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The Third Voice of the Nightjar
Second Printing, 2008
Third Printing, 2010
Printed in U.S.A.

More Great Plays Available
From OWP

Man Measures Man
by David Robson

4 Males, 2 Females

Synopsis: In the waning days of the Kosovo conflict, two American doctors travel to Macedonia to offer their services to Albanian refugees. Into the chaos of the medical camp, a mysterious boy arrives, forcing the doctors to re-examine their actions and the personal ethics that guide them.

Terminus Americana
by Matt Pelfrey

5 Males, 3 Females with double casting

Synopsis: After barely surviving an office rampage, Mac Winchell is thrust into a nightmare landscape populated by lost Marlboro Men, psychotic vagabonds, sinister corporate thugs and a strange cult known as a “The Church of Christ, Office Shooter”. Mac attempts to escape this twisted reality by undertaking a quest that ultimately leads him into the darkest corners of the American Dream. Terminus Americana is a surreal, visceral and challenging examination of our violence-saturated culture.

THE THIRD VOICE OF THE NIGHTJAR

A PLAY

BY KARIN DIANN WILLIAMS

Characters

Peter - a mathematician

Amy - Peter's wife

Shawn - a waiter/drug dealer (male)

<Shawn> - Shawn's alter ego (female)

Jaz - a runaway

Lynch - a computer programmer/criminal

Setting: various locations in cyber-space, real space, and dreamspace.

THE THIRD VOICE OF THE NIGHTJAR

Act I. Scene I.

The stage is dark and empty. A spotlight on PETER, alone at his desk, typing on a laptop. AMY enters, stands watching him.

AMY: It's three in the morning.

PETER: (not looking up from his work) Hmm?

AMY: Three.

PETER: Three what?

AMY: Three-oh-eight.

PETER: The time. Is that what you're on about?

AMY: I'm going back to bed.

PETER: Go.

AMY: Are you coming?

PETER: What does it look like?

AMY: Are you ever planning to sleep again?

PETER: (finally looking up) Planning? That's a strange way of putting it. I don't know that I've ever actually planned to sleep. I've slept. Sometimes, I've slept.

AMY: Getting into bed might help.

PETER: It might. But right now I'm awake.

AMY: You can't keep this up forever.

PETER: Really?

AMY exits.

PETER: I suppose we'll see about that.

PETER continues typing. He stops and laughs to himself, then continues as the lights reveal <SHAWN>, lounging in suggestive lingerie on a crushed velvet couch.

PETER: My wife says I can't keep this up forever. And she's right, of course, in the literal sense. I can't keep anything up forever. None of us can. Mortality. The sins of the fathers, etc. Nevertheless, I can keep it up for a period she might easily describe as forever. In one of her more agitated moods. In fact, I imagine I already have. Kept it up.

<SHAWN>: I'll bet you can keep it up as long as you feel like it.

PETER: You'll bet?

<SHAWN>: I certainly will.

PETER: And what will you bet, my dear?

<SHAWN>: I'll bet anything you'd like.

PETER: What I would like is a dinner date.

<SHAWN>: A dinner date? What's that?

PETER: Just the two of us. Face to face across an actual table in an actual restaurant. Candles. Cocktails. Oysters on the half-shell. Wine. A nice thick steak, on the bloody side. And dancing.

<SHAWN>: You dance?

PETER: You don't?

<SHAWN>: I used to slam.

PETER: Oh, my.

<SHAWN>: But that was a few years back.

PETER: Not too many years.

<SHAWN>: That depends on your perspective.

PETER: Well I'm talking about dancing. I'll lead.

<SHAWN>: And what will I do?

PETER: You'll just do what comes naturally.

<SHAWN>: You're on.

PETER: But who will be the judge of our little contest?

<SHAWN>: We'll need to find someone objective...Lynch?

PETER: Lynch is about as objective as a Newtonian physicist...

<SHAWN>: Now you're going over my head.

PETER: Sorry, bad aim.

<SHAWN>: Or good timing.

PETER: I've already forgotten what we're betting about.

<SHAWN>: Whether or not you can get it up...?

PETER: Something is starting to smell like Jasmine...

<SHAWN>: Jaz is about as objective as a hit of ice-nine.

PETER: What?

<SHAWN>: Are you getting sleepy?

PETER: I don't sleep any longer. Didn't I ever tell you that? As my wife is so fond of reminding me, I stay up nights working myself into an early grave.

<SHAWN>: Working? At what?

PETER: I'm trying to unravel the mysteries of the universe.

<SHAWN>: A nomad on the netscape...trying to unravel the mysteries between my creamy thighs...

PETER: Not to discount the secrets of your creamy interior, my dear, but this is only a diversion.

<SHAWN>: A diversion?

PETER: I'm formulating a unified set theory...

<SHAWN>: And how many hours of online charges have you racked up formulating this theory of yours?

PETER: I don't think you understand. My mind is constantly racing...from cardinals to algebra...sometimes I need some distraction before I can see things clearly again...

<SHAWN>: And all those lonely nights you spent cuddled up with Jasmine on a cozy private channel you've been sipping Chardonnay and whispering sweet formulae in her ears?

PETER: Jaz is a computer programmer...she has a very fine mind...

<SHAWN>: And a creamy set of temporal lobes no doubt...

PETER: Are you jealous?

SHAWN: Not now.

PETER: Now that I'm finally alone with you?

<SHAWN>: Now that Jaz is gone.

PETER: Gone?

<SHAWN>: Jaz is gone. She took off.

PETER: What do you mean she took off?

<SHAWN>: I mean she finally left that lunatic sculptor, and she hit the road... (pause) Peter?

PETER: Where...which road did she hit?

<SHAWN>: Who knows? I can't believe she didn't tell you. Didn't she even say goodbye? (another, longer pause) Peter, are you okay? You haven't fallen asleep, have you?

PETER: No. I haven't fallen asleep.

Scene 2.

JAZ is perched on a stool at a truckstop diner. SHAWN serves her a cup of coffee.

SHAWN: You're up late, little lady.

JAZ: Need fuel. I've got to make Paso Robles by dawn...

SHAWN: What's your hurry?

JAZ: What's it to you?

SHAWN: I'm just making conversation.

JAZ: How 'bout you make another pot of coffee.

SHAWN: Funny, you don't look much like a trucker.

JAZ: And what is a trucker supposed to look like?

SHAWN: Most of them have considerably more hair.

JAZ: My disguise must be working.

SHAWN: What's in Paso Robles?

JAZ: Who knows? Never been there.

SHAWN: Neither have I.

JAZ: I'll let you know.

SHAWN: You do that.

Pause. SHAWN refills her coffee.

SHAWN: Not many truckers use three packs of sugar in their coffee.

JAZ: I'll make a note of that. Useful information. You'd be surprised at all the interesting facts I collect.

SHAWN: Facts, huh.

JAZ: Actually, I'm a detective. I'm only posing as a neophyte trucker to misdirect the bloodhounds on my tail...

SHAWN: That how you got those bruises?

JAZ: I'm going to write a letter to Max Factor. Dear Max...you have failed me once again. Time after time I've returned to you. I've believed the sweet nothings you whispered in my ear, I've trusted you, against my better judgment, when I thought I couldn't trust a living soul. I've put my fate in your hands, Max. Is this how you repay me?

SHAWN: So what's his name?

JAZ: Is this how you repay my years of loyalty?

SHAWN: Somebody really after you?

JAZ: Is this how you squander our precious memories? All those sweet, intimate caresses reflected in the mirror of every beer stained bathroom in my misspent youth?

SHAWN: Do you need me to call somebody..?

JAZ: Max, you are a shit. An absolute fucking shit, and you know it, and I know it, and this fucking waiter knows it.

SHAWN: Shawn.

JAZ: Shawn. I have a friend called Shawn.

SHAWN: Is that his name?

JAZ: You realize this is none of your fucking business.

SHAWN: Sure.

JAZ: Then his name is Geral.

SHAWN: Gerald?

JAZ: He dropped the "d."

SHAWN: Sounds like an asshole.

JAZ: That's what I've been explaining.

SHAWN: And what's your name?

JAZ: What's it to you?

SHAWN: You seem like a nice person.

JAZ: Looks can be deceiving. That's another topic I thought we'd covered.

SHAWN: Guess we don't have too many topics left.

JAZ: Oh, there are a lot of topics.

SHAWN: Name one.

JAZ: Symbolic logic. Bertrand Russell's paradox.

SHAWN: Afraid that's a little bit over my head.

JAZ: You might be surprised.

SHAWN: Surprise me.

JAZ: Why don't you warm up my coffee?

SHAWN pours more coffee. JAZ takes out a bottle of bourbon and pours some in the cup.

JAZ: The Barber of Seville shaves all the men in Seville if and only if they do not shave themselves. Does the Barber shave himself?

SHAWN: I'll have to think about that one.

JAZ: How do you stay awake?

SHAWN: What do you mean?

JAZ: You're here, serving coffee to a bunch of drunk philosophers at three am...

SHAWN: Three-oh-eight.

JAZ: And this is something you do everyday...

SHAWN: Sundays and Mondays off.

JAZ: Something you've done everyday for...

SHAWN: Three years now.

JAZ: What do you do on Sundays and Mondays at three-oh-eight?

SHAWN: Honestly?

JAZ: I'm fishing for useful tidbits. Detective work.

SHAWN: I go out and I pick up whores.

JAZ: Interesting.

SHAWN: And I fuck them.

JAZ: That goes without saying.

SHAWN: Well...yeah.

JAZ: And this is at night?

SHAWN: You might say I'm a night person.

JAZ: I might. But more likely I'd keep my mouth shut.

SHAWN: More likely?

JAZ: Believe it or not. It's the coffee.

Pause. SHAWN reaches out and touches JAZ's bruised face. She lets him.

SHAWN: You want some more coffee?

JAZ: Yeah. I think I do.

Scene 3.

PETER and <SHAWN> are making love on the couch.

PETER: You have incredible breasts.

<SHAWN>: Yes, I know. They're large.

PETER: But not too large.

<SHAWN>: Not too.

PETER: Like moons.

<SHAWN>: What?

PETER: Merciless orb, and all that.

<SHAWN>: Round and white.

PETER: But two.

<SHAWN>: Definitely.

PETER: And your hair is like lemons...

<SHAWN>: Round and yellow.

PETER: The smell.

<SHAWN>: I use an herbal shampoo.

PETER: I like it.

<SHAWN>: I like you.

PETER: The feeling is mutual, my dear.

<SHAWN>: Your dick is huge.

PETER: Monstrous.

<SHAWN>: Stupendous.

PETER: It's getting there.

<SHAWN>: Take your pants off.

PETER: I already have.

<SHAWN>: You tiger.

PETER: Goat.

<SHAWN>: Goat?

PETER: Like Pan.

<SHAWN>: Who?

PETER: Dancing thru the forest...plays a pipe...

<SHAWN>: Little horns?

PETER: That's me.

<SHAWN>: I thought that was the devil.

PETER: A previous incarnation.

<SHAWN>: Red and smoking...

PETER: Cloven hoofs...

<SHAWN>: And a pitchfork.

PETER: A pipe.

<SHAWN>: The devil smokes a pipe?

PETER: Plays a pipe. Music.

<SHAWN>: Sing to me.

PETER: What would you like me to sing?

<SHAWN>: Sing to me while you're doing it.

PETER: Something Bacchanalian...

<SHAWN>: Lick my toes.

PETER: I am.

<SHAWN>: You are?

PETER: I'm working my way up.

<SHAWN>: Slowly.

PETER: Of course.

<SHAWN>: Sing Beethoven.

PETER: You have luscious ankles.

<SHAWN>: I'm listening to Beethoven.

PETER: You have creamy thighs...

<SHAWN>: I'm eating whipped cream and it's melting all down...

PETER: It's sweet, it's...

<SHAWN>: Taste?

PETER: Sweet and wet...

Light shows through an open door. AMY enters.

AMY: Peter?

PETER: What?

<SHAWN>: My thighs are dripping with honey...

PETER: Just a minute...

AMY: Peter I don't see...

PETER: I'm busy!

AMY: How can you do this to yourself?

<SHAWN>: Oh, God. I'm coming.

PETER: Go back to bed!

AMY: Peter, you haven't slept in days, there are circles under your eyes...

<SHAWN>: I'm coming.

AMY: You're seeing things...you're shouting at the children...this isn't like you...

PETER: I'm busy. Can't you see...?

<SHAWN>: Oh, Peter...

AMY: I can't just watch this happening...I love you.

<SHAWN>: Fuck me, fuck me right now.

PETER: We'll talk in the morning.

<SHAWN>: Peter!

AMY: I don't understand this...(she begins to cry)

<SHAWN>: Peter? Oh, God, that was fabulous. Peter?

PETER: Honey, go back to bed, and we'll talk...

AMY: Have I done something? What have I done?

<SHAWN>: Sing something.

PETER: I have work to do. I have this work. I'm working.

AMY: You can go fuck yourself, then!

AMY exits, slamming the door.

<SHAWN>: Petey? Hey, Peter Pan...

PETER: What?

<SHAWN>: Where the hell were you?

PETER: Noplace...I was distracted.

<SHAWN>: Needed both hands?

PETER: I need to think for a minute.

<SHAWN>: I need a cigarette.

PETER: Wonder what Jaz is doing right now...

<SHAWN>: Probably more of the same.

PETER: My wife was in here.

<SHAWN>: Doesn't that woman sleep?

PETER: Usually.

<SHAWN>: Up for a threesome?

PETER: I've got some work to do.

<SHAWN>: Sure you do.

SHAWN enters.

PETER: I haven't been able to sleep. I haven't been able to think straight...

SHAWN: Your unified theory of everything?

PETER: It's very taxing...one simple equation can take...

<SHAWN>: So what's this theory all about?

PETER: I've stumbled on a sort of paradox...and I can't seem to work my way past it.

SHAWN: What's the paradox?

PETER: It's complicated.

<SHAWN>: We've got all night.

PETER: I needed a diversion. I've only been coming here these past few months because I needed to think...

SHAWN: Everyone needs diversion.

<SHAWN>: Especially at this hour.

PETER: I haven't been able to sleep.

<SHAWN>: Why not?

PETER: It's eating me up. This paradox. I can't find a way around it.

SHAWN: All of us have problems.

PETER: But this is something I came across by accident. Like a gift.

<SHAWN>: A birthday present..?

PETER: If I can get to the bottom of this, if I can thrash it, if I can go the distance, very big things might happen. My whole career, my entire life might change. I could change our whole way of looking at...

<SHAWN>: How old are you?

PETER: Why?

<SHAWN>: How old are you?

PETER: How old do you think I am?

<SHAWN>: I don't know, that's why I asked you.

SHAWN: You have a career.

PETER: I'm a mathematician. I teach mathematics. I write books.

SHAWN: Which ones?

PETER: I'm working on a book. On mathematics.

SHAWN: I never read books anyway.

PETER: I'm starting to question everything. My career. My entire life's work. Everything I've come to believe in, not just to believe in, to know, through painstaking research...

<SHAWN>: Sounds like a mid life crisis.

PETER: I'm only thirty eight years old.

SHAWN: Have you ever taken acid?

PETER: I don't do drugs.

SHAWN: You ought to try acid. Expand your consciousness. Maybe you'll have a breakthrough. Maybe this mid-life crisis thing...

PETER: There isn't any crisis...

SHAWN: This insomnia...

PETER: What would you know about it? You told me you were twenty-six...

<SHAWN>: I'm ageless...

PETER: Was all of that a lie?

SHAWN: There's no such thing.

PETER: What do you mean?

SHAWN: Lies. Truth.

PETER: Everything you've told me...has it all been..?

SHAWN: There's only what you believe...

<SHAWN>: I can be whoever you want me to be.

PETER: I want to see you.

<SHAWN>: Here I am.

SHAWN: You see me, don't you.

<SHAWN>: I'm right here.

SHAWN: Look at me.

<SHAWN>: Look me in the eye.

SHAWN: What do you see?

PETER: I don't know what to believe anymore.

<SHAWN>: I believe in whatever I like.

PETER: But there's such a thing as fact. There is such a thing as reality.

SHAWN: That's a matter of opinion.

<SHAWN>: Peter, I've been places you'll never go, I've done things you can't imagine.

SHAWN: Never in your wildest nightmares.

<SHAWN>: You may understand mathematics...

SHAWN: But don't preach to me about reality.

PETER: We've been doing this, meeting here, talking like this for weeks now—for months—I know you...

<SHAWN>: Who I am is my business.

PETER: But I don't even know if you're really a woman...you might just as well be...

SHAWN: What difference would it make?

PETER: Will you tell me?

<SHAWN>: If you want me to...

PETER: Will you tell me the truth?

SHAWN: Yes. If you want to know.

PETER: I suppose it doesn't matter.

<SHAWN>: Good. I'm glad.

Scene 4.

JAZ is in bed with SHAWN.

JAZ: So what do you do to them?

SHAWN: Do to who?

JAZ: Your illicit companions of the pre-dawn landscape.

SHAWN: The whores?

JAZ: What do you do?

SHAWN: Whatever I feel like doing.

JAZ: And what do you feel like?

SHAWN: Sometimes one thing, sometimes another.

JAZ: Now.

SHAWN: I feel like...well, I'm tired, but I want to...

JAZ: I want to know what it's like.

SHAWN: Why?

JAZ: Useful information.

SHAWN: Useful to who?

JAZ: What do they look like?

SHAWN: They're young.

JAZ: Young girls.

SHAWN: Sometimes. Sometimes young boys.

JAZ: Aren't you afraid of dying?

SHAWN: Of course.

JAZ: Not me. I'm not afraid.

SHAWN: I want to suck on your breasts.

JAZ: Don't...not yet.

SHAWN: Why not?

JAZ: Is that what you do to them?

SHAWN: This guy you were with...did he always...get physical?

JAZ: You mean this?

SHAWN: That.

JAZ: This is nothing.

SHAWN: He must have done you pretty good.

JAZ: This wasn't Geral. I got in an accident.

SHAWN: Some accident.

JAZ: I got run over by a train.

SHAWN: Some train.

JAZ: A plane crash.

SHAWN: When?

JAZ: I got in the way of a flying bottle of Tanqueray. We were in Mexico, watching from the balcony as a herd of crazed Bulls rampaged through the streets, and I slipped...

SHAWN: Where?

JAZ: I was in a bombing. Somebody left an innocent black briefcase sitting by the curb, and I stepped off...

SHAWN: You're not afraid to die?

JAZ: No. I think I should explain myself. I want you to understand. I was never afraid, not really. Geral and I have...a connection. Even now. I imagine he knows where I am tonight. Just knows...without any...evidence. I imagine he's pissed as hell.

SHAWN: I'm afraid I don't get it.

JAZ: It's so simple! Why the fuck doesn't anybody get it? It's a very simple, logical conclusion. If A leads to B then B necessitates C and it shouldn't be...it's nothing more or less than what it is. There is a connection. There is a series of events, and one event leads to...

SHAWN: Do you know where you're going?

JAZ: Of course I know.

SHAWN: I envy you.

JAZ: Haven't you ever...hurt someone...?

SHAWN: I don't know.

JAZ: And that makes it...

SHAWN: When I started on the night shift, I needed some help to keep awake. I needed the job, you know. I didn't have anyone, just this lousy apartment, just a few hundred bucks, and I needed some help. I needed some kind of diversion. And one day one of the regulars, the truckers you know, he gave me a little something to help me stay awake. And it worked. So the next time, I gave him a few bucks. But the tips weren't...it started to make more sense to buy in quantity, you know. All the truckers...lots of the truckers need a little pick me up now and then. And the money is good...it's excellent. I have CD's now, you know? Certificates of Deposit. That car, it's a nice car, isn't it? From here on out it's only a matter of time...when I've saved enough...to disappear.

JAZ: What will you do?

SHAWN: Start over.

JAZ: I don't know...is it possible?

SHAWN: Why?

JAZ: I'll let you know.

Scene 5.

PETER's study. PETER and LYNCH.

PETER: Lynch.

LYNCH: Hello, Petey.

PETER: What are you doing up at this hour?

LYNCH: I've just designed a new bomb. Tiny. Fits inside a laptop. The explosives are packed inside an extra hard drive, so the airport sensors can't pick it up, and the real beauty of it is that the thing has a software trigger...

PETER: You're lying.

LYNCH: Want to see how it works?

PETER: You're a computer programmer, not a terrorist.

LYNCH: And those are mutually exclusive?

PETER: Last I heard.

LYNCH: So what's your question?

PETER: What do you know about Jaz?

LYNCH: Only what I've heard.

PETER: Which is...?

LYNCH: Same thing we've all heard, bud. No word for going on a week.

PETER: It isn't like her.

LYNCH: I heard from a couple of the guys in our Seattle branch...it looks like she hasn't been showing up for work, either.

PETER: Jaz works for Quantum...?

LYNCH: She never tell you that?

PETER: We didn't talk much about work.

LYNCH: What did you guys talk about?

PETER: Geral. Amy. Math.

LYNCH: Geral and Amy and math.

PETER: I knew she was a programmer...

LYNCH: Did you know she was crazy as hell?

PETER: We'd talk about Bertrand Russell...

LYNCH: Sounds thrilling.

PETER: I need some information, Lynch.

LYNCH: You need some sleep.

PETER: Did you ever meet her in person?

LYNCH: Couple of times.

PETER: What does she look like.

LYNCH: Butt ugly.

PETER: Come on, Lynch. Is she short, is she tall, what color hair does she...

LYNCH: She lives with this crazy sculptor, and word is that maybe he's killed her.

PETER: Who told you that?

LYNCH: Everybody knows it. Sounds to me like it would serve her right. Fucking a thirty year old art student. No money, no job. She lets this clown move in cause I guess she's that hard up. This was about a year ago. And then she starts showing up at work with all these bruises. Or she doesn't show up. And then she's in the hospital.

PETER: This is in Seattle. You heard this. From somebody is your firm, who may or may not be...

LYNCH: The sculptor, he was getting his share too.

PETER: How do you know it's true?

LYNCH: I could give a shit.

PETER: Maybe she left him.

LYNCH: Maybe. But the bitch has disappeared.

PETER: Maybe she left her computer behind. Maybe she can't find a phone line. But I know Jaz. I know she would find some way to contact...

LYNCH: Why are you obsessing over this?

PETER: I'm her friend. I'm concerned.

LYNCH: You two been planning something? Sneaking off to private channels in the middle of the night and talking dirty? Cooking up some dramatic rendezvous in some exotic corner? How long have you been around?

PETER: What does that matter?

LYNCH: It isn't going to happen, Pete. This is a fantasy. It isn't the real world. Take it from me. You've only been playing around here for a couple of months, but I've been doing this for years. It might be fun, or it might just burn up a few more hours of insomnia. But these crappy little liaisons, they're worthless. It's fucking pitiful.

PETER: Then why are you here?

LYNCH: I don't know. Fuck it. I'm going to bed.

Silence. AMY enters.

AMY: Honey, I'm sorry about before.

PETER: I know. It's nothing.

AMY: What is it you're working on? Can you tell me?

PETER: Amy, it's very complicated, even to a professional.

AMY: But if you try...

PETER: I know you want to help, and I appreciate the sentiment...

AMY: I'm not stupid!

PETER: You majored in art history, honey, and art history is a far cry...

AMY: I can't sleep. Peter, I want to know.

PETER: Okay. Here goes. There's a paradox... Have you heard the riddle about the Barber of Seville? The Barber shaves all the men in Seville if and only if they do not shave themselves.

AMY: All right.

PETER: Does the Barber shave himself?

AMY: Well...sure...why wouldn't he?

PETER: He shaves people if and only if they do not shave themselves, so if he does shave himself...

AMY: Then he doesn't shave himself.

PETER: It's a paradox.

AMY: A paradox. Which means there isn't any answer.

PETER: It's a flaw in the system. It's a flaw in the fabric of logic...logic the way we understand it. When Bertrand Russell was writing the Principia Mathematica, he spend years trying to find a way around this particular paradox...

AMY: And now you're trying to...

PETER: Of course not, it's a paradox. There is no solution.

AMY: So what? Who cares?

PETER: After Russell, mathematicians were forced to rethink, to reconceptualize...

AMY: Is this really all that's bothering you?

PETER: You haven't let me finish...

AMY: Because it doesn't bother me. Who is this Barber anyhow? He's not a real person. None of it is real.

PETER: It's a way of thinking...a way of seeing the world.

AMY: But it isn't the world. Peter, I know you know a lot...I know a lot of it is useful...these equations, to make things work. Practical applications. But you aren't going to figure out some system, some equation, some theory of everything, because it's just too big. And it isn't all logical. Some of it is way beyond anything we can...

SHAWN enters.

SHAWN: You need to expand your mind.

PETER: We can't know our absolute limit until we've come face to face with it...

AMY: You aren't god...

SHAWN: But what if you are?

PETER: This isn't about religion.

SHAWN: This is about breaking through.

AMY: I'm talking about...not prayers or hymns, but something behind it all...

SHAWN: Did you open your mail today?

AMY: I'm talking about something bigger than we are, and shouldn't we be glad...?

PETER looks through the mail on his desk. He finds an envelope from SHAWN.

SHAWN: Open it.

AMY: Shouldn't we be happy to find out there is something beyond all of this? Something that might be...it might be what we've wanted...

PETER: Is this what I think it is?

SHAWN: "Thank you, love" "Don't mention it."

AMY: Don't you think...Peter?

PETER: I think I need to be alone.

AMY: Peter, is there someone else?

PETER: Someone else?

AMY: A woman.

PETER: I don't know.

AMY: That isn't an answer. I think you owe me an answer.

PETER: It's the truth.

AMY: All right. I'll leave you. I'll leave you alone.

SHAWN: Are you ready for a little trip, my dear?

PETER: Let's go.

Scene 6.

An airport. JAZ is at the ticket counter. <SHAWN> stands behind the counter in a ticket agent's uniform.

JAZ: How far can I get on seven hundred dollars?

<SHAWN>: First class or coach?

JAZ: Doesn't matter. I just want to get the hell out of here.

<SHAWN>: Is your passport in order?

JAZ: No, it's not. Matter of fact, I haven't got a passport.

<SHAWN>: Well, that narrows things down a bit.

JAZ: I imagine it does.

<SHAWN>: Do you have any preference regarding direction?

JAZ: I'm partial to Kubrick.

<SHAWN>: How about north, south, east and west?

JAZ: When's the next flight?

<SHAWN>: Three-oh-eight to Albuquerque, leaves in seven minutes.

JAZ: I'll take it.

<SHAWN>: It's already overbooked.

JAZ: Get me on it.

<SHAWN>: I'll see what I can do.

JAZ: (holding out a bill)

See this money? This is a bribe.

<SHAWN>: Do you realize that you're acting like a criminal?

JAZ: Really? I'll make a note of that.

<SHAWN>: Of course, if you were actually a criminal, you'd probably make an effort to be a little more discreet.

JAZ: Unless I was a very, very smart criminal.

<SHAWN>: Have fun in Albuquerque.

JAZ: I will.

Scene 7.

SHAWN, LYNCH and PETER are taking acid.

SHAWN: One for you, and one for you, and one for me.

LYNCH: I haven't done this stuff since Vietnam.

SHAWN: I haven't done this stuff since last time I ran out of speed...

LYNCH: How about you, Pete?

PETER: First time.

SHAWN: Oh, boy. A virgin.

PETER: I also haven't slept in eighteen days.

SHAWN: After tonight, you'll sleep like a baby.

PETER: We'll see about that.

SHAWN: Ready, men?

LYNCH: Aye, aye, Captain.

SHAWN: One, two, three...

PETER: It doesn't taste like anything.

LYNCH: Careful, he may be sick.

PETER: How long until we feel the effects of...?

SHAWN: Have patience.

LYNCH: Hey, did you hear about Jaz?

PETER: She heard.

SHAWN: I heard that she put Geral in the hospital, and now she's someplace in Texas...

LYNCH: That's not the way I heard it, but I wouldn't put it past her.

PETER: You shouldn't believe everything you hear.

SHAWN: Peter has the hots for her.

PETER: That's a crude way of putting it.

LYNCH: Jaz is a bitch.

SHAWN: I think she's a doll.

LYNCH: I've fucked her.

PETER: So what?

SHAWN: Wait just a minute...you've fucked her, or you've—

PETER: He's lying.

SHAWN: I think things out in Vegas got a little too hot for her to handle...

LYNCH: When was she in Vegas?

SHAWN: She wrote to me from Vegas.

PETER: When?

SHAWN: That last time, it couldn't have been long...

LYNCH: She's dead.

PETER: She isn't dead.

LYNCH: Ask Geral.

PETER: That Geral treated her like shit.

LYNCH: Better than she deserved.

PETER: She isn't dead, for God's sake.

LYNCH: Then where is she?

SHAWN: I also heard she stopped off in Chicago.

PETER: When?

SHAWN: Somebody saw her there.

LYNCH: Not likely. Since she's dead.

PETER: You just said she was in Texas.

LYNCH: I just got a note from a buddy of mine with the Feds.

SHAWN: What's a Fed?

LYNCH: The FBI.

PETER: Sure you did.

LYNCH: I'm working with them now.

SHAWN: The FBI?

LYNCH: We got a contract for some software...

PETER: He's lying.

LYNCH: Think what you want.

PETER: Nothing is happening. I feel ridiculous.

SHAWN: Patience.

PETER: How long does it..?

LYNCH: Takeoff is minus seven minutes and counting...

SHAWN: She sent me a note, you know.

PETER: When?

SHAWN: Before she did it.

PETER: She hasn't done anything.

LYNCH: Not what I heard.

SHAWN: She sent a note...

PETER: And? What did it say?

SHAWN: Sort of a goodbye.

PETER: Sort of?

LYNCH: She planned it?

PETER: What do you mean sort of?

LYNCH: That's evidence.

SHAWN: Evidence of what?

LYNCH: You'd better get rid of it.

SHAWN: I've forgotten what it said...the exact words...

PETER: What the fuck are you talking about, Lynch?

LYNCH: My buddy with the Feds said he went to her apartment.

PETER: I don't believe you.

LYNCH: The landlady hadn't seen either one of them for days. And the whole apartment is thrashed. Broken glass everywhere...clothes...garbage...and a big stainless steel steak knife in the kitchen sink that had been broken—snapped in half—snapped inside of something...

SHAWN: She said she didn't think she would make it back online for a while...

LYNCH: They're still looking for the other half of the knife.

JAZ enters with <SHAWN>, who carries several bags.

JAZ: Is this the gate?

<SHAWN>: I think so.

JAZ: Thirty-eight.

<SHAWN>: Thirty-eight.

JAZ: So...thanks. I guess this is it.

<SHAWN>: What do you have in here, cement?

JAZ: Detective gear. It's classified.

<SHAWN>: Listen, it was...

JAZ: Yes. It was.

<SHAWN>: Like a little something for the road?

JAZ: No, thanks.

<SHAWN>: On the house.

JAZ: That's okay.

<SHAWN>: They're boarding.

JAZ: I know it.

<SHAWN>: Sure you won't change you mind?

JAZ: I can't. There's something I've got to take care of.

<SHAWN>: What is it?

JAZ: It's personal.

<SHAWN>: You don't have to leave, do you? Did you do something...piss somebody off?

JAZ: You've got a hell of an imagination.

<SHAWN>: Is somebody after you?

JAZ: Please.

<SHAWN>: What are you running from?

JAZ: I'm gonna miss my flight.

<SHAWN>: Well, good luck.

JAZ: Don't worry. I'll be around.

<SHAWN>: Keep in touch.

JAZ: I'll catch up with you.

<SHAWN>: You know where to find me...

JAZ: Sure.

<SHAWN>: I hope you know what you're doing.

JAZ: Me too.

<SHAWN>: Be cool.

JAZ: I'll be seeing you...

<SHAWN> and JAZ embrace. slowly, their embrace becomes passionate.

<SHAWN>: Don't go.

JAZ: You don't get it, do you? This is something I have to do. It isn't a choice, it's...

<SHAWN>: They're boarding.

JAZ: Goodbye, Shawn.

<SHAWN>: I'll be around.

JAZ: Steer clear of Max.

<SHAWN>: No problem.

JAZ: And tell Peter...

The sound of an airplane, taking off.

<SHAWN>: What?

JAZ: Peter! Tell him...

<SHAWN>: I can't hear you!

JAZ: Tell Peter that I...

<SHAWN>: Peter?

JAZ: I'm taking off!

JAZ runs off carrying the bags.

PETER: I don't feel right. I don't feel right.

SHAWN: Just go with it.

PETER: Something strange is happening.

LYNCH: Takeoff is minus three minutes...

SHAWN: What happened, baby?

PETER: Nothing. I haven't slept.

LYNCH: The suspense is killing me.

PETER: I thought I saw a ghost.

SHAWN: Wow. This stuff is gonna kick some ass...

LYNCH: A ghost?

SHAWN: Who was it, Petey?

PETER: It was you.

Scene 6.

JAZ is on an airplane. <SHAWN>, dressed as a stewardess, offers her a drink.

<SHAWN>: Coffee?

JAZ: Bourbon.

<SHAWN>: Milk? Orange Juice?

JAZ: Bourbon, thanks.

<SHAWN>: Bloody Mary Mix?

JAZ: Just bourbon.

<SHAWN>: Have you been keeping track of all these bourbons you've been drinking?

JAZ: I thought this was first class.

<SHAWN>: Do you really want a seventh one?

JAZ: What did I tell you?

<SHAWN>: I'm only asking because I thought the time change may have thrown you.

JAZ: I missed it.

<SHAWN>: We just set our watches to Mountain standard time. The Captain made an announcement.

JAZ: How considerate of him.

<SHAWN>: Her.

JAZ: I'll take that bourbon anytime you get a chance...

<SHAWN>: We'll be touching down in about fifteen minutes.

JAZ: Is this last call? Make it a double bourbon.

<SHAWN>: You realize that the airline can be held responsible...if you do something in Albuquerque that you might regret.

JAZ: That's a comforting thought.

<SHAWN>: Of course, I'll take you at your word...

JAZ: I love first class.

<SHAWN>: But I want you to promise me you'll take a cab home from the airport, and once you get there you'll go straight to bed.

JAZ: Well, that might be difficult. But I'll certainly do my best.

<SHAWN>: (fixing her a bourbon) Cheers.

JAZ: Would you like one?

<SHAWN>: I'm on duty.

JAZ: I'm buying.

SHAWN, dressed as a steward, comes down the aisle with a tray of peanuts.

SHAWN: Peanuts?

JAZ: Definitely.

<SHAWN>: Hey, this is first class.

SHAWN: Oops, looks like I went a little too far...

JAZ: It happens.

<SHAWN>: Get back to coach.

JAZ: I like peanuts.

<SHAWN>: You'll want to fasten your seatbelt. We're getting ready to land.

SHAWN falls into JAZ's lap.

SHAWN: Turbulence.

JAZ: That's okay. Like a drink?

SHAWN: What are we drinking?

JAZ: Bourbon.

SHAWN: Oh, goody.

<SHAWN>: Max, what did I tell you about fraternizing with the passengers!

JAZ: It was turbulence!

<SHAWN>: I'll have to inform the Captain.

JAZ kisses SHAWN. As they embrace, LYNCH's voice is heard over the intercom.

LYNCH: (v.o.) Fasten your seatbelts and prepare for landing. Tray tables in an upright position. Carryon luggage should be stowed beneath the seat in front of you. Your seat cushion doubles as a floatation device. Should the use of oxygen be required, remember to place the mask on your own face first, and then over the face of any small children...Enjoy your stay in Timbuktu, and remember that the airline cannot be held responsible for any acts you may have come to regret...

JAZ and SHAWN tumble off of the airplane seat, still locked in an embrace, and continue their tussle on the floor. Suddenly JAZ goes limp. SHAWN sits up.

SHAWN: Oxygen!

<SHAWN> enters, with LYNCH.

<SHAWN>: Captain...

LYNCH: What happened?

SHAWN: I believe she's passed out.

LYNCH: Poor thing.

They haul JAZ up into her chair.

<SHAWN>: Help me.

SHAWN: She's light as a feather.

<SHAWN>: Lift that tray table, we're about to land.

LYNCH: There we go.

<SHAWN>: Thank god.

SHAWN: Captain? Excuse me...?

<SHAWN>: She drank seven bourbons.

SHAWN: Captain?

LYNCH: What is it?

SHAWN: Who's flying the plane?

LYNCH: Oops.

<SHAWN>: She promised me she's go straight to bed.

LYNCH: Better fasten her seatbelt...

The plane crashes. JAZ sits bolt upright, awaking from a nightmare.

JAZ: Peter!

Scene 7.

An airport. PETER, SHAWN and LYNCH wait at a gate for an incoming flight. A voice on the loudspeaker:

VOICE: Flight number 308 from Seattle arriving at gate number seven...

SHAWN: Look at all these people...

LYNCH: So what?

SHAWN: Hundreds of people...thousands...

LYNCH: It's an airport.

SHAWN: I feel so alone.

LYNCH: I hate airports.

SHAWN: Everyone has a destination.

LYNCH: How do you know?

SHAWN: Everyone is here for a purpose. All these purposeful people. Destinations. flight numbers. Boarding Passes. Luggage tags.

LYNCH: It's so fucking monotonous.

SHAWN: Everyone is here to meet someone. Or to tell someone good-bye.

LYNCH: All this fucking fluorescent.

SHAWN: Everyone has a connection to make. A flight to connect them to someplace, a tag to connect them to something, a gate to connect them to someone, a passport to connect them to...some sense of who they are.

LYNCH: Fucking sucks.

PETER: Shut up, Lynch.

LYNCH: This isn't reality.

SHAWN: What is it then?

LYNCH: It's a dream.

SHAWN: Then whose dream are we dreaming?

PETER: Jaz. It's Jaz. She's on her way.

LYNCH: It's a fantasy.

SHAWN: Everyone has a name...everyone has an address...everyone has a number...

LYNCH: It don't mean shit.

SHAWN: I feel so alone. Why are we here? What are the three of us doing here?

PETER: We're here to meet her plane.

SHAWN: Then what the hell is the number? We need a number, Peter!

PETER: We came to find Jaz.

LYNCH: Fucking senseless.

PETER: She's on a plane. She's flying. And the flight will have to land sometime.

SHAWN: What time is it?

PETER: It's getting late.

LYNCH: We don't even know what she fucking looks like.

PETER: What does that matter?

LYNCH: You aren't going to find her.

PETER: Yes I am. I'll find her because I have to find her.

LYNCH: She's probably fucking dead.

PETER: I'll find her because I have to. Because she knows...she's the only one who knows...

LYNCH: You wouldn't even know her if you saw her. You don't even know if she exists...

PETER: I know she exists.

<SHAWN> *enters with a carryon bag.*

<SHAWN>: Excuse me...can you tell me..?

PETER: (overlapping) Can I help you?

<SHAWN>: (overlapping) I was looking for...

PETER: (overlapping) That bag looks so...

<SHAWN>: A train...or a bus or a...

PETER: (overlapping) If there's any way...

<SHAWN>: Cab. I could use a cab.

PETER: Can I offer you a lift?

<SHAWN>: I don't know.

PETER: Where are you headed?

<SHAWN>: I haven't really got a...

PETER: Do you need a place to stay?

<SHAWN>: I don't have a destination.

PETER: Where did you come from?

<SHAWN>: I haven't got a passport...it isn't in order...

PETER: Which flight?

<SHAWN>: The plane crashed.