

THIRD WINDOW FROM THE RIGHT

by Scott Mullen

CHARACTERS:

KATE is prim and initially quiet, but willing to engage.

HENRY is socially awkward.

The characters can be any age over 20, but should be relatively close in age.

SHORT SUMMARY:

Henry gets up the courage to come down from his apartment and talk to Kate on a park bench, but she isn't who he hoped she might be.

KATE sits on a bench, primly sipping from a thermos, a crumpled paper bag next to her.

HENRY approaches, nervous, manila envelope in his hand. He slows, then speeds up, and passes the bench... then stops. Galvanizing himself, he pivots, and practically throws himself on the bench next to Kate.

HENRY

Oh my God. Wow. I'm here. It feels like the world is spinning. Is it spinning?

KATE

Are you okay?

HENRY

Say that again.

KATE

Are you okay?

HENRY

Your voice is just like I imagined it.

Kate sighs, and screws the top back on her thermos. Reaches for the bag.

HENRY

No, don't go. Please. You need to understand - this is a moment for me. A big moment. I've thought about this a lot, what I would do, what I would say. But this is real. There you are. I've never been so close. To you. My God. Your pores - they're huge.

KATE

What?

HENRY

And your freckles. You have... so many freckles. I thought you might, but now that I'm here - wow.

KATE

I'm leaving.

HENRY

No. Please. I didn't mean to say that out loud. Okay, I actually did. Because I promised myself I'd be honest, and say whatever was on my mind. That I'd just be me.

KATE

Who are you?

HENRY

I'm Henry. I live right up there, across the square. Third floor, third window from the right. That's me. Henry Sturgeon. You've heard of me? No, no of course you haven't. I'm a writer, that's what I do, sit up there all day and write. Well, that's what I should do, but I'm a writer, so I look out the window a lot. And I see you, right here, on this bench, every day between noon and one. Eating lunch from your brown paper bag, which is adorable, by the way. Sandwich, apple, thermos containing, I'm guessing maybe tea? Something brown.

KATE

You can see that from your window.

HENRY

Well, with binoculars. Did I mention I had binoculars? They are very good binoculars. I bought them to look at birds, but there are only like four kinds of birds around here. So I started looking at people. And now pretty much just you.

KATE

So you're a stalker.

HENRY

No-no-no-no. No. That's not - no. I've never followed you or anything. Not that you're not stalk-worthy, I'm sure there are men who - but no, that's not me. You're more - my muse.

KATE

Your muse.

HENRY

No matter how bad things are going, how little writing I've done in the morning, I know that five days a week, Monday through Friday, you're going to be the bench, eating your lunch. It's the one part of my day I really look forward to. You give me this sort of... creative... jolt, that gets me get through the day. And then, once, I even saw you on a Saturday. It was a miracle. I was really kind of depressed, really having problems with a scene, but then I looked up, and there you were. Right here on this bench.

KATE

Yeah. I remember that Saturday.

HENRY

You weren't eating lunch. You just sat here.

KATE

Yes.

HENRY

You just looked really sad. I almost came down to make sure you were okay. Almost. No, I'm lying. I wanted to, but it just wasn't going to happen. And I'm sorry about that.

KATE

What do you want, Henry?

Henry thrusts the envelope at her. She takes it.

HENRY

This is for you. Open it.

Kate looks inside. Reaches in. Ruffles through the bills.

KATE

Holy crap.

HENRY

Three thousand dollars.