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A Walk in the Woods

By Michael Arndt

(PEOPLE SPEAKING INDISTINCTLY)

STAGE MANAGER:

Okay, stand by, everyone.

WOMAN:

Five, four, three, two...

At 52 minutes past the hour

on this Thursday morning, welcome back.

Joining me now is author Bill Bryson.

So, travel writing.

- I'm sorry, is that a question?

- (CHUCKLES)

Noel Coward once said,

"Why do the wrong people travel,"

"and the right people stay at home?"

(BRYSON SCOFFS)

Now, tell us about this

Collector's Edition Box Set.

"An elegant reissue of old favorites."

(CHUCKLES)

Riveting stuff.

Now, in your books, you've written

about Europe, Australia, the British Isles.

You actually lived there briefly.

Briefly. 10 years.

Mmm, but never America.

You've never written

about your home country.

- No, that's not exactly right...

- Why? Why nothing more personal?

I see. So you've moved back,

or is that just temporary?

No. Yes. (STAMMERING) My family,

we moved back. To New Hampshire.

Twenty years ago. And...

And we're still here.

"Still"? Interesting choice of words.

Uh, what else are you working on?

Are you writing something new?

No.

Not thinking of retiring on us, are you?

(CHUCKLING)

No, writers don't retire.

We either drink ourselves to death
or blow our brains out.

And which will it be for you?

After this interview, maybe both.

(CHUCKLES)

- Bill Bryson, pleasure to have you with us.

- Ah. Thank you.

(VIDEO GAME PLAYING)

CHILD:

(LAUGHING)

(VACUUM WHIRRING)

- Oh. Hello, stranger.

- **BRYSON:**

How'd it go?

- You saw?

- Mmm-hmm.

- That good, huh?

- Hey, Gramps.

- Hi.

- I saw, too.

- Oh, yeah? How'd I look?

- Do you want my honest answer?

Never mind.

- Gramps, I made it to level six.

- Level six? Way to go.

Did you get my message
about Earl McGregor?

Services are on Saturday morning.

Can't we just send flowers?

We could.

You two, hands washed,
dinner's nearly ready. Let's go.

(WHISPERING INDISTINCTLY)

(BRYSON SIGHING)

Makes you think
about slowing down, doesn't it?

I'm so, so sorry.

My condolences.

Deborah, we're so sorry.

Thank you so much for being here.

It really means a lot to me.

It's our pleasure.

Uh, I mean, not our...

(CHUCKLES NERVOUSLY) Pardon me.

Uh, I mean, it's, uh, not a pleasant time,

- and it's not a time...

- No, we're just very sorry.

- We're very sorry.

- We're very sorry.

- I'll get my jacket.

- We just got here.

What? We've already paid our respects.

I mean, what else are we supposed to do?

Talk to people. It's good for you.

I don't like talking to people.

Go on.

- How are you? How good to see you.

- (SIGHING)

I'm gonna go for a walk.

Okay.

(CLEARS THROAT)

(CHUCKLES SOFTLY)

(CHUCKLES)

(FAINT HAMMERING)

CATHERINE:

- You want to hike it?

- Yes.

CATHERINE:

Two thousand miles.

2118, actually.

No. You can't.

Why not?

Seriously, Bill.

Even for you this is ridiculous.

(CHUCKLING) Why?

Because you think I'm too old?

No, it's not because I think you're too old, it's because you are too old.

(CHUCKLES)

Oh, God, is this because of the funeral?

- No.

- What then?

Listen, I can't explain it.

Have a go.

It's just something I feel I have to do.
I want to explore nature.
I want to get back to my roots.
- Roots?
- Yeah. You know, push myself.
I mean, really, really hike.
(CHUCKLES)
Hike? You haven't hiked in 30 years.

- **BRYSON:**

- Can't you just do this in the Volvo?
Catherine.
What if I say you can't go?
Well, if you felt that way
then we would discuss it.
You mean I'll yammer on
and you'll nod away,
and then you'll go ahead and do whatever
you were going to do anyway
without having heard a word I've said.
(SIGHING)

- What?

- (CHUCKLING)

Am I just supposed to stand here
and accept these obvious signs
that you have gone mad?
It's my old pup tent. What do you think?
Well, I think it's the perfect place
for you to spend the night.

SAM:

this is a terrible idea, right?

BRYSON:

to my attention.

- **SAM:**

- Yes.

(SAM CHUCKLING)

It's just kinda insane, Dad.
The whole thing, at your age?
Fit people in their 20's can't do it, Dad.
It takes five months and
five millions steps.

- Of walking.

- Yes.

I've been doing it for a while, you know.

Dad, hiking is not walking.

Two thousand people a year try to do this.

Less than 10% make it.

You ought to see the statistics

on how many people finish writing a book.

(SIGHS) There's somebody

I want you to meet. All right?

Hey, Dave.

How's it going?

This is Dave.

- Dave.

- Hello.

He has hiked everywhere.

He can answer any question

you have about anything.

Okay. Can he tell me

why the caged bird sings?

Can you give us just a second? And can I?

Can we keep a lid on the jokes, please?

Pay attention while he's talking,

and don't say,

"You've got to be shitting me"

when he tells you the price of something.

Sam, you act like I've never camped before.

A tent is a tent.

This also has a 70 denier,

high-density, abrasion-resistant fly

with that same rip stop weave.

And just look at these seams.

All lap-felled.

No bias taping on the whole tent.

And the poles. Color-coded, DAC aluminum.

It's the finest craftsmanship.

Yeah, I've carried this one

on several sections of the trail myself.

For your purposes,

cannot go wrong with this monster.

All right, how much is it?

This one here is 289.

You've got to be shitting... Oh, okay.

I see what you're thinking, but out

on the trail, you're gonna thank me.

Are you coming?

You'll need a rain cover too, of course.

- A rain cover? Why?

- To keep out the rain.

- The backpacks aren't waterproof?

- Not 100%.

The rain cover weighs

four point six ounces.

You know how much weight it would add

to fully waterproof an 85-liter pack?

Well, I'll tell you. (CHUCKLES) It's a lot.

Let's not forget...

Oh, let me guess, in case you want

to do a little impromptu gardening?

No. You know the saying, "Take only memories, leave only footprints".

Poop.

(LAUGHS)

- Oh, shit.

- Exactly.

CATHERINE:

Thought you'd find these interesting.

A Virginia man's remains

left undiscovered for 18 days

after he suffers

a catastrophic medical condition

just one week into his solo trek.

Most commonly spread through

infected rodent saliva, urine, and feces,

which become airborne particles...

Several law enforcement personnel

have expressed concern

about the gruesome nature

of these latest murders,

including dismemberment

and ritualistic savagery.

You are not doing this alone.

BRYSON:

How would you like to join me

for a little stroll?

It's a chance to grab some fresh air,

while there's still some left.
You know, studies show
Americans need to walk more.
Our forefathers, they walked everywhere.
It'll give you something to do
for the next six months.
Let me know if you're interested.

CATHERINE:

raccoons, and squirrels,
merciless fire ants, and ravening blackfly.
Poison ivy, poison sumac, poison oak,
poison salamanders,
even a scattering of moose?
(PHONE BEEPS)

MAN #1:

Not in this lifetime.
(BEEPS)

MAN #2:

but I just switched to a new beta blocker.
I barely have enough energy
- to get dressed in the...
- (BEEPS)

MAN #3:

me for something fun.
- Like a colonoscopy.
- (BEEPS)

MAN #4:

of identity theft.
I got the most ridiculous message
- from someone claiming...
- (BEEPS)

MAN #5:

trail online in less than four minutes?
You know, you can't count Dan Budge.
Dying is not the same as saying no.
(BRYSON MUMBLES)
Did we know about that?
About Dan's death?

Yeah, I think
it was in Janice's Christmas card.
Well, that explains why she was so miffed
about my invitation.

(PHONE RINGING)

It's in the...

- (BEEPS)

- Hello?

Hello?

KATZ:

I'm sorry?

Bryson, it's Katz.

- It's Katz?

- Yeah.

- Stephen?

- Yeah.

- (KATZ LAUGHS)

- Whoa.

You're in the States?

Yeah, yeah. Where are you?

(CHUCKLES) I'm in Des Moines.

Where the hell else would I be?

Well, it's good to hear your voice.

Yeah. Hey, Doug told me about
this Appalachian Trail deal of yours.

Are you serious about that?

Yes, I'm very serious.

You think maybe I could come with you?

(STAMMERS)

You wanna come with me?

Yeah, if it's a problem, I understand.

- No, no, no, no.

- I mean, I understand if you don't want me.

No, why... Why wouldn't I want you?

Because, you know,

I still owe you 600 bucks from Europe.

Well, that was forty years ago, Stephen.

Yeah, but I still intend to pay you.

Well, I know you're good for it.

Ah, great, great.

BRYSON:

of shape you in?

Well, I'm in good shape.

I walk everywhere these days.

Really?

Yeah, since the bastards
took away my license.

(CHUCKLES)

Um...

So, how are you with bears?

Well, they haven't gotten me yet.

(LAUGHS)

Well, you know there can't be a black bear
within 1,500 miles of Des Moines, Katz.

That's what I'm saying, man.

Those fuckers keep their distance.

(BOTH LAUGHING)

You'll never guess who just gave me a call.

No, no, no. Not Stephen Katz.

Mmm-mmm.

You said I couldn't go alone.

Well, presuming you were going
to get somebody responsible.

You don't even know him.

Well, I know the stories.

Didn't he have a drinking problem?

We all had drinking problems.

Well, you two ended up
on each other's nerves in Europe.

No, no, no, no.

We started out on each other's nerves.

We ended up despising each other.

(SCOFFS)

You know I hate this, right?

Sweetheart, I really don't think
you have anything to worry about.

No. Just my husband wandering off
into the woods,
surely to be maimed or killed
or contract some ghastly
parasitic disease which,
if lucky, will leave him propped up
in a chair, drooling into his own bib.

But there's nothing to worry about,
because of course

I'll be the one expected to stand

by your side, feeding you ice chips
until you capitulate to this
unnamed malady, and then what?
I get to stand in front
of some gaudy church saying,
"He was a loving husband and father,"
"once considered to be
a man of reasonable intelligence,"
"since revealed to be nothing more"
"than a daft and utter fool."
Well, it's a shame I won't
be there to hear it.
Look, I know what this seems like, okay?
Have you actually
thought this through at all?
Of course not.

WOMAN:

welcomes Cape Air Flight 106.
Travelers arriving from Springfield
can claim their baggage
at Baggage Claim Carousel Four.
(GRUNTS)
(GRUNTS)
You are shitting me.
(BRYSON CHUCKLES)
- Hey, Stephen.
- Bryson.
How are you?
Hello, Steve-o.
This is my wife.
You're the British nurse
I've heard so much about.
- I certainly hope so.
- Yeah.
Good to meet you.
That's a little bit like a bear hug.
Are you limping?
Oh, that's a titanium knee,
and this one's a trick knee, you know.

- BRYSON:

- Let me see, I've got to get...
(GRUNTING)

(CRANKING VENDING MACHINE)

I gotta eat every hour or so,
otherwise I get these, uh...

- What, episodes?

- No, no, they're...

- **BRYSON:**

- Seizures, that's right.

- You get seizures?

- Mmm-hmm.

Yeah. You know, I ate some contaminated
phenethylamines about 10 years ago,
and it totally jacked up my system,
you know.

- I thought you said you were in shape?

- I am.

KATZ:

on a motorbike
and we have no choice but to hitchhike
all the way back to San Sebastian.

We go into the first pub, and boom,
there they are.

So, six hours later
we stumble out to the beach,
and Bryson insists on

having the pretty girl,
- of course, the redhead.

- Ooh.

And I get the horse-faced blonde, you know.

Uh, Bryson!

I can't believe... Come on, sit.

I can't believe

you never told Cathy about Spain.

Oh, it must have slipped my mind.

Hmm, I wonder why?

Anyway, the next day
we're on a train to Madrid.

Bryson goes to the head
and I don't pay any attention to it,
and he's in there a long time.

Finally, I look up,
and he's coming out toward the seat
and he's just scratching and scratching...

- Got it. Got it.
- (CATHERINE EXCLAIMING)
I said to him,
"Hey, Bryson, what's going on?"
And he says,
"Next time you can have the red-head".
(SAM LAUGHING AWKWARDLY)
- Is there a picture of the red-head?

- **KATZ:**
I'd like to see the redhead.
I'd love to see the red-head.
- That's a really great story.

- **CATHERINE:**
- Thank you for sharing that with my family.

- **CATHERINE:**
Well, I have more of them, Bryson.
No, no, that's great.
- No, no, I think we should have a few more.
- All right.
We were in Nice, and Bryson goes to this
very famous hotel there
called The Mayflower...
(TV PLAYING INDISTINCTLY)
(GASPS)
Mmm, the Cubbies.
(LAUGHS)
(SIGHS)
Oh, decomposed.
Oh, my God.
(CHUCKLING)
(GRUNTING)
(PLAYING TUNE)
You still playing that thing?
Oh, yeah. Not good, but I'm playing.
(CHUCKLES)
How about you, still playing the drums?
Oh, God, no. I gave that up years ago.
Oh.
Is that your daughter?
- Yeah.
- Takes after her mother. Lucky break there.

(BOTH LAUGHS)

- How many grandchildren in all?

- Three, and another one on the way.

You really pulled it off, Bryson.

You know?

No, I mean that. I'm happy for you.

Well, how about you, Stephen?

You... You been okay?

Me? Oh, hell, yeah.

I spent half my life getting drunk,
chasing pussy.

The other half I wasted. (LAUGHS)

- Have you seen these things?

- Yeah.

(EXHALES DEEPLY)

Fucked.

Hey, you know,

everyone thinks

we're going to go onto that trail

and quit after a week, like most people do.

We're not most people, Bryson.

No. No, we're not.

- So, good night.

- Good night.

(LAUGHS)

(AIRPLANE WHIRRING)

All right then.

- Thank you, Mrs. Bryson. Bye.

- You're welcome. Good luck.

I'll meet you inside. Right?

- I will miss you, you know.

- I hope so.

(CHUCKLES)

I just want to go on

the record one last time

and say, I do love you.

Try not to die, okay?

I'll do my best.

Go on. Bugger off.

I remember this one guy that I picked up.

He came off the Trail.

He's not like you guys, a lot younger.

He got back there and just started crying.

I'm serious.

Cried all the way back to Atlanta.
Sat back there whimpering like a child.
When you drop people off,
can you tell whether
they're going to make it or not?
Oh. Yes, sir, yes, sir.
Every time, pretty near.
How about us?
Oh, well, here we are. (CHUCKLES)
Thank you.

- Here you go.
- Okay.
- Breakfast at seven.
- Seven.
- Yeah. Okay.
- Okay.

(PEOPLE TALKING INDISTINCTLY)

I hope you don't mind my saying,
but these are about
the best damn pancakes I ever had.
Is that right? Well, I like a man
who appreciates his pancakes.

- Well, I sure do appreciate these, honey.
- (LAUGHS)
- Would you like some coffee?
- Yeah.

And I'll get you a menu.
No, no, I've already eaten. Thanks.
Not bad looking, huh?
That depends.

You know what I look for
in a female these days?
A heartbeat and a full set of limbs.
Well, most people lower their standards
as they age.

- Yeah?
 - You've actually raised yours.
- (CHUCKLES)

You know, Bryson, I've been thinking.
Let's stay here another night.

- You kidding?
- No. No. It is cold outside.
It's warm in here.
- I am going.

- Wait a minute. (GRUNTS)

We go. We go.

Hey, hang on. I'd like to say a few words
if you don't mind.

All right.

- I don't want to reach for metaphors, but...

- No, reach, Bryson, reach.

Well, they say

the Appalachian Trail is like life.

Uh-huh.

You don't know what's ahead, you don't
know what's going to happen next,
but you give it your best shot.

Your best...

So, on that note...

- We go?

- We go.

All right.

(KATZ PANTING)

You keeping up?

Yeah. Keeping up.

(SIGHS)

Are we hiking or strolling?

What, is this a race?

We're trying to do 11 miles.

Slow and steady, pal.

You wanna burn out your legs, go ahead.

(GROANING)

- Just be nice to get there before midnight.

- Yeah, well.

(GRUNTS)

That would be nice.

Go ahead. Help yourselves.

Oh, jeez.

Okay, complete the following sentence.

What goes up must come
down.

What the hell happened to down?

It can't be uphill all the way to Maine.

Coming through.

Oh, my God. All right.

- What's up?

- Not much.

- Beautiful day.

- Yeah, it sure is.
- Excuse me.
- Okay.
Little fuckers.

MAN:

over the hill, guys.
(KATZ PANTING)
(GRUNTING)

- KATZ:

- You okay?

KATZ:

I almost fell off the log.
(PANTS)
How far do you figure we've gone?
Oh, about a quarter of a mile.
Motherfuck.
We're going already?
(GRUNTING)
Just kill me now.
I don't care how you do it,
but please, just kill me now.
(GROANING)
(PANTING)
- What, that's it? No dinner?
- (GROANING)
(ZIPPING UP TENT)
(KATZ GROANS)

KATZ:

- KATZ:

- Of course.

KATZ:

BRYSON:

KATZ:

- BRYSON:

- (CHUCKLES)

- **KATZ:**

- No.

KATZ:

- **BRYSON:**

- (CHUCKLES)

- Bit of a late bloomer, huh?

- (LAUGHS)

I bumped into Jimmy Duncan
a few weeks back.

You remember him?

- Yeah. His mom worked at the library?

- (LAUGHS)

'Course you remember his mom.

BRYSON:

KATZ:

- **BRYSON:**

- (LAUGHS)

KATZ:

(HARMONICA PLAYING)

(CONTINUES PLAYING)

- **KATZ:**

- Yeah?

KATZ:

with Doug Glawinski all these years?

BRYSON:

KATZ:

so I was just curious.

BRYSON:

I invited everyone I could think of.

KATZ:

I heard about it from Doug.

BRYSON:

KATZ:

BRYSON:

better, I really don't like Doug.

KATZ:

Well, I don't blame you.

I'm not sure how that's supposed to make me feel better, though.

BRYSON:

I guess I really didn't think that through. Good night.

KATZ:

(TENT UNZIPPING)

You burying your shit?

Yes.

- In the woods?

- Yeah.

Oh, Bryson, I've missed you.

Thank you. (LAUGHING)

Can't wait to read about this in the book.

BRYSON:

Hi.

You guys camping here?

No, we live here.

(LAUGHS)

What are you guys eating?

Noodles? Ugh, big mistake.

Noodles have got, like, no energy in them.

I mean, like, zero.

I'm Mary Ellen. Is that your tent?

BRYSON:

Oh, big mistake.

They must have seen you coming at the camping store.

- How much did you pay for it?

- I don't remember.

Too much. That's how much. (LAUGHS)
Shoulda got a three-season tent, my friend.
It is a three-season tent.
Pardon me for saying so,
but it is, like, seriously dumb
to come out here in March
without a three-season tent.
It's April. (CHUCKLING)
And it is a three-season tent.
That's a three-season tent.
No, no. Those are both three-season tents.
No. I don't think so.
(GRUNTS)
How many miles did you guys do today?
Around 10.
Ten? Oh, you must be really out of shape.
I did fourteen-two. Started at Gooch Gap.
Well, so did we. And it's eight point four.
- No.
- (CHUCKLING) It is. It's eight point four.
Excuse me. But I think I ought to know.
I just walked it.
So did we. And it's eight point four.
Tomato, tomahto.
You know what your problem is?
You're too fat.
Excuse me?
You should have dropped some of that
tonnage before you hit the trailhead.
I mean, you're liable to have some sort
of serious heart thing out here.
(GRUMBLING)
And so I just walk alone,
because everybody I know is boring.
I'm the only person I know
who doesn't bore myself to death.
Also, if I walked with someone else,
I'd have to watch them make, you know,
mistake after mistake after mistake,
and I'd go crazy, and then I'd not be sane
on the trail, you know?
I was like, "Mary Ellen,
who's the only person you know"
"who doesn't mess up?" and it's like, me.

I went through this person,
it was, like, dumb.
That person, boring. This person, dumb.
Dumb, dumb. Boring, boring.
I know what you're thinking.
I'm not married.

BRYSON:

Well, I do have a boyfriend,
but he's in Florida and he's in prison.
I wouldn't hike with him even if he wasn't
because you can't trust a convict,
and he's dumb.
And boring, actually.
What's your star sign?
I bet you're a Gemini, aren't you?
Ah, I'm really good at this. I have a gift.
- No, I'm not a Gemini.
- I think you are.
Actually, I'm a Leo.
I don't think so. I'm really good at this.
I was born in August.
Mmm, check your birth certificate.
- And you? You're a Libra.
- (SCOFFS)
Definitely a Libra.
I could make a living doing this.
You're zero for two, honey. Zero for two.
Can you guys guess what I am?
- Couple of thoughts come to mind.
- Yeah?

MARY ELLEN:

She's up all night to the sun.
I'm up all night to get some.
She's up all night for good fun.
We're up all night to get lucky
(CONTINUES SINGING)

KATZ:

God damn it. Damn it!
(GROANING)
(UNZIPPING)
I swear to God I'm gonna

rip her larynx out.
I'm not sure that's going to do it.
I got a better plan.
Go on, lay it on me.
Okay, according to the map,
we get to Hiawassee tomorrow.
We get an early start and we hike hard,
we can put some distance between us.
Yeah, that's probably better than my plan.
What's your plan?
Kill her. Take her Pop-tarts.
- Hey, good morning.

- BOTH:

You guys heading out?
Yeah. You want us to wait for you?
Yeah, we'll wait.
Nah, I'll catch up. I'm pretty regular.
(WHISPERS) We go.

BRYSON:

a couple more miles.
How far back is she?
She's gaining.
- I don't think...
- I don't... (YELPS)
We need a new plan.
- Yeah, we do. We need a new plan.
- Yeah.
(PANTING)
Shh.
I didn't say anything.
- Well, you sound like a DC-10. Keep it down.
- Oh.
- (PANTING)
- (FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING)
Here she comes.
(KATZ WHEEZING)
- Hold your breath.
- (GASPS)
(WHISPERS)
Hold it, hold it.
(SIGHS)
(SINGING) We've come

too far to give up who we are

(GRUNTS)

We go, we go!

- Hey, hey, hey! Hey!

- Hey!

Wait, stop!

Who the hell's gonna stop for us?

We look like shit.

KATZ:

(TYRES SCREECHING)

They stopped!

(ROCK MUSIC PLAYING ON STEREO)

(TYRES SCREECH)

Hey, you boys want a ride?

Sure do!

(LAUGHS)

Y'all have to excuse us.

We are celebrating.

Yeah? What are you celebrating?

We are getting married tomorrow.

- Great, great.

- Congratulations, you guys.

Yeah, Darren is making
an honest woman out of me.

- Ain't that right, baby?

- Yes, I am.

- Uh, you wanna watch the...

- (TYRES SCREECH)

(DONNA SQUEALS)

(LAUGHS)

(UNHOOKING BELT)

DARREN:

Holy shit. I wish I was still 20.

I wish I was still 50.

DONNA:

DARREN:

What can I get you boys to drink?

The tallest and the coldest beer
you can offer.

Coke.

- Just Coke, nothing in it?

- Just Coke. I'm reformed.

- Okay.

- Uh, you know what?

Make mine a Coke also.

All right. Just a second.

Oh, wow. I'm... I'm impressed.

Well, you know, ever since

I rolled my car on route six,

- I had to rethink some things.

- Yeah, that'll do it.

A lady cop came up to the window

and she knocked.

I was hanging upside down by the seatbelt

and I said, "What's the problem, officer?"

(CHUCKLES)

She just stared at me and walked away.

So I haven't had a drink since.

- Really?

- Yeah.

Well, that's good.

- Good for you.

- Yeah. Good for me.

Really.

Ah.

You know, Bryson,

I keep looking at the door over there and

I keep seeing Mary Ellen coming through.

I hope you're not going to tell me

you miss her?

Oh, no, no. Hell no,

I'm not going to tell you that.

I mean, we did kind of ditch her though,

didn't we?

No, we didn't just kind of ditch her,

Stephen. We ditched her.

Yeah. We left her all alone in the woods

by herself.

She came into the woods by herself.

It's not like we signed a contract

to look after her.

No, but she's probably scared out

of her wits.

What are you so interested in her for?

I'm not interested in her at all.
The damndest thing,
Bryson, is I am a Libra.
She got it right.
Maybe she has a gift.
What are the chances?
One in 12, actually.
One in 12. That's pretty damn good.
Oh. Southbound, coming through.

MAN:

Oh, yeah, she talked about you guys.

KATZ:

- Well, her words, right?

- **KATZ:**

She said you guys
were a couple of overweight wimps
who didn't know the
first thing about hiking.
And she was tired of carrying you.
Oh, Holy Christ Almighty.
Actually, I think she called you
a couple of pussies.
- Pussies?
- Pussies?
After all we did for her?
You guys know it's supposed to snow
tonight, right? Six to eight inches.
- Really?

- **MAN:**

That's what they're saying.
You're going to be climbing right into it.
- Yeah? Oh.
- Yeah.
- Well, I gotta keep moving, guys. Be safe.

- **BRYSON:**

KATZ:

That guy's out of his fucking mind.
(WIND WHOOSHING)

(SCREAMING)

You okay?

Never better.

Goddamn things are useless.

What I'm thinking

we could do is follow this logging road,

get to the other side of this ridge,

and get out of the wind

where we can set up our camp.

What do you think?

Me? I think I'd rather have a nice hot soak
in a Jacuzzi.

But if you're dead-set on following

that logging road, we can do that, too.

We can save the Jacuzzi for another time

when things aren't going so well.

(CHUCKLING) Yeah.

- I'll follow you.

- Okay.

Katz, you still there?

- KATZ:

- (CHUCKLES)

Just like you said, Bryson.

The AT. You never know what lies ahead.

So it appears.

WOMAN:

it would be on, honey, all right?

Use the talcum powder, that helps.

Hi. We'd like a cabin.

Preferably with a private bath.

The cabins went two days ago.

But I do have two spaces in the bunkhouse.

(KATZ GRUNTS)

KATZ:

if you're aware of this, Bryson,

but every time I hear the word "bunkhouse"

my testicles shrink up inside my body.

Welcome to the Stalag.

There's a meeting of the Escape Committee

at 1900 hours.

Oh, okay.

Hey, are you liking that XT-85?

Your pack.

Oh.

- I got a Gregory.

- Oh, yeah?

Yeah. I looked at the XT-85, solid pack.

But the quad access points,
dual hydration ports in the Gregory,
they sold me.

What made you buy an XT-85?

I thought it was easier
than carrying everything in my arms.

- How come you're up top?

- Well, heat rises, pal.

(KATZ GRUNTING)

Oh, yeah.

(BED CREAKING)

Hey, you know...

KATZ:

Hey, Bryson, are you all right?

BRYSON:

(MOTIVATIONAL SONG PLAYING)

We can start, maybe, right there and...

Hello, there.

You guys, uh, doing all right?

Yeah, we're fine.

Because, look,

when we get over to the other side,

we can just come back

and grab your packs if you want?

You know, it's easy for us.

- Not a problem.

- Happy to help.

We like hard, we don't like easy.

But thanks a lot, you know.

- All right, then.

- Okay.

- Excuse us. All right.

- Yep.

- Nice guys.

- Yep.

- I hate 'em.

- Me, too.

Well...

(GRUNTS)

(GRUNTS)

(GRUNTING)

- That went well.

- It was refreshing.

Bryson, you've got everything
a man could want.

And here you are,
tramping around in the woods with me.
Seriously, what gives?

I don't know.

As John Muir once said,
"Sometimes a man just has to"
"get a loaf of bread and throw it into a
sack, and jump over the back fence."

Oh, I got you.

Life's a little too perfect
inside that fence, huh?

- No, no, no...

- Oh, you made sense, Bryson.

You're a caged animal.

You wanna get back into that forest.

Live a little.

- That's not it.

- No, that's got to be it.

So why'd you come?

KATZ:

the rest of my life in jail.

- **BRYSON:**

- (CHUCKLING) It's nothing, really.

Just a couple of outstanding warrants
I didn't show up for and stuff like that.
Jesus, Stephen, that's really not something
you can run from.

(KATZ LAUGHS)

KATZ:

BRYSON:

Always running from something.

KATZ:

You're one to talk.

Not you.

Remind me again why we're out here?

It's was not like

you had something better to do.

As I recall, in fact,

you begged me to come.

I begged? I begged to come? I asked.

You know what cracks me up, Bryson?

Is how predictable your whole life
has become, right down to the Volvo.

God forbid somebody should evolve
rather than squandering away
their existence.

I mean, look at you. All these years
and you're still stuck at square one.

Hey, Bryson. Are you happy?

What the hell kind of a question is that?

Pretty important question, I'd say.

What, do you think you're happy?

I think...

Wow.

The Smokies.

BRYSON:

Oh, God, this is amazing.

From here you can see

all three kinds of rock.

There, you see that layered section
across that slant?

- KATZ:

- That's sedimentary.

And the dark stuff here, pushing up
from underneath, that's igneous.

Think volcanic.

How do you know all this stuff?

Well, there are these things called books.

- Oh. No kidding, they're called books?

- Yeah, they're like TV for smart people.

See, what we're talking about here,

Katz, is time.

Geologic time.
Hundreds of thousands of years
of enormous, shifting tectonic plates.
It's like the world being reborn from below
while it's being eroded from above.
Yeah. Well,
when we get back I'm gonna buy you a TV.
Because nobody gives a fuck
about shifting tectonic plates.
Well, I do.
You know why?
Because I'm curious,
and I love being curious.
I like knowing things about the world
that we're living in.
Well, I think it's all fucking rock.
Oh, yeah?
I don't get bogged down in the minutiae.
- I'm above the details.
- (CHUCKLING) You are?
I'm big picture, Bryson.
Oh. How's that working out for you?
Ah, pretty, uh, fucking good.
(HONKING)
Hello.
We'd like a room, please.
Two rooms.
Oh, the Cubbies lost a double header,
and they're 11 games back.
Don't act surprised.
Tonight would be preferable.
Hello there?
Where are the Red Sox?
Red Sox? Are you fucking kidding me? Whoa.
Excuse me, ma'am.
- Red Sox?
- I live in New England.
Yeah, but Bryson, it's not about
where you live, it's about who you are.
Oh, yeah? Well, I'm the kind of guy that
likes it when a team wins now and then.
Well, you don't...
You don't give up on a team just because
they've had a few bad years.

(SCOFFING)

A few bad years? Jesus.

KATZ:

Like, she knows what I'm talking about.

Don't you?

Would you two like a minute?

Hi, I'm Jeannie. How can I help y'all?

Mother, let go of the man's hand.

- Hi.

- Hi.

Um, we'd like a couple of rooms. Please.

Oh, sure. Where are you all from?

Uh, I live in New Hampshire,

but I spent over 10 years in England.

- Mostly in the north countryside...

- He's from Iowa.

Well, the rooms are 40 a night

and you can pay when you leave.

Mother, I said, "Let go of the man's hand".

Thank you.

Helluva grip.

BRYSON:

She'd be the youngest in their bullpen.

(KATZ LAUGHS)

- **BRYSON:**

- Yeah, okay. I'm right here.

- **BRYSON:**

- Yeah. All right. I'll see you.

Yeah.

(MOANING SOFTLY)

Ah!

(MOANING)

(COUNTRY MUSIC PLAYING)

- Hi.

- Hello, again.

- How can I help you?

- I just need some towels.

- Oh. I'm sorry about that.

- That's fine.

- Here, come with me.

- Okay.

(CLEARS THROAT)

Yeah, it's family owned and operated. For three generations, if you can believe it.

Oh, I can.

It has a personal feel to it.

That's pretty rare these days.

Eighty-three years.

Wow.

We, um... We added the restaurant 10 years ago.

- So you manage that, too?

- Yeah.

Somebody's gotta do it.

It's not so bad.

I get to meet interesting people.

(CHUCKLES) I'm not sure

I qualify as interesting.

Oh, I wasn't talking about you.

(LAUGHING)

Sorry. Could not resist.

- I'm glad I'm here to amuse you.

- Yeah, yeah. Me, too.

This is you.

You must be exhausted.

(GASPS)

KATZ:

I... I gave you a couple extras.

Enjoy your shower.

I will, thanks.

Do you need anything else?

No. Not at the moment.

Okay.

Well, you know where I am. All right.

CATHERINE:

but please leave a message

and thank you for calling. Bye.

(BEEPS)

Hi, sweetie. It's me.

Uh, just calling to say I love you.

- (COUNTRY MUSIC PLAYING)

- Right, right. That's the one.

Nice, isn't it? I like it.

KATZ:

on the home front?

(CHUCKLES) She's impressed
we haven't killed ourselves yet.

(CHUCKLING)

She's not the only one.

Did you tell her about last night?

What?

You in a robe?

The proprietress,

I'm sure, was looking to hand over
more than just towels.

You're out of your mind.

KATZ:

Sure will make a steamy
chapter in the book.

Katz, I told you I'm not writing a book.

Listen, I'm going to go
over to, uh, K-Mart.

Get a couple of things. You okay?

Oh, I'm in my happy place.

Good.

- (HONKING)

- **WOMAN:**

Oh, wait, wait.

(GRUNTS) Here, here.

- Here you are, ma'am. Here you go.

- Oh, thank you.

(GRUNTS)

(GRUNTING)

(MUTTERING)

- Pardon me.

- Hmm?

I'm so sorry. Do you think
you could give me a hand here?

Well, certainly. I'd be happy to.

What seems to be the problem?

I'm having a difficult time
removing my panties.

Well, luckily you're

- in the presence of an expert.

- Oh.

(KATZ CHUCKLING)

May I?

- Oh, they're silk, aren't they?

- Mmm-hmm.

- (MACHINE CREAKS)

- I'm a pantyologist.

Really? I've never heard of that.

- (MACHINE CREAKING)

- (GRUNTS)

(CLANGS)

- Oh.

- Oh.

Well,

these aren't gonna do you much good.

Well, they might not do me

much bad, either.

(LAUGHING)

No.

- Jesus, Bryson.

- Don't ask.

You been screwing hogs again?

You're just jealous.

Actually, I'm not.

In your absence, my romantic life

has taken a turn for the better.

Remember the laundromat?

Her name is Beulah.

Seriously?

Yeah, seriously.

And she's got a beautiful body.

Buried under two hundred pounds of fat.

But then, you know I kinda like

a little meat on the bone.

Sure, as long as you don't have to

remove a wall to get her out of the house.

How did this happen?

She asked me if I would come

take a look at her panties.

- What?

- They were caught in the agitator.

And they were shredded.

So I'm gonna meet her this afternoon

in front of the fire station.

Is that where she keeps

her spare underwear?

I'm telling you, man,

I felt a stiffening of the old resolve.

(CHUCKLING)

- Oh, yeah?

- I got her these.

Oh, she's a big woman.

Where'd you get these?

K-Mart. I took a cab.

Um, I thought I'd give

'em to her at dinner.

As an ice-breaker.

You're gonna give those to her

in a restaurant?

Yeah.

Unless you think it's a bad idea.

No. I think that's a great idea.

(LAUGHS)

Good.

Hey.

- You had the turkey, right?

- **WOMAN:**

- Enjoy.

- **WOMAN:**

(POUNING ON WINDOW)

We go. We go.

- What are you talking about?

- There's some guy looking for me!

Some guy?

Beulah's husband.

- Beulah's got a husband?

- Yeah.

I mean, there's only two guys on the planet

that would go to bed with her,

and here we are in the same damned town!

So what happened?

I'm standing in front of the fire station

like we planned.

Yeah.

And then around the corner comes

this red pickup and it screeches to a halt.
And this big guy, he's angry, he gets out,
and he's walking up towards me,
and he's going like this.

"I want to talk to you."

- So what did you do?

- I ran.

You ran?

Yeah. I can move like a jack-rabbit
if I have to.

- So he didn't catch you?

- No, no. He's 600 pounds.

He's not exactly a track star.

He's cruising around now in his red
pickup truck looking for me.

I been running through back yards,
clothes lines, all sorts of shit.

- Well, you're safe now.

- This guy is...

(HORN HONKS)

Red pickup!

And there's another one!

Come on, Bryson, we need a plan!

Why don't you go out and talk to the guy,
huh? I'm sure he's reasonable.

That's your plan?

(CHUCKLING) I don't need a plan.

I'm not being chased.

Now, come on, Bryson,
we gotta get outta here.

- Yeah.

- Come on, don't mess around with me.

Please?

- Come on!

- Yeah, yeah.

(FAKE ACCENT)

Hey buddy, you in there?

It's Bubba T. Flubba! Are you in there,
boy? Come out, you chicken shit!

KATZ:

(CAR APPROACHING)

(TYRES SCREECHING)

MAN:

I know you're in there, you son of a bitch!
Holy shit.
He's here!

MAN:

where the hell you are,
I'll knock every one
of these damned doors down!
Come on, I know you're in here somewhere,
you son of a bitch!
I don't care where you are,
I'm gonna find you!
I want to know who's been messing
with my Beulah!
- Bring your ass out here!
- Come on, Bryson!
Pull me through! He's at the door!
- (POUNING AT DOOR)
- (BOTH GRUNTING)
Open the goddamned door!

BRYSON:

(POUNING CONTINUES)
(KATZ LAUGHING)

KATZ:

When we stole the boat?

BRYSON:

the boat, we borrowed the boat.

KATZ:

with the shotgun, he saw it differently.

BRYSON:

(MELLOW SONG PLAYING)
(BOTH LAUGHING)

KATZ:

you missed out in Greece.

BRYSON:

my fill by that point.

When you said you were gonna go to England, I thought you'd last, one week. Tops.

- Well, I met a gal.

- Yeah.

And that was that.

Well... Yeah, thank you.

Cathy seems great. But obviously you've been with other women.

Never?

In the last 40 years?

Nope.

(LAUGHING)

Bullshit, you son of a bitch.

I saw you undress that proprietress six ways to Sunday.

- You can't tell me you didn't.

- Well...

One woman all these years?

Yep.

That can't be good for you.

(LAUGHS)

I mean, when was the last time that you even got a, uh...

Well, never mind.

I know how married women are.

Really? Is that so?

Yeah. Trust me. I've been with way more married women than you have.

(LEAVES RUSTLING)

(RUSTLING CONTINUES)

Hey, Katz, you awake?

- **KATZ:**

- (RUSTLING CONTINUES)

What was that?

How the hell should I know?

(SNUFFLING)

It sounded big.

Everything sounds big in the woods, Bryson.

It's probably just a skunk. Go to bed.

Did you pack a knife?

No.

BRYSON:

(SIGHING) Nail clippers.

(SCOFFS) Swell.

KATZ:

It will go away.

Oh, yeah, well if it is a bear
and it comes toward you,
what are you going to do?

Give it a pedicure?

Jesus! Two fucking bears
staring right at me.

Oh, god dammit, Bryson, get some sleep.

(BEARS GRUNTING)

Holy shit.

(GROWLING)

If they come for us, play dead.

KATZ:

No, wait, wait, wait.

That's grizzlies. Wait a minute.

KATZ:

They're tearing everything apart.

Okay. "Stand up as tall as you can
to intimidate the bear."

Intimidate the bear? They're fucking bears!

BRYSON:

Get! Scat!

(BOTH YELLING)

(PLAYS HARMONICA)

(ROARS)

(SHOUTING)

(ROARING)

(YELLING)

(BREATHING HEAVILY)

You gotta put this in the book.

- There's not going to be a goddamned book.

- Oh.

(THUNDER RUMBLING)

Jeez. Damn.

(GRUNTING)

Come on, we're having fun.

Holy shit.

- Look at this.

- What?

KATZ:

Here we are.

We're not even halfway there.

- This can't be right.

- Son of a bitch.

No way that's to scale.

It says, "Map to Scale".

That's it. New plan.

God damn it.

(INDISTINCT CHATTER)

KATZ:

there's a lot of advantages.

You want to drive the Appalachian Trail?

No, no, just jump ahead.

Pick up the trail a little further north.

You know, we can rent a car over here.

Then we're mobile, we'll see more.

Check out local points of interest.

Bigger field of vision.

Bryson, as a friend,

do this for me.

(KATZ LAUGHING)

Hey, you're not gonna believe the deal

I got on this.

Katz...

This beauty represents not one,

but two upgrades.

Satellite radio, leather seats, sunroof.

Same price as a Camry.

If you can believe that.

Here you go, Mr. Katz. Just three quick

initials and you'll be on your way.

We can't do this.

Of course we can.

I came out here to accomplish something.

Not to just give up

when things got a little tough.

We're not giving up, Bryson.

What does it matter
if we skip the shitty parts?
- No one's gonna know.
- Well, I will.
I'm not a quitter.
I know it served you well in your life,
- but I finish what I start.
- Bryson.
- Did we not both see the same map?
- Yeah.
You have no chance of finishing this trail.
None. Zero. Zilch.
Well, I'm sure as hell gonna try.
Hike until you die.
Where do I sign up?
We're two old men, Bryson.
You gotta quit thinking otherwise.
Speak for yourself.
Just because you don't accept something,
Bryson, doesn't mean it's not true.
- Well, that's interesting, coming from you.
- Just three initials is all...
It's everything with you, Bryson.
Christ, if someone asks you
where you're from, you can't even answer.
Oh, so I'm the one in denial, huh?
When you're the one
hiding whiskey in your pack.
- Oh.
- I saw the bottle.
So I guess neither of us
can accept who we really are.
Oh, I know who I am and why I'm here.
I came out here to be with you,
to sneak in one last adventure
before it's too late.
Well, this is my adventure,
and you signed on.
You can do whatever you want,
but you're not going to drag me down.
- If you could just use that pen to sign...
- (SHOUTS) Fine!
- I don't want your car.
- Excuse me?

I don't want your goddamn car.

Fine!

- Well, that's the spirit.

- Yeah. Fuck.

(KATZ GRUMBLES)

KATZ:

we aren't driving right now.

- You?

- **BRYSON:**

(KATZ SCOFFING)

You know, 50 years ago,
one in every four of these trees
was an American Chestnut.

- You know what that is? You ever seen one?

- I think so.

It's incredible.

They rise from the forest floor,
clear to the top. 100 feet.

And their branches contain
an acre of leaves. An acre.

You look into these woods
and you think they've always been there
and always will be,
like this old oak tree here.

And then you think about
the poor unsuspecting American Chestnut,
and think just in a lifetime... Poof. Gone.
Just like that.

What happened to it?

A fungus.

You know. Just, you know, time. Nature.

(MELLOW SONG PLAYING)

(KATZ SIGHING)

You know, Bryson,

I wasn't actually hiding this.

I wasn't lying about being dry either.

The thing is, Bryson, I love to drink.

Everything about it.

I love the taste.

And that buzz you get
after you've had a couple.

I love the smell of the tavern,

right down to the urinal cakes.

Hmm.

But instead of going into the taverns
like everybody else,
I go home to my little apartment,
and heat my TV dinner,
and feel all virtuous like I'm supposed to.

(SIGHS)

But you know, night after night
it's hard to persuade yourself
that you're living a rich
and thrilling existence.
I mean, if they had a fun-o-meter
the needle wouldn't exactly be jumping
into the orgasmic zone.

You know what I'm saying?

(SIGHS)

I mean, there's just this hole in my life
where drinking used to be.

(SIGHING HEAVILY)

I know I can't drink.

I mean, one drink will lead to 10.
And the next thing, I'll find myself
underneath a bridge somewhere.

That's why I carry this.

To remind myself that I can.

Or maybe I carry it in case I can't.

Here.

Open it.

It's sealed.

Give it to me.

(CHUCKLING) It's shaking.

(SNIFFING)

(EXHALES DEEPLY)

Do you think I have it in me
to never have another drink
for the rest of my life?

Yeah. I do.

(POURING)

(SIGHS)

That was a nice moment.

Real dramatic. (CHUCKLING)

Christ if I don't already regret it.

BRYSON:

(BOTH CHUCKLING)

- Watch it.

- (STONES CLATTERING)

You know, Bryson, I still dream about Amorina. You remember her?

BRYSON:

a girl like that.

You know guys like us aren't supposed to meet women named Amorina.

Disturbs the natural order.

Still the best boobs I've ever seen, and I've seen a lot of boobs, Bryson.

BRYSON:

Hey, you remember her sister?

Oh, God, that poor girl.

They couldn't have been sisters.

If you're going to be ugly, you better be funny.

And if you're ugly and you're not funny, you better have money.

And if you're zero for three, you better be slutty.

(CHUCKLING)

- She was.

- Wait a minute, how did you know that, huh?

Well, actually...

(SCREAMS)

(BOTH GRUNTING)

(GROANING)

KATZ:

Next time you do that, let me know, okay?

It's more fun if it's a surprise.

- You all right?

- You okay?

Yeah.

(BREATHING HEAVILY)

Jesus.

Oh...

We are fucked.

Monumentally.

There's no way out over here.

Uh...

- What are you doing?
- I'm gonna get us out of here.
- Give me your pants.
- Uh, no, no.

You've been planning this
the whole time, Bryson.

Just give me your pants, okay?

Okay.

(GRUNTING)

Okay. Knot this thing.

- **KATZ:**

- Okay.

Here we go.

It is embarrassing, Bryson.

Give me that thing.

(YELLS)

You gotta admit,
pretty good aim, though, huh?

Yeah. But you're supposed to hold on
to one end of it.

Well, you know, it's not that high.

Here, I got it. You see this?

You could come up here.

I'll be around like this
and you could climb up on my shoulders.

- Wanna try it?

- Okay.

Okay. Hang on.

(BRYSON GRUNTS)

- Okay?

- Yeah.

We can make it. Hold...

- You all right? What?

- Yeah, hang on. You know...

This isn't... You've got to get lower,
so I can get on your shoulders.

Fuck. Fine.

(BRYSON CLEARS THROAT)

(GRUNTS)

Okay.

- Okay?

- Yeah.

Okay. There we go.

Bryson, I really don't like this.

No, no, it's good, it's good.

Now, you stand up. Stand up.

(GRUNTS)

Jesus!

Who are we kidding?

For Christ's sake, I can't even
get myself up from that position.

- All right, then. I'll stand on your back.

- How about I stand on your back?

You know,

I think we're really stuck here.

Yeah. Yeah, we are.

BRYSON:

hardwoods are dying.

Not just the chestnut,

but the elm's on its way, too, you know.

Fifty years, this could all be gone.

Thirty days.

Hmm?

Thirty days in jail.

I was afraid of 30 days.

(SIGHS) Compared to this,

I mean, it's like a goddamned trip
to the spa.

God, all I've done is write forewords
for books

for the last four and a half years.

I should have just retired.

Catherine was right,

what the hell am I trying to prove?

Women love a felony record.

Maybe not up in New Hampshire,
where you are.

But in Des Moines,

it would have served me well.

Do you just get to the point where

it's all about ailments,

and medications, and funerals,

and who's being diagnosed with what,

and everyone's just waiting around

for the end.

- Holy shit.

- What?

I just realized, we're
the guy in the article.

You know, the, uh, decomposed guy.

Remember that?

That'll be us.

How long does it take a body
to decompose?

Well, you don't have to worry.

You're so chock-full of preservatives,
you'll be on this ledge forever.

(CHUCKLING)

Well, scientists will come from
all over the world to study me, you know.

I miss Catherine.

I miss Des Moines.

You know, I haven't missed a State Fair
in 39 years.

I always say, "When I miss one",
"I'll be dead."

You know, she makes this little sound
whenever I hug her.

I don't even think she knows it.

I've never told her how much I love that.

I just don't want her to think this trip
had anything to do with her.

She knows.

Believe me, women have a way
of knowing these things.

Yeah, but still, I'd like to tell her.

Well, write her a note.

People love to get notes.

- Hey, you know, you're right.

- Yeah.

Hey, that's a great idea.

(PEN CLICKS)

You know, Bryson, you're the only guy
I'd risk my life with.

I want you to know that.

And the only asshole who can get me out
on a ledge in the middle of nowhere.

(CHUCKLES)

I'm sorry we lost touch.
I know. Yeah, me too.
Goddamned gorgeous night.
It sure is.

KATZ:

there's anyone else on Earth
looking up at the sky and seeing
as many stars as we are?
I don't know.
I gotta be looking at a million.
The naked eye can see 2,000.
Well, then I really got great eyes
'cause I'm looking at a million.
Alpha Centauri's the closest.
That's four and a half light years away.
Four and a half? That's not bad.
Each light year is six trillion miles,
so that's...
twenty six trillion miles.
- Twenty-six trillion. That's the closest?
- Yep.
And there's one hundred billion stars
in our galaxy.
There's more galaxies in the universe
than there are grains of sand on earth.
That is big.
- And we are small.
- Yeah.
(BIRDS CHIRPING)
(PEBBLES CLATTERING)
(INDISTINCT CHATTER)
What the...
People?
People? People?
- People?
- People?
(GRUNTS)
People! Hello!
- Hello! Hello, down here!
- Hello!
Help, please!
Help!
Hey, down there.

You've got to be shitting me.

What happened to your pants?

- Uh, it's a long story.

- **MAN:**

You guys just stay put.

We'll get you out of there.

- Nice fellas.

- Yeah.

- I love those guys.

- Me, too.

- You still got some of that jerky?

- Yeah.

You still good on water?

- About three-quarters. You?

- Yeah, same.

- Hey, Stephen?

- Yeah?

Do you want to go home?

Yeah, I do. I really do.

We weren't even close, were we?

What are you talking about?

We did it, Bryson.

We never even laid eyes on Mount Katahdin.

Another mountain?

How many mountains do you need to see?

(CHUCKLES)

- That's one way of looking at it.

- That's the only way of looking at it.

As far as I'm concerned,

we walked the Appalachian Trail.

We walked it in the heat,

we walked it in the snow,

we walked it until our feet bled.

We hiked the Appalachian Trail, Bryson.

Maybe you're right.

(TALKING INDISTINCTLY)

- You guys called a cab? All right.

- **BOTH:**

This thing's heavy.

You been carrying it awhile?

All the way from Georgia.

You don't say. Good for you, fellas.

Hey, where you guys from?

Iowa.

That's not possible.

No such thing as a Red Sox fan from Iowa.

(CHUCKLING)

(CHUCKLING)

Here you go.

"Dearest Catherine..."

That's as far as you got?

It's lucky we were saved.

There are certain things
you just can't put into words.

Safe journey, okay?

Yeah.

You still owe me 600 bucks.

You know I'm good for it, right?

Oh, yeah.

(CHUCKLES)

Remember me?

Oh. (SNIFFLES)

(MOANS SOFTLY)

(SIGHING)

KATZ:

of pancakes. Katz.

I hate your guts.

(CHUCKLES)

Never buy underpants
for a woman you don't know.
Fuckers still didn't get me.

(CHUCKLES)

Bryson, just wondering,
what's next?

(SHUFFLING POSTCARDS)

(STACK THUDS)

(CLEARS THROAT)

(KEYBOARD CLACKING)

(MELLOW SONG PLAYING)