No Way Home

By Allan Staples
CHARACTERS:
ANN, mid 30s
COLEY, her sister, 30

JEFF, Ann's husband, late 30s
ZACH, mid 30s

SETTING:
In and around Minneapolis, Minnesota. The Present.
SCENE 1.

Brunch. Ann sits at a table waiting. She’s holding two coffees. Finally, Coley arrives, a little disheveled and wearing designer sunglasses. She sets her phone down on the table.

ANN
Hey, there you are.

COLEY
Here I am.

Ann gives her one of the coffees.

COLEY
Thanks.

ANN
It’s probably cold, by now.

COLEY
It’s iced coffee, right?

ANN
Right...

Coley sips her coffee.

ANN
So, Jeff brought some of the boxes in, if you want to come over tonight to go-

COLEY
I can’t deal with that right now.

ANN
Will you please take those off? I can’t have a conversation with you like this.

Coley does. She smiles wanly.

ANN
You look tired.

COLEY
Oh, thank you...

ANN
I didn’t mean anything by it-
Did you order yet?

Inside.

You wanna go order or?

Were you crying?

Not last night.

Because I didn’t see you at Yoga this morning.

That’s because I was not there.

Are we not...doing that anymore? Because I thought it was a good thing.

We didn’t discuss it.

I sent you a text.

Right.

A moment.

Are you still taking the Lexapro?

COLEY

(faux-enthusiasm)

Mornings!

And the Klonopin?

At night!

And the probiotics?

Ann. Probiotics aren’t for. But yes...
Which brand?  

ANN

Culture....something.  

COLEY

Culturelle?  

ANN

Yeah-  

COLEY

No, Coley, no-  

ANN

They’re fine, they’re working, if you must know-  

ANN

Do you keep them refrigerated?  

COLEY

It didn’t say to.  

ANN

Which means they’re no good.  

COLEY

God, how do you even know that?  

ANN

Because I get mine from Whole Foods. And the good ones have to be refrigerated.  

COLEY

Whole Foods? How expensive are they?  

ANN

Does it matter?  

COLEY

Well...  

ANN

Does your health matter?  

Coley has no answer for this.

ANN

Because, I mean, if money is the issue-  

COLEY

Money’s not the issue-
ANN
Because those sunglasses alone were probably, what, like, $200, $300 at least-

COLEY
Form work. Employee discount.

ANN
Regardless, I’m sure you’re out there spending money on God knows what, when a small investment in your health could really help...

COLEY
Wow, you totally sound like Mom.

Ann stops.

What?

ANN
Why would you say that?

COLEY
Because that sounds exactly like something Mom would say.

A moment.

COLEY
Or, what, can we not say that anymore?

ANN
We can, but I think there should be a moratorium on-

COLEY
A moratorium?

ANN
A waiting period.

COLEY
I know what moratorium means.

ANN
(flatly)
Give it a couple weeks. How ‘bout that?

A slight moment.

ANN
Sorry, I’m running on not a lot of sleep...

COLEY
It’s fine. Another dream?
Ann nods.

ANN
We were in the car this time, the old one, and she was driving me somewhere. I think to gymnastics or something.

Coley nods.

Coley
You know, I have to say. I’m a little jealous.

ANN
Why? You took gymnastics.

Coley
No, that you have these dreams with her in them. At least you get to feel like she’s still...in contact with you or...

ANN
Oh no, that’s not at all how it feels.

Coley
Really?

Ann shakes her head.

Ann
Well. That pisses me off then, too.

ANN
Wait, what does?

Coley
(casual)
That we haven’t heard from her!

ANN
From Mom?

Coley
Yeah.

ANN
Coley. I don’t think it works like that...

Coley
Why not? ‘Cause all sorts of people have all sorts of stories. About, you know, “Oh, I could see the spirit of my mother in that tree over there.” Or, hey, there’s my dad’s soul. In this tortilla and...

Ann laughs a little.
ANN
Coley, tortilla is Jesus, not...

COLEY
So why not us? We deserve that, right? I mean, Mom’s the one who believed in all that shit.

Ann nods.

COLEY
I’d just like to know that she’s okay. Wherever she is, you know? That’s it. That’s all. That’s not so much to ask, is it?

Coley’s phone rings. They both stare at it.

ANN
If that’s Mom, I will start believing in God again.

Coley checks her phone.

COLEY
No, decidedly not Mom...

Coley texts something back.

So who is it?

ANN
Who?

Who?

ANN
Ahmm, the phone.

COLEY
Ann...

Coley’s sunglasses come back on.

ANN
I told you, I can’t talk to you when you have those things on.

“Those things?”

ANN
It’s rude...

COLEY
We’re outside and they’re sunglasses! Sunglasses! This is what they’re for! It’s in the name, Ann!
ANN
Are you hungover?

Coley is silent.

ANN
That’s why your eyes are puffy. That’s why you ‘no showed’ Yoga this morning. Of course, you’re...

COLEY
Ann-

ANN
You’re clearly hungover, how did I miss that...?

COLEY
What is clearly hungover?

ANN
Are you supposed to drink while on those meds?

COLEY
Yes! It’s really weird. They encourage it actually-

ANN
To be clear, it specifically says not to-

COLEY
They put that warning on everything.

A slight moment.

ANN
So why are you hungover?

COLEY
Because I drank too much.

ANN
Oh, helpful, thank you.

COLEY
Honesty always, you know me.

ANN
Sarcasm always, I do know you...

COLEY
The two aren’t mutually exclusive, you know...

ANN
So, what, you went out last night and...?
Yes.

With friends?

Ann.

Or not with the guy from the-

No.

This “no one” you were texting, is this a new guy?

Must we do this-

Or a new gal?

That was once, in college. Please stop always asking if-

Was it a date?

Define ‘date’ and I’ll tell you...

There seems to be considerable turnover lately. In the, in the man department.

The man department?

But that’s fine, I guess. We all do what we do. To cope with the...whatever. Do I know him? Have I met him?

Are you even talking to me or is that all-

I’m talking to you.

Then ask what you want to ask, I’m too hungover to decode.
ANN
Are you having sex with all these random men?

COLEY
Not at the same time.

ANN
Coley.

COLEY
I’m not answering that-

ANN
It’s a simple question.

COLEY
It’s an accusation-

ANN
Those two aren’t exclusive either.

COLEY
How is that an appropriate question?

ANN
Because I’m concerned about you-

COLEY
Oh, right, of course. I don’t ask about your sex life-!

ANN
I’m married!

COLEY
So what? I still could-

ANN
But why would you want to?

COLEY
Did you and Jeff have sex, or make love, or whatever it is you guys do-

ANN
Coley-

COLEY
Last night? Did you?

ANN
A moment.

ANN
It’s different.