

**FRIDA.** Whatever.

**EVA.** I'll be your friend if you help me find Whitestone.

**FRIDA.** I don't even know what you're talking about.

**EVA.** I need to go.

**FRIDA.** Hold on. I'm gonna call the police for you.

**EVA.** No, I have to go.

*(EVA exits. FRIDA looks after her, perplexed.)*

## **THE DISAPPEARANCE OF DANIEL HAND**

by Dan O'Brien

### **Characters**

SHANNON, a high school senior.

GIRL, homeless, 17.

### **Scene**

Shannon, a young aspiring filmmaker, has gone to New York City in search of a classmate who recently went missing. At the end of a long, somewhat harrowing night, she meets a homeless girl in Grand Central Station. Also, Shannon's video camera was a gift from her estranged father.

### **Author Note**

An entire line like this:

...

or

... ?

indicates a significant beat, perhaps played as a pause.

**GIRL.** Stuck?

**SHANNON.** What?

**GIRL.** I said, you stuck here for the night?

*(She's sitting against the wall, a piece of cardboard beneath her, and another, smaller piece in front of her that reads something like: "I need money for a bus ticket home. Please help.")*

*(A paper cup for change...)*

**GIRL.** You got any money?

**SHANNON.** No.

**GIRL.** Yes you do.

**SHANNON.** I'm sorry. —Excuse me—

*(She starts to walk away.)*

**GIRL.** You do.

**SHANNON.** What:

**GIRL.** —I said you've got some money. Some change at least...

**SHANNON.** I don't have any money for you. I'm sorry.

*(She turns to leave again.)*

**GIRL.** You can't keep running away.

**SHANNON.** ... ?

**GIRL.** *(She smiles.)* ...Are you afraid?

**SHANNON.** Of you?

**GIRL.** ...

**SHANNON.** Here's five dollars—

**GIRL.** You don't have to give me that much—

**SHANNON.** I want to—for your—bus.

*(She puts the money in her paper cup.)*

**GIRL.** You're afraid to touch me.

**SHANNON.** I didn't touch you—

**GIRL.** I know: you touched the cup. Barely. —You didn't want to touch the cup; with your hand.

**SHANNON.** —Why are you taking a bus?

**GIRL.** ... ?

**SHANNON.** You're in a train station—

**GIRL.** Trains don't take me where I'm going.

**SHANNON.** ...That sounds poetic...

**GIRL.** Does it?

**SHANNON.** Yeah. Like a song lyric.

**GIRL.** ...

**SHANNON.** ...

**GIRL.** —Buses are cheaper, that's all.

**SHANNON.** That's good to know...

**GIRL.** —What is?

**SHANNON.** That you're not lying. —Sometimes I see these signs and I think people are lying...

**GIRL.** Do you always think people are lying?

**SHANNON.** *(Sbrugs.)* ...

**GIRL.** People are frightened of me...

It upsets me. I'm dirty. I'm depressed. But mostly because I'm dirty, and asking for help...

People don't like to be asked for help. Why is that?

**SHANNON.** ...

**GIRL.** How old am I?

**SHANNON.** I don't know.

**GIRL.** No—guess:

**SHANNON.** I don't know—

**GIRL.** Come on:

**SHANNON.** Twenty-two.

**GIRL.** Seventeen.

**SHANNON.** Me too!

**GIRL.** Just turned it.

**SHANNON.** —So did I—

**GIRL.** Yeah?

**SHANNON.** Yeah. In September?

**GIRL.** Wow. Cool... We must be the same sign...

**SHANNON.** ...Are you making fun of me?

**GIRL.** *(Smiles.)* A little...

**SHANNON.** *(She smiles too.)* ...

**GIRL.** You want to sit down?

**SHANNON.** *(She does.)* ...Sure.

**GIRL.** ...That your camera?

**SHANNON.** Uh-huh.

**GIRL.** Expensive...

**SHANNON.** Not really.

**GIRL.** How much did it cost you?

**SHANNON.** I got it—as a gift.

**GIRL.** Like a Christmas present? Or for your birthday?

**SHANNON.** For my birthday. From my dad.

**GIRL.** ...That's cool...

**SHANNON.** Why are you here? You know: begging.

**GIRL.** I ran away; about a year ago...

**SHANNON.** Why?

**GIRL.** (*Shrugs.*) I didn't want to be home, I guess.

**SHANNON.** How'd you do it? —How'd you run away?

**GIRL.** (*Strongly.*) I don't want to talk about it—

**SHANNON.** ...

**GIRL.** ...I left with my boyfriend...

**SHANNON.** ...Is he here?

**GIRL.** In Seattle...

**SHANNON.** Is that where you're from?

**GIRL.** No.

...We're not together anymore.

**SHANNON.** ...Do you ever want to go home?

**GIRL.** Never.

**SHANNON.** Why not?

**GIRL.** That's not an option for me...

**SHANNON.** If you're homeless—

**GIRL.** I can't—

Okay? (*Quietly.*)

It's just not an option...

**SHANNON.** I don't think you should've done that.

**GIRL.** ...

**SHANNON.** You shouldn't've run away from home: it's not fair.

**GIRL.** To who?

**SHANNON.** To the people you left behind.

**GIRL.** ...You don't know why I left...

**SHANNON.** So?

Even if your parents were terrible—like they, I don't know, abused you—

Don't you have any friends...? Isn't there anyone who might miss you? —

You can't just give up on people. You can't just disappear.

**GIRL.** ...I did...

**SHANNON.** ...What do you do for money?

**GIRL.** Stuff...

**SHANNON.** Like what?

**GIRL.** Use your imagination. *Stuff!*

**SHANNON.** ... *LIKE WHAT?!*

**GIRL.** ... *I sit out here and I beg people for change who couldn't care less to even look at me.*

**SHANNON.** Here:

**GIRL.** What are you doing—?

**SHANNON.** (*Overlapping.*) I'm giving you my camera.

**GIRL.** (*She pushes it away.*) ...

**SHANNON.** Take it: I don't want it anymore. I don't need it.

**GIRL.** —What do I need it for?

**SHANNON.** You can sell it. If you want. —Can you sell it?

**GIRL.** ...

**SHANNON.** You can take the money. Go to Seattle.

**GIRL.** (*She smiles.*) Thanks...

**SHANNON.** ...

**GIRL.** —I was going to steal it, you know.

**SHANNON.** ...?

**GIRL.** When you fell asleep, here, next to me: I was going to steal it from you...

*(SHANNON places the camera in her hands.)*

**SHANNON.** I'm giving it to you now.