

TRANSIT;

an underground play

By Jane Lindstrom

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This is a sample scene from the full script.
If you'd like to read the play in its entirety, please contact me directly.
Thank you!

SCENE 2

The darkness holds and a sequence of train sounds fills the time.

ANNOUNCER

Next stop: Boylston. No smoking please. Change for the silver line. Doors will open on the right.

Lights up on Anna in the train car. A few other passengers occupy seats. A train silence-- all that can be heard is the racing of the tracks beneath.

ANNOUNCER

Entering: Boylston. No smoking please. Change here for the silver line. Doors will open on the right. Boylston: The destination of this train is Lechmere.

The train screeches to a stop. It's the loudest sound you've ever heard. It's the Boylston stop. The doors snap open. Passengers board. LISA boards. She notices Anna.

LISA

Anna!!

ANNA

Aunty Lisa?

LISA

Hiiiiii sweetie.

Lisa sits next to Anna and SQUEEZES her in a hug.

ANNA

Hi!

LISA

What are the odds, right?

ANNA

Crazy!

LISA

Oh sweetheart, it's so good to see you. How have you been holding up? How's mom?

ANNA

Good, I'm good. Mom's good. Yeah... We're all-- Good!

LISA

That's great... That's great honey.

Pause.

LISA

Are you sure there's nothing going on? You know you can talk to me.

ANNA

Yeah! I mean *no*, nothing's going on. But thanks Aunty.

LISA

Okay.

A silence.

LISA

I know about Danny.

ANNA

Oh. Right.

LISA

I am so sorry it didn't work out.

ANNA

Thanks.

LISA

Breakups are so hard.

ANNA

Yeah.

Long pause.

LISA

It's okay to not be okay.

ANNA

I know.

Long pause.

LISA

Everything happens for a reason, and it's okay to not know that reason yet.

ANNA

I really don't want to talk about it, actually? Could we talk about something else?

LISA

Sure, sure. Whatever you want, Annie-bannie. What do you want to talk about? I'm here for you.

ANNA

Uhhh-- how are the dogs? How's Cooper?

LISA (on a sigh)

Oh you know. Cooper's sleeping all day. I take him for a 10 minute walk and he's wiped. I've been letting him up on the couch, feeding him left-over steak tips. I serve at his pleasure these days.

ANNA

Aw, that's great.

LISA

Yeah.

Lisa looks at Anna with concern. Nods and nods, like a therapist you didn't ask for.

LISA

Honey, I went through a break-up right after college too. He was my boyfriend of 4 years. It was totally serious, just like you and Danny. I was so sure I'd marry him, and he broke my heart. I totally wallowed away in my sadness. I lost almost half a year of my young adult life, just feeling sorry for myself and throwing my ambitions away.

Anna looks at the floor.

LISA

And you know what? Your mom, of all people, got me to pick myself up by my boot straps and go on with my life. She said, "Lisa. You're no fun anymore. I'm sick of this sorrowful bullshit. Let's go on a hike." And we did. We went on a hike and I re-connected with my body, and with the natural world, and it gave me a new sense of hope. I had to get to the top of that mountain to really find my sense of perspective.

ANNA

Uh-huh.

LISA

So I'm just saying, Anna, that I know what you're going through, okay?

ANNA

Okay.

LISA

And you can talk to me. Really.

ANNA

Thanks. I just, don't really want to. Right now.

LISA

That's okay, that's okay. I totally understand that.

ANNOUNCER

Next stop: Park Street. No smoking please. Change for the red line. Doors will open on the right.

LISA

And so have you found a place to live?

ANNA

What?

LISA

Well I'm assuming you're not living with Danny anymore.

ANNA

Oh, right.

LISA

So do you have a plan? Can you afford a place on your own? You know, this woman in my book club has a niece about your age living in Boston, and I could always ask her if she's looking for a roommate-- maybe it would be good for you to have some female energy around you while you get back on your feet.

ANNA

I've been staying with Sarah.

LISA

She has an extra room?

ANNA

No--

LISA

On her couch?

ANNA

Yeah, just for now.

LISA

Well I can absolutely ask Karen about her niece and setting you up on a coffee date or something, because you really need to start looking for a new place. Leases are getting snatched up left and right. You need to be proactive about it.

ANNA

Yeah, I will.

LISA

Have you looked anywhere yet?

ANNA

I've looked at a few places.

LISA

And?

ANNA

It's just a matter of finding somewhere I can afford that isn't a total shit hole, you know?

LISA

Oh, Annie, you really shouldn't curse, it's not very attractive.

ANNA

What?

LISA

I mean all power to you, and it's your life and you can make whatever choices you want to make, but now that you're single, you should keep in mind how you... come across.

ANNA

It's not the 1950s.

LISA

I just worry about you. I mean with being all wrapped up in that art stuff, and you're such a beautiful young girl, and now you're living alone--

ANNA

I'm living with Sarah.

LISA

I just wouldn't want you getting involved with the wrong type of guy. Do you understand what I'm saying?

ANNA

No... Not really.

LISA

Those artist boys think they can do anything they want because they're "emotionally in tune" from their haikus // and silly sonnets or whatever--

ANNA

That's not what Danny was like.

LISA

So they take advantage and // manipulate your feelings with some contrived metaphors--

ANNA

No, Danny never took advantage of me. Danny wasn't like that!

LISA

Well it doesn't matter what Danny was like, now does it? Because you're not with him.

ANNA

Yeah, I'm fully aware of that, thanks.

LISA

I'm saying you need to be wary of other boys like him. You can't let another writer or some musician drag you into any trouble.

Anna says nothing.

LISA

You hear me, Annie?

Anna says nothing.

LISA

Annie? I'm worried for your safety.

ANNA

I'm safe, I'm safe! I'm perfectly FINE, okay?

Silence.

LISA

Anna, can I tell you something?

ANNA

Can we just forget it?

LISA

Can I just say something to you? Can I be frank?

ANNA

Please just forget it.

LISA

You know I love you. So. Much.

ANNA

I know.

LISA

But you need to get it together.

Anna does not respond.

LISA

You're broke, you don't have a job, you look like a mess-- I mean really, Anna, just because you've been dumped doesn't mean you can just throw yourself away and if you'd just listen to what I have to say--

ANNA

No. I don't want to.

LISA

I'm trying to help you.

ANNA

I don't need your help.

LISA

I want what's best for you, Anna. I'm worried about you, all the time--

ANNA

Don't be. It's not doing me any good.

LISA

Hey, I don't deserve this attitude.

ANNA

Yeah? Well you're not my mother, so lay off.

ANNOUNCER

Entering: Park Street. No smoking please. Change here for the red line. Doors will open on the right.

LISA

Not your mother? No. No, I'm not. But, I basically raised you. I'm your mom's oldest friend.

Anna stands to get off the train. In Lisa's monologue, the lights of the train car begin to flicker.

LISA

I'm your mom's oldest friend. I know you. I know your mom and I know you. I've been there for every stage of your life. I've watched you grow up. For 24 years. Think of all the things your mother-- that we've-- sacrificed for you. I was there the day you came home, you know. I watched your mother bring you inside. It was the happiest day of her life. It was one of the happiest days of *my* life! Your mom and I, I mean we went shopping for baby things together, spent hours deciding which brand of diapers would be best. We always wanted to make sure you had the absolute best. And all those dance lessons, painting classes, theatre camps? Do you have any idea how expensive those are? You probably never knew because why would you know, but I payed for a lot of those. You wanted to go so badly and your mom couldn't afford it all on her own and I love her so *I helped her make you happy*. And what was it all for? Art school? You went to art school. To be an artist. Art is a fucking hobby, Anna, not a career. You cannot waste yourself making fucking art. Art helps nobody. Your art and your talent will never be enough to pay for rent, to pay for anything really! And certainly not even enough to pay for more art classes so you can make more pathetic art that will also not make you any fucking money! Is this what your mother raised you for? Is this what she's been working for? 24 years of doing anything for you so you'll be happy and you're just choosing failure. You could have done anything you wanted to. A near perfect score on the SAT, but god forbid you have any ambition to be anything more than a poor, pathetic, lonely fucking artist.

The train's devolving into nightmare crescendos with Lisa's tirade. The screeching of the train is deafening.

ANNOUNCER

This is Park Street. No fucking smoking. Change here for the red line. That's you Anna, change here to get on the fucking red line. Run, Anna. Run. Get off the fucking train. Doors open on the right. Get off the train, Anna. Get off the damn train.

The doors open and suddenly Anna is shot out onto the crowded platform.

ANNOUNCER

Attention passengers. The next red line train to Alewife is leaving 10 minutes ago. That's your train, Anna. You better run.

Anna runs. Transition.