

“DAYS SINCE SHE CALLED ME”
(excerpt)

by Peter Kovic
based on a screenplay by Peter Kovic
additional dialogue by Nathan Satterlee

At around 2:30 I reached Café Artisté and got a Diet
Whatever to go. I put my back between it and the guy at the
cash register and poured in some rum. I was almost to the
door when she opened it and we stared at each other.

Eric? Eric Mersault?

Breeze.

Maybe this didn't happen.

We sat on the patio. She read a book and sipped tea.
I drank and looked at the houses and the trees. She looked
like a beatnik. It was good sitting next to her.

She laughed.

what is it

start there and go to there

I read.

thats pretty funny

i thought youd appreciate that

She went back to reading.

are you still with larry

She answered but she was still reading.

larry my no we split up back that was a long time ago
your ring

jake jacob pasternak have yall ever met

the name doesnt ring a bell did he go to true cross

i didnt meet him until i was in grad school

wheres he at right now

he has work tomorrow

what is he a priest

close hes the assistant manager for a catering company

close

hm

how is that close

close

how is a caterer close to being a priest

they both do a lot of weddings and funerals it's our
little joke

oh

She read for a while. Then she put her book down.

i'm sorry i dont mean to ignore you you wanted to go
and i made you stay and now i'm just reading

no it's okay it's just like it used to be
it's funny we havent seen each other in so long and we
still got nothing to say
i'm beginning to think thats what your late twenties
are all about

She nodded but I think it was to be polite.

ive pretty much stopped playing video games by the way
thats good i always thought you played too many of them
how about movies

i still watch tons of movies
do you and everyone else still go to the movies every
friday or saturday night

we got out of the habit somehow jobs
thats too bad the whole camaraderie thing
we used to be a real crew
crews turn into couples

not even that anymore it's just me and the video store
wait arent you and
no
thats too bad

I shrugged and we watched a car drive by.

i like it here

me too

Nothing to say.

In the wee hours you can tear down Memorial and Allen Parkway as fast as you want. I got to the garage underneath the Angelika at about 3:45 and moped around there for a while working up a good buzz. I thought someone was looking so I went up the stairs.

The tall buildings, the empty cafés, the wide lawn of the Wortham Center—it was all romantic and I was alone. It took a while to climb down the little waterfall behind the Wortham because I didn't want to spill my drink.

I like to walk. It's important to have a girl who likes to walk. I put my hand out like you were there—like anyone was there—but then I thought I heard someone. I sat on a bench under the bridge and put my arm around someone who wasn't there but it didn't work. I watched the water. Then I went up on the bridge and found that button that when you press it it makes all those bubbles come up in the Bayou. It made me smile.

Steel and glass all the skyscrapers downtown did not give the slightest shit about me and my suffering. I was walking funny. My friend Potter used to have a girlfriend you could borrow from time to time. After a movie she and I climbed inside that sculpture the big multi-colored abstract one in front of one the office buildings and we talked for

nearly an hour. On the way home we sang along with all the radio songs. That must have been in college because we knew all the words. Another time she and I made a cake when my parents were out-of-town. She was beautiful and athletic but I never thought of her in that way. Except to look at sometimes.

I don't know what time it was when I parked in front of a big chain grocery store and put my seat back and drank some more. Do you remember when we used to talk about spending a night in the park and sleeping under the stars?

Blackness.