

ANTARCTICA

By Teddy Haddow

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CHARACTERS:

KATE, late 30s, businesslike, thinks she's quirky.

ETHAN, early 30s, eccentric, unapologetically himself.

PATTY, early 30s, basically a female version of **ETHAN**.

TIME:

Summer, middle of the day.

PLACE:

Edge of the docks at the Port of Boston.

At Rise: KATE is standing, waiting. She is wearing simple, stylish summer clothes. ETHAN enters, wearing loud, colorful, unseasonable clothing. A pause.

KATE

Excuse me, do you have the time? *(Pause)* My phone is dead.

ETHAN

How does one “have” time? It’s not something you can hold in your hand.

KATE

Pardon?

ETHAN

Your question confuses me as much as my answer confuses you.

KATE

Do you know what time it is?

ETHAN

Yes, it’s... *(checking his watch)* 2 am.

KATE

What? It’s the middle of the day.

ETHAN

If you know that, then why did you ask me for the time?

KATE

The exact time. I asked for the exact time.

ETHAN

I can’t help you. I’m still on Tokyo time.

KATE

Oh. You just got back from Japan?

ETHAN

No, I just woke up on a bench in the park. I used my passport as firestarter a few months ago, so traveling is a bit difficult.

KATE

You're impossible. You remind me of my ex.

ETHAN

I figured I would, Kate.

KATE

(With dawning realization)
Ethan?

ETHAN

In the flesh.

KATE

Ohmigod how are you? Where have you been?

ETHAN

Nowhere interesting. As for how I am, well, ask my parents.

KATE

Ask them what?

ETHAN

Well, Kate, when a man and a woman love each other very much... *(Pause. Shrug.)* Therefore, I am.

KATE

I'm beginning to remember why I haven't called you all this time.

ETHAN

Nine years, seven months, 28 days... *(Checks his watch.)* And four hours.

KATE

(Touched)
You've been counting the hours since we broke up?

ETHAN

No. Just since I had a taco afterwards. *(Pause)* It was a very good taco.

(ETHAN takes out a cigarette, lights the filter end, and begins smoking.)

KATE

Right. *(Pause)* So, what brings you here?

ETHAN

I'm going to Antarctica.

KATE

Antarctica! Wow! *(Pause)* Well, my fiance is picking me up in his boat. We're going to Plymouth to see the plantation there, and then we're staying over in Martha's-

(KATE stops as ETHAN takes the cigarette out of his mouth and sticks it in his nose.)

KATE

-Vineyard. *(Pause)* So, what's in Antarctica?

ETHAN

Penguins.

KATE

Yes, but what are you there for?

ETHAN

Penguins. I'm going to Antarctica for the penguins, Kate.

KATE

Oh, for pets? I feel like you need a special permit for that?

ETHAN

I'm not going to keep them as pets, I'm just going to try them.

KATE

What?

ETHAN

I never told you? I've always wanted to try penguin meat.

(Beat.)

KATE

What.

ETHAN

Yeah. I'm just gonna see how they taste.

KATE

Ethan, what the fuck? Isn't that illegal? Aren't they endangered?

ETHAN

That's a matter of opinion.

KATE

That it's illegal or they're endangered?

ETHAN

Yes. It's not the end of the world, Kate, it's just an experiment.

KATE

I can't believe my ex boyfriend is going to Antarctica to kill and eat penguins.

ETHAN

You make it sound so awful. It's not much different from all the burgers I've seen you eat.

KATE

I'm actually vegan now.

(ETHAN begins laughing uncontrollably, almost inhaling his cigarette into his nose. He takes the cigarette out and sticks it in his ear. Pause. KATE looks into the distance.)

KATE

You know, I think I see my boyfriend.

ETHAN

That's a dinghy. You said he had a boat.

KATE

(Evasive)

It was *so* good to see you again, Ethan. Can I find you on Facebook?

ETHAN

I'm not on Facebook, but I am on iTunes.

KATE

Bye, Ethan! *(Begins walking away.)* Michael! Oh, Michael!

(KATE exits. ETHAN takes the cigarette out of his ear, crumples it in his hand, and puts it in his pocket. PATTY enters, dressed in a similar fashion to ETHAN. There is silent acknowledgement between the two of them.)

ETHAN

Do you know what time it is?

PATTY

(Checks watch.)
8:05 pm.

ETHAN

Moscow. Nice. *(Pause)* What's your plan?

PATTY

I'm going to Iceland.

ETHAN

What's in Iceland?

PATTY

Volcanoes. I want to try bungee jumping.

ETHAN

I tried that once. It was very safe.

PATTY

What about you?

ETHAN

Antarctica.

PATTY

Nice. I've always liked penguins.

ETHAN

I intend to eat them.

PATTY

That's what I meant.

(They look at each other. Beat.)

PATTY

I've changed my mind. I haven't had penguin in a long time. I'd like to go to Antarctica with you.

ETHAN

Well, you're just in time. (*Pointing into the crowd.*) There's my ride.

(*ETHAN begins taking off his shoes.*)

PATTY

It looks like the raft from *Castaway*.

(*They look at each other. Pause. ETHAN shrugs.*)

ETHAN

It floats.

(*ETHAN and PATTY burst into giggles. PATTY slips off her shoes and the two of them, still giggling, jump off downstage and feign swimming up the aisles while yelling:*)

ETHAN & PATTY

Wilson! Wilson! Wilson!

END SCENE