

Name of Play

---

A full-length play

By Your Name here

Contact:  
Your Name  
Address  
Phone  
Email

<< OR >>

Represented by:  
Mary Agent  
The Mary Agency  
123 Main Street  
Anytown, USA 11111

## PROLOGUE: TAPPING

PENELOPE and WES enter the maple tree orchard. There's melting snow on the ground. They all wear thick sturdy boots and carry huge metal buckets, drills and spiles.

They work in a comfortable, determined silence. PENELOPE drills neat holes into each tree and puts a spile in each one. WES hangs the buckets.

When they're done, they admire their work.

PENELOPE

We made good time. It's getting cold.

They exit.

## SYRUP

PENELOPE enters, alone, on a darkened stage.

PENELOPE

This is how you make syrup. First, you tap the trees and collect the sap. You need lots of it if you want enough for your whole family's breakfast. Then you put it in a pot, and you boil it. Easy, right? No. You have to the heat on low. Loowww and slooowwww. Don't stir it a lot. Syrup is patience. Syrup has to be sticky and sweet and sloooww. Depending on what you boil it over, it can take all day. Over a stovestop it could only take an hour. Over an open fire, it could take all day. Our setup in the shack, over the woodstove takes somewhere in between. After waiting, you can stir. You know its ready when it sloooowly drips off your spoon. Then, you get a funnel, and you pour it into a bottle or a jar. Do you just pour it in, quickly and carelessly? No. You do it slowly. After all, good things take time.

## ACT ONE SCENE ONE

A sunny afternoon in the orchard. WES and PENELOPE are collecting syrup like they do every day after school.

They pour buckets of sap into bigger buckets.

PENELOPE

Did you start the English homework yet?

WES

I'm in AP remember? We don't have the same homework.

PENELOPE

Right. You're the smarter one.

WES

Okay that's not what I said.

PENELOPE

Shut up.

Hey. Isn't Declan in AP.

WES

Oh my God. You're still on this?

PENELOPE

What? He's cute. AND smart.

WES

Yes. He's in AP.

PENELOPE

Oh my GOD.

She's staring into her bucket of sap.

WES

What?

PENELOPE

This is like, so dirty! There's a dead bug in here!

Beat.

(To the dead bug)

Well, congrats on being the first dead bug of the season, little guy.

DECLAN enters quietly. He wears a disheveled school uniform.

DECLAN  
What about dead bugs?

PENELOPE  
AH!  
She jumps and drops her bucket.

DECLAN  
Sorry.

WES  
Way to waste a whole bucket of sap.

PENELOPE  
There was barely anything in it!

WES  
Except your bug friend.

DECLAN  
Are there bugs in you syrup?

PENELOPE  
NO! We strain it and then it gets boiled.

DECLAN  
Your shit is so good, I'd still buy it if there was a dead bug in it.

WES  
Well we have none ready yet. We barely have enough for a pint.

DECLAN  
Dibs on the first pint.

WES  
No.

PENELOPE  
Wesley! Be nice.

DECLAN  
Its chill.

Silence.

PENELOPE tries to collect sap while also looking at DECLAN. She can't get the lid off a bucket.

PENELOPE

So. Declan! Did you want something besides our great product!

DECLAN

Nah. Just bored. Thought I'd come visit my favorite neighbors.

PENELOPE blushes.

WES

We're the only neighbors.

DECLAN

True.

They get back to work. DECLAN makes himself comfortable against a tree.

WES

So are you just gonna stand there all afternoon or what?

DECLAN

Fine. I'm supposed to be at wrestling practice, but I actually wanna quit so I came out here instead.

PENELOPE

Good for you. Wrestling is super shitty. I heard it caused eating disorders and stuff.

WES

Since when do you care?

DECLAN

Yeah, its super unhealthy. The captain has only been eating bananas, for like two weeks?

WES

So why don't you just quit, instead of just ditching?

DECLAN

You know. Parents.

WES

I actually don't know parents.

DECLAN

Right. Sorry dude.

WES

Its chill. I guess. So this has nothing to do with you not wanting to commit to anything?  
Like with your English homework.

PENELOPE

WES.LEY.

DECLAN

Maybe. I just think high school can be a total waste of time. Like, I'm never gonna need to analyze all the themes and motifs of The Scarlet Letter in my life. So why do it now? I'm not gonna get a job with that.

PENELOPE

Good point.

WES

(To Penelope)

What if your mom comes out here?

PENELOPE

What?

WES

She'll think he's a distraction.

PENELOPE

But he's not!

WES

Okay then.

PENELOPE

He's actually helpful. In a way. But she doesn't really know him.

DECLAN

Does anyone really know me.

WES stares at him.

Wow. PENELOPE

Who just says that? WES

Wes, does anyone know the real you? DECLAN

I do. Right Wes? PENELOPE

Sure. WES

DECLAN grins.

Maybe one day I'll know the real you. DECLAN

I hope not. WES

He pops the lid off a bucket and stares into it for a long time.

You good over there? PENELOPE

Come on. You're my friends! I should know the real you. DECLAN

Aww thanks. PENELOPE

And you're like, real. You live out here, you work off the land. Its like you live like humans were always meant to. DECLAN

Yeah definitely. PENELOPE

What? WES

DECLAN

You just don't worry about all the bullshit.

He stands and gets very close to PENELOPE.

She turns bright red.

DECLAN

Like you don't wear make up.

PENELOPE

(Breathless)

Thanks.

WES chuckles.

DECLAN

And Wes? He's, you know. In this town!

WES

Gay.

DECLAN

I didn't know if I could just say that. Anyway its sorta cool.

WES shrugs and blushes into a bucket.

DECLAN smiles.

DECLAN

You are. Hey is there anywhere I can take a piss?

WES

Wow. Way to ruin that touching moment.

PENELOPE

We're in the woods. Go behind any bush or tree. That's what Wes does.

DECLAN

Does he?

He walks off into the trees.



WES

He's a little scrawny.

PENELOPE

Do you mean like...too scrawny for me?

WES

Too scrawny in general.

PENELOPE

Oh. Okay.

WES

All that wrestling.

PENELOPE

I heard he was like a state champ.

WES

Really? Probably not anymore.

PENELOPE

I mean I don't have any confirmation. I don't follow sports.

WES

You mean you're not a wrestlerette? You don't get your little pom poms out and cheer for Declan?

Penelope snorts.

WES

Imagine. That little skirt and one of those ponytails that looks like it'll hurt your head.

PENELOPE

Ugh.

WES

Could be cute.

PENELOPE

I'm wearing rubber boots and a men's coat I can't button over my boobs.

WES

Well boys like big boobs right?

PENELOPE  
I don't know. I'm not the boy here.

WES  
Yeah but I'm gay.

DECLAN enters.

WES  
(To Penelope)  
Hey wanna ask Declan your question?

PENELOPE  
About my...you know?

WES  
Not specifically your's!

DECLAN  
What is happening?

WES  
What do you think of boobs?

PENELOPE  
Oh my god oh my god.

DECLAN  
They're uhh cool. I guess.

WES  
Okay.

DECLAN  
Why?

WES  
Penelope had some questions.

PENELOPE  
Did not!

DECLAN  
Its chill.

PENELOPE

But I didn't.

WES

You're like a virginal farmgirl. You probably have lots of questions.

PENELOPE

Hey!

DECLAN

Its not a bad thing! I have questions too! Like what are bras like?

PENELOPE

This is the worst day of my life.

WES

Answer him!

PENELOPE

Umm. Uncomfortable. Expensive.

DECLAN

Women suffer so much. And for what?

WES

Some girls don't. The artsy hippie ones.

PENELOPE

Well that's not fair. I always have to wear a bra.

WES

Otherwise your tits will sag all the way to the floor?

She makes a snowball and throws it at him.

PENELOPE

No more boob talk! Please!

WES

I'm kidding. They're beautiful.

DECLAN smiles. He also throws a snowball at WES.

WES

Fuck you.

DECLAN

That's for Penelope. And people with boobs everywhere.

WES

Go home Declan.

DECLAN laughs and picks up his backpack.

DECLAN

Bye Wes.

PENELOPE

Bye Declan!

DECLAN

Oh. Bye Penelope.

## ACT ONE SCENE TWO

The sun is just rising over the orchard.  
DECLAN stands pressed against a tree,  
smoking.

WES and PENELOPE enters, in boots and a  
flannel jacket.

DECLAN

Hey.

PENELOPE jumps and WES tries not to act  
surprised.

WES

What the fuck are you doing here?

PENELOPE

Good morning Declan.

DECLAN

I need a ride to school.

WES

Ever heard of knocking on the door and asking?

DECLAN

Sure. But I figured one of you would come out here eventually.

PENELOPE

God, if I knew I'd see someone that wasn't Wes today I might've actually tried to look decent.

WES

You look fine.

DECLAN

Your shirt is buttoned wrong.

PENELOPE looks down at her shirt, panicked.

PENELOPE

I think that's just my boobs. They make it hard to button.

Silence.

PENELOPE

Ha! Anyway! We gotta check on these trees.

WES walks to each bucket, lifts the lid, tightens the spiles.

DECLAN watches.

WES

Can I help you?

DECLAN

You never said you'd give me a ride.

PENELOPE

Of course we will!

WES

I'm the driver!

DECLAN

Please? My car isn't working and the bus doesn't come out here.

WES

Fine. I'll drive you. But I expect gas money.

DECLAN reaches into his pocket. PENELOPE glares at WES.

WES

I was joking asshole! I don't need your money. Its not like I'm going out of my way.

DECLAN

Oh.

WES

Yeah.

WES lifts the lid off a bucket and swishes it around.

WES

Weird.

PENELOPE

More bugs?

WES

No. There's actually some sap in here. Usually we don't get any in the night.

DECLAN

Can I try it?

WES

Excuse me?

DECLAN

Can I taste the sap?

PENELOPE

You don't want to do that. It won't taste great.

DECLAN

I just wanna know.

WES

Fine.

DECLAN dips his finger in the bucket, and lets some sap drip off. He sucks it off, slowly.

PENELOPE looks away. WES rolls his eyes.

DECLAN

It just takes like water. Sweet water.

PENELOPE

(Flustered)

Yeah. Supersweet. Very sweet.

WES

Well yeah dipshit. That's what it is.

PENELOPE

You don't have to be mean.

WES

I'm just being honest.

DECLAN

Mean.

WES

Shut up. I just thought since you're always here harassing us about syrup you'd know a thing or two about it.

DECLAN

Tell me about it.

PENELOPE

Okay. You want like a tutorial? We can show you how sometime?

DECLAN looks at WES.

WES

Its not that interesting. The sap gets boiled. Once it gets boiled down enough, its syrup.

DECLAN

Cool.

A beat.

WES

Are you guys ready to go or are we going to stand out here in the cold for a while longer?

PENELOPE

One second. I gotta check out this bucket.

WES

What have you been doing this whole time?

PENELOPE

Shut it. You could've checked it too.

PENELOPE lifts the lid off the last bucket,  
swishes it around, snaps it back on.

DECLAN

Are you guys ready to go or are we going to stand out here in the cold for a while longer.

WES

Shut up.

DECLAN grins. WES digs his car keys out of  
his pocket.

DECLAN

I call shotgun.

### ACT ONE SCENE THREE

PENELOPE, WES and DECLAN trudge into  
the orchard.

They throw down their backpacks and get to  
work.

WES

So why is Declan here again?

DECLAN

No where else to go.

WES

What about wrestling?

PENELOPE

He doesn't wanna wrestle anymore.



DECLAN

Thanks. Glad someone has my back.

She gives him a small smile.

WES yanks the lid off of a sap bucket.

WES

Penelope. Are you going to help me or?

PENELOPE

Sorry. Sorry. Declan can help too.

WES

Absolutely not!

PENELOPE

Why not?

WES

He has zero respect for what we do.

PENELOPE

That's not true.

WES

He snuck over and carved profanities on the trees that one time!

PENELOPE

He was thirteen!

DECLAN chuckles.

DECLAN

Guys, guys. No need to argue over little ole me.

WES

Come on. You're loving this.

PENELOPE

WESLEY.

DECLAN

Its chill. I'm just gonna do some reading.

He sits against a tree and retrieves a copy of The Scarlet Letter from his bag.

WES

Are you kidding me? You specifically said you weren't gonna read it.

DECLAN

For school. I'm reading it for me. I think it can provide some insight to the modern culture of slut shaming.

WES

Jesus Christ.

PENELOPE

I'd love to hear your thoughts on slut shaming!

WES

Penelope. If you do not get to work I will make your mom reinstate the Declan ban.

PENELOPE

No!

DECLAN

The first one was the worst week of my life.

WES

Best week of mine.

DECLAN smiles at him. He doesn't notice.

PENELOPE

Don't be mean. Here, let me help with that lid.

PENELOPE walks over and yanks on the lid off a bucket.

PENELOPE

Whoa! Good tree.

WES

Damn. That's like enough for a very small jar.

DECLAN

A very small jar for me?

Nothing for you.

WES

Wes! Sorry about him Declan.

PENELOPE

Its chill.

DECLAN

PENELOPE stares into her bucket. WES stares at her, gives her a little nudge. She glares. He nudges harder, making it so she almost spills the contents of the bucket.

DECLAN looks up and she blushes, but clears her throat.

PENELOPE

Hey Declan! Do you think you'll go to the Spring Formal?

DECLAN

I don't know. All my friends are going.

PENELOPE

Well then you should totally go.

DECLAN

They're all assholes and I hate them.

WES grins and hides his face.

PENELOPE

You can come with us.

WES

Excuse me?

PENELOPE

It can be a group thing.

DECLAN

Maybe.

WES

No.

PENELOPE

We don't need Wes. We can have fun without him.

DECLAN

Yeah. Maybe.

WES

Asshole. She really wants to go to this lame dance. So just say yes.

PENELOPE

WESLEY I SWEAR-

DECLAN

Huh.

WES

She doesn't get out much so this dance could be so good for her.

PENELOPE

I'm right here!

DECLAN

It could be fun. Going with someone who isn't an asshole.

WES

Yeah.

DECLAN

Are you sure you don't wanna come with us Wes? We could have lots of fun.

He raises his eyebrows.

PENELOPE

I thought you said you didn't wanna go with an asshole.

She waits for someone to laugh at this. They don't. She frowns.

WES

Nah. Its not my scene.

DECLAN

What is your scene?

WES

Here.

DECLAN

Ha. Your loss. Penny and I will have a great time. Or try to.

PENELOPE

Thanks! Uh. I guess.

WES

You call her Penny?

PENELOPE

Cool. Cool.

DECLAN stands up and collects his belongings.

DECLAN

I'm gonna head out. I feel like I'm distracting you.

PENELOPE

No, you're not.

WES

Bye.

DECLAN

Bye Wesley.

PENELOPE

Bye Declan!

DECLAN

Oh. Bye Penny.

He exits. PENELOPE swoons against a tree.

WES

Jesus Christ.

PENELOPE

"Penny"!

WES

You're welcome.

PENELOPE

For what?

Getting you a date to the dance.

WES

You made me look desperate.

PENELOPE

Aren't you?

WES

Yeah but that's not the point.

PENELOPE

Wasn't the point to get him to take you to the dance?

WES

I guess.

PENELOPE

We did that. Woot. Woot.

WES

I need a dress, I need shoes, I need to learn how to do hair.

PENELOPE

What have I gotten myself into? Dear Jesus.

WES

Hey!

PENELOPE

Sure. Sorry.

WES

I need a dress. Maybe the one from grandma's birthday last year.

PENELOPE

Are you sure that's a good idea?

WES

What do you mean?

PENELOPE

Just that you've, uhh, changed since then.

WES

Changed? Changed how?  
PENELOPE

Penelope you know what I mean.  
WES

No I don't.  
PENELOPE

There's nothing wrong with it.  
WES

With what?  
PENELOPE

Your weight.  
WES  
(nervous, quiet)

A beat.

Oh. Is it that bad?  
PENELOPE

No! You're fine. You're always fine.  
WES

Silence, except the sound of sap splashing onto  
the bottom of Wes's bucket.

I mean we could have a lot of fun finding a new one! We can go thrifting and stuff!  
WES

Sure. Yeah.  
PENELOPE

She pulls a bucket off a tree and pours it into the  
bigger bucket.

Penny?  
WES

Never call me that.  
PENELOPE

I'm sorry.

WES

Its okay. You're right.

PENELOPE

But I should've been better about it.

WES

Just shut up, okay? Let's talk about anything else.

PENELOPE

Anything?

WES

Yes! Like how Declan is such a feminist.

PENELOPE

I would literally rather die than talk about that.

WES

#### ACT ONE SCENE FOUR

DECLAN, PENELOPE and WES enter the orchard after school. WES gets to work. DECLAN leans against a tree and takes out a book.

Wes, are you sure you got this?

PENELOPE

Yeah, just hurry? Also, I feel like I ask this daily, but why is Declan here.

WES

DECLAN waves at him.

Because. He's my date so he should see what I'm going to wear.

PENELOPE

I really don't care what you wear, Penny.

DECLAN

Right, but you're seeing it anyway.

PENELOPE



WES

Weird that your mom just went and got some dresses for you. Seems like you should be there.

PENELOPE

Yeah, but I like hate shopping. Because every time I see something cute it only goes up to large. That, um, doesn't exactly fit me.

WES

Whatever. Just go do your Goodwill try on so you can help with this.

She runs off. Silence.

WES takes a bucket off the tree, and struggles with its weight.

WES

Fuck, this is heavy.

DECLAN

Need help?

WES

Nope. I've been doing this my whole life. I know how to carry a bucket.

DECLAN

Okay then.

WES struggles with the bucket and some sap splashes out.

DECLAN

You sure?

WES

That doesn't matter. Its mostly water. It rained last night.

DECLAN

Oh.

WES

Yeah.

Silence, except for water hitting bucket.

DECLAN  
Hey Wes?

WES  
What.

DECLAN  
I wanted to ask you something.

WES  
Um, okay.

DECLAN  
I just, um....how did you know-

PENELOPE comes running out in a shapeless,  
floral, borderline muumuu dress.

PENELOPE  
Guys this is the ugliest dress I ever saw.

WES  
(trying not to laugh)  
Its not that bad.

PENELOPE dramatically throws herself against  
a tree.

PENELOPE  
It looks my grandma's nightgown.

DECLAN  
It seems comfortable.

PENELOPE  
I don't wanna be comfortable. I wanna be cute.

WES  
She got more than one right? Go try on another dress. This one actually hurts to look at.

PENELOPE  
Yeah? Well try wearing it.

She stomps off.

WES bursts out laughing.

DECLAN

Well that wasn't good.

WES

Yeah. Well. Clothes are hard for her.

DECLAN

Clearly.

WES

So what were you gonna ask me? Before she came running?

DECLAN

Oh. Right.

WES

Okay. Are you gonna ask me or?

DECLAN

How did you know you were gay.

WES

Take that again?

DECLAN

(quietly)

How did you know were gay?

WES

Oh. Okay. So why the fuck do you wanna know that?

DECLAN

Um. I guess because I claim to be this ally? And I don't even know about the whole gay experience, I guess.

WES

What?

DECLAN

Can you just answer?

WES

Declan this is super weird, and invasive.

DECLAN

I just wanna be a better person.

WES

Oh my god.

DECLAN jumps at the sound of PENELOPE wailing.

PENELOPE (O.S.)

Declan turn around!

DECLAN

What?

PENELOPE

I just really don't want you to see this one!

DECLAN

Okay?

He turns around.

She comes running, (waddling) again, this time in a super tight dress. She can barely move.

PENELOPE

Why why why?

WES

Um.

PENELOPE  
(wheezing)

I can't even breathe.

WES

Then take it off!

PENELOPE

I feel like a sausage.

DECLAN

Sausage can be good sometimes.

WES glares at him.

WES

Its okay. There's one more. That'll be the one.

PENELOPE

Okay. But...

WES

But what?

PENELOPE

Mom had a little post it note with this one? It said this can be my goal dress. What does that mean?

WES

Oh my god.

PENELOPE

What does it mean?

WES

I think...I think she means you can like work your way into fitting into it?

PENELOPE

Oh. So like?

She gags

PENELOPE

Exercise.

WES

Um I guess? And dieting.

PENELOPE

I'd have to starve myself! She must mean something else.

WES

I'm not sure. But I'm sure the last one will be the one, okay?

She nods and then waddles back off stage.

DECLAN  
Soo?

He turns to face WES again.

WES  
Oh my god weirdo.

DECLAN  
Did you just like wake up one day and thought “Wow boys are cute I think I like boys only”.

WES blinks.

WES  
What? No. Its not a one day thing. Its more like you watch a lot of Disney Channel and a lot of Barbie movies, and you take a great interest in all the cute boys in them. Or I gues that happened to me. And - wait, why I am telling you this?

DECLAN  
Cause we’re friends?

WES  
No. Look, what I’m saying is you start to realize you don’t like the boy characters more because they can fight and play sports good. Its because they’re nice and cute and you like the way they look. The end.

DECLAN  
Interesting.

WES  
Super.

DECLAN  
Thanks.

WES  
For what?

PENELOPE comes out again. This dress fits. Its boring and gingham, but she can move.

WES  
Hey! That one’s cute.

I feel like Laura Ingalls Wilder.

PENELOPE

You sort of are.

WES

I like it.

DECLAN

Thanks. I do too.

PENELOPE

WES sighs.

So is this the one?

WES

It sort of has to be.

PENELOPE

Well okay then.

WES

It suits you.

DECLAN

Because it suits my “virginal farmgirl” aesthetic.

PENELOPE

Yes. Now go change out of it and help with work.

WES

Okay. Yeah. Be right back.

PENELOPE

She leaves again.

Is this conversation over with? Its draining.

WES

Sort of. Except, how did you come out.

DECLAN

WES hits his head against a tree.

WES

I looked at the only two people in the world that I care about and I said “I’m gay”.

DECLAN

Penelope and her mom?

WES

Yeah. Duh.

DECLAN

How did they react? Is that too far?

WES

Oh for sure, but you know this much so I might as say it all. Penelope was cool, of course. But I think my aunt was a little disappointed at first.

DECLAN

Seriously?

WES

Yeah. She wanted me to be perfect I think. To be everything my mom wasn’t.

DECLAN

Which was?

WES

Why would I tell you?

DECLAN

Cause we’re friends?

He raises his eyebrows and does a funny little grin.

WES

Whatever. My mom was a mess. She hated living in the middle of nowhere, she hated the whole routine of this place. But I’ve always been good at it. Waking up early, working after school, staying up late to do homework. My mom never got good at those things. And honestly, Penelope hasn’t either. So I became the person my aunt needed me to be.

DECLAN

And she got over the gay thing because your perfect in every other way?

WES

Completely perfect besides the gay thing.



DECLAN

I mean there's nothing wrong with gay.

WES

My hero.

DECLAN

But how does everyone at school know?

WES

Some girl asked me to Sadie Hawkins and I said "Sorry but I'm gay".

DECLAN

And no one cared?

WES

Maybe they did a little. But no one cared about me before that so I didn't think they'd care after.

DECLAN

I cared. I thought it was brave.

WES

Thanks.

He moves to get another bucket, but turns to look at DECLAN at the last second.

WES

What the fuck is going on with you?

DECLAN

I told you.

WES

And I thought that was bullshit.

DECLAN

Can't I just be curious about my friend?

WES

Maybe if it was two years ago, when it happened! And maybe if we were friends.

DECLAN

Look, can we just-

PENELOPE comes stomping out in her work boots.

She starts collecting sap.

PENELOPE

Whoa, the buckets are extra heavy today.

WES

Yup.

He dumps some sap in the bucket with a big splash.

PENELOPE

Wow the vibes out here sure are weird.

WES

Really? Because I think everything is cool and normal and fine.

DECLAN abruptly stands.

DECLAN

I think I'm gonna leave.

WES

Gonna go to wrestling practice for the first time in months?

DECLAN

Maybe I will.

WES

Whatever.

DECLAN

Okay. Bye Wes.

WES

Bye.

PENELOPE

Bye Declan!

DECLAN

Oh. Bye Penelope.

He leaves.

PENELOPE stomps over to WES.

PENELOPE

What did you do to him?

WES

I didn't do anything. He was being weird.

PENELOPE

He was probably just being nice.

He snorts.

PENELOPE

You can't just believe he was being nice?

WES

No.

PENELOPE

Why?

WES

It doesn't matter. He was asking me a lot of personal questions.

PENELOPE

Like what? Anything about me?

WES

No. About being gay.

PENELOPE

Wow. He's such a good ally.

WES

Is that what he is?

PENELOPE

Yes. Now shut up. I don't need you two fighting.

WES

We're not fighting.

Whatever it is, don't do it.

PENELOPE

Sure.

WES

A beat.

WES

So your dress is cute!

PENELOPE

"Fitting" and being "cute" aren't the same thing. This dress fits. So I have to wear it.

WES

It will be cute. You're cute.

PENELOPE

If you say so.

WES

I do. You're gonna look cute. Maybe Declan will wear a matching gingham tie.

PENELOPE

You think so?

WES

No. I don't even think they make those.

He walks over to the last untouched bucket of the day.

WES

We're almost done collecting. Isn't that weird?

PENELOPE

Sort of.

WES

Only a few more days and then we're back at the shack.

PENELOPE

Yup. I can't say I'll miss this.

WES

Why?

Manual labor.

PENELOPE

It's good for us. Makes us stronger.

WES

PENELOPE frowns.

Maybe.

PENELOPE

#### ACT ONE SCENE FIVE

Morning. WES enters the orchard, checks the buckets.

DECLAN quietly walks up behind him.

Hey.

DECLAN

Ah! What the hell?

WES

Sorry, I didn't meant to do that.

DECLAN

What are you doing here?

WES

I wanted to talk to you. Without Penelope.

DECLAN

Okay.

WES

Um, okay.

DECLAN

Okay, so why did you want me alone? Were you gonna ask if I'm still a virgin? Or if I've been bullied for being gay?

WES

DECLAN

What? No. I wanted to tell you I'm gonna be hanging out here less.

WES

Uh. Why?

DECLAN

You hate me.

WES

I never said that.

DECLAN

Well you imply it. Often.

WES

Well I don't hate you. And you can't stop hanging out here. The dance is this weekend.

DECLAN

Oh.

WES

If you don't wanna hang out with me, I get it. But stay for Penny.

DECLAN

Wes.

WES

At least for this week. She's so excited for it. We're not gonna let her down just because we had some weird conversation.

DECLAN

Wes.

WES

She likes having you around. I don't know why, but she does.

DECLAN

Wes.

WES

WHAT?

DECLAN

I never said I didn't wanna hang out with you. I thought you didn't wanna hang out with me.

Oh. That's not *always* true.

Really?

Yes.

Cool. I'll stick around for the times you don't mind me.

And for Penelope.

Right. Of course.

WES does a thumbs up.

Cool.

Silence.

I thought our set up out here was going to get all screwed up in that windstorm.

But it didn't. Everything looks fine.

Yup. Looks fine.

Okay, well I gotta get going. Catch the bus.

Hey asshole.

Yeah?

I'll give you a ride.

Shotgun?

DECLAN

WES shakes his head but he's smiling just a little.

ACT ONE SCENE SIX

WES, DECLAN and PENELOPE enter the orchard.

DECLAN pulls out a book. WES and PENELOPE get to work, dumping small splashes of sap into buckets.

Almost syrup time?

DECLAN

Yeah. Almost.

PENELOPE

Dibs on the first jar.

DECLAN

I already said no to that.

WES

Right.

DECLAN

He goes back to his book.

What are you even reading now?

WES

The Great Gatsby.

DECLAN

Ohmygod.

WES

I really like that movie.

PENELOPE



DECLAN

Really? I hated it. Cool soundtrack though.

PENELOPE

Oh that's totally what I meant! That soundtrack, uh, slaps.

WES snorts.

DECLAN

What do you listen to Wes?

WES

You know. The classics.

DECLAN

What does that mean?

PENELOPE

Dolly Parton.

WES

Hey! I listen to Emmylou sometimes too.

DECLAN

Wow.

PENELOPE

We just kind of listen to whatever our mom plays.

DECLAN

Any good dancing music?

WES

Um no. Not really.

PENELOPE

That's not true!

WES

Don't say it Penelope.

DECLAN

I would like for her to say it.

PENELOPE  
We square dance!

WES  
I'm removing myself from this family.

DECLAN is utterly delighted.

DECLAN  
Sqaure dance!

WES  
Top ten worst days of my life.

PENELOPE  
Its fun.

DECLAN  
Can you teach me?

WES  
NO

DECLAN  
Come on. Penny and I need some cool moves to bust out at this dance.

PENELOPE  
Sure. Come on Wes. Its fun.

DECLAN  
Yeah. Come on Wes.

WES  
Fine. But if you two do this at a high school dance I'm gonna want video footage.

DECLAN  
Deal.

He jumps up.

DECLAN  
Where do I start?

PENELOPE  
Its so easy. Just face me.

DECLAN does this. WES rubs his temple.

PENELOPE

This might be hard with an odd number. But what you do is-

She grabs his left hand with her left hand, and walks around him.

PENELOPE

Ta-da! Now you do it too.

They hold hands and circle each other.

PENELOPE

Yee haw! Wes, your turn.

She tosses Declan over to him.

WES

I'll lead.

PENELOPE begins clapping in time.

They dance and make eye contact for a moment. DECLAN smiles and looks away.

DECLAN tosses WES to PENELOPE.

WES

You can't do that. I was leading.

PENELOPE

Just dance!

They expertly Square Dance while DECLAN claps and laughs.

PENELOPE

Wow. I'm sort of winded.

DECLAN

Let me dance again.

He walks over to WES.

WES

Dance with Penelope. She's better.

She stares, confused. DECLAN shrugs and takes her hand.

They dance, less enthusiastically.

DECLAN

Well we're gonna be the coolest kids at the dance.

PENELOPE

Totally. Maybe we can teach your friends how to square dance too.

DECLAN

No way am I going near them. Its gonna be you and I, Penny. Unless Wes changes his mind.

WES

Nope.

DECLAN

I tried.

PENELOPE

We don't need him.

DECLAN

I guess we don't. But I'll miss him.

PENELOPE smiles, confused

PENELOPE

Not me. I'm stuck with him 24/7.

DECLAN

It must be fun though. To always have a friend there.

PENELOPE

Yeah. It is.

DECLAN

What's it like? Living with Wes?

WES

Hi I'm right here.

DECLAN

Living with someone your age I meant?

WES tilts his head at him. PENELOPE remains oblivious to their strangeness.

PENELOPE

Well, its nice most of the time. He helps with homework and we gossip.

DECLAN

Who do you gossip about?

WES

You. We just have so much to say about you.

DECLAN

Really?

WES

No. I deal with you enough as it is. I don't need you ruining gossip time.

PENELOPE

Stop being rude! Anyway, he also does things like bring me extra cookies when mom bakes.

DECLAN

You can't take them yourself?

PENELOPE blushes.

WES

No. My aunt has weird cookie limits.

PENELOPE

Its for health reasons. I think.

DECLAN

That's fucked up.

PENELOPE

Maybe. I guess it is weird. Whenever Wes gets good grades he gets extra cookies and when I get good grades she gives me stickers. I'm sixteen. I don't need stickers.

WES

It is a little fucked up.

PENELOPE

I guess I never thought about it.

DECLAN

Cookies should have no limits.

WES smiles into a bucket.

PENELOPE

You're right. Limitless cookies.

WES

Limitless cookies.

ACT ONE SCENE SEVEN

WES and PENELOPE sit in the orchard. She is dressed for the dance. WES brushes out her hair.

PENELOPE

Are you sure this dress is okay?

WES

You look great.

PENELOPE

Thanks.

A beat.

PENELOPE

Hey. So. I asked mom about the goal dress thing.

WES freezes.

WES

And?

PENELOPE

And, it pretty much meant exactly what you said it meant. Isn't that weird?

WES

Yeah. Super weird.

PENELOPE

I mean to give me a week to fit into it? I'd have to stop eating.

WES

And that's not healthy.

PENELOPE pokes at her stomach.

WES

Nope.

PENELOPE

Keep brushing. He's going to be here any minute.

He does.

WES

I think its not really cool of your mom to do that.

PENELOPE

Oh. Why?

WES

I just don't think anyone needs to tell you what you should and shouldn't fit into.

PENELOPE

She just wants me to be better.

WES

Well I like you now.

PENELOPE

Thanks.

WES

Can I be done? I've done a hundred strokes, at least.

PENELOPE

I just wanna look/

DECLAN enters, wearing a blazer with a t-shirt under it, and dress pants that show a tasteful amount of ankle. PENELOPE stares.

WES

Hey.

He elbows PENELOPE.

PENELOPE

Hi!

DECLAN

Hey.

WES

You're wearing that?

DECLAN

Yeah. Its like, what is "formal" anyway? I think its different for everyone.

PENELOPE

I think he looks great.

DECLAN

Thanks Penny. You look great too.

She blushes.

PENELOPE

We should probably get going. I don't want my mom to come and try to take pictures or something like that.

DECLAN

Ah. My mom doesn't even know I'm going to this.

WES

Does your mom know anything you do?

DECLAN

Nah. Too busy with my sister.

WES

Does she know you quit wrestling?



No. I haven't quit yet.

DECLAN

He smiles and starts to climb WES's tree.

Wes

No you don't!

DECLAN

What? Is this your special tree?

Wes

No. I just don't want you to ruin this great outfit.

DECLAN

Ah.

WES

You don't believe me.

DECLAN

Tree hog.

WES

There's literally hundreds of trees here. Why do you need to climb this one?

DECLAN

Tree. Hog.

He starts climbing again.

WES

Oh my god shut up.

PENELOPE clears her throat.

DECLAN

Oh right. Let's get going.

He jumps down.

WES

Have fun! Make good choices.

PENELOPE

Sure. Declan?

He offers his arm. She takes it, blushing. They start to walk off.

PENELOPE

I love that shirt. What's on it even?

DECLAN

I don't know.

WES

(calling out to them )

Looks kinda unwashed.

PENELOPE

What was that?

WES

It doesn't matter. Just go. Have fun.

DECLAN

Last chance to come with, Wes.

WES

No! Bye!

DECLAN

(muttering)

Right. You'll just spend the night up your tree.

PENELOPE

You ready to square dance your butt off?

They exit. WES watches, and then scrambles up his tree.

BROWNIES/BARS

DECLAN comes onstage, alone.

DECLAN

Right. So, I don't feel qualified to tell you how to make anything, but here's how to make maple brownies. Preheat the oven to 350. I think 350. Its usual 350.

And melt some brown sugar in a pot with syrup and butter. Don't burn it. Take it off heat, whenever it starts to get really bubbly. Then mix all that with a few eggs, and flour. Baking powder or soda. I don't know which. I'm not a baker. I shouldn't be doing this. I tried to make these for my mom once and I made this big huge mess and I burnt everything. She was not happy with me. But I tried really hard. She didn't care. So I guess how you make maple brownies is you do the opposite of what I did. Because I really screwed it up. Don't be like me. Don't get burned.

#### ACT ONE SCENE EIGHT

It's dark out. DECLAN is heard laughing offstage.

He enters the orchard, PENELOPE in tow. He has some sort of booze. His blazer hangs off his shoulders.

She guides him over to a tree and they lean against it. It's the same one WES was in earlier.

PENELOPE

Why did you wanna come here?

DECLAN

Do you think Wes is awake?

PENELOPE

He will be if you don't quiet down.

DECLAN

Penelope, you're too nice to deal with me.

PENELOPE

You've always been nice to me too.

She smiles. He laughs. She laughs too, loud and strained.

DECLAN

I totally ditched you at the dance.

Yeah. PENELOPE

Sorry. DECLAN

You just. You kept saying you hated your friends. That you wouldn't hang out with them there. PENELOPE

Yeah. But they had this. DECLAN

He waves his bottle around.

And I stole it. To get back at them. DECLAN

Get back at them? PENELOPE

Yeah. For being assholes to you. DECLAN

They didn't say anything to me. PENELOPE

But they did to me. DECLAN

What did they say? PENELOPE's eyes widen.

I can't repeat it. DECLAN

Yes you can. PENELOPE

But I won't. DECLAN

PENELOPE sniffles.

DECLAN

Penny-

PENELOPE

This was supposed to be the best night of my life. I was going to teach everyone to square dance. I was going to hang out with this dumb boy I've like since I was little. I thought I might get kissed.

DECLAN puts his hands on her shoulders.

DECLAN

Penelope. I don't know what to say.

PENELOPE

That you're not into virginal farmgirls.

DECLAN

Penelope.

PENELOPE

I'm right.

DECLAN

You can still get kissed.

He leans in.

PENELOPE

Do you actually want to kiss me Declan?

He lets out a shaky breath.

DECLAN

I...no.

PENELOPE

I thought so.

DECLAN

Its not you. I swear its not you.

PENELOPE

Then what is it?

DECLAN

Penny. I can't force myself to like you.

She moves away.

DECLAN

That was maybe the worst thing I could've said.

PENELOPE

Yeah. It was.

She stands up.

DECLAN

You don't get it.

PENELOPE

I think I do!

DECLAN

Penny. I'll explain it one day. But I can't now.

Tears fall down her cheeks.

PENELOPE

Yeah. One day.

She runs off.

DECLAN takes another sip, then shakes his head and sets the bottle down.

DECLAN

I suck!

He stands and begins to climb the tree.

He doesn't get very far and settles into some low branches.

Suddenly, WES storms in.

WES

What the fuck Declan!

DECLAN jumps and almost falls.

Oh god. DECLAN

What did you say to her? WES

I couldn't kiss her Wes. DECLAN

I'm coming up there. WES

No! DECLAN

Yep. WES

There's literally hundreds of trees here. Why do you have to climb this one? DECLAN

So I can push you out. WES

He kicks the bottle of booze over before he starts climbing.

He climbs quickly and gracefully. DECLAN is an awe..

Wow. How'd you do that? DECLAN

Years of practice. WES

Right. DECLAN

She's really upset. WES

I know. I suck. DECLAN

He looks at the sky.

DECLAN

I SUCK!

WES

Shut up. You're gonna wake up my aunt.

DECLAN

Right. Sorry.

WES

So do you wanna tell me what happened.

DECLAN

She likes me and I couldn't like her back.

WES

Did you say that?

DECLAN

Well.

WES

Declan!

DECLAN

I did.

WES

Idiot.

DECLAN

Yeah.

He groans, and leans back. He almost falls. WES steadies him.

WES

Careful.

DECLAN

I'm gay.



WES almost falls. DECLAN steadies him.

WES

WHAT?

DECLAN

I'm gay Wes.

WES

Yeah. I heard. What?

DECLAN

I like boys. Just like you.

WES

I mean, yeah you were being weird. And I had some thoughts, but I didn't really let myself think it.

DECLAN

No?

WES

Look at you. You're in a t-shirt and a blazer.

DECLAN

You like it!

WES

Do you want me to like it?

DECLAN

Well. Yes?

WES rubs his temples.

WES

You're so drunk.

DECLAN

I'm not that drunk.

WES

Okay.

DECLAN  
For real.

WES  
This is so weird.

DECLAN  
I like the wrong cousin.

WES  
I'm gonna puke.

DECLAN  
Because I'm ugly?

WES  
You know you're not ugly.

DECLAN moves closer to him.

DECLAN  
Do I?

WES  
Yeah. You have to. You're like super beautiful.

DECLAN  
You think so?

WES  
Its a fact Declan.

DECLAN  
You think I'm super hot.

WES  
I think I'm going to push you out of this tree.

DECLAN  
Kiss me.

He leans in.

This is your worst idea.

WES

He leans in.

Lights out.

End of Act One.

## ACT TWO SCENE ONE

Morning at the Sap Shack, the place where all syrup, and syrup related products are sold. The shack is small, with a counter, a window and shelves all over. A folding chair sits in front of it. Its empty. Not for long.

WES and PENELOPE enter, carrying boxes of products. PENELOPE's hair is back in braids, both have bags under their eyes.

They silently do their jobs, shelving jars of syrup and cream, brownies and candy. WES brings back more as PENELOPE organizes it all.

WES brings out one last box and sits in the folding chair.

Wait! We forgot something.

PENELOPE

She dashes away.

Ugh.

WES

He stands and slightly adjusts some of the products PENELOPE placed.

She comes back out, carrying pens, labels and a green smoothie.

WES

What is that?

PENELOPE

Labels. We have to price and label everything.

WES

No. Your potion or whatever.

PENELOPE

Oh. Breakfast.

WES

You drink smoothies?

PENELOPE

Well mom was making one and she offered to make me one, and I thought, why not?

WES

Weird.

PENELOPE

Just trying something different.

WES

Penelope.

PENELOPE

Wesley.

WES

Do you wanna talk about Declan?

She slaps a label on a jar of syrup.

WES

It just really sucks that we have to sit out here and do this all day. After you had such a hard night.

PENELOPE

Yup.

I'm sorry.

WES

He takes the labels from her and guides her to a less breakable product.

PENELOPE

Why?

WES

Don't make this harder than it already is.

PENELOPE

You didn't do anything!

WES

Yeah, well.

PENELOPE

What did you say to him? When you went out there last night?

WES almost drops the jar he's holding.

WES

That he's an asshole.

PENELOPE

Oh. Yeah.

WES

I almost pushed him out of the tree.

PENELOPE

Why didn't you?

WES

You know. Lawsuit.

He places a lopsided label on a jar.

PENELOPE

Declan wouldn't sue us.

WES

Who really knows what Declan would do?

PENELOPE slaps on another label.

PENELOPE

Yeah, who knows? Maybe he'll ditch you! Maybe he'll tell you he hates you!

WES

He didn't say that.

PENELOPE

How do you know?

WES

Because you've never done anything wrong.

PENELOPE

I have though. I just put like twenty labels on lopsided.

He looks at the brownies she labeled. They are lopsided.

PENELOPE

See? And there's the, well. You know.

WES

Know what?

PENELOPE

That I'm...different.

WES

Whatever Declan did, wasn't because of how you look or what you do or what you wear or anything like that!

PENELOPE

Then what was it?

WES

I don't know! All I'm saying is you're being weird today.

PENELOPE

You are too!

WES

I'm not the one drinking spinach.

PENELOPE

People do that!

WES

We make SYRUP. Breakfast is pancakes and waffles and french toast! Since when do we drink smoothies.

PENELOPE

Oh my god Wes just let me enjoy this!

She takes a sip and gags. He laughs.

PENELOPE

So refreshing.

WES

Really?

PENELOPE

No its so gross and I hate it.

WES

Wow.

PENELOPE

But its all I have to eat, so I'm going to do it.

He throws a brownie at her.

PENELOPE

I can't eat that.

WES

Since when?

PENELOPE

Since today. Now let me choke down this delicious smoothie in peace.

WES

You don't have to finish it.

PENELOPE

Yes I do.

She gently places the brownie back on the display and takes another sip. She doesn't gag.

PENELOPE

Its getting better!

## ACT TWO SCENE TWO

WES is getting ready to close the shack for the night. He dusts off shelves, and steals the occasional piece of candy.

DECLAN silently enters.

DECLAN

Hey can I get a-

WES turns and whacks him with the duster.

DECLAN

Ah! What was that for?

WES

You scared me! And you can't be here.

DECLAN

Why not?

WES

Penelope.

DECLAN

She's not here.

WES

Yeah for now. She just went to drop some things off inside. And go to the bathroom.

DECLAN

Great. We have some alone time.

WES

Do you even listen to me? She's going to come back out any minute and/



DECLAN

Do you wanna go on a date with me?

Silence.

WES

Oh my god.

DECLAN

I just thought, after last night...

WES

Oh. My. GOD.

DECLAN

I thought we had a moment.

WES

We made out. And you left.

DECLAN

I left because you said Penelope would wonder what was going on!

WES

I wasn't wrong.

DECLAN

I want to pick back up!

WES

You wanna shove your tongue down my throat again!

DECLAN

Why are you acting like last night was nothing?

WES

Because it has to be nothing.

DECLAN

Why?

WES

I can't believe I kissed the dumbest boy alive.

You kissed another boy?  
DECLAN  
He smirks.  
WES  
I hate you.  
DECLAN  
I think that's a lie.  
WES  
I have to hate you.  
Silence.  
DECLAN  
I don't think you have to. Hate me, I mean.  
WES  
Okay but I can't just go out with you. Penelope will wonder where I am.  
DECLAN  
You're not her mother.  
WES  
Yeah but she's being all weird. I have to be supportive.  
DECLAN  
Ah yes, you're strongest suit. Supporting people.  
WES  
Shut up.  
DECLAN  
Go out with me.  
WES  
Nope.  
DECLAN  
Please!

I don't even like you....that much.

WES

We can sneak out! She'll never know.

DECLAN

And go where?

WES

Anywhere Wes. Back up that tree maybe.

DECLAN

Gross. But I'll think about it.

WES

Yeah?

DECLAN

Probably not.

WES

Come on.

DECLAN

He leans in really, really close.

I like you.

DECLAN

I can still smell booze on your breathe.

WES

We should kiss again.

DECLAN

No.

WES

Footsteps.

Who are you talking to?

PENELOPE (O.S.)

They jump apart.

No one!

WES

Me!

DECLAN

She enters, and barely looks at Declan.

Oh.

PENELOPE

Just here to pick up a jar of syrup.

DECLAN

We're closed.

PENELOPE

Don't I get friends and family perks?

DECLAN

No, considering you're not either of those things.

PENELOPE

Wes lets out a low whistle.

Little harsh.

WES

Feel free to leave and come back tomorrow, when we're open.

PENELOPE

Penelope. Come on.

WES

Why are you being so nice to Declan?

PENELOPE

WES picks up a jar.

I'm not being nice to Declan. I'm being nice to a paying customer.

WES

Wesley, put that jar down.

PENELOPE

No.

WES

WES.LEY!

PENELOPE

DECLAN

I'm uh, gonna go home. Catch up on school work or something. Don't wanna get in the in the middle of anything.

He turns to leave.

WES

No! We'll give you this. I mean you have to pay, but you can have it.

PENELOPE

NO!

She tries to grab it from him.

WES

Just let him buy it. He's been whining about it for months.

PENELOPE

Not until we're open.

She tries to grab it again. She gets ahold of it.  
WES tries to pull it back. Their fingers slip.

CRASH.

DECLAN

Fuck.

WES

Oh my god.

PENELOPE

Look what you did. This is what happens when you try to be nice.

She stomps off.

WES

Guess we're picking this up.

DECLAN smiles.

You defended me.

DECLAN

And I deeply regret it. Now help me.

WES

WES gets on his hands and knees and gingerly picks up shards of glass.

DECLAN gets down next to him. He runs his finger through the puddle of syrup.

No.

WES

DECLAN raises his finger to his mouth.

That was on the ground.

WES

Don't care. I've been waiting for this.

DECLAN

Its probably full of little bits of glass.

WES

Worth it.

DECLAN

Let me get you a new jar.

WES

DECLAN sucks the syrup off his finger.

You're disgusting.

WES

You kissed me.

DECLAN

I won't anymore. Now that I know what else has been in your mouth.

WES

DECLAN  
 Interesting.

WES  
 Shut up and go find a mop.

DECLAN  
 Please go out with me.

WES  
 We're still on this?

DECLAN  
 I don't wanna pretend last night didn't happen.

WES  
 Fine. What we do even do on a date.

DECLAN  
 Sit. Talk. Feed each other maple candy.

WES  
 Where exactly would we do this?

DECLAN  
 I dunno. Here.

WES cringes.

WES  
 Okay. When exactly, would this date happen?

DECLAN  
 Tomorrow night. Late. When Penny is asleep.

WES  
 Late? When is late?

DECLAN  
 Give me your number! I'll text you when I'm here.

WES  
 No. You'll harass me all day.

DECLAN  
 No I won't.

You give me your's.

WES

Really?

DECLAN

Don't flatter yourself. This way I'm control of when we talk.

WES

DECLAN sighs.

You make everything difficult.

DECLAN

Here's my phone.

WES

He hands DECLAN an older phone, and DECLAN slowly punches his number in.

What's taking so long?

WES

Nothing.

DECLAN

Are you looking through my photos?

WES

No!

DECLAN

Yes you are.

WES

This one's cute.

DECLAN

Wait which one? Let me see.

WES

I'll just send that to myself.

DECLAN

Oh my god.

WES



DECLAN  
It'll be my contact photo for you.

WES  
Disgusting.

DECLAN hands the phone back. He gets up to leave, stops and kisses WES on the cheek. WES wipes his cheek off and stares at his hand.

WES  
I'm all sticky from your syrup mouth.

DECLAN stands.

DECLAN  
I'll see you tomorrow night Wes.

He walks away.

WES  
Wait! Help me clean this up! And I never agreed to anything.

Too late. DECLAN is gone

### ACT TWO SCENE THREE

Its morning, the sun is barely out. The shack is all closed up.

PENELOPE enters, wearing sweatpants and a too big t-shirt. Her hair is in a messy ponytail. Her sneakers have holes.

She yawns, and takes a deep breath. She begins to stretch. She swings her arms around. She tries to touch her toes. She can't.

PENELOPE  
Come on, come on, come on.

Her fingers graze her toes.

Yay.

PENELOPE

She throws her leg up on the counter of the shack in an attempt to stretch. She reaches for her toes.

Ow, ow, ow.

PENELOPE

She tries with the other leg and groans. She gives up stretching and attempts to run in place. She does this for a little bit before wheezing.

Okay, okay, I think that means its working.

PENELOPE

She takes a deep breath and runs a lap around the shack. She finishes, puts her hands on her knees and takes some deep breaths. She straightens up, and tries to run again. She takes off at a slow jog. She jogs offstage.

A moment later, WES enters, ready for school, and carrying a bagel wrapped in a napkin.

PENELOPE!

WES

No response.

Its time for school!

WES

Nothing. He eyes the bagel in his hand.

I HAVE BREAKFAST!

WES

PENELOPE walks back on, wheezing.

Hey. There you are.

WES

PENELOPE  
(Wheezing)

Its time already?

WES

Yeah. What are you doing?

PENELOPE

Cramping up.

WES

What?

PENELOPE

Nothing. Is that bagel for me?

WES

Yeah. Here.

He tries to hand it to her.

PENELOPE

No thanks.

WES

Penelope.

PENELOPE

I'm actually not hungry.

WES

You actually have to eat.

PENELOPE

Why's it gotta be a bagel? Can't you make me something with a little more nutritional value?

WES

You're lucky I made you anything at all. Now take this bagel, and come on.

PENELOPE

Wait! I need to change.

WES

No time.

But I'm all sweaty. PENELOPE

You should've timed this better. WES

I didn't realize stretching would take so long. PENELOPE

Jesus Christ. WES

I'm new to all this. PENELOPE

"all this"? WES

Wellness. PENELOPE

WES rolls his eyes.

What's wrong with being well? PENELOPE

I thought we were "well" before! WES

Silence.

Hey, I'll take that bagel now. PENELOPE

She hands it to her. She wipes off some cream cheese on the napkin. He glares at her. She takes a small bite.

We're late. Plus I know you keep spare clothes in your locker in case of...you know. WES

My period? PENELOPE

WES

Yes, that. Now come on.

They walk off together.

## ACT TWO SCENE FOUR

The Sap Shack at night. DECLAN leans against the counter, alone. He's waiting for WES. He checks his phone. Nothing. He sighs. He sits on the ground and begins humming a Dolly Parton song.

A howl in the distance. He jumps.

DECLAN

What the fuck?

More howls.

DECLAN

He's trying to get us both killed. Wow.

Suddenly, there's footsteps. He lets out a dignified screech.

DECLAN  
(whispering)

Wes?

PENELOPE enters. She shrieks back.

PENELOPE

What are you doing?

DECLAN

What are you you doing?

PENELOPE

Are you trying to steal from us?

DECLAN

By sitting on the ground?

PENELOPE  
WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE?

DECLAN  
Probably the same as you. Trying not get eaten by coyotes.

She groans.

PENELOPE  
I'm jogging.

DECLAN  
This late?

She shrugs, and slides down the shack wall to sit near him.

PENELOPE  
Excuse me? This is my property.

DECLAN bites his lip.

PENELOPE  
Hello? You better answer me or I'll call the police.

DECLAN  
You will not.

PENELOPE  
Tell me why you're here. Are you sleepwalking?

DECLAN  
What? No! I just wanted to get out. Get some air.

PENELOPE  
This late?

DECLAN  
Like you're one to talk?

PENELOPE  
Fine. I started jogging at night so no one would see me.

DECLAN  
Why?

PENELOPE

Its embarrassing. These tight workout clothes? And all my business bouncing all over for everyone to see. No one will see me get winded after like, one minute. Its just better this way.

DECLAN

Okay but I just heard a coyote howl.

PENELOPE

Good thing you're here then. To protect me.

DECLAN

Ha. Look. I'm serious, be careful out here, okay?

PENELOPE

Like you care.

She stands.

PENELOPE

I need to get some sleep. Go home Declan.

She starts to walk away.

DECLAN

Wait! Is Wes awake?

PENELOPE

What? No! Why?

He deflates.

DECLAN

Just wanted to know if anyone knows you're out here. That's all.

She jogs off without a word.

A beat.

He checks his phone one last time. Nothing.

He stands and walks off, quietly humming Dolly Parton.

## ACT TWO SCENE FIVE

The next morning at the Sap Shack. WES and PENELOPE work silently, sealing jars, wrapping cookies and brownies, putting labels on.

PENELOPE has bags under her eyes and she moves slower than usual. She accidentally drops the brownie she's holding.

You good?

WES

Yup. Just tired.

PENELOPE

She yawns.

Did you eat breakfast?

WES

Yes.

PENELOPE

Penelope?

WES

Wesley?

PENELOPE

What did you eat?

WES

Grapefruit.

PENELOPE

Since when did you eat grapefruit?

WES

Since mom bought it.

PENELOPE

She yawns again, and stretches again.



PENELOPE

Maybe I need coffee. Wes, want some coffee?

WES

Is that part of the new diet plan?

PENELOPE

So that's no then.

She leaves.

WES gets back to work. DECLAN enters and  
knocks on the counter.

WES

Sorry we're not open yet.

DECLAN laughs. WES looks up and realizes its  
him.

WES

Oh. Its you. Sorry we're not open yet.

DECLAN

I waited for you last night.

WES

Yeah?

DECLAN

You didn't come.

WES

Nope

DECLAN

Why?

WES sighs.

WES

Declan.

DECLAN

Weslan.

WES laughs a little and then straightens up.

WES

I don't really wanna spend my Friday nights sneaking around with a fake woke jock who broke my only friend's heart.

DECLAN

You were the one who wanted to sneak!

WES

I didn't want to sneak! I wanted to protect Penelope.

PENELOPE enters, carrying two mugs.

PENELOPE

Protect me from what?

DECLAN

Me.

PENELOPE

I can protect myself from him.

DECLAN

How'd you sleep last night Penny?

PENELOPE

Horribly. And don't call me that. How'd you sleep?

DECLAN

Horribly.

WES

I slept well.

DECLAN

Clearly.

PENELOPE

I had nightmares about you.

DECLAN

That was real life actually.

WES

What is happening?

DECLAN

When I was here last night waiting for -

WES glares.

DECLAN

Waiting for my thoughts to clear up so I could sleep, I saw our Penelope. She was jogging.

WES

Jogging? Were you being chased by a coyote?

PENELOPE

No. I was exercising.

WES

Well you will be chased if you keep it up. We live in the woods.

PENELOPE

Thank you so much Declan.

DECLAN

Gotta keep you safe from those coyotes.

PENELOPE

Listen, we all know I could easily take out a coyote over him.

DECLAN

Hey. I'm a wrestler.

WES

Yeah, that'll scare off the bears.

PENELOPE

Can't you just be happy for me?

WES

Happy? Yeah, I'm thrilled that you're now the kind of person who eats grapefruit for breakfast and takes their coffee black.

A beat.

DECLAN

I can keep coming here at night.

PENELOPE

Seriously? I'm telling you I'll be fine. What's he going to do?

WES

He probably has a real phone he can use to call for help.

DECLAN

Yes, and to call other people.

A pointed look.

WES

Look, I don't think its good for either of you to be out there, but two is probably better than one.

PENELOPE

Its just better in the dark. No one can see me. I can barely see myself.

WES

Fine. Fine. Its not up to me I guess.

DECLAN

Okay. I'll be out here every night.

He looks at WES.

DECLAN

Every. Single. Night. Unless Penny tells me differently.

PENELOPE

I won't tell you anything.

DECLAN

See you tonight Penny!

He leaves.

PENELOPE

Ugh.

WES

Ugh.

PENELOPE

I'm just trying to be better, Wes.

WES

It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter what anyone thinks of you. Not your mom, not me, especially not Declan.

PENELOPE

Yeah but what about how I feel? Shouldn't I deserve to feel better?

WES

Yeah, but how do you feel?

PENELOPE

Tired. Hungry. Like my buttons are getting closer to staying closed. Like mom is proud of me.

WES

I just want to make sure its for the right reasons.

PENELOPE

What?

WES

You don't need a guy like Declan. And you have no idea why he doesn't like you back.

PENELOPE

And you do?

WES

Uh. No. But I bet its nothing to do with you how you look.

PENELOPE

So its my bad personality?

WES

No!

She laughs.

PENELOPE

I'm joking. Now come on, we have work to do.

He laughs nervously, stands and tries to lug a crate of syrup jars to their shelves.

He struggles. PENELOPE comes over and moves the crate with ease.

ACT TWO SCENE SEVEN

Night. DECLAN enters, whistling, and slides down the side of the shack to sit. He checks his phone. WES enters.

Hey.

WES

DECLAN tries to act cool.

Oh. Looked who showed up.

DECLAN

Briefly. So we'll both get eaten by coyotes.

WES

He sits.

Romantic.

DECLAN

Yeah. Sorry for ditching you last night.

WES

DECLAN grins.

You're apologizing.

DECLAN

Don't get to use to it.

WES

What happened?

DECLAN

I fell asleep.

WES

But you're here now.

DECLAN

I am. WES

DECLAN reaches his hand out to him.

What's that? WES

Its for holding. DECLAN

Why? WES

Because we're like a thing. DECLAN

Gross. WES

So dramatic. DECLAN

WES grabs his hand. DECLAN does a little smile.

Look at that. DECLAN

I should leave. I don't want her to see us. WES

Okay. DECLAN

I'm serious. WES

I said okay. DECLAN

I'm leaving now. WES

He doesn't let go of DECLAN's hand.

You aren't moving. DECLAN

Give me a second. WES

Sure. DECLAN

No movement.

Footsteps offstage.

WES

Okay okay okay she's coming. I'm going I'm going.

He stands. DECLAN does too. He kisses his cheek. WES blushes.

WES

Okay bye!

He dashes off.

PENELOPE enters, wheezing. DECLAN cheers.

PENELOPE glares.

DECLAN

Hey.

PENELOPE

You're here.

DECLAN

Yup.

PENELOPE

I'm alive. No coyotes. We're good.

DECLAN

Okay.

PENELOPE

So you can leave.



DECLAN  
Yeah? Are you done?

PENELOPE  
Almost.

DECLAN stops.  
She puts her leg on the shack counter and stretches. DECLAN attempts this too.

PENELOPE  
Yeah don't do that.

DECLAN stops.  
DECLAN  
Hey- tomorrow's Easter.

PENELOPE  
(confused)  
Yeah.

DECLAN  
Your mom still hide all those eggs?

PENELOPE  
Every year Declan.

DECLAN  
Cool. Cool.

A beat.

PENELOPE  
Do you want to come help us find the eggs?

DECLAN  
Yes!

PENELOPE  
Why?

DECLAN  
Fun.

PENELOPE  
Fine. Whatever.

DECLAN

So I'll see you tomorrow?

PENELOPE

I guess. Only because Wes and I won't be able to find them all on our own.

DECLAN

And I'm the best tree climber of the group. You need me to find all the high up ones.

PENELOPE

You are not the best climber.

DECLAN laughs.

DECLAN

You're jealous.

She stands to look him in the eye.

PENELOPE

I don't care about climbing trees. But I definitely could. If I wanted.

DECLAN

I was joking.

She sighs.

PENELOPE

I'm going home Declan.

She turns away.

DECLAN

Good night Penny.

She stops.

PENELOPE

Good night. Don't call me that!

She runs off. DECLAN stays a moment longer, smiling.

## ACT TWO SCENE 8

PENELOPE and WES stand at the Sap Shack counter, cracking open plastic Easter Eggs. WES pops a piece of candy into his mouth.

WES

Are we sure this isn't all of them?

PENELOPE

Yeah, she hid like seventy.

WES

For two people?

PENELOPE

Three.

WES

What?

PENELOPE

I invited Declan.

WES freezes.

WES

You invited Declan?

PENELOPE

Yeah. He was sitting there all alone and I thought we could use him to help find all these stupid eggs.

WES

Oh.

PENELOPE

I'm trying to make things normal.

WES

Declan isn't normal.

DECLAN enters, smiling.

You don't think I'm normal?

DECLAN

God. How do you do that?

WES

I'm sneaky. Like a cat.

DECLAN

Good. That'll be good for egg hunting.

PENELOPE

She shoves a pile of maple candies at him.

DECLAN

Don't you want some?

PENELOPE

Can't.

DECLAN

Why?

WES

You know why.

DECLAN

Oh.

WES

Just have a piece Penelope! Its a holiday.

PENELOPE

No thanks. You enjoy it. I'll go find more.

DECLAN

You gonna let us find any?

PENELOPE

Oh. You want to?

DECLAN

I came over for an Easter Egg hunt.

PENELOPE

I mean I've always thought that the finding was no fun but eating candy was the best part.

WES

But candy always taste better after you find it!

DECLAN

Its like a reward!

PENELOPE

Good point. My reward will be a banana or something.

WES

No fun.

PENELOPE

Go find some eggs.

WES

Fine. Declan come with me. You'll never find them on your own.

DECLAN grins.

DECLAN

If you insist.

They take off, into the orchard.

PENELOPE

Bye. Guess I'll look around here.

She gets on her hands and knees and looks at the ground around the shack. She finds one egg and stands up, not so gracefully.

She opens the egg and removes the piece of candy. She goes into the shed and looks for eggs on all the shelves.

She finds none, and sighs. She looks around the room, her eyes landing on no eggs, but the candy on the counter.

She picks up a piece of candy, and looks at it closely. She sets it down. She keeps looking for eggs but turns back to the counter. She picks up the candy again, and looks around the space.

Finally, she puts it to her mouth and licks it. She licks it again. And again.

Suddenly, she stops. She takes the candy and throws it. She looks at the pile of candy in front of her and groans. She takes a handful of candy and throws them in the trash. And another one. And another one.

PENELOPE

Oops.

She grabs more candy but stops when she hears DECLAN and WES laughing.

The boys enter, carrying handfuls of eggs. They look disheveled.

WES

He! We found so many eggs.

PENELOPE

I found one.

WES

That's it?

PENELOPE

Yup.

DECLAN

Hey. What happened to the rest of the candy that was here?

PENELOPE

What? That's all of it.

DECLAN

No.

Penelope.

WES

What?

PENELOPE

Did you eat all of this?

WES

NO!

PENELOPE

Then what the fuck happened to it.

WES

DECLAN looks around, confused, and spots the trash.

Huh.

DECLAN

What?

PENELOPE

It appears that all the candy is in the trash can.

DECLAN

Well. That's weird. Isn't that weird Penelope?

WES

Yeah. Maybe mom put them there. Maybe they're screwed up or something.

PENELOPE

Yeah! That's totally it.

WES

You think so? Cause it seems like a lot from before are totally gone and Penelope was the only one here.

DECLAN

That's weird. But these look fine to me. I say we dig them out. Don't want this candy going to waste.

WES

DECLAN

Oh okay. Yeah.

The boys dump the trashcan out.

PENELOPE

You're going to eat trash candy?

WES

Its totally fine. Its all wrapped and everything.

PENELOPE

Fine. Eat the trash candy.

WES

We will. Candy is candy.

PENELOPE

Great. I'm going inside. I'm hungry.

DECLAN

Have some candy.

PENELOPE

No!

She stomps off stage. WES and DECLAN stare after her.

Suddenly, a crash is heard.

PENELOPE (O.S.)

OW!

WES

Uh. You good?

PENELOPE stomps back on holding an egg.

PENELOPE

I tripped over the last egg. Here!

She slams the egg on the table and walks off again.



DECLAN

See you tonight Penny!

DECLAN opens the egg and eats the candy inside. WES elbows him.

CREAM

PENELOPE walks onstage, alone.

PENELOPE

So, I guess I'm gonna tell you how to make maple cream. First you're gonna take your syrup and you're gonna boil it even more! Crazy, right? So boil it until it gets to 230 degrees, and DO NOT STIR IT. That's gonna be hard for some people. I mean this is easy to mess up. You overcook it and it becomes candy. You throw it in the ice bath too soon and it stays syrup. Its an exact science, one I have to have down. One I do have down. But even if you try your best, even if you never stop stirring it can be screwed up. It can be too thick, full of tiny imperfections. But its still so good. Its still worth the price.

ACT TWO SCENE NINE

Night. DECLAN sits on the ground by the Sap Shack. He hums Dolly Parton.

WES enters and sits next to him.

DECLAN

Hey.

WES

Was that Dolly Parton?

DECLAN

Maybe.

WES

Cute.

HE LOOKS UP AT THE SKY.

I think it might storm.

WES

Really?

DECLAN

I heard it on the evening news.

WES

The evening news? Old man.

DECLAN

Shut up.

WES

Make me.

DECLAN

Gross.

WES

That's not what you said during the egg hunt.

DECLAN

WES blushes.

Oh my god are you blushing?

DECLAN

I don't blush.

WES

You are. You are right now.

DECLAN

You can't see me. Its dark.

WES

Suddenly, there's a crack of thunder in the distance.

Fuck.

WES

DECLAN  
Scared?

WES  
Yeah. I hope Penelope isn't out here.

DECLAN scoots closer to him.

DECLAN  
I bet she isn't. She probably watched the evening news.

WES  
But what if -

DECLAN  
Maybe she came out earlier.

He scoots even closer. Thunder, a little louder.

WES  
We should go inside.

DECLAN  
Should we?

They kiss. Thunder.

WES moves away from DECLAN.

WES  
She's not out here. There's no way she's out here.

They kiss again.

A loud CRACK, a flash of light. They spring apart.

WES  
Fuck!

DECLAN  
Come here.

What was that?  
 WES  
 The storm.  
 DECLAN  
 We need to go inside.  
 WES  
 One last time.  
 DECLAN  
 They kiss. Footsteps that can barely be heard in  
 the storm.  
 PENELOPE (O.S.)  
 Declan! Declan! One of the trees got hit! I almost got knocked out by a branch we have to  
 go -  
 She enters, sees them and stops in her tracks.  
 PENELOPE  
 Inside.  
 WES scrambles away from DECLAN.  
 WES  
 Oh no.  
 PENELOPE  
 Oh my god oh my god oh my god. I'm gonna puke I'm gonna be sick oh my god.  
 She gags.  
 DECLAN  
 From the running or the fear or the kissing?  
 PENELOPE  
 All three!  
 DECLAN  
 I'm sorry. This is my fault.  
 PENELOPE  
 So Wes was completely against hooking up with the cutest boy in town?

Sort of? DECLAN

Jesus Christ. WES

He can't save us now. PENELOPE

Thunder.

Don't be mad. DECLAN

Go home Declan. WES

Stay here Declan! PENELOPE

What? DECLAN

You need to go home. WES

Or stay! PENELOPE

Um. DECLAN

This is between me and Penelope. That's it. WES

Really? Because based on what I saw, Declan was pretty heavily involved! PENELOPE

I guess that's true. DECLAN

So he's staying! PENELOPE

Doesn't that make it more complicated? WES

PENELOPE

I don't know Wesley. You made things pretty damn complicated when you started doing whatever this is with the only boy I've ever liked!

WES

Its not my fault he's gay!

PENELOPE

I don't care that he's gay. I care that no one bothered to tell me!

WES

It wasn't exactly my secret to tell.

DECLAN

I'm sorry.

PENELOPE

Here I am, thinking Declan rejected me because I some chubby weirdo. Here I am drinking green smoothies and fucking jogging in the middle of the night when all along this scrawny motherfucker has been gay? And kissing my cousin? My best and only friend? Really.

Silence.

PENELOPE

Sorry. That was more than swears than I've said in my whole life.

DECLAN

I wish it could've been you Penny.

PENELOPE

Then why didn't you tell me? I'm your friend. I don't even know anyone else.

Beat.

PENELOPE

And don't call me Penny.

WES

Can you calm down for a second?

PENELOPE

Nope.

WES

Did you ever think that this isn't all about you?

PENELOPE  
What?

DECLAN  
Wes...

WES  
No, listen. I share everything with you Penelope. A mom, a job, all our books, even clothes. And then suddenly, I had this thing for myself. I had this boy and this secret and it was all mine. For once. I didn't have to share with you.

A gust of wind.

PENELOPE  
(crying)  
So then what do I have for myself? Where does that leave me?

WES tries to hug PENELOPE.

PENELOPE  
I really don't want to be touched by you.

A gust of wind.

WES  
Can we talk inside? Its going to pour.

PENELOPE  
We can talk out here. I don't want to wake mom up if I yell.

WES  
Penny.

PENELOPE  
Do. Not. Call. Me. Penny.

He looks down, ashamed.

PENELOPE  
How long?

WES  
You don't want to know.

PENELOPE

Wesley.

DECLAN

Since the dance. I was alone in that tree and then I wasn't and then I told everything and I kissed him and I thought he'd shove me but he didn't.

She gasps.

PENELOPE

So I was inside crying my eyes out in my stupid gingham dress and you're kissing the boy that broke my heart. Amazing.

WES

I rejected him a few times between then and now.

PENELOPE

Oh my god.

DECLAN

He did it for you Penny. But I convinced him. It was all me.

WES

I wish I could take it back.

PENELOPE

Really? Because I don't think you do. You're just as lonely as me. You're just as bored as me. So I know you don't regret letting a cute boy crawl into your lap.

WES

Maybe! But I don't even know if I like him!

DECLAN

Really?

WES

Declan, come on. You know this is because we're both just here, in the middle of nowhere, with no other gays in sight.

DECLAN

So there's no feelings?

WES

I never had feelings. About anything.



PENELOPE

Of course you did! He lets you say whatever you want to him, he's nice to us, he's smart!  
What's not to like?

WES

He hurt you.

PENELOPE

You have that in common.

Another gust of wind.

DECLAN

You know what Wes? She's right.

WES

What?

DECLAN

I liked you. Like you! I didn't kiss you because you were there. And I don't think you did either.

WES

Declan, come on.

DECLAN

You come on! Wes, I know it meant something. It had to have meant something for you to risk the most important relationship you have.

PENELOPE

I think he's right.

WES glares at her.

WES

I made a mistake. That's all.

DECLAN

Well I didn't. Or at least I thought I didn't.

WES

I'm sorry.

Too late. DECLAN

That wasn't for you. WES

PENELOPE sniffles.

Doesn't matter. PENELOPE

DECLAN sniffles too.

DECLAN

I wish it didn't happen this way, Penny.

PENELOPE

Don't call me Penny. And don't cry! You're the one who lied to me.

DECLAN

I'm not crying.

PENELOPE

Yeah you are.

WES

Why are you crying?

Wind.

PENELOPE

Wesley, don't be an idiot!

DECLAN

Wes, can we please talk. Please.

PENELOPE

No, no, no. You can't be angry with each other. This is about me being angry with both of you.

DECLAN

Wes?

WES

Not now.

When? DECLAN

I don't know. Never? WES

Please? DECLAN

Stop making me feel sorry for Declan. Let me be mad at him! PENELOPE

Silence, except the wind and thunder.

At least. At least you know why he rejected you. WES

Thunder.

Can we please go inside? WES

Yes. PENELOPE

So now that you know, are you going to, um/ DECLAN

I don't know Declan. But all I want to do now is eat a cookie. PENELOPE

I'll bring it to your room. WES

I would rather you didn't. PENELOPE

DECLAN chuckles. Thunder.

We can go in now. PENELOPE

She starts to walk off. The boys stare.

Come on. I don't want you getting struck by lightning. PENELOPE

WES follows. DECLAN leaves in the opposite direction.

### 3. SOAP

WES comes onstage, alone.

WES

So there was this one time, where my aunt had this great idea to make maple soap. She saw on it online on Pinterest or some shit and thought it would be a fun new product for us. We set aside this whole Saturday to make this soap. We got out all these tools and all this sugar and syrup and all these weird oils and like, lard? My aunt even got an immersion blender. But we had no idea what we were doing, like at all. We used way too much syrup and the soap curdled? Did you know soap could curdle? We sure didn't. Penelope and I were all ready to quit but my aunt was like no, no, no we can fix this. She tried the immersion blender and next thing you know all of us, and the whole kitchen was covered in syrupy lard. I was pissed, for like a second. But then Penelope started laughing, and my aunt did too. We didn't need to make soap. We already had so many good products that people loved. Nothing had to change, we had a good thing going already. Why would we add something new when things were good the way they were?

### ACT TWO SCENE TEN

The next morning at the Sap Shack. The ground is covered in branches and leaves, the aftermath of the storm. PENELOPE stomps in, wearing a rain coat and boots.

She gets to the brownie display and picks one up. She hesitates, but takes a bite.

WES enters.

WES

Are you ready for school?

Nothing.

WES

Okay, I had this coming.

Silence.

WES

It might rain. So you should probably just ride with me.

PENELOPE finishes her brownie, and opens a new one.

WES

Haven't seen you eat sugar since, like, the dance.

PENELOPE glares. He deflates.

WES

Don't bring that up, right.

WES

So will we move past this Declan thing, ever? Because its kind of boring not talking to you and I don't think he'll back any time, so that's good.

PENELOPE

You are impossible! I'm not even that mad at Declan! I'm mad at you.

WES

Oh.

PENELOPE

You broke his heart! And mine! That's two broken hearts!

WES

Three. My heart isn't doing so hot either.

PENELOPE

We are just too pathetic.

WES

I told you I was sorry.

PENELOPE

And I believe it! But you know what sucks the most? That "I needed this for myself" bullcrap.

WES

Used up your swear quota last night?

PENELOPE

Don't make jokes, I'm mad.

He sighs.

PENELOPE

Oh shut up. You act like I have this perfect, amazing relationship with my mother, but do you know what she told me after the dance? After Declan.

WES

What?

PENELOPE

She told me it was a "wake up call". Like Declan rejecting me was this great moment of self discovery and now I could work on not being fat.

WES

That's probably not what she meant.

PENELOPE

Oh yes it was. Because who buys the grapefruit? Mom. Who bought me workout clothes? Mom.

She angrily takes a bit of her brownie.

WES

That sort of sucks.

PENELOPE

She's my mom. She doesn't want me to die like everyone else.

WES

You won't die.

PENELOPE

Not yet.

WES

She does love us, Penny.

PENELOPE

I know. I know she does.

WES

But she doesn't know how to show that. She's always been bad at that I think.

PENELOPE

Yeah. She loved my dad but let him leave anyway because he was a seasonal hire

WES

Brutal.

PENELOPE

Yup. And I know she loves me. But she likes you. You're smart and skinny. I'm fat and stupid.

WES

Don't-

PENELOPE

Let me have this. Please

WES

Will you always be mad at me?

PENELOPE

Probably not. But I'm taking the bus today.

WES

Oh come on. The bus stop is all the way down the road!

PENELOPE

I could use a walk!

WES

No you-

PENELOPE

Oh my god! I want to talk a walk! I want to walk to clear my thoughts and get some goddamn air and have some alone time. Has it ever occurred to you that I want to do things for myself? I'm not doing anything for you or mom or Declan. I'm walking for me.

SILENCE.

PENELOPE

Well. I'll see you later.

She walks off.

WES

(Calling out)

Sorry!

## ACT TWO SCENE ELEVEN

Its night time in the orchard. Moonlight peeks out from above the trees. Its quiet, until footsteps. The snap of twig, feet hitting dry leaves.

DECLAN enters, wearing a backpack with the ukulele poking out of it. He looks around, checking that he's alone. When he decides he is, clumsily climbs up a tree. Its the same tree he and WES had their first kiss in. He precariously balances on a branch, obscured by leaves, and tries to get out of his ukulele.

Footsteps. He freezes. Its WES, who enters and leans against the tree without noticing DECLAN. He begins whistling Dolly Parton.

More footsteps, and heavy breathing. Here comes PENELOPE, at a slow jog. She immediately sees WES but not DECLAN. She stops.

PENELOPE

Oh. Why are you here?

She sits down and groans.

WES

Couldn't sleep. You?

PENELOPE

Same.

WES

I know that I keep saying it, but I'm sorry. I should've told you as soon as it happened.

PENELOPE smiles.

PENELOPE

I might've thought it was cute. You know, if it hadn't been kept secret from me.



WES

Yeah?

PENELOPE

Maybe. Like yeah, I would've gotten nauseous if I saw you kiss, but other than that? Cute.

WES

I'm so dumb.

DECLAN leans out of the tree a little. He's smiling.

PENELOPE

Yup.

WES

I lost you and the only guy I've ever liked.

PENELOPE

Hey. You'll never lose me. We live together.

WES smiles.

WES

Good.

PENELOPE

Too bad Declan will never come back since you stomped all over his heart.

DECLAN fully pops his head out.

DECLAN

That's not true. He'll come back! He came back!

PENELOPE screeches and WES jumps to his feet.

WES

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING UP THERE?

DECLAN

I was going to serenade you. See?

He holds out his ukulele.

PENELOPE

Get down! He'll hates things like this.

But WES is smiling.

PENELOPE

Come on, just get down and talk to him like a normal person.

DECLAN

But he's so happy.

He settles on a branch and strums the ukulele.

WES

Declan! Get down here.

PENELOPE

Yeah. You kind of heard a deeply private conversation.

DECLAN

No judgements from me!

The branch sways.

WES

Oh my god. Please just get down here, dipshit. And we can talk without Penelope hearing all of it.

DECLAN

No, no, no. I'm going to play a little Dolly.

PENELOPE lets out a bark of laughter at this.

PENELOPE

Tell me this isn't real.

DECLAN plucks out a few notes.

PENELOPE

This is the cutest thing I've ever seen and its wasted on Wes.

WES

This is the most embarrassing moment of my life.

DECLAN

Do I look okay?

WES

You never look bad. If you get the fuck down I'll-I'll um...kiss you!

PENELOPE gags.

DECLAN

Really?

SNAP. The branch gives out. DECLAN falls, falls, falls. PENELOPE screams.

He lands.

DECLAN

Fuck! Ow! Fuck!

PENELOPE

You should've listened to me!

DECLAN

Yeah! I know that now! But my leg is all fucked up.

PENELOPE

All for Wes.

She walks over to where he lays, sees his leg, and gags.

PENELOPE

Why does it look like that?

DECLAN

Probably because I fell out of a tree!

WES

Does it need to be popped back into place or something?

DECLAN

No! It needs medical attention!

PENELOPE

What do you need us to do? Oh my god. I can't believe this is happening. I need an adult.

DECLAN

Yeah.

WES slowly walks over.

DECLAN

Thank God, an adult.

PENELOPE

He's our age.

WES

What the hell is wrong with you!

DECLAN

Wes, I broke my leg for you.

He winces.

DECLAN

And it actually hurts. A lot.

WES

Um okay, we'll dive into the whole me thing later.

PENELOPE

Its very romantic Wes.

DECLAN

It was. Now please help me.

WES

Okay, okay. Penelope do you have a phone?

PENELOPE

Yeah but I'm out of minutes.

DECLAN

Minutes?

WES

Declan do you have one?

DECLAN

Yeah, uh, in my pocket, the right front one.

WES

Can you get it?

I can barely move!

DECLAN

Okay, so I'll just, uh...

WES

He walks over to DECLAN, and leans over him.

You need to tell me if I'm hurting you.

WES

You are. Emotionally.

DECLAN

Fuck off.

WES

He gently touches DECLAN'S leg, and reaches into the pocket.

PENELOPE looks away.

I said right. That's left.

DECLAN

Oh. Sorry.

WES

He stares at DECLAN.

I love that we're having a moment, but I'm in pain.

DECLAN

Oh, sorry, sorry.

WES

He reaches into the pocket, grabs the phone and-

Hey wait, wait, wait. I'm out of the tree. Can I get that kiss?

DECLAN

Now is not the time!

WES

Did you get the phone?

PENELOPE

WES

Yeah but its broken because Declan fell out of a tree.

DECLAN

For you!

PENELOPE

Well what now?

WES

We'll carry him to the shack. There's a phone there.

DECLAN

I actually can't feel my leg at all right now.

WES

Okay. I'll just, uh, here I go.

He tries to pick up DECLAN by grabbing his arms and throwing them around his shoulder.

DECLAN

Fucking ow, Wesley!

WES

Sorry! Um, how's this?

He wraps his arms around his middle and tugs.

PENELOPE

Wesley, he weighs two pounds. This can't be that hard.

WES

He's fragile.

PENELOPE

Obviously! Pick him up bridal style.

WES

Uh.

DECLAN

Come on Wesley, pick up your damsel in distress.

WES tries this, but every time he gets close, he moves away.

PENELOPE

Okay you've made out with him but you can't touch his butt a little!

WES

I'm weak Penelope.

PENELOPE

I know. Let me try.

WES

I don't know Penelope.

DECLAN

Let her try. You're getting nowhere.

WES

Fine. Fine.

He throws his hands up and moves away.  
PENELOPE walks over.

PENELOPE

I've wanted to touch you for a long time. This is never how I pictured it.

She reaches down.

PENELOPE

Can you put your arms around my neck?

He does.

PENELOPE

Okay. Okay. This might hurt a little. I'm sorry if it does.

She lifts. She heaves. She breaths heavily.

WES

You're almost there Penny.

She heaves again.

PENELOPE

Don't call me that.

DECLAN

Hey! Focus on me!

Sorry!

WES

PENELOPE lifts him all the way up.

DECLAN

My hero.

PENELOPE

I know.

WES

Okay, okay we gotta go.

PENELOPE starts to walk.

DECLAN

Hey Penny?

PENELOPE

Yeah?

WES

He can call you that?

PENELOPE

He's in pain.

DECLAN

Penny, you're the best friend I ever had.

WES

Jesus Christ.

PENELOPE

That's sweet. I mean that's not really what I've wanted to hear from you my whole life but I'll take it.

WES

He kept it in the family.

PENELOPE

You're ruining the moment.

DECLAN

Can we hurry up? I'm in pain.



They start to walk away.

WES

I'm glad you didn't die when you fell, idiot.

DECLAN smiles.

PENELOPE

We need to walk and talk guys, Declan's scrawny, but not that scrawny.

They start to walk off. WES trails behind, hesitates, grabs the broken ukulele and runs after them.

DECLAN

Really?

WES

You still owe me a song.

PENELOPE laughs, hoists DECLAN up a little, and walks off. WES comes up behind them, grabs DECLAN'S hand.

At some point DECLAN has started crying.

PENELOPE

Don't worry. It'll be fixed soon.

SNOW

The stage is empty. PENELOPE, WES and DECLAN enter.

WES

I feel like one of the most country things about us is how often we eat snow. Its clean snow, fresh snow! Not days old sludgy stuff. And its not just plain old snow. Whenever Penelope and I saw a flurry, we'd run outside with this plastic cup and leave it until it filled with snow. One day, late in the season, Declan was over and there was this freak snowstorm. He was so confused when he saw us run outside and collecting snow.

DECLAN

But once they told me what to do I came outside too. But they had taken all of the good snow and all that was left for me was that nasty muddy snow.

WES

That's not true. You just had to walk a little farther.

DECLAN

I was on crutches. Anyway, I managed to find enough snow, and then we get inside and they start drizzling syrup on it. I thought it was a huge waste of syrup and they almost kicked me out. But then I tried and it was so good. Like some country yee haw version of a snow cone. And its summer now, so when we went to the county fair I brought my own bottle of syrup and tried to get the guy at the snow cone booth to use it. He said no. Wes was really embarrassed.

PENELOPE

He wasn't the only one. Plus, having it summer ruins the magic. It was a treat, one that we could only have when the world was cold and dreary. Syrup feels unlimited to us, our house is full of it at all times. But snow? Snow is a sometimes thing. And good snow, you know like this big, fluffy flakes? Even more rare. A lot of the time we'd put a cup out and it'd be full of water, because sometimes snow turns to rain. Or there was one year we forgot and found the cup under a melting mound of dirty snow. So Declan can call it a waste all he wants, but maple snow is a sometimes treat, something we can't have once the snow melts and spring comes again. I mean what's the big deal with spring anyway? Everything is melty and wet and messy, and ugly.

WES

It gets green eventually.

PENELOPE

And we can play manhunt in the trees, and I can make you flower crowns and force you both to go the spring formal.

DECLAN

And I can sing you songs around a bonfire.

PENELOPE

And then its fall, and then winter, and we're right back out there with our trees and our sap and the snow.

The end.