MRS. SWANSON. I am. Wow.

JOHN DODGE. I bought a tandem bicycle from him. He was really friendly when I brought it back.

LIBRARIAN. Oh, he's a complete gentleman. He has one of those haircuts. He said he wouldn't be able to see us, way up there, but that he'd think about us. Can you imagine? All that splendor, all that wonder and beauty, and all you can say is just, “Houston this,” and “Houston that.” To be so far away, with such a little vocabulary. *(She stamps the book for JOHN DODGE.*) And then there's John, here, with his handy-man work and now his reading. Such lively people, our townspople. Always trying different things. Always pre-occupied. *(to MRS. SWANSON:) And now you, too.

*(hands JOHN DODGE the book)*


JOHN DODGE. Thanks. Bye. *(to MRS. SWANSON:) Nice talking to you. Here's my card.

MRS. SWANSON. *(She looks at it.)* This says “Lucy Graves Associates: If you need help, we can help.”

JOHN DODGE. Yeah, that's wrong, that's someone else's card.

MRS. SWANSON. Okay. *(pause)* Well, so, then, how would I get in touch with –

JOHN DODGE. *(interrupting)* Here, why don't I just write my name and number on that one. *(He does so.)* There we go. Problem created, problem solved. Bye. *(exits)*

MRS. SWANSON. Bye.

LIBRARIAN. *(to MRS. SWANSON:) Now, you wanted books on children. What, specifically?

MRS. SWANSON. Health. Pre-natal health. And also maybe wallpapering. We want to get a room ready.

LIBRARIAN. It's so exciting. A room. Wallpaper. I love the patterns. Little flowers or fire engines – it's almost too much. Let me show you.

*(They exit.)*

(MECHANIC moves downstage and stands very still, looking through the audience.)

MECHANIC. I was nervous, earlier. I don't know why. Well, I do know – for part of it, I was being choked. And I'm nervous now, now that I think of it. But, I'm nothing special, post-natally speaking. I fix cars, I try to. I get hassled by the cops, try to maintain a certain – I don't know – sobriety. Sometimes, I volunteer at the hospital, dress up for the kids. It was part of a plea deal. But, what isn't. Nothing really crazy to report. Except, I found this rock once, everyone. What I thought was a meteorite. I brought the thing into the school, here. The kids ran it through all these tests, tapped on it, shined lights at it. I found it in a field. It looked special. Then the astronaut here told me it was just a rock. Said it was probably from, at some earlier time, another slightly larger rock. His name is Greg Something. I had ideas about getting famous, getting on local TV with my meteorite. When it turned out to just be a rock, I thought I could still make some headlines with it if I threw it off a bridge, hit some family in their car and killed everybody. But then I figured, you know what, forget it, that's not me. So now some family's driving around, not knowing how lucky they are, not knowing how sweet it all is. Just because. *(very brief pause)* Wait, hang on a second. Do you... *(Pause. He stays very still and listens intently.)* I thought I heard something. *(listens again for a moment)* I'm still not convinced I didn't. Weird. Anyway, that was just a little local story. Although, you know, it almost had outer space in it. *(brief pause)* I wish that lady luck, with the family. People don't stop to think of how lucky they are. I do. And, I've realized, I'm not that lucky. But I get by. If I had more self-esteem, more stick-to-iveness, I might have been a murderer. I was a child once. Like everybody. Some worried mother's son or distant father's daughter, sneaking around with