“A ghost is an emotion bent out of shape, condemned to repeat itself...” -Mama, 2013**

## SCHEDULE

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
5 hrs Character Work and Blocking	<b>March 27</b>	<b>March 28</b> All: 6:30-9:00 Annex	<b>March 29</b> All: 6:30-9:00 Annex	<b>March 30</b> Designer Run	<b>March 31</b>	<b>April 1</b>	<b>April 2</b>
1 hrs One on One character coaching and review blocking	<b>April 3</b>	<b>April 4</b> Tech	<b>April 5</b> Seth: 1:00-2:00 Annex Tech	<b>April 6</b> Tech	<b>April 7</b> Paige: 3:00-4:00 Annex Dress	<b>April 8</b> Meet to Run Lines 10:30AM Judson Lounge Off Book Day Off	<b>April 9</b>
4 hrs Filming	<b>April 10</b>	<b>April 11</b> Opening	<b>April 12</b> All: 6:30-8:30 Film on Location Meet in Trone	<b>April 13</b> All: 6:30-8:30 Film on Location Meet by Chapel	<b>April 14</b>	<b>April 15</b>	<b>April 16</b> Closing
Editing Week	<b>April 17</b>	<b>April 18</b> Emergency Rehearsal if needed: 6:30-8:30 Filming in car	<b>April 19</b>	<b>April 20</b>	<b>April 21</b>	<b>April 22</b> SHOW TIME	



## Visual Research





## Costume List and Prop Lists

### Costumes:

- Seth in car: khakis and a polo
- Seth in woods: tank top and shorts – sporty casual
- Paige in car: Dark dress
- Paige in theatre: White dress

### Props

- Paige in the car: holding papers, the “maps”

## Rehearsal Notes

Tuesday March 28<sup>th</sup>

Rehearsal 1: March 28<sup>th</sup>, 6:30-9:00PM

### 9. Check ins

### 10. Community Norms, Expectations

- a. Speak in draft
- b. Take risks
- c. Realize our limitations, but stay positive
- d. This is a learning process; we are here to learn, not judge

### 11. Assigning roles, talking about the scope of the play

- a. Likely will not take place in a car

### 12. Read Through – Time it

#### a. 9:49

#### b. Responses:

- i. “I don’t think that’s a good idea”
- ii. Circular ideas
- iii. Absurdism
  1. Circular plot lines
  2. Weird pauses
  3. Meaningless dialogue
  4. Impossible things happening
  5. Gaps in memory
- iv. Purgatory
- v. Significant: the dream
- vi. Woman is a demon/ghost keeping him in purgatory
- vii. Dark spaces
- viii. Did the woman die in the tornado?
- ix. Did they crash and go into the light at sunset?
- x. Was the sunset “the light” and he merged into someone and the woman says no now when he tries to merge.

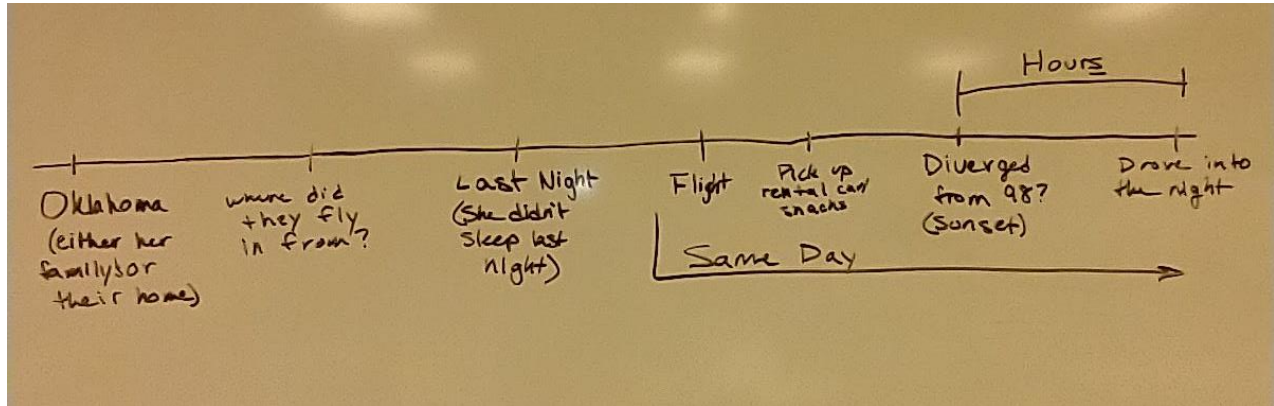


## Exit 34 – Rehearsal Notes

- xi. Doesn't have to do with death. They're just two characters
- xii. She actually did fall asleep and this has been a dream the whole time.
  - 1. Maybe she feels stuck in the relationship.

13. Give out dramaturgical sheet and talk through it

14. Build a timeline



15. What do your characters say about themselves, each other, their relationship?

- a. Starting character analysis
- b. Significance of knowing what's inside versus outside of the car?
  - i. She understands the internals of the relationship, he sees things from the outside of the relationship
  - ii. She does notice things right next to them. The cars merging to them
- c. Cliches
  - i. The man: stereotype who doesn't ask for direction, observer of the outside (the protector)
  - ii. The woman: stereotype of the clueless woman, gives the candy/food (the provider)
  - iii. But in this situation: Man wants to get off the road, not stay on
  - iv. He provides her the shitty maps and then gets mad at her for being bad at navigating
    - 1. Maybe there's not a map that they need. But why didn't he label them?
- d. What does the exit mean?
  - i. A break-up
  - ii. Death
  - iii. Heaven or hell
  - iv. The familiar versus unfamiliar

16. 2<sup>nd</sup> Read Through

- a. "What kind of navigator are you?" She gives him a look.
- b. Maybe they didn't start driving in Mississippi.
- c. Are the car lights off?
- d. What was he saying about his Mom?
- e. Run-on line on pg. 10
- f. How do you react to what they say?
- g. All drivers are referred to as he, or that "guy."

Facts:



## Exit 34 – Rehearsal Notes

- Ages, not names

### Questions:

- Why didn't she get much sleep last night?
- Where are they going?
- Why does she wait so long to admit it might not be 98?
- What reasons are they there for?
- Are they really married together?
- How does time work in this space?
- Why does the gas not go down?
- Are we stuck in time?
- Is there a loop?
  - But how did it become night?
- Why is he the one driving?
- Why didn't he label the maps?
- Why do they both need to be up?
- How much attention is he giving her?
- What do they realize in the end? "(A long pause.)"

### Next Steps:

- Psycho Watch Party: Saturday?
- Plan next rehearsals

### Rehearsal Report: (sent to cast)

"For the next rehearsal: Bring your scripts, any new thoughts, and be ready to move! Let's see if we can start getting this on its feet!"

### Important Dates:

- **Next Rehearsal: Tomorrow, 6:30PM, Annex**
- Psycho Watch Party: Cancelled because Seth and Andra are going to see Legend of Georgia McBride on Saturday April 1st.
  - I think I will still watch it by myself and give thoughts, take any inspiration I need.
- Off-Book Day: Saturday, April 8<sup>th</sup>

## Rehearsal 2

### Bring highlighters

#### 1. Check in and meditation

#### 2. Moment before and moment after:

- a. Before: How long has this conversation been happening? It doesn't stop. The play just ends.



- b. Significance of 34: connection to spiritual, supernatural
  - i. All signs point to: they died in a car accident and they're stuck in purgatory and 34 is heaven or hell. But they can't get to it. WHY? Cars keep them from passing it. So who is in the other cars? Is 34 heaven or hell? Or other? Man wants but woman doesn't want.
    - 1. Man doesn't know he's dead. Woman has a sense? Premonition
    - 2. What if you know? We might not be on 98 anymore... you swerved... you're trying to tell him.
    - 3. Does she know all the time?

### 3. Stereotypes

- a. I do not want this to lean into stereotypes.
- b. Let's bring out paranoia for man, about technology, about where they are in the end.
- c. The woman is not a weak, flat character
- d. These are two people put under stress. Two regular people. Their names don't matter, where they came from, where they're going
  - i. What do I want people to take away after watching this: It makes me think, it makes me ponder, I enjoy the thrill

### 4. Film Talk

- a. How would I stage this? Separate on stage
- b. Nothing wrong with looking amateur
- c. In a car. Then flash black, then be in man's mind

### 5. Movement ideas and Questions from yesterday

- a. "What kind of navigator are you?" She gives him a look.
- b. Maybe they didn't start driving in Mississippi.
- c. Are the car lights off?
- d. What was he saying about his Mom?
- e. Run-on line on pg. 10
- f. How do you react to what they say?
- g. What if he keeps looking at a clock?

### 6. Mindfulness exercise –

- a. How do you react to stress?
  - i. S: It depends on the stress. Academic, life, personal stresses
  - ii. P: It can be unpredictable. Different reactions to same levels on different days
- b. How do you remember things? What takes up space in your head? Do you see your mind as house, filing cabinet, circle, your room? Or items in vastness?
  - i. S: He tried the house, mind-palace idea, but it didn't work for him. He sees his mind as a spiderweb. Image in thoughts type of person. Also feels foggy when stressed
  - ii. P: Writing lists, notes for information. She remembers details but not a lot of memories of her childhood. When she is stressed, she feels like it's a ball of tangled yarn, crowded, foggy. Thinking of a word is like scrolling through a menu
- c. What might that look like for your character?
  - i. Man: One thought leads him too the other. His mind is clouded. His brain chooses something to focus on: Food. He thinks about Starbucks, Country Kitchens, Exxon
    - 1. Maybe why he wants music. To distract him



- ii. Woman: An old movie projector with reels. When she repeats ideas, it's like dialogue on screen in a silent movie. Her different memories are different reels on the one projector of her mind. Film gets damaged. Can more than one run at once?

#### 7. Beat breakdown

- a. Beginning: charming, fun, high spirits... until "Watch it!" transition point
- b. Section 2: man's section
  - i. He looks into the camera
  - ii. In the trail behind the church?
- c. Section 3: woman's section
  - i. Studio
  - ii. She looks at the camera
- d. End: Back in the car
  - i. Black out with radio static fading into OTHER SOUND

#### 8. Get it on its feet

- a. Starting in the hallway with lights on and happy music playing (at a 3)
  - i. Tonal shift to positive
- b. Man's mind (at a 5)
  - i. Nature video in Annex
  - ii. Let's not get into the dark tone right away
  - iii. In the beginning, he's on the trail
  - iv. "Close my eyes" – sitting, pg. 6
  - v. "How could that be?" -standing, pg. 7
  - vi. "Speaking of which"-quickenning, pg. 8
  - vii. Then in the end, he's running
- c. Woman's mind (at a 7)
  - i. She starts sitting
  - ii. Gets up at Oklahoma monologue
  - iii. Paranoia, pacing, feeling followed at "What's up ahead" pg. 11
  - iv. Stick the ending
- d. Back in the car (at a 9, move to 10)
  - i. Dovetailing
  - ii. More hysterical than upset
  - iii. Long pause. Quiet but morbid in the end

#### 9. Rehearsal Report sent to the actors in email

## One on Ones

Seth

- Saturday availability: 10:30AM

#### 1. Check in

#### 2. Update on knowledge



- a. Tethered in the car together because you crashed together. Souls intertwined
- b. The man is closer to death.
- c. The cars are the paramedics blocking your way to death
  - i. The fight is internal: balancing wanting to stay alive with wanting to let go
  - ii. He doesn't have the backstory and connection to his past that she does. More proof: he is closer to death.
- d. In the end, they don't enter death. But they're still stuck in limbo

### 3. Build your backstory

- a. Who is your mom? She is a blob in his memory; a passing thought.
- b. His life is not there in him. He still has emotion but everything is so vague and distant.
- c. He wants to take her with him. He doesn't want to be alone without her.
- d. He is a person with siblings because the stubbornness and argumentativeness nature.
- e. Character description: lethargic, restless, naïve (innocent), pushy, humorous
- f. Relationship description: He loves her, known her for a long time, internal "why won't she go with me"
- g. He is a hiker.

h. Is the trip that got them here something they wanted to do or needed to do?

### 4. What action are you playing?

- a. First section:
  - i. To find, to navigate
- b. Second section:
  - i. To reason, to explain
- c. Third section:
  - i. To reexamine, to assure, to orient
- d. Fourth section:
  - i. To end, then to reconcile

### 5. What discoveries are you making?

- a. You might not be on 98 anymore.
  - i. A discovery placed in front of him but he doesn't accept it.
  - ii. Discovery vs denial
- b. Nothing changes. Not finding things new, externally.
- c. Discovering there's no getting out of the car during the long pause in the end

### 6. Function of the role?

- a. Foil to the woman
  - i. Not about being antagonistic to the woman
- b. Emotional shift occurs – not static, they are dynamic
- c. Almost like it'll go into a stock character of man but then it doesn't

### 7. Costumes and tech

- a. Two different outfits in the woods and in the car
  - i. Car: Khakis and polo, hair in ponytail
  - ii. Hike: hair down, shorts and t-shirt

Paige

- 1. 10:30AM - TMR



## Exit 34 – Rehearsal Notes

2. Check in
3. Update on knowledge
  - a. Tethered in the car together because you crashed together. Souls intertwined
  - b. The man is closer to death
  - c. In the end, they don't enter death. But they're still stuck in limbo

### 4. Build your backstory

- a. Oklahoma – A traumatic experience, near death moment; they experienced it together but she experienced in the dream alone
- b. The swerve is the crash and she woke up just in time to see it
- c. Picky, snobbish (this is the place I come from, but don't associate it with me energy)
  - i. Likes coffee; drinks caffeine
  - ii. Doesn't like western/country music; doesn't want to take the shitty country road
  - iii. Trying to distance herself from that time
- d. Pro-technology because you want the car with the GPS

### 5. What action are you playing?

- a. First Section: To guide, to advise
- b. Second Section: 5-6 To brush off, 6-9, to doubt, to question
- c. Third Section: 9-11 to muse that becomes intense, 11-12 to dissuade
- d. Fourth Section: To reconcile what she is perceiving versus what he is saying, to resolve the cognitive dissonance
- e. Ending: To accept that she can't resolve this

### 6. What discoveries are you making?

- a. Discovery vs Denial: doesn't ping a bell when the gas tank is still on half
- b. Discovery that he doesn't have the same awareness she does
- c. Discovery that something bigger is going on
- d. Discovery that she doesn't see the sign, that she doesn't know what's happening

### 7. Function of the role?

- a. Foil to the man – characters are each other companion
  - i. He wants to take her on the exit
  - ii. She wants to keep him from leaving her
- b. Dynamic, avoids the dive into the stock character
  - i. Calm until the discovery... she almost becomes haunted, saw a glimpse of something greater
- c. Informant – how much of an informant she can be when she doesn't know what happened

### 8. Costumes and tech

- a. In the car: cardigan, modest top/dress, darker color but not red
- b. Outside the car: White dress

Saturday April 8<sup>th</sup>

1. Run Through Notes from each other's one on one
2. Do a read through
  - Remember the change in stakes/pace
  - Keep in mind the subtext



## Exit 34 – Rehearsal Notes

### 3. Review

- We get to film in burgess
- Filming on: Wednesday, Thursday
- Filming with my phone
- Growing figure of death in the scene??
  - Get black cloth, cloak

### 4. Read Through 2

- Candy bars: no more life
- Seth: remember to keep the arc going from low to high stakes throughout
- Paige: think about how to deliver your last line

Wednesday April 12<sup>th</sup>

- Filmed all of Paige's scene in the theatre and the first car scene

Thursday April 13<sup>th</sup>

- Filmed all of Seth's scenes in the woods

Tuesday April 18<sup>th</sup>

- Filmed final scene in the car



Exit 34

SITTING IN THE CAR IN THE WHOLE SCENE

ACT I

(MAN and WOMAN sit next to each other downstage center, as if in the front seat of an auto, the man driving. The WOMAN holds several sheets of paper on her lap, consulting them on occasion. The two are spot lit together and the rest is in shadow. Simulations of passing headlights can illuminate the shadows now and then. (The muted running of an auto engine can be heard at rise. The two characters can either speak their dialogue over the sound or it can disappear after it's introduced. Highway sounds—engines accelerating, the sweep of cars, trucks passing—can be used at the director's discretion and where indicated.)

MAN

I'm getting off at the next exit.

WOMAN

I don't think that's such a good idea.

MAN

I'm tired. I've got to stop somewhere, and we haven't seen a single service station or rest stop along the highway for I don't know how long. I'm getting off at the next exit.

WOMAN

That's not a good idea.

MAN

Why do you keep saying that?

WOMAN

Because we're in the middle of nowhere, and we're sure to be a lot worse off on some two-lane back-country road than we are right here.

MAN

This is a major highway. And there's bound to be a diner or gas station somewhere nearby, as soon as we get off.

WOMAN

Open this late? Even if we find one, which I doubt, will it even be open?



Exit 34

MAN

Or a motel. At this point, I'd even be willing to stop overnight at a motel. I'm just so damn tired.

WOMAN

Sure. The Norman Bates Hideaway, here we come.

MAN

Look, I'm very tired. And we've got to go how much longer before we get to. . . ?

WOMAN

I don't know. I don't know.

MAN

You don't know? What kind of navigator are you, anyway? . . . You're sure there's no more coffee?

WOMAN

I'm sure there's no more coffee. We'll fill up the thermos at the next stop. There's bound to be a service plaza along here somewhere.

MAN

Where? Have you seen any? Where are they? But what's that up there. . . . That's an exit, isn't it?

WOMAN

I don't think so. I haven't seen any signs, and it's so small, like one of those runaway-truck roads.

MAN

Look, that guy's pulling into the highway just ahead, so that's got to be the exit right afterwards. See, there's a sign . . . . I'm getting off.

WOMAN

Watch it. Give the guy room. He wants to merge.

MAN

I'm giving him room, but I need that lane, too.

WOMAN

Then speed up.

MAN

He's speeding up, too. He's not letting me. . . .



Exit 34

WOMAN

Watch it! You're too close! Pull over!

(Sound of a horn blaring.)

Transition

Seth Start standing

MAN

Dammit! We've passed it. Did you catch its name?

WOMAN

What name?

MAN

The name of the exit!

WOMAN

Oh, it was something, something Farmer's Road. Route something. See, I told you. We're better off right here.

Be walking

MAN

Did you get the number?

WOMAN

The number?

MAN

The number of the exit?

WOMAN

I don't know. I think it was thirty-four.

MAN

Exit thirty-four? That was the one before, wasn't it?

WOMAN

No, I don't think so. Maybe. I don't know. Thirty-four? Maybe this one was thirty-five, then. I don't know. What's the difference?

MAN

I told you. The exit numbers are all on the map, so once we find them on the map, we'll know where we are and how far we still have to drive.

Arrive at the bridge

WOMAN

And I told you, I couldn't find them on your maps. Thirty-four, thirty-three, thirty-five, whatever. None of them are on these stupid maps.



(She displays the packet of papers on her lap.)

MAN

You don't know where to look.

Lean on the bridge. Stop and listen

WOMAN

Of course I know where to look. You just can't depend on these damn Google maps. I told you to rent a car with a GPS.

MAN

I don't like those things, and they're not worth the extra cost in my book. Print maps are very reliable.

WOMAN

Right, so long as you can pinpoint where you are on them. You are here! You are here! Print maps never tell you that.

MAN

Once we stop, I'll take a look at them, see where we are. . . . But first, I've got to close my eyes for just a few minutes, then get a cup of coffee, and maybe a bite to eat. A little more sugar in my blood wouldn't hurt. There's sure to be something up ahead. . . . If only you could find exit thirty-four or thirty-five on the map.

WOMAN

I told you, I can't, and it's too dark in here now even to look. . . . Besides, we might be off the map.

MAN

What do you mean off the map? How could we be off the map? I printed out route ninety-eight almost end-to-end, practically all the way to the coast. One page right after the other. . . .

WOMAN

One page right after the other, and all out-of-order.

(She rattles the papers in frustration.)

You didn't paginate them, you know. Maybe you should just pull over.

MAN

Not here. There's hardly any shoulder at all. Just sheer rock and steep drops, and it's too damn dark, anyway. Much too dangerous. . . . There's sure to be somewhere to stop up ahead, and I'll put all the maps back in order once we're there. . . . As long as we're on ninety-eight, everything should be just fine.



Exit 34

WOMAN

It's just that . . .

MAN

What?

WOMAN

It's just that I'm not so sure we're still on ninety-eight.

MAN

How could that be? We've hardly ever been out of the middle lane, and we certainly haven't gone off on any side roads.

WOMAN

But don't you remember that two-lane turnoff I pointed out? I'm pretty sure it was just another exit, but still . . .

MAN

What turnoff?

WOMAN

A while back, when the sun was going down. Just before it turned dark. You were talking about your Mom.

MAN

Oh, yeah, I remember. The sun was right in my eyes. I couldn't read the sign, but that was just another exit, right? We never got off the main highway . . .

Start walking again

WOMAN

Unless that was the main highway. The sun was in my eyes, too. It was hard to see, and now I'm starting to wonder . . .

MAN

But that was hours ago. Look for road markers. Ninety-eight west.

WOMAN

I've been looking. But it's so damn dark. And I'm getting tired, too.

MAN

Just don't fall asleep. For God's sake, don't fall asleep. . . . Keep talking. Or try the radio again.

WOMAN

I don't think it works. It hasn't picked up anything but static. . . . See . . .



Exit 34

Leave the bridge and cross to the creek

(Sounds of static in several frequencies as he turns the radio on and looks for a channel.)

WOMAN

Nothing. It'd probably only be some country-and-western station, anyway.

MAN

Well, even Merle Haggard would be some company at this point.

Sit down on the pipe

WOMAN

How's the gas.

MAN

Still half-a-tank.

WOMAN

Wow, it seems like it's been half-a-tank for forever.

MAN

Some of these new rental compacts get terrific mileage. I'll fill her up, anyway, as soon as we stop . . . speaking of which, look at that sign up ahead.

WOMAN

Where? I don't see any sign.

MAN

There, up ahead. It's tough to see, but that's an Exxon logo, isn't it?

WOMAN

I can't see it. That truck's in the way.

MAN

I'm sure it's for a service plaza somewhere up ahead.

WOMAN

Don't pass the truck. Pull in behind it so I can see the sign.

MAN

Dammit, he's slowing down. Why's he slowing down?

WOMAN

I said pull in behind him.



Exit 34

MAN

I can't. There's someone coming up fast on my tail.

Gesture around like you're back sitting  
in your car on the road

(A horn honking, headlights from behind.)

MAN

I've got to speed up. I'll pull in front.

WOMAN

Don't! I won't be able . . .

(Sounds of acceleration as MAN pulls in front of  
the truck and is passed by the other car. The  
headlights of the truck replace those of the car and  
gradually diminish.)

Transition

MAN

Damn. We've passed it. Did you catch any of the sign at all?

Paige Starts sitting

WOMAN

All I could read was "Acme Freight. We're Here for the Long Haul."

MAN

I think there was a Country Kitchen logo, too.

WOMAN

I hate Country Kitchens. They make lousy coffee.

MAN

And a Starbucks. I'm sure there was a green Starbucks logo, too. Keep your eyes peeled. There must be something up ahead.

WOMAN

I didn't see anything.

MAN

A Starbucks. . . You're sure we don't have any coffee left?

WOMAN

How many times do I have to tell you? Yes, I'm sure. I took the last swallow myself. It was all grounds, anyway.

MAN

You should've left some of those grounds for me.



Exit 34

WOMAN

You want me to stay up, too, don't you? To help keep you awake?

MAN

No more candy bars?

WOMAN

No more candy bars.

MAN

I'm just so tired. You know, I almost fell asleep back there. . . . When was it? A good thing you were awake.

WOMAN

Well, I'm pretty tired, too. I didn't get much sleep last night, and none on the plane. . . . I've almost nodded off myself a couple of times . . .

MAN

Well, don't, because I . . .

WOMAN

That last time, I think I did.

MAN

. . . because I need you to keep me awake.

WOMAN

I did. I must've nodded off, or almost, because I had one of those weird waking dreams, like a hallucination. The car must've been shaking a bit, because I thought . . . because I dreamed I was back home in Oklahoma, in our cellar, that time when the tornado came through and everything came crashing down on top of us . . . and then I woke up just as you were swerving off the road. Yeah, you swerved right off the road, didn't you? And I woke up just in time, didn't I? Or was that part of the dream, too?

MAN

What're you talking about?

WOMAN

You don't remember veering off the road, do you?

MAN

No.



Exit 34

Pacing as she thinks across the stage

WOMAN

Well, I'm sure . . . I think I woke up just in time to stop you from driving completely off . . . even if it was only a dream. So don't regret me that last drop of coffee.

MAN

What's that up ahead?

WOMAN

Where?

MAN

I think it's an exit sign.

WOMAN

I think you're right.

MAN

I'm going to get off.

WOMAN

I don't think that's such a good idea.

MAN

Why do you keep saying that?

WOMAN

Because we're in the middle of nowhere, and we're sure to be a lot worse off on some two-lane back-country road than we are right here.

MAN

But you saw that service-plaza sign. Maybe it was telling us that there's a Starbucks right off the exit. Right here.

WOMAN

I didn't see any sign.

Keep pacing like someone is following you

Paranoid pacing

MAN

But you do see that sign up there. Tell me what it says.

(Flashing headlights from behind brighten the car's interior)



Exit 34

MAN (cont.)

Someone wants to pass and he's got his brights on, and that guy's merging up ahead. Get the name of the exit and we'll get off and find out where we are, and everything will be just fine.

Finish standing in place... Deliver line without wandering WOMAN

Ok, ok, the name of the exit is, the name of the exit is, "Under Construction. Exit Closed."

(Sound of an accelerating car passing.)

Transition

BACK IN THE CAR

MAN

There's another sign. Get the number.

Whole scene takes place and finishes in the car

WOMAN

The number?

MAN

The number of the exit! The number of the exit!

WOMAN

I can't see it. There's a tarp over most of it.

MAN

Get the number!

WOMAN

I think it's . . . it's exit thirty-four.

MAN

Thirty-four? That was the last one.

WOMAN

No it wasn't. . . . I don't think so.

MAN

Yes it was. I'm sure of it.

WOMAN

Well, then maybe this one was thirty-five.

MAN

Thirty-four or thirty-five?

WOMAN

(on the verge of crying). I don't know. I don't know.



Exit 34

MAN

Ok, we'll get this all straightened out at the next rest stop or the next service plaza. There's sure to be one right up ahead. That's what that Exxon sign was telling us, right? You saw the sign didn't you?

WOMAN

I didn't see any sign.

(A long pause.)

MAN

No more candy bars?

WOMAN

No more candy bars.

MAN

Try the radio.

(She tries the radio again.  
(Fade out as sounds of static in several frequencies  
augment then gradually disappear.)

Fade out from them in the car