

SCENE 4.1

(Ramada Inn. A toast. Small-talk. Kenny G. Hors d'oeuvres. Punch. MACMILLAN and COLLAR reach for the same mini-pizza-- the last one.)

COLLAR
(Laughing politely.)

Sorry--

MACMILLAN
Not at all. Here, you--

COLLAR
No! It's fine.

MACMILLAN
It's fine.

COLLAR
No, it's /

MACMILLAN
Here...

COLLAR
It's-- You're embarrassing me!-- It's a mini-pizza!

MACMILLAN
(With mock-chivalry.)
I insist, madame. The last mini-pizza.

COLLAR
I'm sure the twelve-year-old waiter will be around soon with a whole heap of them and I don't even really want one to begin with so whatever just--. I'm sorry! I hate this! Ugh--I'm giving a lecture, in about four hours.

(Eating the mini-pizza. Mouth full, wiping her hand on her pants:)

And I'm just... I'm sorry, gosh--

(She extends a hand.)

I'm Judith Collar. History Department. Albion College.

MACMILLAN
(Taking it.)
Ian Macmillan. Psychology. Johns Hopkins. You must have--

COLLAR
--Just graduated, right, well, almost.

(Beat.)

COLLAR (CONT'D)
Oh--hmmmmm, that's--(weird...) Psychology, huh?

MACMILLAN
Yes. Oh!--There are, ah, two conferences going on right now. Punch?

(He gets her punch.)

COLLAR
Wow, score one for the Ramada Inn, huh? I hope security's extra tight tonight, a hotel full of wheezy academics.

MACMILLAN
Spared no expense.

COLLAR
I did hear there'll be free booze sometime.

MACMILLAN
Well--there's something to look forward to.

COLLAR
Hm.

MACMILLAN
Oh...I, didn't mean--I'm not at your conference mine's boring. I'm sure yours'll be great, fascinating, really.

COLLAR
(Laughing.)
It's fine, no. It...hopefully will be.

MACMILLAN
The first night of the conference, no less. Must be a pretty big deal.

*(She laughs, shakes her head:
No...)*

MACMILLAN (CONT'D)
At the risk of talking shop, could I ask what you're speaking on?

COLLAR
Ah--

(Beat.)

MACMILLAN

Sorry. I

COLLAR

(Overlapping.)

Nonononono don't--. I found something.

MACMILLAN

Oh? A discovery. Good for you. / Really.

COLLAR

A letter-- Well... A letter fragment, a fragment of a love letter.

MACMILLAN

Wow. I mean... A love letter from Phineas Gage? That's huge. Do we know anything about her?

COLLAR

Not too much, but she's connected with Valparaiso somehow, when Gage went to Valparaiso. I'm hoping to explain how Gage suddenly got better after the accident and then what made his health suddenly decline.

MACMILLAN

You think it was love?

COLLAR

Huh?

MACMILLAN

Love. You think-- Okay-- You think after having an iron rod puncture his frontal lobe, he survived because of love?

COLLAR

Well--

MACMILLAN

--and then, when he went to Chile, it was also love that caused his mysterious downfall?

COLLAR

Um. Yeah.

MACMILLAN

That's brilliant. Let me see it.

(Beat.)

MACMILLAN (CONT'D)

May I see it?

(Beat.)

COLLAR
The punch, / I don't

MACMILLAN
I'm used to handling / old

COLLAR
Of course, I... Are you sure you wanna talk about this?
Because / I sure don't.

MACMILLAN
You must have it with you.

COLLAR
...

MACMILLAN
I'm curious.

*(COLLAR gets out a badly burned
letter inside a ziploc bag
from her case. He takes it.)*

COLLAR
That's-- That the two of us should just meet here at
random essentially--

MACMILLAN
This is something.

COLLAR
What's your lecture on? I'm doing Gage, you're doing
Gage, it must be--

MACMILLAN
*(Still engrossed in the
letter.)*
My research?

COLLAR
Your--

MACMILLAN
So, you say he met someone in Vermont, fell in love with
her, was the victim of an accidental lobotomy, was
healed by his pure pure love, took her to Valparaiso,
Chile, then something happened and he suddenly got
really sick and died, and that that is also related to
this mysterious woman.

(She stares at him.)

COLLAR
I don't want to talk to you any more.

(FROM) SCENE 3.3

CONSTANCE
Hm. Who is she?

PHINEAS
She's... I call her Missy. She lives...here, with me.

CONSTANCE
She's from Vermont--

PHINEAS
Yes.

CONSTANCE
Cavendish?

PHINEAS
Please, Constance, I don't want to

CONSTANCE
(Overlapping.)
Will you answer some questions for me?

PHINEAS
I'll try.

CONSTANCE
Do you know how long it takes to get here from Cavendish?

PHINEAS
Roughly.

CONSTANCE
And how long it takes to find someone--a specific person's location--in Valparaiso, when you can't understand the language?

PHINEAS
...I can imagine.

CONSTANCE
Can you imagine what a woman has to do to survive in a place like Valparaiso when she runs out of money?

PHINEAS
...

CONSTANCE
Phineas?

PHINEAS
(Overlapping.)

No. I don't.

CONSTANCE
 Do you remember what you said to me when we first met?

PHINEAS
 I said that you had beautiful eyes.

(This is wrong.)

CONSTANCE
 Do you remember what I said to you when you told me you loved me?

PHINEAS
 Of course.

CONSTANCE
 ...

PHINEAS
 You said you loved me back.

(Again: this is wrong.)

CONSTANCE
(With tears in her eyes:)
 Do... Do you remember

PHINEAS
(Overlapping: He hits her:)
 NO! I DON'T FUCKING REMEMBER.

(Beat.)

CONSTANCE
 The man I knew, he was dependable, honest, shy, kind—not wise, perhaps, but clever enough to make a life that was happy and healthy for himself and his bride-to-be.

PHINEAS
 YOU B--

(A few beats.)

CONSTANCE
 I wish so much that you were right. I almost think you are.

PHINEAS
 I am--

CONSTANCE

(Overlapping.)

You asked if you could walk me down the street. I said no. You said you loved me; I called you foolish. ... I love you Finn. You need help and love and I want to give those / to you.

PHINEAS

I have Missy.

CONSTANCE

Mis-- ... That...

PHINEAS

Yes.

CONSTANCE

I won't leave you.

PHINEAS

Neither will / she.

CONSTANCE

You think I will but I won't, you think I won't love you but--

PHINEAS

Well I'm leaving, so...

CONSTANCE

I'll find you.

PHINEAS

No you won't.

CONSTANCE

Yes. I will.

(PHINEAS breaks down.)

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

Whatever it takes.

PHINEAS

Why.

CONSTANCE

Why what?

PHINEAS

Maybe... Maybe I deserve this, you know?

CONSTANCE

You don't

PHINEAS

(Overlapping.)

Just listen. Maybe it's like this is a punishment. Maybe it is a punishment, and lying cold in a coffin is the reward. Fuck. I get a second shot--why?--the chance to do something, and I'm fucking miserable.

CONSTANCE

Well, I'm fucking miserable too and I'm on my first try.

PHINEAS

...

CONSTANCE

What does that tell you?

PHINEAS

That life is... what--a shithole, what do you want / from me?

CONSTANCE

No. That, if nothing else, we have each other.

PHINEAS

Leave me alone.

CONSTANCE

No.

PHINEAS

OUT! GET. THE HELL. OUT. OF MY HOUSE!

CONSTANCE

But I love / you

PHINEAS

(Overlapping.)

I'm not me. You don't love me. Leave me alone. Go home.

(He picks up her suitcase and shoves it in her arms, hurting her. Beat: they stare at each other. He swiftly raises a hand to her. Beat: she doesn't flinch. Beat. He drops his hand.)

PHINEAS (CONT'D)

Go home.

CONSTANCE

You are my / home.

PHINEAS

That's shit.

CONSTANCE

I won't--

*(PHINEAS and CONSTANCE sing
"American Crowbar.")*

PHINEAS, CONSTANCE

FESS UP YOU KNOW IT'S TRUE
 IT WAS A SHITTY THING TO DO
 YOU SAY I'M NO LONGER ME
 WELL, YOU'RE NO LONGER PRETTY
 THAT'S FOR SURE
 I'VE GOT MY CONSTANT COMPANION
 MY IRON BAR MY LIFE'S REMINDER
 NOT THE MAN I WAS BEFORE
 NEVER BE THE MAN I WAS BEFORE
 NEW ENGLAND JUST DON'T HOLD ANY PEACE
 NOT FOR A MAN LIKE ME
 NOT FOR A MAN LIKE ME
 WE RISE AS ONE
 YOU BLEW MY MIND OUT WITH A
 HEAVY METAL ELEPHANT GUN
 WE ARE FIGHTERS
 WE GOT BACKPACKS FULL OF COFFEE, CIGARETTES AND LIGHTERS
 ALL WE'VE GOT IS ONE ANOTHER
 ALL WE'VE GOT IS ONE ANOTHER
 FIRST ONE FALLS AND THEN THE OTHER
 ALL WE'VE GOT IS ONE ANOTHER