

...AND STUFF... •

BY PETER DEE

Wanda lives alone with her father. She can barely remember her mother, who left town shortly after Wanda was born. Although Wanda is "doing okay" with her father, sometimes she feels neglected, and she longs to have a relationship with her mother.

Strangely enough, years after her mother has disappeared, Wanda receives a letter from her Mom—with no return address. It is then that Wanda becomes obsessed with the need to see her mother. All she knows, though, is that her Mom lives somewhere in Texas, and Wanda has no bus ticket, no plane ticket and no exact destination—just a lot of determination. She decides to try to hitchhike there.

When her friend, Taylor, sees her on the road trying to thumb a ride, he tries to keep her from going. But Wanda is set on seeing her Mom, and, eventually, the two friends reach a compromise that they both can live with.

1 Boy and 1 Girl Taylor and Wanda

Lights come up on Wanda, hitchhiking. Taylor enters, sees her.

Taylor

Where are you going?

Wanda

To see my mother.

Taylor

To see your mother?

Wanda

What I said, didn't I?

Taylor

Where's she at?

Wanda

Texas.

Taylor

You going all the way there?

Wanda

It's where she is.

Taylor

How do you know she's there?

Wanda

She wrote me a letter.

Taylor

No kidding.

Wanda

She says she loves me.

Taylor

How does she know that?

Wanda

What do you mean?

Taylor

You got to see a person to love 'em, when she ever see you?

Wanda

Says she got snapshots.

Taylor

Snapshots!

Wanda

You practicing to be an echo, or what?



Taylor Where'd she get 'em?

Wanda From when I was a baby. She was around for that, you know.

Taylor That and not much more.

Wanda Yeah, well I'm going to see her, Taylor.

Taylor Hitchhiking?

Wanda Yeah.

Taylor Long trip. Want company?

Wanda Do I want company?

Taylor Yeah.

Wanda Like who?

Taylor Me.

Wanda You?

Taylor Yeah.

Wanda No.

Taylor Why?

Wanda Are you crazy?

Taylor No.

Wanda How can I show up to meet my mother with you?

Taylor I don't have to meet her. I can go get a hamburger while you get it over with.

Wanda You'll go get a hamburger while I meet my mother.

Taylor What I said, didn't I?



Wanda I intend to stay a little longer than that.
Taylor That's cool.
Wanda It's not cool at all. I don't want you hanging out down there.
Taylor You might be glad I'm around.
Wanda Taylor, you're crazy.
Taylor No crazier than you.
Wanda I got someone waiting for me down there. You don't.
Taylor If she knew you were coming you wouldn't be hitchhiking. She'd have sent you a bus ticket at least.
Wanda Maybe she's poor.
Taylor She probably saw some phony show on TV. Pee'd her face with stupid tears and writes you a letter about how much she loves you.
Wanda Don't you talk about my mother like that.
Taylor You're doing fine here. I don't know what you're running off to Texas for.
Wanda You're interfering with me getting a ride. Leave me alone so I can hitch proper.
Taylor Bullcrap to that. I'm not leaving you here for all the truckdrivers to eat up.
Wanda I know Karate.
Taylor So do they. And they're bigger.

Wanda If you're trying to scare me, forget it. I'm going to Texas and that's that.
Taylor Where in Texas?
Wanda None of your business.
Taylor She didn't even tell you what city she lives in? Just says (*does the accent*) ... "Love from Texas."
Wanda Taylor, you're pissing me off!
Taylor Good.
Wanda There's a car coming. Get in the bushes.
Taylor No way.
Wanda Get in the bushes, you creep.
Taylor I ain't a creep. (*Car stops.*) Hi. Thanks for stopping. Me and my girlfriend are looking for a ride to Texas. We're a bit shaky on which city, but we'd sure appreciate a lift in that direction and I can tell by looking at you that you're not the kind of person who'll be bothered by the fact that she picks her nose and wipes it everywhere and I release the meanest farts in the universe at least once every ten minutes. (*Car drives off.*) See, Wanda, people just don't care.
Wanda I'm going to kill you.
Taylor Didn't like that guy's looks.
Wanda Will you get away from here!
Taylor What's the matter with your father?
Wanda Nothing.



Taylor Does he know you're doing this? Huh?
Wanda He'll notice I'm gone in about a month.
Taylor Bullcrap.
Wanda Drop by the house tonight and tell him I'm okay. Will you?
Taylor You didn't even leave him a note?
Wanda I wrote him about sixteen...horrible...trying to explain...what? Every word I wrote down... seemed so stupid...and like I was complaining and whining and stuff...you know?
Taylor Sure.
Wanda I kept tearing 'em up and starting new ones. Every one of 'em sucked worse than the one before. Besides, he'd...follow me and make me come back home before I even got out of the state.
Taylor You really want to see her that bad?
Wanda Yes.
Taylor I wish my mother would move to Texas.
Wanda I've never seen her. She's my mother, Taylor. My very own mother and when I was having this need real bad to see her she sends me this letter. That has to mean something, doesn't it?
Taylor Probably that she's a witch.
Wanda Yeah, well, I'm going to see her and no one's stopping me.
Taylor Okay.

Wanda I just got to.
Taylor I can see that.
Wanda So will you stop by the house tonight and tell my Dad I'm okay?
Taylor I can't. I'll be with you.
Wanda No.
Taylor Yes.
Wanda I don't want you to.
Taylor Tough.
Wanda Why are you doing this?
Taylor Look, Wanda, you gotta see you mother, that's okay. That's cracker barrel, jim dandy, far out, bonkers, electrifying. But I'm going to see that you get there safe.
Wanda I'll be okay.
Taylor No you won't and I'm not going to spend all my time worrying about you out there alone.
Wanda Why are you doing this to me?
Taylor Because I like you. More than any mother that found some baby pictures and stuff.
Wanda Taylor.
Taylor You're going to get there safe. Or you're not going at all.
Wanda You don't have a backpack or anything.

- Taylor** I put on fresh underwear this morning. That has to mean something.
- Wanda** I just want to see her.
- Taylor** You're going to.
- Wanda** I can't believe this road leads to the highway. There's no traffic at all.
- Taylor** Road to the highway is three streets over.
- Wanda** You sure?
- Taylor** Do I look like a fool?
- Wanda** Where does this road lead to?
- Taylor** Town Dump.
- Wanda** Wow. I hope that doesn't mean anything.
- Taylor** Just that we got to move. Come on. I'll show you how to hitch. You doing it all wrong.
- Wanda** How did you happen to find me here?
- Taylor** Guess I just look for you every day, Wanda. Think that makes me some kind of nut?
- Wanda** No.
- Taylor** Let's go. Hey, what if she's like Joan Collins in "Dallas?"
- Wanda** "Dynasty."
- Taylor** Whatever.
- Wanda** I won't introduce you to her!

(They laugh and head for Texas. Lights fade on Taylor and Wanda.)

The play, *Approa*
Blossom family, as
City all the way to
camps outdoors.
The Blossoms are r
great-aunt Olivia
girl, aged nine, at
Aunt Livvie before