

don't want to see you cry.

**SANDY:** Then leave, cause I'm about to.

**JIM:** I'm sorry. Really.

**SANDY:** I know. Me too.

**JIM:** I do love you. We will always be friends.

**SANDY:** No, we won't.

**JIM:** But why?

**SANDY:** I can't handle that. I can't go from lover to friend in that short a time period. You have obviously had time to get used to the idea. I don't think I ever will.

**JIM:** But...

**SANDY:** Go. Please. I can't have you here right now.

**JIM:** I don't understand why you want me to leave.

**SANDY:** Because I'm going to cry, and I don't want to do that in front of you.

**JIM:** I've seen you cry before.

**SANDY:** But not over you. And you never will. Goodbye, Jim.

**JIM:** I'll call you tomorrow.

**SANDY:** Goodbye.

**JIM:** *(A pause)* Goodbye, Sandy. *(He leaves.)*

**SANDY:** *(Runs hands over face, through hair, then quietly.)*  
Jerk.

## CHOICES

**SHARON:** Eighteen, soon to graduate from high school. Full of wonderful expectations for the future.

**TONY:** Sharon's boyfriend, also eighteen, filled with dreams and hopes, but facing frustration about achieving them.

**SHARON:** Two more months. I don't know if I can take any more than that.

**TONY:** *(Preoccupied)* Tell me about it.

**SHARON:** Graduation, summer, and then we are gone. Tony, are you as excited as I am?

**TONY:** Thrilled.

**SHARON:** Yeah, I can tell. Tony, what's the matter?

**TONY:** Nothing. Everything is fine.

**SHARON:** No, I can tell something is the matter. What is it?

**TONY:** There is "nothing the matter." God, what a stupid phrase.

**SHARON:** Listen, I know something is wrong. You are trying to start a fight with me. Well, we've been through this little plot line too many times, and I am not following it. When you feel like opening up, let me know. *(She continues what she was doing.)*

**TONY:** *(After a moment's brooding)* Sharon, I'm leaving.

**SHARON:** Fine. Call me when you're in a better mood.

**TONY:** No, I mean I am leaving-leaving.

**SHARON:** Me? You're leaving me? Because I don't want to fight with you this time and stand up for myself, you want to break up?

**TONY:** No, no, that's not what I mean.

**SHARON:** *(Grabbing him, holding him close)* Don't scare me like that, please, ever again. I don't know what I would do if I lost you.

**TONY:** I was hoping you'd say that.

SHARON: Was there ever a doubt I wouldn't?

TONY: But I am leaving. After graduation, I'm getting out of this town.

SHARON: Well, we both are. We're going to go away to college together. I know you're frustrated now, especially because the end is so near, but gut it out. It will be here before you know it.

TONY: Sharon, sit down. Stop flitting all over the room and listen to me.

SHARON: *(Finally looking at him, seeing he is very serious.)* What? What are you leaving? What are you talking about?

TONY: This. I am leaving this life. *(SHARON gasps, putting her hand over her mouth.)* No, no. I mean *(He waves his hands around.)* this. This kind of life.

SHARON: What kind of life?

TONY: The kind of life our parents live. The nine-to-five what's-for-dinner-honey kind of life. I can't do it.

SHARON: I still don't know what you mean. You won't have that kind of life with me. We'll go to college, we'll be professionals, *(Attempting a small joke)* we'll have a maid to ask what's for dinner.

TONY: It's the same thing. *(Grabbing her by the arms, sitting her down.)* Don't you see? We'll end up like our parents. We get married, buy a house, have 1.4 children, tell them to turn down the music. That's the worst thing that could happen. Telling them to turn down the music.

SHARON: So, we'll put them in a soundproof room.

TONY: I don't mean that music. I mean the music of life.

SHARON: You're talking in riddles. Say what you mean.

TONY: For once, Sharon, look beyond today. Really look and see what the future is holding out to us. Look for the path not taken, and it will make all the difference.

SHARON: Please don't quote dead poets to me. Just talk. Say exactly what is going on with you . . . with us.

TONY: I'm leaving, but I'm not going to college . . .

SHARON: What . . . ?

TONY: Let me finish. I'm going to New York.

SHARON: Why New York? What's there?

TONY: Music. All kinds of music and music producers. I've got so much music inside of me that it hurts from trying to burst free.

SHARON: This is crazy. I don't get it. Why do you have to let your music "burst" in New York? Can't you study music in college? Major in it.

TONY: It's not something you study. Music is something you either have or you don't. I have it. I've got to do something with it. In New York I can be free of my parents, of everyone I've known all my life, of . . .

SHARON: Me. You can be free from me.

TONY: No. That's another thing. Come with me. With you standing behind me, supporting me, there's nothing I can't do.

SHARON: But what about college? What about my future?

TONY: Your future is with me. College is a dream that belongs to our parents. Do you really want to go? I know I don't.

SHARON: I don't know. I guess I could go to college in New York.

TONY: After a while, when I make it, of course you could. We'd work together to make it happen.

SHARON: What do you mean, "After a while"?

TONY: One of us would have to work while I was making the rounds of producers and studios.

SHARON: One of us is me? I would have to work? What about you?

TONY: I need to work on my music. It would be a twenty-four-hour-a-day effort.

SHARON: What about your parents? Won't they help out?

TONY: I don't want to have to depend on anybody.

SHARON: But me.

TONY: I'd be doing this for both of us. For our future. For our dream.

SHARON: Your dream. Tony, this is your dream.

TONY: It could be our dream if you'd let it.

SHARON: My dream includes college. My dream is to be a lawyer.

TONY: You could have your dream . . . just a little later. By that time I'll need a good business lawyer to handle my affairs. Don't you see how this could work for us?

SHARON: I want to be a defense lawyer, not a business lawyer.

TONY: You're missing the whole point of this discussion. Go with me, Sharon. Come to New York. I need you with me. Walk the path not taken.

SHARON: I don't want to lose you. But . . .

TONY: Marry me.

SHARON: What?

TONY: Marry me. Come to New York and marry me.

SHARON: Ohh. I've dreamed of this moment. Yes! I'll marry you. I'll follow you to New York. *(She jumps in his arms.)*

TONY: *(Holding her)* It will be great. You and me, taking on New York. I can do anything with you there to lean on, to support me.

SHARON: And I will be there for you.

TONY: Mr. and Mrs. Anthony March. *(Looking at her, holding her face.)* How does that sound? Mrs. Anthony March.

SHARON: *(Pauses, looking at him, really seeing him.)* Mrs. Anthony March. *(She moves away from him, pauses, faces him again.)* Mrs. Anthony March? *(Quiet deep breath)* Wow.

TONY: You and me.

SHARON: And your dream.

TONY: Our dream.

SHARON: No, Tony, your dream. I just fit into it. Mrs. Anthony March. Breadwinner. Supporter of husband. Worker bee.

TONY: You're seeing this wrong.

SHARON: No, I'm seeing reality. You're the one with the dream. It's a good dream, Tony, but it's yours. I just got swept up in the riptide effect.

TONY: Don't you love me?

SHARON: More than you know. But I love me, too. I love being the person I am. I'm not Mrs. Anthony March. My name isn't Anthony . . . that's yours.

TONY: You're being grammatical.

SHARON: I'm being who I am . . . a realist. I can't be Mrs. Anybody until I try to be all I can be.

TONY: Then join the army.

SHARON: Weak joke.

TONY: I'm sorry. *(Looking at her)* Sorry about a lot.

SHARON: Don't be. It's a nice dream. You should go to New York but not with me. Give your dream a try, and I will work for mine.

TONY: It won't be the same without you.

SHARON: You're right. You'll have to work.

TONY: That's not what I meant.

SHARON: I know. I know. It's not what I meant, either. I mean that you'll have to work harder on your dream because it will be *your* dream.

TONY: So, does this mean we break up?

SHARON: I don't know. I think it just means we take

our own paths, alone. But we'll always be there for each other.

**TONY:** Just miles apart.

**SHARON:** You can look at it that way. I prefer to think of it as a phone call away.

**TONY:** *(Holding her)* I will always love you.

**SHARON:** No matter where we end up? *(He nods.)* Me too.

## DOES IT MATTER?

**ROBERT:** Seventeen years old, upset about the death of his friend and confused about his friends' lack of feelings.

**MATT:** Also seventeen, more accepting of the "life goes on" school of thought.

**AMY:** Seventeen, appears to be very self-absorbed, but is a realist about life and expects it from others.

**SETTING:** A funeral reception for a friend who has committed suicide.

**ROBERT:** Did you look?

**MATT:** At what?

**ROBERT:** At . . . her.

**MATT:** You mean . . . oh. Nah.

**ROBERT:** I did. Whew.

**MATT:** How'd she look?

**ROBERT:** Dead, I guess. She looked dead.

**MATT:** Makes sense. She was.

**ROBERT:** She looked good, though.

**AMY:** *(Entering on ROBERT's last two words.)* Who, me?

**MATT:** No, Jackie did.

**AMY:** You mean I don't look good?

**MATT:** Who cares how you look? Today isn't about you.

**AMY:** I care. You know I like to make a good presentation.

**ROBERT:** A little self-absorbed today, Amy, even for you.

**AMY:** I prefer to think of it as self-aware. Have you tried the onion dip?

**MATT:** No. Is it good?

**ROBERT:** Both of you are just too much. Jackie is dead and *(Indicating AMY)* you're talking fashion and *(Indicating MATT)* you're feeding your face.

**MATT:** I'm hungry. Funerals make me hungry.