

***Bob: A Life in Five Acts* by P.S. Nachtrieb**  
**Overview & Character Breakdown**

**CHARACTERS**

BOB — from infant to old man. If handsome, unconventionally so. If not handsome, his personality adds something charismatic. Energy, optimism, open, active. American, of any or many cultural backgrounds.

THE CHORUS — Two women (Chorus One and Chorus Three) and two men (Chorus Two and Chorus Four). The chorus is, ideally, of unspecified but diverse cultural backgrounds. American. The Chorus will play themselves as well as every character in the play, aside from Bob. (See end of play for a possible breakdown of roles for each chorus member.) The Chorus is dispassionate but eloquent. The characters they assume are vivid, bright, sharp, and distinct. Even if they only have one line, there is pathos, history, and pain.

**PLACE**

All over the United States of America, interiors and exteriors. Plus one scene in Mexico. The play often changes rapidly from location to location and the shifts are quick. The speed of the changes is important and part of the ride of the play. My hunch is that the stagecraft in the play is exposed for being what it is.

**TIME**

From the birth to the death of Bob.

## **THE ACTS**

ACT ONE — How Bob was born, abandoned, raised by a fast-food employee, discovers his dream, and almost dies.

ACT TWO — How Bob does not die, comes of age at a rest stop, pursues his dream, falls in love and has his heart broken.

ACT THREE — How Bob pursues his dream across America, gets chased out of many towns, meets an important man, and turns his back on everything he believed.

ACT FOUR — How Bob has a turn of luck, becomes a new man, achieves a false dream, meets an important woman and is redeemed.

ACT FIVE — The rest.

## **INTERLUDES**

There are short interludes in between each act, each performed by a chorus member. I call them "dances" in the play but they could be any sort of brief performance with no words.

An intermission is perhaps best placed between Acts Three and Four.

## **MUSIC**

Yes. Underscoring. Maybe a live musician. Maybe the Chorus plays music.

## **MOOD**

Epic, cinematic, a whirlwind, a ride.

**CAST BREAKDOWN**  
**(A suggestion)**

BOB — male

CHORUS ONE — female

JEANINE

CAITLYN

WAITRESS ONE

PROSTITUTE ONE

DEBORAH

VERA (+ others)

CHORUS TWO — male

CONNOR

JAMES

WAITRESS TWO

MADAM

BARISTA

TONY

LEO (+ others)

CHORUS THREE — female

HELEN

BONNIE

KIM

AMELIA

WAITRESS THREE

PROSTITUTE THREE (+ others)

CHORUS FOUR — male

SETH

SAGE

WAITRESS

PROSTITUTE FOUR

GUNTHER

ROULETTE DEALER

SVEN (+ others)

## Bob Side #1: Chorus, Bonnie, Jeanine, Bob, Connor

safe space behind the service counter. *(Jeanine moves.)* Do not stand near fryers. *(Jeanine moves again.)* Step two: Determine if parent or guardian is still on the property. *(Jeanine takes counter microphone.)* Attention Valentine's Day guests. We hope you are all enjoying your romantic meals. If there is anyone in the restaurant who may have left a personal item in the bathroom, would you please come to the counter at this time? *(Jeanine waits.)* Step three: Should no one claim baby/child, immediately phone the police, Child Protective Services, and the corporate legal crisis line. Under no circumstances should you look into the baby's eyes and fall in love with it. Do not fall in love with the baby. *(Jeanine lowers the paper. Jeanine tries to not look at Bob. Jeanine looks at Bob. Jeanine falls in love with Bob.)*

CHORUS FOUR. This is why Jeanine decided to raise Bob as her own. *(Jeanine driving, Bob in a bundle next to her.)*

JEANINE. I was finishing up my Sunday night dinner at the Bamboo Wok. I don't know how authentic or healthy it is but I like the flavors. I'd been working my way through the menu for about a year. Each week, I would have a new entrée in order of appearance. I'd finally made it to the "Noodles slash Rice" section after several months of Lamb and I felt like I was entering a new era in my life. When the waiter delivered the check and cookie, the fortune inside seemed different. The paper looked shiny, almost golden, the ink darker, more insistent.

FORTUNE COOKIE VOICE (CHORUS TWO). "You will be the mother to a great great man."

JEANINE. The fortunes I usually get are a little more vague than that. But this felt intentional. Like someone was watching me. From inside the cookie.

FORTUNE COOKIE VOICE (CHORUS TWO). "You will be the mother to a great great man."

JEANINE. It made me smile. I thought, "Well, cool, Jeanine, maybe the future isn't only selling tiny burgers and having Asian food once a week." And then my stomach started to twitch, felt like I was gonna be sick. I started sweating, breathing heavy. And I thought, Oh my god, it's happening already. I stood up from my table and shouted "I'm gonna be the mother to a great great man!" Next thing I knew I woke up in a hospital bed. At first I thought I'd conceived my great man immaculate till the nurse told me that I'd almost died at the restaurant. That I had a severe reaction to the gluten in Asian noodles slash rice that messed up my insides so much that I would never be able to make a "great great man" the regular way. I don't really care for fortunes very much anymore. But, funny, you know, there you are. There you are. I must be just a weird noise in your ear. You little moving thing. I will give you food and shelter. I will educate you. I will make sure that becoming President of the United States remains a possibility. Even if it kills me, I will make you a great great man. *(Shift.)*

CHORUS FOUR. This is how Bob got his name. *(Jeanine's house. Bonnie, Jeanine's friend, is there. Jeanine is playing with Bob. Bonnie stares at Jeanine. Bob is examining.)*

BONNIE. You don't look exhausted.

JEANINE. I'm not exhausted, Bonnie.

BONNIE. Trust me. In a few days you will be exhausted for the rest of your life.

JEANINE. He sleeps through the night.

BONNIE. Since when?

JEANINE. Since I got him five days ago.

BONNIE. I read that babies who sleep through the night often have learning disabilities. It was in *Newsweek*.

BOB. Ghshablah.

JEANINE. What should I name him?

BONNIE. You don't have a name for him yet?

JEANINE. It's not like I got to plan ahead for this. *(Bonnie starts to cry.)* Bonnie?

BONNIE. Are you sure you can do this?

JEANINE. I think so.

BONNIE. The choices you make right now will determine a life of joy or a life of pain.

BOB. Ooo.

JEANINE. It's just a name, Bonnie.

BONNIE. THE NAME IS EVERYTHING, JEANINE! First impressions, schoolyard happiness, entire futures depend on the name. I read that in *Newsweek* too. This is a child's future. THINK OF THE FUTURE.

JEANINE. You're getting a little angry, Bonnie.

BONNIE. I was given the wrong name! Someone asks, "What's your name?" and I say "Bonnie" and people think something's wrong with me 'cause I don't seem very "Bonnie-like." I'm suspect from the get-go and that ripples and ripples, a chain reaction against my favor and look at me now. If I wasn't "Bonnie," I'd be a different person. I'd have a better life. I wouldn't want to die. Chester. *(Bonnie does a flourish with her hands. Exits.)*

JEANINE. What do you think? If you could be called anything in the world, what would it be?

BOB. Bwahhhhhhhhhhhb. *(Beat.)*

JEANINE. What was that?

BABY BOB. Argh baplbttss urrglmmmmmm ... bwaahhb.

JEANINE. Did you just say —

BABY BOB. Bwaahb.

JEANINE. Bob? Bob. Bob. Bob.

BABY BOB. Bwahb. *(Jeanine looks out — a thought to the future. The Chorus each take alternating lines.)*

CHORUS TWO. Welcome our newest student, Bob.

CHORUS THREE. What a beautiful painting, Bob.

CHORUS FOUR. You were just incredible at recess, Bob.

CHORUS TWO. Bob the way you play hockey, I don't know what to feel.

CHORUS THREE. Kiss me Bob.

CHORUS FOUR. Here, take this special chair, Bob.

CHORUS TWO. Bob you can be anything you want.

CHORUS THREE. Be a historian, Bob.

CHORUS FOUR. Be an artist, Bob.

CHORUS TWO. Cure, Bob. Cure the sick.

CHORUS THREE. Kiss me again Bob.

CHORUS FOUR. Bob, kiss us both at the same time.

CHORUS TWO. I love you Bob.

CHORUS THREE. I love You Bob.

CHORUS FOUR. Bob must be stopped.

JEANINE. Bob. Your name is Bob.

BABY BOB. Bwahb. *(A banging on the door.)*

CONNOR. Open up, Jeanine!

CHORUS FOUR. This is why Jeanine decided to leave town with Bob.

JEANINE. That's the police, Bob. *(A bang.)*

CONNOR. Jeanine!

JEANINE. It's open! Stay quiet, Bob.

BABY BOB. Bwahb.

JEANINE. Stay quiet. *(Jeanine hides Bob in a grocery bag. Connor, a police officer, enters.)*

CONNOR. Jeanine.

JEANINE. Connor.

BABY BOB. Bwahb.

CONNOR. Been a long time.

JEANINE. Seen you around.

CONNOR. It's been a long time. *(The pain of their history is felt.)*

JEANINE. How can I help you, Connor?

CONNOR. You still working at the White Castle?

JEANINE. You know I still work there.

CONNOR. Anything weird happen the last few days?

JEANINE. Something weird happens every day. Our lighting has a way of pushing people over the edge.

CONNOR. We got a call at the station today.

JEANINE. Well, good for you.

CONNOR. Some woman.

JEANINE. Of course it was a woman.

CONNOR. Crying. Didn't say her name. Just asked if "he was OK."

JEANINE. Who?

CONNOR. She wouldn't say. Said she "had to do it," that "if I knew the whole story," blah de blah and I had to interrupt: "Ma'am, what you are talking about?" She said, "White

Castle" and hung up.

JEANINE. How odd.

CONNOR. Anyone leave an infant at the White Castle on Valentine's Day?

BOB. Bwahb.

JEANINE. Not to my recollection.

CONNOR. You've always had a great memory.

JEANINE. Don't butter me, Connor.

CONNOR. I'm just saying you have a tendency of not forgetting any and all things that happen.

JEANINE. I like to learn from my mistakes. *(Beat.)*

CONNOR. I've seen you at the Bamboo Wok.

JEANINE. Don't.

CONNOR. Eating alone every week.

JEANINE. I enjoy self-dining.

CONNOR. Maybe I can join you sometime.

JEANINE. Connor, thank you for your diligent police work but alas, I do not recollect anyone leaving a Bob at my place of employment.

CONNOR. A what?

BOB. Bob.

JEANINE. A baby.

CONNOR. You said Bob.

JEANINE. I meant a baby.

BOB. Bobby.

CONNOR. Who's Bob? *(Bob pokes his head out.)*

JEANINE. It's someone I'm seeing. His name is Bob. *(Beat.)*

CONNOR. I don't believe it.

JEANINE. I fell in love with him the moment I saw him.

CONNOR. What does Bob do?

BOB. Bob do. Do Bob Bob.

JEANINE. He is a great great man.

BOB. Gray. Man.

CONNOR. I guess it was a mistake to come here. *(Connor almost exits, turns.)* I want you back, Jeanine. I want another chance.

JEANINE. You had your chance, Connor. *(Beat.)*

CONNOR. If you see anything at work —

JEANINE. Nothing would overjoy me more. *(Connor almost exits, turns.)*

CONNOR. One day, Jeanine Bordeaux, I will prove myself to you. *(Connor exits.)*

BOB. Bwahb. Proo Mah Salf.

JEANINE. We can't stay here, Bob.

CHORUS FOUR. It is said that Jeanine collected the few belongings she felt to be essential, including a pillowcase filled with her life savings, and left her home forever to raise Bob in her beige Chevy Malibu. This is the road trip of Bob and Jeanine. (*A "road trip" that spans twelve years. The Chorus assists.*)

JEANINE. That is the sky. That's a tree. Black walnut. That's a dead goat. That's a fire. You'll want to be careful with that. (*White Castle.*) That's where I worked. (*Las Vegas.*) That's where they play roulette. (*A religious sign asking "Where you will spend eternity?"*) That's a good question. (*Bamboo Wok.*) Don't eat there. That's a farmer. That's someone who delivers things to people. That one's crazy. And that one's evil. (*The Grand Canyon.*) This is the Grand Canyon, Bob.

BOB. Whoa.

JEANINE. It was carved by the Colorado River over millions of years. And it's still changing. (*Pointing.*) As are those Rocky Mountains, those mesas, this coastline. The ground beneath us is undergoing constant change, Bob.

BOB. Erosion. (*A house in South Carolina.*)

JEANINE. And it was here that they would rest, but only for a few hours. Danger was always close. Nineteen times Ms. Tubman made this journey. That's what you do when things aren't right, Bob.

BOB. Railroad. (*New Mexico.*)

JEANINE. And it was here that Mr. Oppenheimer dropped his experiment from a wooden tower and fission ensued. One event can change the world, Bob.

BOB. Chain reaction. (*The first Wal-Mart.*)

JEANINE. And it was here that Mr. Walton opened the first stores that ushered in a new type of shopping experience. But he still always drove the same old truck, Bob.

BOB. Entrepreneur. (*Mt. Rushmore.*)

JEANINE. And even though Lincoln was killed at a play, the decisions he made would change the course of our nation. One man can change everything.

BOB. So if I do something amazing, someone else will carve my face onto a mountain?

JEANINE. There are lots of factors involved when getting put on a mountain. Politics. Popularity. Your face. A lot of achievements go completely unrecognized, not even on a plaque.

BOB. What's a plaque? (*They look at a plaque.*)

JEANINE. It's a marker, Bob. To pay tribute to some great act or person.

BOB. (*Rubbing fingers over letters.*) "In Memory of Great Sculptor Gutzon Borglum." It's beautiful.

JEANINE. And they last forever.

BOB. I want to be on a plaque someday.

JEANINE. Well, you can be, Bob.

BOB. In memory of Bob, the man who rescued a town from destruction! Bob, the great



entertainer and tamer of beasts. Bob, the man who invented a blanket you can wear!

JEANINE. You better keep a piece of paper handy to write all your ideas down.

BOB. I've got some paper in my pocket!

JEANINE. You can do anything you want with your life, Bob.

BOB. You should be on a plaque, Mom.

JEANINE. Oh, Bob, that's, well, that's the nicest thing anyone has ever —

BOB. Let's go.

JEANINE. We don't always have to be in such a rush.

BOB. But Mom, if I am to become great, there is so much I have to learn and see! *(The montage goes into overdrive. Bob's energy remains high. The trip is killing Jeanine.)*

BOB. Birthplaces!

JEANINE. Battlegrounds.

BOB. Big cities!

JEANINE. Empty stretches.

BOB. Public parks

JEANINE. Private islands.

BOB. Man-made lakes.

JEANINE. Hoover Dams.

BOB. Holy sites.

JEANINE. Corn Palaces.

BOB. Dinosaur bones.

JEANINE. Swinger camps.

BOB. Monuments.

JEANINE. Junkyards.

BOB. Luxury homes.

JEANINE. Trailer parks.

BOB. Ham and Cheese omelets.

JEANINE. Coffee.

BOB. More Ham and Cheese omelets.

JEANINE. Indigestion.

BOB. Fudge.

JEANINE. Ibuprofen.

BOB. Art and science

JEANINE. Wow that is hurting —

BOB. History and Civics

JEANINE. Can't quite — catch my breath *(Jeanine begins to fade with a fatal liver disorder).*

## Bob Side # 2: Chorus, Bob, Deborah, Barista, Gunther, Helen

WAITRESS THREE. Just feeling your weight, Bob, made me teeter.

WAITRESS FOUR. Where'd he go?

BOB. There are a lot of important things in my undies.

WAITRESS THREE. My petals were starting to open.

BOB. Lovemaking is only great with someone you love.

WAITRESS FOUR. *(Whispering to another waitress.)* I don't know if that's true.

BOB. Can I ... just show you my list? *(A small waitress groan.)* Isn't it long? I've got a whole section on "ways to restore a dying town back to health." Tourism! We could work together. Some creative marketing and a fudge shoppe and —

WAITRESS ONE. Our husband's gonna be home soon.

BOB. You all have a husband.

WAITRESS TWO. He just doesn't scratch everything we need, you know.

BOB. Well then, find someone who can scratch it all.

WAITRESS THREE. We've got a pretty complicated itch, Bob.

BOB. "When you give up, you drown." The great escapist Harry Houdini said that. *(Beat.)*

WAITRESS FOUR. If you don't mind, let yourself out the back? Neighbors.

BOB. I don't think you realize how much tourists really love fudge.

WAITRESSES. Good luck, Bob.

WAITRESS ONE. And here's your change. *(Leaving a plastic change container with a dollar on it. Bob alone.)*

BOB *(Reading the dollar.)* "Barry Metcalf is still a slut." And what am I? *(Bob journeys across America.)*

CHORUS TWO. Three hundred seventeen towns. Twenty-three unopened fudge shops. Eleven hundred waitresses. And Bob was unable to accomplish anything on his list.

BOB. *(Crossing each item off his list.)* Nobody will give me a chance.

CHORUS ONE. Bob was reduced to performing some of the worst jobs in the nation. *(A chain coffee shop.)*

BOB. Ventino Quadruple low-fat-half-caf mocha latte for Deborah.

CHORUS THREE. But, much like a Cubs fan, Bob would enter each new chapter with a small amount of hope. *(Bob hands the drink to the customer, grabs her arm.)*

BOB. This could be better than it is, Deborah. If they let me make it how it should be made, with a little pitcher for the milk and grace in the pour, it could change your life.

CHORUS THREE. And much like a Cubs fan, Bob's hope would quickly fade.

BARISTA. Customers do not need to be made aware of the mediocrity.

BOB. This is an opportunity to affect another person on this planet.

BARISTA. You're a barista.

DEBORAH. My arm.

BOB. There are great baristas out there.

BARISTA. I majored in literature. At Cornell.

BOB. They have barista competitions and their own dirty style!

BARISTA. I was going to be the cultural critic of *The New Yorker*.

BOB. That's amazing!

BARISTA. It would have been, if I was the cultural critic of *The New Yorker*! If life were actually fair, if the UPenn mafia didn't control the publishing world, if Sybil hadn't called me promiscuous on every dollar she had ... my dream is over, dude.

DEBORAH. Let go of my arm.

BOB. Start your own magazine. Host culture at the store. Make it a critical Mecca.

BARISTA. Dude dude dude, chill the 'bition. Don't you see what Deborah and I are doing? The whole suffering of life gets a little bit lighter when you just give up. *(Bob punches barista.)* Why did you do that?

BOB. BECAUSE WE ARE ALL GOING TO DIE OR DISAPPEAR. Vanish into small little bits and break hearts. And before that happens, before it all gets taken away, I'm supposed to be great at something. Even if it's foam.

BARISTA. You just punched me.

BOB. I am Bob and I will be a great man.

BARISTA. You're delusional, Bob.

BOB. You're a slut, Barry Metcalf.

BARISTA. You're fired, Bob.

BOB. I fire you! *(Barista punches Bob.)* You are all fools! *(Barista punches Bob.)* YOU ARE DOOMING THIS NATION TO SMALL DREAMS. *(Deborah punches Bob.)*

BARISTA. You're the dream. *(Punches Bob, he falls to the ground.)*

I'm reality. Get it, dude?

DEBORAH. Don't make me feel bad for what I've settled for. *(Deborah kicks Bob.)*

BARISTA. Now get the hell out of Poncha Springs! *(Barista and Deborah walk off arm in arm on their way to have sex. Bob crawls into the boxcar of a freight train, wipes his bloody face.)*

BOB. Create catharsis through artistically moving beverages. *(Crosses it off his list.)* What degrading act will I be forced to perform next? I don't know what to do anymore.

GUNTHER. Sounds like you haven't found your RingerTraum Yet. *(A match is struck and a lantern lit revealing Gunther [Chorus Four], a roughly dressed man who looks like he may have been strikingly handsome back in the day but now has some wreckage.)*

BOB. Sorry, I didn't realize this boxcar was taken.

GUNTHER. Trade you a drink for some food.

BOB. All I have are muffin wrappers.

GUNTHER. My favorite. *(Bob gives Gunther a couple muffin wrappers. Gunther takes a swig and passes flask to Bob. Gunther chews.)* Blueberry?

BOB. Reduced-Fat blueberry bran.

GUNTHER. Pretty good buds you got.

BOB. I used to sell them. Took the wrappers out of the trash. *(Bob takes a sip and coughs.)* What is this?

GUNTHER. It's whin.

BOB. Never heard of it.

GUNTHER. My own special blend of whiskey and gin. Bottom shelf.

BOB. Oh.

GUNTHER. I only have one flask.

BOB. It's awful.

GUNTHER. Give it a few years and it goes down smooth. *(Bob gives back the flask.)* Something gnawing on your bone, tiger?

BOB. It's my birthday.

GUNTHER. On Valentine's Day? How sweet.

BOB. I'm thirty years old.

GUNTHER. Young buck.

BOB. Before they turned thirty, Bill Gates founded Microsoft, Carolyn Davidson designed the Nike swoosh, and Jimi Hendrix already died. My greatest achievement to date is survival.

GUNTHER. Don't knock survival. Not easy keeping the blood pumping, hoping the wolves don't get you along the way.

BOB. I need to be more than alive. *(Beat.)*

GUNTHER. I used to be more than alive.

BOB. Yeah, I'm sure you were.

GUNTHER. Perhaps you would be illuminated by my life story.

BOB. Actually I was thinking I might close my —

GUNTHER. My name is Gunther Roy.

BOB. Hi. I'm —

GUNTHER. I used to be known as the greatest animal trainer of all time. Lions, tigers, llamas, anything with a compound eye.

BOB. Sorry, I've never heard of —

GUNTHER. I toured for thirty years with the largest circus in the country. I stuck my head into the mouth of a lion. I made tigers jump through flaming hoops. I made geese fly in formations that spelled letters of the alphabet. USA.

BOB. That sounds pretty —

GUNTHER. My closing act was called the "CreatureMaker" where I would command a lion and a tiger to mate. No other trainer could do that. But then one night changed everything. Do you want to hear about the night that changed everything?

BOB. Maybe in an hour, I'm tired and still bleeding and I —

GUNTHER. This is Gunther's flashback!

BOB. OK. *(At the circus. Helen runs in.)*

HELEN. Mr. Roy, that was amazing!

GUNTHER. Why thank you, little fawn.

HELEN. A lion and a tiger! And they seemed to enjoy it!

GUNTHER. They don't.

HELEN. I'm an animal trainer too.

GUNTHER. Oh. How wonderful.

HELEN. Aspiring. I work at a pet store to pay the bills.

GUNTHER. What have you forced animals to do so far?

HELEN. Little stuff. Getting sheep into various shapes: pentagons, rhombuses and whatnot. Got a whole coop of chickens to play dead when I rang a gong. That sort of thing.

GUNTHER. Pretty impressive. For a lady.

HELEN. Helen. My name is Helen.

CHORUS ONE and TWO. (*Whisper.*) Helen.

BOB. Helen ...

GUNTHER. You smell like celery, Helen.

HELEN. Animals have been more faithful and loving to me than any person. And training is my life.

GUNTHER. What is your RingerTraum, Helen?

HELEN. You want to know my RingerTraum?

BOB. What is a ... wait, how do you even say —

GUNTHER. Every great animal trainer has a RingerTraum. The dream they have, standing in the center ring, performing the one seemingly impossible act they've dedicated their entire life to being able to achieve.

BOB. I need one of those. 'Cause I have this big list and it is not —

GUNTHER. (*To Bob.*) Quiet!

HELEN. I've never told anyone.

GUNTHER. It's the most important thing to know about you. What is Helen's RingerTraum?

HELEN. I call it the "Living Totem." A tribute to nature and our Native American ancestors. A prairie dog sitting on top of a bald eagle perched on top of a beaver lying on a wolf standing on a mountain lion hunched on a grizzly bear that's got each paw on one of four buffalo. After they stack up, the lights would dim, and I would ask the audience ... "What animal are you? Which one is your guide on the trail of life? You are not alone." I want my act to cause inspiration, revelation and tears.

GUNTHER and BOB. (*Gunther threatened.*) That is the most impressive RingerTraum I have ever heard.

HELEN. That's nice of you to say.

GUNTHER. Helen, you have the potential to become the greatest animal trainer of all time.

HELEN. You don't really mean that.

GUNTHER. Unless someone can stop you.

HELEN. If I can't become a trainer, my life will be nothing but misery.

GUNTHER. Well then, you should join the circus, Helen.

BOB. Yes, she should.

HELEN. Right now?

GUNTHER. You can be my assistant.

HELEN. You're joking.

GUNTHER. I can keep an eye on you.

HELEN. I was just hoping for an autograph and a photo.

GUNTHER. Is that a yes?

HELEN. Yes yes!

BOB. Yes!

GUNTHER. Then we must kiss!

HELEN. Mr. Roy?

GUNTHER. To be a great trainer and assistant team, the animals must sense that we are mates, that we have tasted of each other, our smells intertwined, that we would defend each other's life with brutal conviction.

HELEN. Can't we just rub handkerchiefs on each other?

GUNTHER. Animals could smell that lie. Join me, Helen. Show your talent. Kiss my lips.

HELEN. You better not be just saying things to seduce me.

GUNTHER. Are you scared, Helen?

HELEN. I am never scared, Mr. Roy. Even if it kills me, I will do whatever it takes to be the greatest trainer that I can.

GUNTHER. Tonight, we begin the great collaboration of Helen and Gunther Roy.

HELEN. Helen and Gunther Roy.

GUNTHER. Who knows what we can create together? *(Back to the freight train.)*

BOB. I bet you created something amazing.

GUNTHER. It was the most incredible night of hanky panky I've ever known. Heaven and earth crashing together, lightning striking water, making life.

BOB. That's the best kind.

GUNTHER. Well, Gunther Roy, for the first time, got scared.

BOB. But you conquered your fears and together you were the greatest animal act team the world has ever seen!

GUNTHER. When Helen ran home to pack her toiletries and leotards, I told the circus that something happened between a child and a clown, and we quickly left town. I had Helen blacklisted from all the other circuses, the animal schools, zoos ... I made sure she would never train again. *(Helen runs in with a packed bag. Looks around at an empty lot, spinning.)*

BOB. No. No no no.

GUNTHER. When she described the RingerTraum she had, I knew she would unseat my title as the Greatest Animal Trainer of All Time. And so, much like a baby elephant, her spirit had to be crushed.

BOB. That's ... terrible!

GUNTHER. Of course it is.

BOB. You destroyed her dream.

GUNTHER. Forty weeks later a voicemail was left on my trailer phone. *(Helen appears, post-birth, a phone booth outside the White Castle.)*

HELEN. Dear Mr. Roy. I should have known by the way you whip goats how cruel you really are. Now I know. You have bound another soul, cue the music. I thought you should know that your act has resulted in a baby boy. He's got your frown. Something sparkly about him but one sight of his face makes me want to rob his clothes. And so I have left him in a White Castle to fend for himself. Somewhere in America, your firstborn son is living. If you want to go find him and tell him things are different than you've shown them to me to be, be my guest. Until you do, I curse you to live a life that befits the type of trainer that you are. *(A distant lion's roar.)* Good luck. *(Helen runs off, crying.)*

BOB. You deserved that voicemail.

GUNTHER. The animals sensed it immediately. They began to lose their fear and one day, when I stuck my face into the mouth of Mary Jo Sabre, I felt her jaw close just enough that I couldn't remove my head. I think she would have closed all the way if I hadn't shot her in the head with my gun. And from that moment I have lived a curs-ed life, of sadness and suffering that not even a full jug of whin can obscure.

BOB. You had the opportunity to create something amazing. And you didn't. You're not a great man at all!

GUNTHER. All I wish is to redeem my existence just a little. And so I tirelessly wander across this land, looking for that boy that's got a bit of me placed in him thirty years ago. *(Beat.)*

BOB. Thirty years ago.

GUNTHER. Yeah. Thirty years and nine months. *(Beat.)*

BOB. I'm thirty years old.

GUNTHER. Happy birthday.

BOB. I was born in a White Castle.

GUNTHER. I've heard worse.

BOB. I've never met my birth parents.

GUNTHER. I'm searching for my boy.

BOB. I'm not a girl. *(Beat.)*

GUNTHER. Smile. *(Bob smiles.)* That's her smile.

BOB. Frown. *(Gunterh frowns.)* I've got your frown.

GUNTHER. I thought it looked familiar.

BOB. Father?

**Bob Side #3: Bob, Vera, Dealer, Chorus**

GUNTHER. If you need to, you can drink your own pee.

BOB. I don't like it when people give me urgent final lessons.

GUNTHER. It's looking like my only gift to you is saving your life.

BOB. I want to hang out with you. Live in a trailer, cook omelets together and laugh about sad things. You were about to tell me the first thing I need to —

GUNTHER. THIS IS MY RINGERTRAUM, BOB! FIND YOUR OWN!

BOB. But I don't know how!

GUNTHER. Good luck, Bob. JUMP! *(They jump off the freight car.)*

BOB. AHHH!

GUNTHER. *(Running towards wolves.)* AHHHH! *(The wolves eat Gunther. Probably offstage. Gunther's arm flies in. An angry prayer.)*

BOB. Are you listening, Barry Metcalf? Are you listening, Poncha Springs? I have a father, who lived hard, smelled rough, who has done some terrible things in his life and he's still a greater man than all of you! And somewhere in America I have a mother who has the power to curse through voicemails. Who had a beautiful RingerTraum. And I have her smile. And they've ruined their lives for me. You evil, selfish, despicable land. You eat my father, poison my Jeanine, steal my Amelia, and you have soiled every beautiful idea I've written on pieces of paper with your mediocre filth. You are killing everything I love! Well, I curse you, Barry Metcalf. I curse Sioux Falls, Roanoke, and Aberdeen. I curse this ENTIRE NATION to live a life that befits who they are! No more fudge shops. No more lists. America does not deserve the love and passion of a dreamer. But I do. I have a dream. And I will pursue it by any means necessary until there is justice, until the pain you have inflicted upon me is avenged. I have a RINGERTRAUM and BOB WILL NOT BE STOPPED. Good luck, Bob. Good luck, indeed. *(He walks. Blackout. Intermission.)*

**End of Act Three**

**Interlude Three**

*A dance about luck.*

CHORUS FOUR. This is a dance about luck. *(Chorus Four does the dance.)* Thank you.

**ACT FOUR**

ALL CHORUS. Bob. Act Four.

CHORUS FOUR. How Bob has a turn of luck, becomes a new man, achieves a false dream, meets an important woman and is redeemed.

CHORUS THREE. This is how Bob had a turn of luck. *(A doorbell rings in a very large house. Tony, a butler, heads for the door.)*

BOB. No! *(Bob, 50 years old, perhaps dressed like Hugh Hefner [fancy pajamas], enters. He holds two glasses of champagne.)* I'll get it, Tony!

TONY. Yes, Bob. *(Tony exits. Bob opens the door.)*

BOB. Just in time! The Jacuzzi is at the perfect temperature for — Oh.

VERA. Hello!



BOB. You are not who I was expecting.

VERA. My name is Vera Ponchatraîne and I am a member of Troop 599: The greatest scouting troop of any gender in the Nevada area!

BOB. What do you want?

VERA. Did you know that there are over 1.3 million homeless and abandoned youths in the United States?

BOB. Oh no.

VERA. Yes, it is sad. All of us in Troop 599 are blessed to come from loving families, except for Bernadette Winters, and we would like to share a small portion of our blessings with those who are cursed. So, our troop is building a brand-new shelter for abandoned children in the Nevada desert area. Because everyone deserves a place they will not feel alone. Would you be interested in purchasing a box of cookies to support our cause?

BOB. Would I be interested?

VERA. If I sell the most cookies, I win tickets to Water Kingdom. *(Beat. Bob laughs. Not so nicely.)* What's so funny?

BOB. I used to be like you. "Doing Good Deeds." "Save The World." "Thin Mints." Guess where that got me?

VERA. It looks like you're doing very —

BOB. It seems like only twenty minutes ago that I was in the middle of the desert, no food or water, everything I loved robbed from me except for a ring in my undies moist with scrotal dew. For all practical purposes I should be dead. You know what death is, little girl?

VERA. Yes, my brother —

BOB. The point is, I'm not dead. I'm here living richly in this huge house. Isn't my house amazing?

VERA. It's very large.

BOB. And my silk pajamas. Don't they look comfy?

VERA. They're kind of opening up at the —

BOB. How do you think I did it, Brownie?

VERA. Did you pray?

BOB. No, *chica*, I got my feet under myself, cursed the nation, picked a direction, and I walked. *(Bob's flashback/story begins.)* Across hot sand. Past nuclear testing sites, foreclosed homes, and a terrible "arts" festival that was lighting something stupid on fire. I hunted and ate beetles, threw sand at vultures that were bird-kissing my flanks with their sharp, hungry beaks, and I followed the only piece of advice my recently met and killed birth father gave me and drank my own pee.

VERA. There's a lot of ammonia in —

BOB. And I kept yelling at myself, "Don't die, Bob! Keep crawling, Bob, and prove Poncha Springs wrong!"

VERA. Who?

BOB. I crawled for forty days and nights or thereabouts until one scorching day that hot sand became grass, and that grass became a fountain and that fountain had a pathway that led to the floor of this very building.

VERA. You just crawled into your house?

BOB. The Martin Luther Casino. The only civil rights-themed casino and adult playground in the country. "Martin Luther Casino: What's Your Dream?" That was the message blinking above the door.

VERA. That sounds wrong

BOB. But I had a dream. And, much like the creators of the greatest musical ever, *Mamma Mia*, I knew I had to risk everything I had. *(A roulette wheel spins in a melancholy way. A one armed roulette dealer stands by the wheel. Bob staggers towards it. There are two onlookers.)*

DEALER. Roulette wheel. Ye tired, ye poor, ye huddled. Come to my wheel and place your bets.

BOB. It's so beautiful.

DEALER. You look like Walt Whitman.

BOB. It's a sign.

DEALER. It's a wheel.

BOB. I want justice. I want a different life. Can I do that here?

DEALER. Depends on what you risk. The more it hurts, the bigger the win. *(Showing stump.)* What you gonna bet? *(Bob pulls out the ring.)*

BOB. Everything I have.

DEALER. What a moist ring.

VERA. You shouldn't bet that. You should be saving that for someone special.

BOB. Saving it for me. Roulette dealer, if I win, I promise I will honor and avenge the deaths of all I have loved. I will never again be slave to fools. I promise I will not be the man I used to be.

DEALER. Deal.

BOB. Red. Red is blood. I bet this ring on red.

DEALER. No more bets at this table please, this gentleman has bet it all. What do the Fates have in store for us tonight? A story of joy or a story to learn from? It all depends on this one little shiny ... BALL! *(Sound of the ball rolling, bouncing and landing in a slot. Putting down the marker.)* 30. Red. *(Vera stifles a clap.)*

BOB. Yes!

VERA. Yes!

BOB. This is my moment.

VERA. Yeah, that's, oo ... Well done.

BOB. Double or nothing!

VERA. No!

BOB. And if I lose, kill me. On the casino floor. Drag me through the streets, place my

head on a spire along I-15.

VERA. My brother doubled or nothing'd and they found him —

BOB. This is my flashback, Sashy! Red again!

DEALER. BALL! (*Sound of the ball rolling, bouncing and landing in a slot.*) Twenty-seven. Red.

VERA. Amazing! Oh wow! That's amazing! Holy cow.

BOB. It's not enough.

DEALER and VERA. Enough for what?

BOB. Again!

DEALER. Red.

BOB. Again!

DEALER. Red.

BOB. Again! Again! Again!

VERA. My tummy hurts.

BOB. And I won again. And again and again and again and that wheel landed on red seventeen times! (*The flashback fades out.*)

VERA. A hundred and thirty-one thousand times the value of the ring.

BOB. And I would have kept going if the Martin Luther Casino hadn't gone bankrupt and everyone lost their jobs and they had to turn their property over to me and is now my very home in which you solicit in today.

VERA. Wow, sir, it sounds like you were very, very lucky.

BOB. THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS LUCK! When Rockefeller was born at the right place at the right time, he monopolized. When Judy Garland chanced the part of Dorothy, she knocked it out of the park. And when Lou Gehrig stumbled upon a new disease, he made sure his name would last forever. I risked my life for this. I crawled towards a window and I jumped. Don't tell me that's not work, girlfriend.

VERA. I don't want to be your girlfriend.

BOB. Tell your little homeless children buddies that maybe they should stop hoping for handouts from ugly girls who really just want free tickets to Water Kingdom.

VERA. It's true what they say about you.

BOB. What do they say about me?

VERA. That you are not a very nice man.

BOB. No. No, I am not a nice man. Nothing great ever happens from being nice.

VERA. I told my pastor I was going to save you.

BOB. The only reason I answered the door is that I thought you were a prostitute!

VERA. Mom! (*Vera runs off.*)

BOB. Yeah, run back to Mommy! Run back to the parent who's alive and loves you! Hug her tight, mommyhaver! (*Door slams. Bob alone.*)

CHORUS. (*Whisper.*) Bob. (*Bob looks around. Whisper.*) Bob. (*Bob looks around.*)

BOB. Quiet.

CHORUS. (*Whisper.*) Not a nice man, Bob.

BOB. Music! (*Music plays.*)

CHORUS THREE. It is said that in the twenty years since Bob had his "this is not luck I totally earned this" moment, Bob had become the three thousand two hundred and seventh richest person in America.

BOB. Champagne! (*Tony brings Bob a glass of champagne.*)

CHORUS FOUR. Bob bought new clothes, got a butler, and put his money into Goldman Sachs instead of pillowcases where he made tons of money gambling on the misfortune of others.

BOB. Cake! (*Tony enters with birthday cake.*)

CHORUS ONE. Bob's kisses tasted different, he drank espresso from a can and he would occasionally lock himself in hotel rooms and urinate in jars. Bob never left the casino grounds and his eyes, the ones that saved him, had sunk into his skull.

TONY. Happy fiftieth birthday, Bob.

BOB. She knew about me.

TONY. Who, Bob?

BOB. Apparently I have a reputation in the female scouting community for "not being nice."

TONY. You must feel proud, Bob.

BOB. The world that you live in is not nice, Vera!

TONY. I don't think she can hear you, Bob. (*Bob pees in a jar.*)

BOB. I have everything I need. Money. A casino turned into a house. A butler.

TONY. That is the trifecta, Bob.

BOB. I don't need validation from "Scouts." I don't need a "birthday party" with "guests." I think I'm going to lock myself in room seven-oh-nine.

TONY. Bob ...

BOB. Please no lesson on my birthday, Tony.

TONY. Bob, I have been a butler for several hundred years as I possess both a tremendous ability to attend to people's whims and a rare genetic disease where I shall never age nor die. I've seen money transform some of the most decent people. My last employer, a successful and mediocre entertainer, insisted I put diamonds in her salad. She wanted to feel them pass through her abdomen, come out the back, after which she planned to sell them on her website. She would have done so if the diamonds had not sliced through her small intestine, bleeding her dead in less than two hours.

BOB. Are you saying it was wrong to pursue my happiness?

TONY. Are you happy, Bob?

BOB. What makes you think I'm not happy?

TONY. You seem a little lonely, Bob.

BOB. You seem a little lonely, Tony.

## Bob Side #4: Full Cast

*A dance about love.*

CHORUS TWO. This dance is about love. *(Chorus Two dances.)* Thank you.

### ACT THREE

ALL CHORUS. Bob. Act Three. *(Bob runs in with urinary urgency.)*

BOB. Clench clench clench.

CHORUS THREE. How Bob journeys across America, tries to do everything on his list, fails, meets an important man, and turns his back on everything he believes. *(Bob finds a bush. Pees.)*

BOB. Thank you, Caitlyn.

CHORUS FOUR. It is said the Ford Focus Bob jumped into drove for seven hours without stopping. Bob slept little, sweat a lot, and cried for various reasons he couldn't put into words.

BOB. *(A wordless noise.)* Ohhhhhhhhhhh.

CHORUS TWO. It is said that the driver of the car was once again Jeanine's friend Bonnie who in the past seven years had attempted fresh starts with four different names: Barbara, Hillary, Laura and Michelle. *(Bonnie appears.)* Seeing Bob in her trunk once again, Bonnie was reminded how little had changed in her life and what was it, really, that she needed to feel comfortable in her own skin. *(Bonnie thinks very seriously about what she needs, exits.)*

CHORUS ONE. This is how Bob journeyed across America. *(Bob zips up and wanders into town.)*

BOB. Main Street. Maple Lane. Spruce Alley. Evergreen Boulevard. Deciduous Way. Washington, Madison, Franklin, Van Buren. The Mesquite Grill, El Sombrero, Luigi's, The Bamboo Wok. *(Darker incarnations of the road trip characters: A farmer walks by with a Monsanto-like seed bag, spirit crushed.)* Excuse me, hello there, farmer, can you tell me where I am? *(A delivery person walks by with a foreclosure notice or some other unwelcome delivery.)* Pardon me, delivery person, is there a good place to stay around here? *(A crazy person walks by.)* And ma'am, I recognize that you might be crazy, but can you tell me if this is a good place to live? *(An evil person walks by. Insert funny cultural icon of your choice here.)* Or ... Never mind. *(A diner table. Waitress One enters with a coffee mug and a pitcher.)*

WAITRESS ONE. New in town?

BOB. I am.

WAITRESS ONE. I can tell.

BOB. My clothes?

WAITRESS ONE. Just something wet about you.

BOB. I was in a car trunk so I might be a little damp —

WAITRESS ONE. Cream and sugar?

BOB. That's the only way I can drink it.

WAITRESS ONE. How sweet. *(Waitress Two brings in cream and sugar.)*

BOB. Could you tell me —

WAITRESS TWO. You want to hear the specials?

BOB. No. I'll have a ham and cheese omelet.

WAITRESS TWO. Oo, a man who knows what he wants.

BOB. My favorite breakfast. Been a long time since I've had a real one. *(Waitress Three brings in toast.)*

WAITRESS THREE. Bet you need some white toast too.

BOB. With extra butter.

WAITRESS THREE. Knew it in your eyes. *(Waitress Four brings in extra butter.)*

WAITRESS FOUR. So ... what brings you to Sioux Falls?

BOB. Oh, is that where I —

WAITRESS ONE. And what brings you to Roanoke?

BOB. I thought I was in —

WAITRESS TWO. And to Aberdeen?

BOB. The birthplace of Kurt Cobain?

WAITRESS THREE. And South Padre Island?

WAITRESS ONE. Bloomington?

WAITRESS TWO. Glendive?

WAITRESS THREE. Montana?

WAITRESS FOUR. Lansing?

BOB. It's just where the trunk opened so I don't — *(The waitresses interrupt, overlapping.)*

WAITRESS ONE. Bella Vista?

WAITRESS TWO. Duluth?

WAITRESS THREE. Naples?

WAITRESS FOUR. Waterloo?

WAITRESS ONE. Middletown?

WAITRESS TWO. Portland?

WAITRESS THREE. Southampton?

WAITRESS FOUR. Las Cruces?

BOB. I've spent the last bunch of years thinking of ideas. Stuff I could do that might make a difference. And I wrote them down on a list. And now I'm looking for a place where I can do ... things. Solve problems. And maybe be recognized for it on a plaque or possibly a mountain.

WAITRESSES. Ohhhhhhh.

WAITRESS ONE. We got ourselves a dreamer.

WAITRESS TWO. Young blood.

WAITRESS THREE. Fresh meat.

WAITRESS FOUR. Your eyes haven't sunk into your skull yet.

BOB. Have you ever done anything great with your lives? *(The waitresses think.)*

WAITRESS ONE. I can be the only waitress in this diner, have it be packed and not miss a single order, not a single coffee mug dry.

WAITRESS TWO. I'm pretty good at quilts, how to tell a story and evoke memories through fabric. I gave one to my grandmother and it made her cry, so I consider that an accomplishment.

WAITRESS THREE. I'm the emperor of an online kingdom.

WAITRESS FOUR. I can tie a cherry stem into a knot with my tongue.

BOB. Maybe you can teach me.

WAITRESSES ONE, TWO and THREE. Maybe we can.

WAITRESS FOUR. It depends on your tongue. *(Each waitress puts a ham and cheese omelet in front of Bob.)*

BOB. Jeanine, who stole me, loved me and died, taught me that you could tell a lot about a place from the type of omelet that they make. Breakfast, unlike jazz, is America's gift to the world. Is this a place that honors that culinary legacy? Is it a place that would give someone a chance? *(Bob takes a bite of each omelet.)*

WAITRESS ONE. Is it?

BOB. I, uh, I think I'm going to go.

WAITRESSES. No!

BOB. Sorry, Those omelets are not very good.

WAITRESSES. No!

BOB. Something doesn't feel right about this place!

WAITRESSES. *(Various simultaneous muttering.)*

WAITRESS ONE. Well, yeah we know.

WAITRESS TWO. That's for sure.

WAITRESS THREE. Don't even get me started.

WAITRESS FOUR. That's 'cause we're situated on a hellmouth. *(The waitresses turn to Bob seductively.)*

WAITRESS ONE. We'd really love it if you stuck around for a score.

WAITRESS TWO. I could show you the new quilt cycle I'm working on.

WAITRESS THREE. And we really like having a fresh young face to look upon.

WAITRESS FOUR. I like the way your lips open and close.

BOB. You're all leaning so close to me.

WAITRESS ONE. You're exciting.

WAITRESS TWO. You have a mission.

WAITRESS THREE. Desire and passion.

WAITRESS FOUR. Is there anything we can do to convince you to stay? *(Sexy pause.)*

BOB. Maybe a bad omelet is an opportunity. There is a reason that trunk opened here and now. Because it is my job to transform this place from a drug-infested cesspool of

decay into a Jacuzzi of opportunity and hope. And with this list I will — *(Waitress One kisses Bob.)*

WAITRESS ONE. Oh my.

BOB. That wasn't —

WAITRESS TWO. Bob.

BOB. I didn't mean to —

WAITRESS THREE. Bob Bob Bob.

BOB. I don't even remember telling you my name.

WAITRESS FOUR. You're a great kisser, Bob.

BOB. It could be my legacy. *(Beat. Bob kisses all of the waitresses. It becomes a group kiss and they fall to the ground. A bizarre lovemaking scene ensues.)*

WAITRESSES. Yes!

BOB. Yes.

WAITRESSES. Yes!

BOB. Yay.

WAITRESS ONE. You taste amazing, Bob! So fresh.

WAITRESS TWO. Like a lemon.

WAITRESS THREE. Fabric softener.

WAITRESS FOUR. Carbonation.

BOB. And you taste like peanut oil.

WAITRESSES. Mmmmm!

WAITRESS ONE. So passionate.

WAITRESS TWO. Hungry!

WAITRESS THREE. Strong!

WAITRESS FOUR. Moderately hairy.

BOB. So are you!

WAITRESS ONE. Let's get some of these clothes off, Bob.

BOB. Oh, that tickles.

WAITRESS TWO. Let's get these undies off, Bob.

BOB. Wait. There are some things in my undies that I need to —

WAITRESS THREE. I really want to get those undies off, Bob.

BOB. No, really, hold on, I keep stuff in there that I —

WAITRESS FOUR. Here I go, about to take off your undies!

BOB. NO! STOP! STOP STOP! *(Bob emerges from the sheet protecting his undies. The waitresses remain in a pile.)* I'm sorry.

WAITRESS ONE. I was on the cusp, Bob.

WAITRESS TWO. Your tenderness, Bob, you're really good at that.



WAITRESS THREE. Just feeling your weight, Bob, made me teeter.

WAITRESS FOUR. Where'd he go?

BOB. There are a lot of important things in my undies.

WAITRESS THREE. My petals were starting to open.

BOB. Lovemaking is only great with someone you love.

WAITRESS FOUR. *(Whispering to another waitress.)* I don't know if that's true.

BOB. Can I ... just show you my list? *(A small waitress groan.)* Isn't it long? I've got a whole section on "ways to restore a dying town back to health." Tourism! We could work together. Some creative marketing and a fudge shoppe and —

WAITRESS ONE. Our husband's gonna be home soon.

BOB. You all have a husband.

WAITRESS TWO. He just doesn't scratch everything we need, you know.

BOB. Well then, find someone who can scratch it all.

WAITRESS THREE. We've got a pretty complicated itch, Bob.

BOB. "When you give up, you drown." The great escapist Harry Houdini said that. *(Beat.)*

WAITRESS FOUR. If you don't mind, let yourself out the back? Neighbors.

BOB. I don't think you realize how much tourists really love fudge.

WAITRESSES. Good luck, Bob.

WAITRESS ONE. And here's your change. *(Leaving a plastic change container with a dollar on it. Bob alone.)*

BOB. *(Reading the dollar.)* "Barry Metcalf is still a slut." And what am I? *(Bob journeys across America.)*

CHORUS TWO. Three hundred seventeen towns. Twenty-three unopened fudge shops. Eleven hundred waitresses. And Bob was unable to accomplish anything on his list.

BOB. *(Crossing each item off his list.)* Nobody will give me a chance.

CHORUS ONE. Bob was reduced to performing some of the worst jobs in the nation. *(A chain coffee shop.)*

BOB. Ventino Quadruple low-fat-half-caf mocha latte for Deborah.

CHORUS THREE. But, much like a Cubs fan, Bob would enter each new chapter with a small amount of hope. *(Bob hands the drink to the customer, grabs her arm.)*

BOB. This could be better than it is, Deborah. If they let me make it how it should be made, with a little pitcher for the milk and grace in the pour, it could change your life.

CHORUS THREE. And much like a Cubs fan, Bob's hope would quickly fade.

BARISTA. Customers do not need to be made aware of the mediocrity.

BOB. This is an opportunity to affect another person on this planet.

BARISTA. You're a barista.

DEBORAH. My arm.

BOB. There are great baristas out there.