

ACT I

*LIGHTS UP*

*CLAIRE sits at a table typing on a laptop. MAGGIE surreptitiously observes her from a few tables away. CLAIRE glances at MAGGIE who quickly puts a book in front of her face to hide behind. CLAIRE resumes typing. MAGGIE puts the book in her handbag, moves closer and resumes observing CLAIRE. CLAIRE glances at MAGGIE again. MAGGIE whirls to face the door and fake waves as if a friend has entered. CLAIRE glances at the door but no one is there. CLAIRE shakes her head and resumes typing. MAGGIE whips out her cell phone, moves directly behind CLAIRE and tries to take a picture of the computer screen. CLAIRE turns to face MAGGIE who whirls to face away from the audience. CLAIRE stands and taps MAGGIE on the shoulder.*

CLAIRE  
May I help you?

MAGGIE  
(*flustered*) What?

CLAIRE  
May I help you?

MAGGIE  
(*making this up as she goes along*) Oh...um...let me see...I'll have an appletini.

CLAIRE  
Excuse me?

MAGGIE  
It's like a vodka martini but it has apple snaps--

CLAIRE  
I know what an appletini is. What I don't know is what you're doing.

MAGGIE  
Ordering a drink?

CLAIRE  
From me?

MAGGIE  
You're not the bartender?

CLAIRE

Why would the bartender be sitting at a table typing on a computer at the busiest time of the evening?

MAGGIE

*(thinks for a second)* The bartender could have overheard that her boss was in the office auditing the books. So she sits at a table to blend in with the customers. Then she whips out her laptop to transfer the money she embezzled to the Cayman Islands.

CLAIRE

*(beat)* I'm not the bartender.

MAGGIE

*(shamefaced)* I know.

CLAIRE

Now that we've established you don't want an appletini, what do you want?

MAGGIE

Actually I wouldn't mind an appletini--

*CLAIRE clears her throat to bring MAGGIE back to the point.*

MAGGIE *(cont'd)*

*(sighs)* I wanted to see what you were working on.

CLAIRE

Why?

MAGGIE

I wanted to see what your story was.

CLAIRE

My what?

MAGGIE

I...uh...make up stories about people in the bar.

CLAIRE

Why?

MAGGIE

It got boring just watching people so I started making up stories to explain who they are, why they're here, what they're doing.

CLAIRE

You're joking.

MAGGIE

No. It's fun. Although most people's stories are ridiculously easy to make up. Like that group. (*MAGGIE points to a random table.*) Friends meeting to watch the game. And that guy (*MAGGIE points to a random guy.*) He's with the band and he's trying to decide how many beers he can chug before the next set. And those two. (*MAGGIE points to a random table.*) Couple on a date. Hmm pregnant pauses, almost no eye contact...make that a blind date. But you? You're interesting.

CLAIRE

There are a lot of people more interesting than me. (*CLAIRE points to a random woman.*) Like that woman in the corner serenading us with Sondheim in belches.

MAGGIE

Drunk community theatre star wannabe who just found out she didn't make the cast list of Into The Woods. Believe me, you are by far the most interesting person in the bar. Besides, I've known you the longest.

CLAIRE

You've known me for three minutes.

MAGGIE

I've known you for three months.

CLAIRE

You're kidding. Well now you've got me curious. Have a seat.

*CLAIRE motions for MAGGIE to sit but MAGGIE does not.*

MAGGIE

Aren't you afraid I might be a stalker?

CLAIRE

As the saying goes, I keep my friends close but my enemies closer. Either way...

*CLAIRE motions again for MAGGIE to sit and this time she does. CLAIRE sits and holds out her hand.*

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Claire Austin.

*MAGGIE shakes CLAIRE's hand.*

MAGGIE

Maggie Hoffman.